
Language learning and teaching – theory and practice

Theory and principles

89-406 Brumfit, Christopher. A literary curriculum in world education. *ELT Documents* (London), **130** (1989), 24–9.

Justification for the use of literature in the classroom must ultimately relate to educational objectives. What differentiates classics of literature from popular works is not their status but their capacity for a sustained, complex and sophisticated contribution to our understanding of the human condition. Literature is a means of enabling learners to participate in this serious debate. Literary competence demands a certain degree of linguistic sophistication. The fundamental convention of western-derived literature is that it is untrue, another

is that literary imagination ‘plays’ with language. Literary competence also implies some familiarity with particular cultural conventions and with a range of literary experience covering different styles and conventions.

If learners lack any aspect of these abilities, the text will not be ‘literary’ to them. Criteria must therefore be found to establish roughly what texts are useful for what purposes at early and late stages, for particular groups of learners.

89-407 Cicurel, Francine (U. of Paris III). Didactique des langues et linguistique: une circularité. [Language teaching and linguistics: reciprocal relations.] *Etudes de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **72** (1988), 15–23.

Linguistics is not generally concerned with questions of methodology, while language teaching seeks specific solutions to specific methodological problems. Thus the relationship between the two disciplines is sometimes seen as a one-sided and simplistic one in which the latter puts into practice theories provided by the former. But language teaching furnishes linguistics with a research lab-

oratory and so a new kind of two-way linkage between teaching and research in the language disciplines is called for, with teaching defining the objectives and the most relevant areas of research so that theories can be formulated which clarify problems encountered in teaching foreign languages.

89-408 Cicurel, Françoise (U. of Paris III). La mise en scène du discours didactique dans l’enseignement des langues étrangères. [The theatre of the foreign language classroom.] *Bulletin CILA* (Neuchâtel), **49** (1989), 7–20.

There is an element of play acting in the language teaching classroom. Two levels of language can be discerned: the ‘real’ language of student–teacher and student–student interaction and the fictitious language of dialogue, exercise or role play. The students have to accept and operate the rules of the

game. However a certain basic verisimilitude must be observed; even the most banal classroom exchange encapsulates a subtle interaction of the real and the imaginary. The class itself may be seen as a fictional representation of reality which nevertheless cannot escape the constraints of that reality.

89-409 Kroon, Sjaak (Tilburg U.) and **Sturm, Jan** (Nijmegen U.). Language teaching in a multilingual context: some reflections on the concept of mother tongue education. *Teanga* (Dublin), **9** (1989), 1–39.

One of six papers delivered at a symposium on ‘Mother-Tongue Education in Ireland’ describes an international symposium on the methodology of mother-tongue teaching held in Bielefeld in Germany in February 1988.

In addition, differing and often contradictory concepts of what constitutes a mother tongue and mother-tongue education are examined, with reference to the position in the Netherlands and in

other European countries, together with the problems and issues arising. In many cases only the standard form of the dominant language in the country or area is allowed to be used for teaching and learning in schools. Where this is not the pupils’ mother tongue it is misleading to talk of mother-tongue education. While due recognition must be given to the importance of the mother tongue for ethnic, national and cultural identity, mother-



tongue education should not divide or segregate people on the basis of race, class or gender. Mother-tongue teaching for minority groups must ultimately be considered as leading to integration into the dominant society. Radical restructuring of education may be needed.

The state of research in this area is reviewed and the work of the Nijmegen Research Group in Mother-Tongue Education, oriented towards acquisition of empirically based descriptive knowledge

of mother tongue education, is described. Also outlined are the activities of the International Mother-Tongue Education Network (IMEN), an informal group of researchers in universities in 10 European countries currently conducting research into the subject content of mother-tongue education, which organises training programmes, workshops and conferences and publishes studies in this field and a bulletin.

89-410 Mountford, Alan (British Council, Thailand). Factors influencing ESP materials production and use. *ELT Documents* (London), **128** (1988), 76-84.

Current ESP approaches are fairly successful in 'training' contexts with in-work, adult learners, but less so in 'educational' contexts, notably 'service English' in universities and technical institutions, where future real language use is chronologically and psychologically more remote. The mistakes made by educators here are mostly traceable to over-enthusiasm for materials writing and failure to examine classroom processes and the ecology of learning. There is insufficient allowance for the difference between the 'specific purposes' of teachers

and learners, and between learner needs and wants. Goals are often unrealistic (e.g. reading journals in English), texts inaccessible due to excessive concern for authenticity, and materials uncreative with limited scope for interesting activities. The author suggests starting from students' present concerns and interests, taking account of learner anxieties and differences in learning style, and emphasising not the educational seriousness of topics but the pedagogic appropriacy of activities.

89-411 Porquier, Rémy (U. of Paris X.) Quand apprendre, c'est construire du sens. [When to learn is to construct meaning.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), special number 2/3 (1989), 123-36.

Learning a language implies learning rules, either explicit or implicit, whether we are aware of them or not. Therefore the learner constructs his own grammar. The author attempts to show how the work of Brunot and Bottier explains the notion of semantic grammar and leads to questions concerning the construction of meaning in a learner's grammar. He then expresses a few ideas based on a semantic-grammatical example before discussing the relationship between a semantic grammar and the various activities set in motion by the learning process.

A learner is *a priori* neither a linguist nor a

grammarian. The systematic examination of exercises and activities found in classes and in language textbooks, particularly at beginners' level, seems to be based either on linguistic description or on the reproduction of a terminal activity rather than on processes which are aroused in the learner. There appears to be a special relationship between semantic grammars and a cognitive conception of the teaching and the learning of languages. Semantic grammars are the work of linguists rather than teachers and are not automatically didactic in intent.

89-412 Py, Bernard (U. of Neuchâtel). Didactique et modèles linguistiques. [Teaching and linguistic models.] *Etudes de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **72** (1988), 7-13.

Language teaching and linguistic theory both have language in its various forms as their object, the difference being that the linguist keeps his distance and observes from the outside while teachers and learners are at the same time both observers and participants.

Applied linguistics constitutes the relationship between the two disciplines: the teaching of

languages provides linguistics with documents, a research laboratory, situations where language occupies a privileged place, while linguistic theories furnish reference models for teaching and assist it in defining its own specific role. Studies of inter-language and exolingual conversation serve to illustrate the concept of the function of applied linguistics [examples].

89-413 Schneiderman, E. I. and Desmarais, C. (U. of Ottawa). The talented language learner: some preliminary findings. *Second Language Research* (Utrecht, The Netherlands), **4**, 2 (1988), 91-109.

Talent is defined as the ability, possessed by only about five per cent of humans, to achieve native-like competence in a second language after puberty. These five per cent probably retain the neuro-linguistic organisation characteristic of children, with great flexibility and the ability to make new connections rather than rely on prior learning. It is hypothesised that they will therefore: (i) perform memory tasks with less reliance on categorisation; (ii) be adept at learning new codes (e.g. a set of

symbols); (iii) have their language functions shared by both brain hemispheres, unlike most adults in whom the left hemisphere dominates; (iv) perform markedly better on verbal than non-verbal tests; (v) exhibit some of the traits in Geschwind and Galabuda's 'pathology of superiority', e.g. migraines, asthma, schizophrenia. Tests on two native-speakers of English with native-like French supported all five hypotheses, although no statistical claims can be made.

89-414 Trocmé-Fabre, Hélène (IUT La Rochelle). Pédagogie et fonctionnement cérébral. [Pedagogy and brain function.] *Etudes de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **72** (1988), 95-113.

Mind and body control each other during the acquisition of knowledge. A pedagogy compatible with brain function should therefore avoid creating disequilibrium between mind and body, decode the grammar of the brain both of the learner and the teacher, help the learner recognise and manage his own inner resources and adapt pedagogic objectives to learning objectives and not vice versa. Learning difficulties are due to the absence of self-knowledge and self-confidence. Learning is envisaged as a journey between and around three poles: doing (*faire*), understanding (*comprendre*) and fulfilment

(*laisser se faire*). Doing involves making the learner aware of his own inner resources, modifying behaviour, developing memory and tactile and kinaesthetic experiences. Understanding involves becoming aware of brain activity cycles, anchoring knowledge in context and experience, taking account of individual differences as well as individual expectations. Fulfilment moves the learner into the realm of freedom and self-realisation and away from the shackles of stimulus and response. It implies choice, heterogeneity and enrichment.

89-415 Wenden, Anita (City U. of New York). A curricular framework for promoting learner autonomy. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **44**, 4 (1988), 639-52.

L2 learners need help to become competent both as users and learners of their second language. Three kinds of learning are outlined for promoting pedagogic autonomy - technical learning, conceptual learning and self-learning.

An objective that focuses on the technical aspects of learning expertise helps prepare learners for pedagogic autonomy by helping them learn how to use strategies. Not all learning is instrumental in purpose. Adults also learn in order to better understand their social and physical environment. This kind of learning is dialogic. There are three different kinds of knowledge learners can acquire about the learning process: (1) knowledge about

themselves as learners (person knowledge), including perceptual learning style, language aptitude, cognitive style, age and learning, language shock, and motivation and learning; (2) the knowledge learners acquire about the learning task (task knowledge); and (3) the knowledge learners acquire about the means of learning (strategic knowledge). Self-reflective learning is directed at better understanding oneself. Learners consider their role in the learning process and their competence as learners. There is a close relationship between the three kinds of learning, and the promoting of learner autonomy requires the teacher to function both as language resource and learning counsellor.

Psychology of language learning

89-416 Bardovi-Harlig, Kathleen (Indiana U.) and **Bofman, Theodora** (Northeastern Illinois U.). Attainment of syntactic and morphological accuracy by advanced language learners. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **11**, 1 (1989), 17-34.

The present study examines the relationship between syntactic development, or complexity, and overall accuracy evidence in the written English of advanced adult foreign language learners. Similar acquisition profiles were found to exist for 30 learners across five language groups: Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Malay, and Spanish. Syntactic complexity, measured in number of clauses per T-unit, is found to be

similar in all five groups. These advanced foreign language learners, who show similar patterns of error distribution, all show relative strength in syntax, what Newport, Gleitman and Gleitman (1977) call a universal design feature of language, but relative weakness in morphology, which is always a language-specific system.

89-417 Connor, Ulla and Keller, Joseph. Creative mapping and second language acquisition. *Anglo-American Studies* (Spain), **8**, 1 (1988), 5-17.

Lexical mapping across languages is creative rather than mechanistic, L2 words frequently attracting some of the semantic associations of their L1 counterparts. Mapping is seen to be most effective at the prototypical level, since all natural languages possess fundamentally similar abstract grammatical, semantic and phonological categories. FL teaching would benefit from an increased emphasis on mapping in addition to the more customarily stressed surface-level features.

Creative mapping is then discussed in terms of its idiosyncratic/unpredictable nature on the situational, structural and lexical level. The discovery of

similarities and differences between two languages has not yet, however, been reduced to formal procedures which could be applied systematically to actual learning situations. Using examples from French and Finnish, the authors claim that comparison of such non-related languages (where no decoding assistance could be gained from cognate words or surface structure similarities) clearly illustrates the existence of categories like 'personality', 'physical classification', 'agent' or 'topic', as well as of culturally similar discourse chunks and situational scripts/scenarios.

89-418 Conrad, Linda (Akademie für Lehrerfortbildung, Dillingen, FRG). The effects of time-compressed speech on native and EFL listening comprehension. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **11**, 1 (1989), 1-16.

The experiment reported here used time-compressed speech to handicap the process of listening comprehension in an attempt to observe aural processing strategy differences among groups of native English speakers and high- and medium-level skill groups learning the language. The participants were asked to recall immediately 5 time-compressed recordings each of 16 simple English sentences; the 5 replays represented decreasing rates of time-compression ranging from 40% to 90% normal playing time. Group performances were compared

for the 5 rates of compression with regard to overall sentence recall as well as to the recall of specific parts of speech. Results showed both quantitative and qualitative differences among the three test groups. Overall recall of the time-compressed sentences decreased with decreasing proficiency in the language. Furthermore, whereas native listeners demonstrated a strategy of concentrating on key content words in the stimulus, both learner groups tended to recall more words they had heard in initial or final sentence position.

89-419 Crahay, Marcel (U. of Liège). Comportement du maître et participation des élèves. [The behaviour of the teacher and pupil participation.] *Langues Modernes* (Paris), **83**, 1 (1989), 77-86.

Many factors contribute to the creation of a 'good' pupil. Research suggests that the more a student participates, the better is his academic performance.

Students who feel incompetent will not try hard, whilst students who feel competent make more effort. The teacher's evaluation is very important.

Teachers behave more positively towards students considered 'good', and more negatively towards students considered less able. Good pupils were allowed more time to answer and were more often asked. Previous academic results and a pupil's physical appearance also influenced assessments.

The cause of this bias is examined. It is suggested that when people meet, many different impressions concerning physical appearance and behaviour are received, as well as other knowledge. In order to cope with the complexity of these impressions and

information, a mental 'classification system' of people is used. Implicit ideas about personality are inherent in such a classification. Some personality traits go together, whilst others are thought to be incompatible. When a trait is noticed, other traits can be inferred. It is easier for teachers to explain behaviour by reference to imagined personality traits, than to analyse it correctly. Teachers need to recognise their acceptance of implicit personality traits in their daily teaching.

89-420 Fagan, William T. and Hayden, Helen Mary. Writing processes in French and English of fifth grade French immersion students. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **44**, 4 (1988), 653-68.

This study investigated the writing processes of ten grade 5 students as they wrote both in French and English. Subjects wrote as much as they wished on two separate occasions on topics of their own choosing. Data on 22 features were analysed for comparisons from two sources - (a) information obtained from the subjects during discussions prior

to and after the writing tasks, and (b) an analysis of the written compositions. Results indicated that differences across languages occurred on eight features. Furthermore, students displayed a wide range of writing process behaviours in both languages. Implications for teachers are also presented.

89-421 Flège, James Emil and Bohn, Ocke-Schwen (U. of Alabama, Birmingham). An instrumental study of vowel reduction and stress placement in Spanish-accented English. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **11**, 1 (1989), 35-62.

Morphophonological alternations in English words such as *able* versus *ability* involve changes in both stress and vowel quality. This study examined how native speakers of Spanish and English produced four such morphologically related English word pairs. Degree of stress and vowel quality was assessed auditorily and instrumentally. Stress placement generally seemed to constitute less of a learning problem for the native Spanish speakers than vowel

reduction. The results suggest that Englishlike stress placement is acquired earlier than vowel reduction and that the ability to unstress vowels is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for vowel reduction. The magnitude of stress and vowel quality differences for the four word pairs suggests that L2 learners acquire stress placement and vowel reduction in English on a word-by-word basis.

89-422 Hare, Victoria Chou and others. (U. of Illinois, Chicago). Text effects on main idea comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **24**, 1 (1989), 72-88.

In two studies the authors examined the effects of selected text features on students' main idea comprehension. Seventy-five fourth-grade, 78 sixth-grade, and 107 eleventh-grade students in the United States participated in the studies. In Study 1, students were asked to identify the main ideas of two kinds of text with a listing structure: contrived instructional texts, and less constrained texts like those in content area textbooks. In Study 2, the same students identified the main ideas of texts of four different structures: listing, sequence, cause/effect, and comparison/contrast. In half of the texts of each

structure, the main idea was explicit; in the other half, it was implicit. Students in both studies inferred significantly fewer correct main ideas for the less constrained texts than for the contrived texts. The authors suggest that students who have been taught to identify main ideas using only contrived texts such as those found in basal reader skills lessons will have difficulty transferring their main idea skills to naturally occurring texts. Thus, instruction in main idea should include the opportunity for students to practice applying their skills to naturally occurring texts.

89–423 Horwitz, Elaine K. (U. of Texas). The beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **72**, 3 (1988), 283–94.

This paper is one component of an on-going investigation which aims to characterise individual learner beliefs by student type. The aim is to sensitise teachers and researchers to the variety of beliefs students hold and to the possible consequences of specific beliefs for second language learning and teaching.

An inventory was developed to assess student opinions on a variety of issues related to language learning (the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory – BALLI). It contains 34 items related to: difficulty of language learning, foreign language aptitude, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, and motivations and expectations. The inventory was administered to language students in their first term at university, using three target language groups (Spanish, German and French) for comparison. Students from all groups overwhelmingly supported the concept of language learning difficulty hierarchy, but within each group respondents differed as to the difficulty level of their particular target language. Asked about time requirements for language learning, a large number of students felt that a maximum of two years is sufficient (at one hour per day) for learning another language, and many were optimistic that they would ultimately learn to speak the language in question ‘very well’ (two-thirds of these thought it would take them three or more years, one-third thought it would take two years or less). If students underrate the difficulty of their task in this way they are likely to become frustrated when their progress is not rapid. On the other hand, students who expect to be unsuccessful may be being unduly pessimistic. Teachers should discuss

this with their students, and point out the value of some language ability even if it is less than fluent.

About half the students agreed that some people are born with a special ability to learn a foreign language, but less than half thought they themselves possessed it. Three-quarters of them agreed that everyone can learn to speak a foreign language. Students felt overwhelmingly that it is easier for children than for adults to learn a foreign language.

Many students endorsed statements indicative of a restricted view of language learning, e.g. that the most important part is learning vocabulary, or learning rules, or learning to translate from English into the target language.

On strategies for learning and communication, students strongly endorsed repetition and practice in the language laboratory. Students were mixed in their support for a communication-centred approach to teaching, which could lead to a clash of expectations in the classroom. On expectations, Spanish students were the most, and German students the least, optimistic about opportunities to use the language. Less than half the students wanted to get to know representatives of the foreign culture.

Since the students were in the very early stages of language learning, their beliefs may change in time. The majority of them will in any case cease language study as soon as possible. It would be helpful if teachers could include discussions about the nature of language learning as a regular part of their teaching. They should also show by example and instructional practice the holistic nature of language learning.

89–424 Koda, Keiko (Ohio U.) Cognitive process in second language reading: transfer of L1 reading skills and strategies. *Second Language Research* (Utrecht), **4**, 2 (1988), 133–56.

Two crosslinguistic experiments were conducted with 83 skilled readers from four contrasting L1 orthographic backgrounds. Experiment 1 tested the effects of blocking either visual or sound information on lexical decision-making. Experiment 2 examined the effects of heterographic homophones (e.g. *eight and ate*) on reading comprehension. Data from the

two experiments demonstrate that the subjects utilise cognitive skills and strategies developed in their L1 when reading English as an L2, suggesting that (a) L1–L2 cognitive process transfer does take place in L2 reading and also that (b) orthographic structure exerts a significant influence on cognitive processes in reading.

89-425 Moody, Raymond (U. of Hawaii). Personality preferences and foreign language learning. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **72**, 4 (1988), 389-401.

This is a report of a preliminary investigation into what new learning and teaching strategies will be needed in order to comply with a University of Hawaii regulation requiring all students entering in 1989 to learn a foreign language. The primary focus of the study was on personality – the characteristic ways in which people respond to the world and ways they prefer to learn. The approaches of language learners were compared with those of students of other disciplines (science, engineering and business).

The method of the study is described. From the statistical results showing the general personality of the four groups of students, it is possible to deduce the kind of activities preferred by each group and compare these with the others. The author concludes that the study lends support to the theory that a variety of class-room activities should be provided, geared to a level and type that promote visible success. A wider variety of activities can also help students to develop and expand their repertory of response choices.

84-426 Munsell, Paul E. and others (Michigan State U.). Review essay – language learning and the brain: a comprehensive survey of recent conclusions. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **38**, 2 (1988), 261-78.

Significant findings in research on the nature of the brain are discussed and suggestions made on how this information might be applied to language teaching. Evidence shows that the brain is modular (not monolithic) and capable of a wide range of responses and feelings. We are capable of higher states of awareness and self-direction and of allowing activities to fall below our awareness level as well as raise them above it, according to our needs, thinking styles and capabilities. The brain has modular specialisations and a variety of intelligence. The

memory is part of physiological process in many parts of the brain, and emotion is the central specialisation of the brain, but it is very complex. Language learning should have a rich variety of stimuli, including information, sound, vision, imagination, intuition, social interaction, movement and reasoning, so that as many aspects of the learner's brain as possible may be affected and the learning process therefore enhanced as much as possible.

89-427 Oxford, Rebecca L. (Pennsylvania State U.) **and others**. Language learning strategies, the communicative approach, and their classroom implications. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **22**, 1 (1989), 29-39.

Some 62 strategies used by good language learners are classified in six main groups: memory (e.g. associating), cognitive strategies (e.g. recognising and using formulas), compensation (e.g. message adjustment), metacognitive (e.g. seeking practice opportunities), affective (e.g. taking risks), social (e.g. asking for correction). A teaching methodology which follows four communicative principles will help learners to develop many of these strategies. The principles are: (1) change of classroom organisation – pairwork, etc. – promoting social and compensation strategies; (2) more realistic

communication – information gaps, etc. – promoting cognitive, social and affective strategies; (3) use of active learning modes – problem solving, simulation/gaming, etc. – which encourage learners to be responsible for their own learning; (4) strategy training, necessary because not every learner 'catches on' without additional guidance.

A circular relationship is suggested: more communicative activities lead to better learner strategies which in turn lead to still more communicative activities.

89-428 Peinemann, Manfred (U. of Sydney). Is language teachable? Psycholinguistic experiments and hypotheses. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **10**, 1 (1989), 52-79.

This paper argues that the 'teachability of language' is constrained by what the learner is ready to acquire. The author describes experiments and

longitudinal studies which show that formal learners process their language in stages and in the same order as has been found in natural language

acquisition. It is accepted that second language acquisition in a natural setting is systematic, and in a mixed natural and formal setting formal language teaching can capitalise on the natural language

learning process. However, the paper shows that teaching a step that the learner is not ready for can have an adverse effect on his learning.

89-429 Pica, Teresa and others (U. of Pennsylvania). Comprehensible output as an outcome of linguistic demands on the learner. *Studies in Second Language Learning* (Baltimore, Md), **11**, 1 (1989), 63-90.

In view of the theoretical claim that comprehensible input is not sufficient for successful second language acquisition, but that opportunities for non-native speakers (NNSs) to produce comprehensible output are also necessary (Swain, 1985), this study sought to describe how second language learners responded linguistically when native speakers signalled difficulty in understanding them and to compare types and frequencies of the learners' responses in relation to different native-speaker (NS) signal types and different communication tasks.

The NS signals differed in the extent to which they offered nonnative speakers an open-ended request for clarification or a model to repeat or acknowledge. The tasks differed in the degree of control they gave to NSs and NNSs over the preciseness and relative quantity of information needed to carry them out, and were as follows: (a) an 'information-gap' task, in which the NNSs drew

their own original picture and then described it to the NSs, who had to reproduce the picture solely on the basis of the NNSs' description; (b) a 'jigsaw' task, in which the NNSs and NSs were required to reproduce an unseen sequence of pictures by exchanging their own uniquely held portions of the sequence; and (c) a discussion, in which the NNSs and NSs were told to share their views on the language-learning contributions of the other two communication tasks. Each task was carried out by 10 NNS-NS dyads.

Results of the study provided empirical validation for the theoretical construct of comprehensible output and revealed the extent to which its production by NNSs was influenced by the linguistic demands of NS signals of comprehension difficulty and communication tasks. Additional analyses of data indicated that the gender of participants in each dyad played an important role in these results.

89-430 Polomska, Margaret (U. of Liverpool). A case for 'acquisitional strategies': some methodological observations on investigation into second language learners' initial state. *Second Language Research* (Utrecht), **4**, 2 (1988), 110-32.

This article reports on a pilot investigation into initial assumptions of second language learners in the methodological framework of 'acquisitional strategies'. Its focus is predominantly methodological, but experimental data is used to illustrate the approach. Acquisitional strategies constitute an elaboration of recent applications of the parameter setting model of grammar to the investigation of second language learners' initial state in that in this framework markedness and parameter setting interact with cognitive and psycholinguistic factors. Acquisitional strategies are understood as an identifiable, but subconscious plane according to which acquisition is handled and which is based on a subconscious assumption or a range of assumptions about the linguistic characteristics of the language under acquisition. Learners' initial state or their assumptions are seen as reflected empirically by a range of interacting formal and substantive choices, attached to a particular grammatical phenomenon. In contrast to the parameter setting model, the

analysis of second language learners' initial state in the context of acquisitional strategies is essentially individual-based.

An exploratory application of this framework to the investigation of second language learners' initial state has been undertaken in the context of acquisition of preposition stranding by English learners of Dutch. Preposition stranding refers to a marked phenomenon where movement extracts an NP complement of the preposition out of PP, leaving the preposition 'stranded' behind. The respective realisation of this phenomenon in English and Dutch manifests interesting syntactic and morphological contrasts, which render it a valuable empirical tool for evaluation of acquisitional strategies. A tendency to statistically significant individual choices has been noted in this study. The predominant choice, manifested by the subjects, appears to be a strategy associated here with the assumption of nonequivalence of the phenomenon of preposition stranding in English and in Dutch.

89-431 Reves, Thea and Levine, Adina (Bar Ilan U., Israel). The FL receptive skills: same or different? *System* (Oxford), **16**, 3 (1988), 327-36.

Opinions differ as to whether language ability is unitary or divisible. Thus, to what extent can reading and listening skills be considered similar or different with regard to their respective sub-skills, and between these sub-skills and the unitary skill factor underlying them? Some 68 Israeli Social Science students taking an EFL reading course were subjected to identical diagnostic tests at the beginning and end of their course. During the course, listening comprehension tests were given, each based on the specific sub-skill studied in the reading

course such a recognition of key lexical items, logical relations and word meaning deduction.

Results suggest that listening skills are less divisible than reading ones. The listener concentrates less on specific sub-skills but more on holistic comprehension of the text. The unitary skill factor appears to be more dominant than the composite parts of the skill. One should not expect listening comprehension ability as a result of teaching specific reading sub-skills. It has to be taught and practised.

89-432 Spivey, Nancy Nelson (Carnegie Mellon U.) and **King, James R.** (Texas Woman's U.). Readers as writers composing from sources. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **24**, 1 (1989), 7-26.

In 'discourse synthesis' readers become writers, creating new texts by selecting, organising, and connecting content from source texts. In this study of discourse synthesis, accomplished and less accomplished readers in the 6th, 8th, and 10th grades in U.S. schools were given a report-writing task. Over a three day period in their English/language arts classes, the 60 students in the study wrote informational reports composed of content they selected from three source texts (encyclopedia articles on a single topic) as well as content they added. Text analyses showed differences associated with both reading ability and grade level in how students selected content from the sources and

provided connections between ideas in their reports. In addition, differences associated only with reading ability were apparent in students' organisation of the content. Differences between readers were manifested on measures of task management as well as on features of the texts they produced: the accomplished readers developed more elaborate written plans and spent more time on the task. The authors conclude that general reading ability and success at synthesising overlap to a great extent, and suggest that success at synthesis may be related to cognitive factors commonly associated with comprehension, such as sensitivity to text structure.

89-433 Stahl, Steven A. and others (Western Illinois U.). Prior knowledge and difficult vocabulary in the comprehension of unfamiliar text. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **24**, 1 (1989), 27-43.

In three studies the authors investigated the interactive effects of prior knowledge and vocabulary difficulty on students' recall of social studies text. In all three, groups of sixth-grade students were pretaught either relevant or irrelevant information about an Amazonian tribe. All students then read a passage from a fifth-grade textbook, either in the original version or in a version with difficult synonyms substituted for every one out of six content words. In Study 1, both vocabulary difficulty and preteaching affected students' recall of central and supporting information, but the two factors did not interact. Students given the difficult vocabulary version recalled more information out of order, suggesting that vocabulary difficulty might affect the development of a coherent text base. The preteaching appeared to have an independent effect

on readers' selection of the most important text to recall. These hypotheses were tested in two other studies. In Study 2, in a standard cloze task, vocabulary difficulty was found to affect the exact replacement of function words, but not content words, as predicted. However, preteaching did not affect replacement of either type of word. Finally, in Study 3, vocabulary difficulty, but not preteaching, affected children's ability to recognise the order of events. Also, the preteaching affected students' importance ratings, as predicted, but the specific ratings were not consistent with predictions. The authors conclude that vocabulary difficulty and preteaching may function independently, not interactively: vocabulary difficulty may affect micro-processing, and preteaching may affect macro-processing.

89-434 Zuengler, Jane (U. of Wisconsin-Madison). Identity and IL development and use. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **10**, 1 (1989), 80-96.

In second language acquisition settings, identity is an important factor for the learner. The target language model may not necessarily be the standard model but could be another variety, e.g. Black English vernacular for native Spanish-speaking males in New York. Interlanguage (IL) performance may alter according to ethnic identity, and degree of perceived empathy towards the IL speaker as well as whether the IL speaker feels threatened. Other factors which affect IL performance are gender and the degree of knowledge an IL speaker possesses about the topic under discussion. IL performance

may also affect the attitudes that native speakers show towards them. In general, non-target-like performances tend to lead to negative impressions of IL speakers. We need to know whether such speakers are aware of such reactions. Contrary to research which suggests that different processes of language acquisition occur in non-native varieties (NNV) of English settings as opposed to IL settings, it is argued that this is not so. IL settings do not imply a standard TL; language input is just as rich in IL as in NNV settings and motivation in both settings may be both integrative and instrumental.

Research methods

89-435 Gaonach, Daniel (U. of Poitiers). Psychologie et didactique des langues: perspectives de recherche en psychologie du langage. [Psychology and language teaching: possible lines of research into the psychology of language.] *Etudes de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **72** (1988), 83-93.

The aims and ends of language teaching and the psychology of language learning are not the same but it is both misleading and unhelpful to regard the relationship between the two as being nothing more than a case of the former borrowing from the latter. More fruitful would be an interdisciplinary approach based on joint research projects focusing on the language activities of the speaker (or learner).

Suggested research areas include: mother tongue interference, interlanguage, reading comprehension. Language teaching would acquire a more profound knowledge of the cognitive processes involved, while for psychology there would be valuable comparative data with which to elucidate underlying general principles.

89-436 Read, John (Victoria U. of Wellington, New Zealand). Measuring the vocabulary knowledge of second language learners. *RELJ Journal* (Singapore), **19**, 2 (1988), 12-25.

There is renewed recognition these days of the importance of vocabulary knowledge for second language learners. This means that it is often necessary to find out, for diagnostic and for research purposes, how many words are known by particular learners. In order to measure vocabulary size, we need to deal with three methodological problems: defining what a word is; selecting a suitable sample of words for testing; and determining the criterion for knowing a word. A first attempt to produce a diagnostic test of this kind for EAP learners is

represented by the Vocabulary Levels Test, which uses a matching format to measure knowledge of words at five frequency levels. The development of the test is outlined, followed by an analysis of the results obtained from a group of learners at Victoria University. Another approach, the checklist, is proposed as an alternative testing format. The literature on the checklist is reviewed, with particular reference to methods of controlling for the tendency of learners to overrate their knowledge of the words.

Contrastive analysis

89-437 Henderson, Lalitha. Interference in second language learning: the acquisition of English and Tamil phonemes by the native speakers of Tamil and English. *JTL* (Louvain), **81/2** (1988), 73-111.

This study deals with the acquisition of English and Tamil as a second language and aims to explain the

errors found in the speech of L2 learners caused by the interference from the first language within the

frame of reference of the phonological system of the target language (L2) as perceived and produced by the native speaker of the first language (L1). The overall systems are compared so as to highlight the most general similarities and differences. The comparison also focuses on the similarities and contrasts

between the phonetic manifestations of each phonological unit of L1 and its counterpart in L2. The data from the actual speech of English and Tamil by the L2 speakers are used to bring out the contrast between the two languages and the L1 interference on L2.

Testing

89-438 Alderson, J. Charles (U. of Lancaster). Testing English for Specific Purposes: how specific can we get? *ELT Documents* (London), **127** (1988), 16-28.

This article maintains that the use of differential tests for particular groups of ESP learners raises major issues of content/construct validity – it is not at all clear, for example, that applied linguistics really can answer the question ‘what should the test content be?’. It is claimed that the ideal solution would seem to be one test for all.

The fairness of using the same test for, say, Engineering and Liberal Arts students is discussed, and such points considered as ‘how much’ or ‘what kind’ of language is needed to cope in different study situations; also, the relationship between background specialist knowledge and language competence (particularly in reading) is explored. Testers could elect either to use reading texts (1)

related to a specific discipline, (2) having a ‘neutral’ content accessible by any educated layman, or (3) having an arcane content such that no reader would be likely to have the relevant ‘background’ (an approach exemplified in the JMB Test in English Overseas). Three studies are then described, in which these levels of specificity were compared; results [tabular data] seemed to indicate support for a broad based ESP approach – it appears that background knowledge does improve reading comprehension, though, and that ‘neutral’ texts sometimes caused unnecessary difficulty. It is concluded that ESP tests should be specific in terms of a situation/set of purposes rather than any ‘special’ subject content.

89-439 Blue, George M. (U. of Southampton). Self-assessment: the limits of learner independence. *ELT Documents* (London), **131** (1988), 100-18.

The learner can play an active part in an area of second language learning where teachers have heretofore been reluctant to lose control: assessment of language ability. Self-assessment is felt to be an important component in self-directed learning, but with the caveat that it has limitations – indeed, individual needs analysis and formative/summative SA are, it is claimed, very difficult for many learners to cope with unaided.

The article describes the formalised SA/testing activities in the Language Centre at the University of Southampton, where placement tests, subjective tutor assessments and needs analysis/SA questionnaires are typical evaluative instruments used on the

pre-sessional EAP programme. Oskarsson’s descriptive rating scales are provided to help learners assess their language ability at the beginning of the course. Comparisons between, for example, self-assessment scores and tutor ratings [tabular data] indicate a less than perfect comparability, and it is claimed that self measurement is less reliable with multicultural groups [tabular data], overestimates being far more common than underestimates of proficiency level. Moreover, from a needs analysis perspective, learners are frequently unable to think of language in terms of its composite skills or to use the descriptive metalanguage familiar to the teacher.

89-440 Cleary, Christopher (British Council, Alger, Algeria). The C-Test in English: left-hand deletions. *RELC Journal* (Singapore), **19**, 2 (1988), 26-38.

The topic of this article is the C-Test – a relatively new addition to the existing battery of techniques, cloze in particular, which claim to measure general language proficiency. Recent trials of the C-Test in Oman on subjects at lower levels of attainment have produced encouraging results on all counts except discrimination. This paper reports an attempt to

address the problem of poor discrimination by means of an experimental C-Test variant in which grammatically unmarked items were deleted to the left rather than to the customary right. The findings showed that the discrimination of the C-Test could indeed be enhanced by left-hand deletions, but for a negative rather than a positive reason. It is concluded

that the C-Test, and possibly other testing techniques which have proved effective at intermediate level and above, may be less appropriate when applied to

lower levels, and that caution should be exercised in their use.

89-441 Cruz-Ferreira, Madalena. A test for non-native comprehension of intonation in English. *IRAL* (Heidelberg, FRG), **27**, 1 (1989), 23-39.

This article describes a general, practical test of intonational comprehension of English which is intended for use by learners of any L1 background (in this case, Portuguese). The test consists of several sentences of spoken English, delivered with particular patterns of tonality (division into intonation groups), tonicity (placement of nucleus/main accent) and tone (melodic shape of the nucleus - e.g. rising/falling intonation). Three alternative interpretations are provided for each sentence, from which the candidate must choose by ticking appropriate boxes. Explanations and instructions are given orally in the native language, and learner attention is drawn explicitly to the semantic differences which can exist between utterances

having the same lexico-grammatical structure. The 'correct' answer is the least occurring possible meaning of an utterance, to counteract the effect of guessing or the use of learner strategies to infer the right meaning.

There is felt to be a need for such a test, given the fact that intonation is the last 'stronghold' of a foreign accent, and the test could help teachers of English to diagnose/systematise the most common learner difficulties, errors and misinterpretations; in this way, their teaching could subsequently focus on and remediate problems. It is hoped that when other versions of the test are constructed, they may contribute significantly to the field of comparative intonation.

89-442 Davies, Alan (U. of Edinburgh). Communicative language testing. *ELT Documents* (London), **127** (1988), 5-15.

The various elements which are present to a greater or lesser degree in all communicative tests are discussed, there being no clear cut definition of them; for example, they would be more criterion referenced, integrative and direct, and rather less concerned with discrete point items. The main concern is also with language in situation rather than language as system.

The problem of achieving 'authenticity' in testing situations is discussed at length. The RSA Communicative Test of English as a Foreign Language provides a case in point; its cultural bias (i.e. the norm being 'Life in Britain') is seen as a limitation to any claims of 'authenticity'. Munby's needs analysis approach, with its resultant skill taxonomies, underlies the British Council ELTS test and is called

into question here because of the logic of its necessarily increasing specificity and narrowness of focus: there could be a distinct test for every individual. The 'cost' of authenticity would thus seem to be very high. Moreover, its elusiveness is perhaps coupled with the fact that it could actually be less revealing than more 'traditional' methods (termed 'pragmatic' by Oller) such as dictation and cloze. Quite simply, dictation requires the constrained, real-time processing of the meanings 'encoded in discourse' - the same skills used in 'real world' language use. Communicative testing therefore needs to be thought of as the testing of communicative language, not the communicative testing of language.

89-443 Davies, Alan (U. of Edinburgh). Procedures in language test validation. *ELT Documents* (London), **127** (1988), 29-35.

The issue of 'sampling' is considered, i.e. the assumption that the corpus evaluated in the test represents the language as a whole. If it is felt, for example, that grammar is central to language use then grammar must be included in the test. Language proficiency is not unifactorial or based on a single, unitary competence; reliability and validity are therefore at odds with one another.

Three levels of validity are discussed, in connection with the testing approaches evinced by particular examinations (e.g. the RSA Communi-

cative Test of English, ELBA, ELTS). Validity 1 involves the use of linked examination levels, validity 2 would be the acceptance of a new test as the equivalent of some existing measure (e.g. a public test already offered by a prestigious institution); validity 3 would be the appeal to some external criterion such as concurrent/predictive validity, as substantiated by statistical analyses.

The Bangalore Communication Teaching Project is also considered, a series of tests having been used to explore the validity of the project's pedagogic

claims. In basic terms, the package of achievement and proficiency tests showed modest support for the belief that grammar can be learnt through com-

municating and that this grammar is deployable by learners.

89-444 Hughes, Arthur (U. of Reading). Achievement and proficiency: the missing link? *ELT Documents* (London), **127** (1988), 36-42.

The author accepts the traditional distinction between achievement and proficiency tests (i.e. the measurement of the effects of a particular instructional programme versus determination of the correspondence between a learner's language ability and a set of specific requirements); he takes issue, however, with the typical ways in which content decisions are made in these two types of test, maintaining that the procedures should essentially be the same. This contention is discussed in terms of the Bogazici University English Proficiency Test Battery [tabular data].

The content of proficiency tests should be based on a needs analysis; achievement tests should not, on the other hand, be designed exclusively with

reference to a course syllabus or textbook; the experience at Bogazici with progress and final achievement tests purportedly showed that goal-oriented, needs-based approaches perform better. Measurement of the attainment/non-attainment of objectives (no matter how these objectives were met), expressed in terms of a set of language skills or ability levels.

This emphasis on course objectives rather than on discrete syllabus items provides a content link between achievement and proficiency tests which should help testing procedures to provide vital feedback as to the success/validity of teaching programmes.

89-445 Jochems, Wim and Montens, Frans (Delft U. of Tech., The Netherlands). The multiple-choice cloze test as a general language proficiency test. *ITL* (Louvain), **81/2** (1988), 139-59.

This article presents and discusses a number of empirical findings concerning the validity of multiple-choice cloze tests as tests of general language proficiency. Foreign students of Dutch at Delft University of Technology were given both a series of separate proficiency tests in listening, speaking, reading, writing and text comprehension, and a series of multiple-choice cloze tests. Scores on the multiple-choice cloze tests were found to correlate significantly with each of the proficiency tests. In addition, scores made on the multiple-choice cloze

tests appeared to form a solid basis for predictions of the total scores for listening, speaking, reading and writing taken together. Finally, a close structural similarity was found to exist between curves of average scores on successive multiple-choice cloze tests and the presupposed growth of vocabulary during the language learning process. Together, these findings tend to show that multiple-choice cloze tests constitute a valid instrument for measuring general language proficiency.

89-446 Lennon, Paul. Conversational cloze tests for advanced learners. *ELT Journal* (London), **43**, 1 (1989), 38-44.

This article reports performance on proficiency tests and 'conversational' cloze tests for a small group of advanced learners of English at the outset and conclusion of a six months' period of residence at the University of Reading, in England. For each subject, responses at Time 1 and Time 2 for each cloze item are compared, so as to provide some insight into the linguistic developmental processes which learners may have been undergoing in the interim.

It is found that linguistic improvement deriving from extensive exposure to the target-language community in the absence of formal instruction did show up in scores on a written multiple-choice test, particularly for vocabulary, but that the conver-

sational cloze tests separated out subjects more effectively.

From the changes in response made by subjects from Time 1 to Time 2, it becomes evident that the language of the advanced learner is characterised by uncertainty, that learning does not consist of a process of incremental additions to a fixed store, but that 'backsliding' occurs, as well as non-critical variation and improvement. Learners would appear to differ in the extent to which they are satisfied with an 'acceptable' but not fully native-like response, and in the indices of certainty they attach to their L2 linguistic repertoire.

It is finally suggested that the use of cloze tests with advanced learners may be beneficial as a

teaching and diagnostic device, in alerting the learner to degrees of linguistic appropriacy, and enabling the teacher to identify both the over-

experimenter and the under-experimenter among learners.

89-447 Lynch, Tony (U. of Edinburgh). Peer evaluation in practice. *ELT Documents* (Oxford), **131** (1988), 119-25.

Peer evaluation was used on an experimental basis in one component (the 'speaking skills' sessions) of a pre-sessional EAP summer programme. It is only one of several forms of assessment applied in the course. Reasons for using it are (1) it fits in with the emphasis on the value of communication between students; (2) given that students will be taking university courses where many of their fellows will be non-native speakers, they need to be able to understand, and be understood by, other non-native speakers; (3) face-to-face speaking demands immediate sensitivity to the interlocutor/s, so feedback

on how much of what they have said has been comprehensible is useful; (4) all judgements are subjective, including that of the language tutor, so a wider sample of opinion is helpful.

Peer evaluation here took the form of a questionnaire on individual presentations (leading a seminar), concerning such points as clarity of main points, organisation, use of aids, speed of delivery, interaction with audience. Some initial training was given. It was concluded that this form of evaluation had a marked effect on the extent to which speakers take their audience into account.

89-448 Neil, Derek (Monkseaton High Sch.). Foreign languages in the National Curriculum - what to teach and how to test? A proposal for the Languages Task Group. *Modern Languages* (London), **70**, 1 (1989), 5-9.

How can we set up a teaching syllabus and assessment system for children from 11 to 16 of all abilities, which does not keep repeating its content from year to year, assesses them at their levels of ability and rewards positive achievement? There are at present far too many FL courses and tests. The system needs to be rationalised: the author outlines a syllabus and testing system consisting of 10 topics and a basic core. The first three years would constitute the First

Cycle and the final two years the Second Cycle during which the 10 topics would be covered again but with extra vocabulary and structures. Assessment would be by grades - grades 6-8 corresponding to grades C-A at GCSE and 9 as a bridge to GSE 'A' level. Answers need to be found to many questions raised by these graded tests.

89-449 Perkins, Kyle and Brutten, Sheila R. (Southern Illinois U.) An item discriminability study of textually explicit, textually implicit, and scriptally implicit questions. *RELC Journal* (Singapore), **19**, 2 (1988), 1-11.

This paper reports the effect that background knowledge has on the item discriminability of reading comprehension items; item discriminability is an index of how well a test item discriminates between weak and strong examinees in the ability being tested.

The questions from three reading comprehension tests were placed into one of the following categories: (1) textually explicit; (2) textually implicit; and (3) scriptally implicit. An item discriminability index was computed for each item.

The results indicated that there were significant differences in the three categories of items with respect to item discriminability and that reading comprehension items which are heavily dependent on background knowledge do not exhibit good item discriminability. The findings indicate that researchers must control for background knowledge in a reading test when they use test products as the basis for making inferences about the processes underlying reading comprehension.

89-450 Pugsley, Jenny (British Council, London). Autonomy and individualisation in language learning: institutional implications. *ELT Documents* (London), **131** (1988), 54-61.

The British Council administers about 20% of the overseas study fellows in the UK during an academic

year. -It reconciles the students' pedagogic needs with other factors: the main training institutions'

requirements, the terms of the student's award, the conditions imposed by the student's employer, and various practical problems.

The English Tuition Co-ordination Unit's work concerning student language programmes is described, with particular regard to the various conflicting interests involved. The Unit assesses study fellows' linguistic requirements for pre- and in-session training and decides where to place them. It also monitors study fellows' linguistic performance and liaises with language training institutions.

Problems can arise as (a) most applications have

to be quickly processed during the summer and (b) colleagues who do not teach language often minimise its advantages and it is often the first victim of reduced funding. Teachers and students often perceive students' language-related problems differently. One problem area is the piece of extended academic writing, generally required at a late stage in a course when language problems cannot be easily remedied. The question is raised as to whether the same levels of competence should be set for all non-native speakers, regardless of their own linguistic patterns.

Curriculum planning

89-451 Baetens Beardsmore, Hugo and Kohls, Jürgen. Immediate pertinence in the acquisition of multilingual proficiency: the European Schools. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **44**, 4 (1988), 680-701.

Two aspects of the European School network are highlighted in this article. The first part provides a detailed description of the structure and programme of these multilingual schools which teach through the medium of nine languages. Particular attention is given to the role of languages in the curriculum. The second part analyses the linguistic outcome of the system of education, with particular emphasis

on a comparison with Canadian immersion programmes. Research findings are examined for an explanation of the high levels of bilingualism prevalent in European Schools. The roles of input, output and pertinence are examined in the light of social engineering built into the curriculum as a means of fostering multilingual contacts.

Course/syllabus/materials design

89-452 Bearne, Colin (U. of Sussex). Readers and 'readers': foreign language reading in 18+ learners. Russian as a case study and some strategies. (Oxford), **5**, 1 (1988), 163-179.

This article examines the foreign language learning needs of a specific group of undergraduates and postgraduates, principally learners of Russian, with particular reference to their need to develop reading skills in the foreign language. It examines what actual reading these students do and how this relates to their previous language learning experience.

Traditional educational publications designed to foster reading skills (readers) are examined, taking Russian as an example, and their effectiveness evaluated. In the light of the evaluation alternative strategies are explored, with a view to integrating reading into the total FL learning process.

89-453 Bloor, Meriel (U. of Warwick) **and Bloor, Thomas** (U. of Aston). Syllabus negotiation: the basis of learner autonomy. *ELT Documents* (London), **131** (1988), 62-74.

Students are often unclear about what they want from their studies but by negotiation with their teachers, agreement may be reached on establishing an inventory of objectives. Syllabus negotiation considers not just needs but also wants of students, increases their motivation and encourages them to take more responsibility for their own learning. Syllabus negotiation usually takes place within the framework of individual study programmes based on 'consultations' during which the student is able

to specify his wants with regard to aspects of language use, levels of competence aspired to and preferred study modes. With taught classes, broad objectives are usually pre-defined but negotiations can be conducted on the details. On an academic writing course, for instance, students identified areas of difficulty (e.g. punctuation) and worked out a course structure with their teacher. Syllabus negotiation promotes effective language learning by laying the foundations of learner autonomy.

89-454 Crombie, Winifred (Hatfield Poly.). Syllabus and method: system or licence? *System* (Oxford), **16**, 3 (1988), 281-98.

There is a clear distinction between syllabus and method which is in danger of being blurred. A syllabus has to do with course content; a method has to do with the implementation of the content. Objections to five syllabus design proposals are made. A functional syllabus cannot exist because one cannot list particular functions in terms of linguistic categories. A notional syllabus, defined as a list of meanings associated with grammatical constructions, is not fundamentally different from a structural one. Objections are also made to the Procedural Approach, the Core and Spiral Ap-

proach, the Natural Approach and the Structural syllabus, either on the grounds that they are disguised methodologies or that they leave the syllabus design issue unresolved, or that they are sentence based and ignore discourse. However, a Relational syllabus includes categories which are finite and systematisable. Such syllabuses are constructed on three main principles: they progress from the known to the unknown, they avoid *ad hoc* solutions and they take into account the cognitive and conceptual knowledge all learners have by virtue of knowing their own language.

89-455 Nunan, David (National Curriculum Research Centre, Adelaide, Australia). Principles for designing language teaching materials. *Guidelines (RELC Journal Supplement)* (Singapore), **10**, 2 (1988), 1-24.

This paper sets out some key principles for designing language teaching materials. These principles are derived from recent theory, research and practice in language learning and teaching. Where relevant, the principles are illustrated with practical examples.

The principles are as follows: (a) materials should be clearly linked to the curriculum they serve; (b) materials should be authentic in terms of text and task; (c) materials should stimulate interaction; (d)

materials should allow learners to focus on formal aspects of the language; (e) materials should encourage learners to develop learning skills, and skills in learning-how-to-learn; (f) materials should encourage learners to apply their developing language skills to the world beyond the classroom.

[Appendix shows how these principles can be integrated into a unit of work.]

89-456 Swan, Michael Language teaching: Is there a solution? Is there a problem? *Guidelines (RELC Journal Supplement)* (Singapore), **10**, 2 (1988), 34-7.

Solutions to language teaching problems sometimes cause more trouble than the problems they are supposed to solve. Teachers are made to feel guilty about doing the things which seem natural and useful, like translating, explaining grammar rules or drilling. All the elements - language, learners, and the learning process - must be treated with respect.

Respect for the language involves ensuring that all aspects are covered in materials, not just those of current interest to the theorist. Syllabus planners need to draw on formal, semantic and performance

syllabuses, and not privilege only one of them. Respect for the learner involves recognising that people learn in different ways; materials should contain something for everyone. No course should neglect the 'hidden materials' inside learners' heads. Respect for the language-learning process means recognising that learners do not do just one thing when they learn languages - materials must provide opportunities for the various processes involved to operate appropriately.

Teacher training

89-457 Moirand, Sophie (U. of Paris III). La mise en texte: une approche communicative des enseignements. [How a text is constructed: a communicative approach to the training of teachers.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), special number 2/3 (1989), 147-59.

Teachers doing refresher courses are presented with a variety of texts: dialogues, monologues, telephone conversations, reports, newspaper articles, official documents (video tapes are also used). They are

encouraged to consider how the text functions and what the underlying structures are (the 'grammar of texts'). This is done in order to equip them with a descriptive model they can make use of in the

classroom as well as an understanding of the theoretical concepts, the ultimate aim being to achieve a communicative approach to grammar

where the formal regularities are at the service of the meaning to be conveyed. [Examples of texts.]

89-458 Nunan, David (National Curriculum Resource Centre, Adelaide, Australia). A client-centred approach to teacher development. *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **43**, 2 (1989), 111-18.

As language teaching has become more learner-centred, the curriculum is being rediscovered, not as a set of prescriptive edicts, but as the documentation and systematisation of classroom practice. In-service workshops for teachers have tried to incorporate 'client-centred' principles, for example (1) the content and methodology of workshops should be perceived as being personally relevant to participants, (2) theory should be derived from practice, (3) the approach should be bottom-up rather than top-down, (4) teachers should be involved in the structuring of the professional development programme, (5) teachers should be encouraged to observe, analyse, and evaluate their own teaching, and (6) the programmes should provide a model for teachers of the practices they wish to encourage.

The way in which these principles can be realised in workshops for teacher development is illustrated

with references to a workshop on classroom learning tasks run by the Australian Adult Migrant Education Program. The aim was to introduce participants to language curriculum design. The point of entry was the concept of 'task' (rather than the conventional one of 'needs', 'goals', etc.). The aim was to get participants to explore (some weeks in advance of the workshop) their concept of the 'good' language task and provide an example. At the workshop, they rated statements on a questionnaire, then worked in pairs to select the five most essential characteristics. Then they applied these to the examples they had provided at the outset, which prompted many to renew their approach.

The second part of the workshop was devoted to the issue of task difficulty. Sets of criteria were provided. Subsequent workshops incorporated changes made in the light of participants' comments.

89-459 Sheal, Peter. Classroom observation: training the observers. *ELT Journal* (London), **43**, 2 (1989), 92-104.

Classroom observations have traditionally been conducted by administrators and senior teachers mainly for the purpose of teacher evaluation. Recently, however, more attention has been paid to the potential uses of observation for staff-development and observational research purposes. Teacher trainers and educational researchers argue that observations can provide useful feedback to teachers, and can improve the overall effectiveness of the teaching/learning process. But administrators and senior teachers want to know how to combine staff development with evaluation. This article

suggests that the answer to the problem involves having observation procedures and forms which provide useful feedback to the teacher, while also contributing to objective and reliable evaluations.

The article describes a series of three workshops designed to train classroom observers and overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of using observation for staff-development purposes. It also raises some important questions about the role of supervisors of teachers, and discusses their need for training in supervisory skills.

89-460 Williams, Marion. A developmental view of classroom observations. *ELT Journal* (London), **43**, 2 (1989), 85-91.

Classroom observations often cause problems for teachers and trainers. They tend to be judgemental, relying on a trainer's subjective judgements, rather than developmental, developing the teacher's ability to assess his or her own practices.

This article describes a scheme of developmental classroom visits currently in use in an in-service teacher-training programme for primary teachers in Singapore. The reasons for dissatisfaction with traditional observations are listed, and the principles

behind the new format are discussed. A set of questionnaires with focus questions for the teacher to answer before and after the lesson is used, and the procedure for using the questionnaires is described. The purpose of the questionnaires is to develop the teacher's own critical thinking ability. The trainer's role is positive and helpful, and becomes one of clarifier and helper. The visits were considered successful by teachers and trainers.

Teaching methods

89-461 Allwright, Dick (U. of Lancaster). Autonomy and individualisation in whole class instruction. *ELT Documents* (London), **131** (1988), 35-44.

The terms 'autonomy' and 'individualisation' are typically associated with a radical restructuring of traditional language pedagogy. Yet the seeds are there even in the traditional classroom, in (1) the idiosyncrasy of classroom language learning (each lesson is a different lesson for each learner); and (2) the co-productive nature of classroom lessons (all the participants interact and make a difference to what happens). All learners' errors have the potential

effect of individualising instruction, as do their questions. Ways are suggested for developing these small beginnings of learner autonomy and self-individualisation, with reference to a transcript of a university-level ESL grammar lesson [appendix]. Looking at such classroom data may be the best way of developing the agenda for in-class learner training work.

89-462 Bickes, Gerhard and Scott, Andrew (U. of Western Australia). On the computer as a medium for language teaching. *CALICO Journal* (Provo, Utah), **6**, 3 (1989), 21-32.

The three most common arguments against computer-assisted language learning (CALL) are that it is as limited as the language laboratory, it is used because it is technologically innovative, and that its communicative, interactive and creative capacities are restricted. However, while it is accepted that the computer is limited in that language data and programs are predetermined and because it cannot anticipate or analyse errors, it is argued that interaction between the learner and other media such as the textbook, video or tape recorder, is just as limited since they cannot process learner input.

Even a teacher's comments are limited by time and numbers of students.

Despite its limitations, the computer is an effective medium for language acquisition. It allows for an exchange of information, provides an immediate response and offers the possibility of individual tutoring. The Private Tutor System, developed at Yale, illustrates the flexibility and limitations of CALL. This program allows for a measure of learner control, e.g. adjustment of teaching material to suit the learner's needs. It also offers a wide range of exercise formats.

89-463 Braine, George (U. of Texas at Austin). Writing in science and technology: an analysis of assignments from ten undergraduate courses. *English for Specific Purposes* (New York), **8**, 1 (1989), 3-15.

If academic writing is to be taught successfully, composition teachers must be aware of what students write in the major disciplines. The numerous academic writing task surveys carried out to date have two characteristics: (1) most have used questionnaires, a somewhat unreliable data gathering method; and (2) none have focused on the writing in science and technology, disciplines which attract the majority of foreign students, especially at the undergraduate level. This study classified 61 writing assignments from 10 undergraduate science and technology courses. The classification was

according to task and audience specifications. Most of the sample fell into the *Report on a specified participatory experience* category, while 25 percent of the sample specified an audience other than the course instructor. All the assignments in the sample were of a highly controlled nature. Pedagogical implications such as forming composition classes exclusively for science and technology majors and 'individualising' assignments within such classes, emphasising contributory skills such as paraphrase and summary, and using peer critiquing to practice audience expectations are also discussed.

89-464 Budd, Roger. Simulating academic research: one approach to a study-skills course. *ELT Journal* (London), **43**, 1 (1989), 30-7.

This article describes a month-long experiment, carried out by a multi-national group of students on a pre-sessional Study Skills course. The experiment consisted of simulating a piece of genuine academic research. The rationale for the simulation, and a

description of the day-to-day progress, are presented, as well as a short evaluation, including the change in teacher/learner role and learner expectation that it required.

89-465 Chamot, Anna Uhl and Kupper, Lisa (Interstate Research Associates, VA). Learning strategies in foreign language instruction. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **22**, 1 (1989), 13-24.

This paper summarises the findings of a three-year project which investigated the use of learning strategies by foreign language students and their teachers, and suggests specific classroom applications for learning strategy instruction. Three studies were conducted under this project: (a) a descriptive study, which identified learning strategies used in studying foreign languages, (b) a longitudinal study, which identified differences in the strategy use of effective and ineffective language learners and analysed changes in strategy use over time, and (c) a

course development study, in which foreign language instructors taught students how to apply learning strategies. Classroom applications discussed in the paper include guidelines for developing students' metacognition and motivation through the identification and discussion of their existing language learning strategies, and techniques for modelling and practising additional strategies that can help students become more effective and independent language learners.

89-466 Clarke, David F. (U. of East Anglia). Materials adaptation: why leave it all to the teacher? *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **43**, 2 (1989), 133-41.

This article begins by discussing the background to the idea of learner involvement in syllabus design. It seems unlikely that full learner participation in decisions concerning content and methodology will be possible in most circumstances, but it is suggested here that learner creativity can be introduced in other ways, specifically in the area of materials adaptation. The article describes five principles which lie behind learner involvement in materials adaptation: (1) learner commitment (through interest in the materials); (2) learner as materials writer and collaborator (working within a group in class);

(3) learner as problem solver (adapting materials to create tasks is a fruitful task in itself); (4) learner as knower (by researching language areas to produce material, learners become 'expert' and can transmit their knowledge); (5) learner as evaluator and assessor (learners become better able to assess the relevance of what they are doing and of their own level of achievement). These principles are then illustrated concretely by means of four extremely diverse opportunities for learner involvement in the adaptation process: substitution tables, questions on a text, adapting computer materials, and test design.

89-467 Courtilon, Janine (ENS de Fontenay-Saint-Cloud, CREDIF). La grammaire sémantique et l'approche communicative. [Semantic grammar and the communicative approach.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), special number 2/3 (1989), 113-22.

Not every grammar is compatible with communicative methodology; a suitable grammar must have meaning rather than form as organising principle, and must enable learners to move from meaning to form rather than vice versa, constructing mini-competences in areas where they have real needs which can motivate learning. Development of these competences can and should begin at the

earliest stage of learning. The approach advocated entails metalinguistic discussion among learners, who must find their own rules rather than receiving them ready-made; the rules may be formulated explicitly or implicitly according to each learner's cognitive style. [Examples, including *par/pour*, perfect/imperfect tense, definite article, all discussed from a semantic perspective.]

89-468 Crouch, Christopher (U. of Ulster, N. Ireland). Performance teaching in ELT. *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **43**, 2 (1989), 105-10.

Performance teaching is a strategy in which the teacher is seen to perform in ways not normally associated with teacher roles, providing variety, contrast and possibly paradox. It seems to increase the students' attention and motivation. Two examples of performance teaching are described: in one, the trainee teacher, aiming to develop conversational English, behaved in an exaggeratedly

energetic fashion with which the students joined in happily, in the other, the trainee (in a lesson on the imperative) exaggerated his gestures in directing a roleplay. In both instances, the trainee supplied a model, even a caricature, which the students could imitate, and which they found possibly puzzling but stimulating.

89-469 Dickinson, Leslie (Moray House Coll. of Ed., Edinburgh). Learner training. *ELT Documents* (London), **131** (1988), 45-53.

Learner training is frequently advocated as a way to help students derive the most benefit from autonomous learning. The term 'learner training' covers such diverse phenomena that it is difficult either to assess its usefulness, or to decide on appropriate objectives. The main problem is that the same term is used both for learners aiming at autonomy, and for students being taught by conventional classroom methods.

In attempting to define learner training, three areas are identified and the first two discussed in detail: (a) processes, strategies and activities within learner training; (b) language awareness training;

and (c) instruction in aspects of language learning and language acquisition theory. A definition of learner training is given which is a résumé of these three points. In order to design different programmes, three subcategories are proposed and discussed: the intended learning mode; learning aims; the planning level (subdivided into approach to learning, learning plans, and learning techniques).

A heightened awareness of learner training among teachers is required, accompanied by a more deliberate approach, so that the learning skills taught to students are appropriate to their needs.

89-470 Dunkel, Patricia and Davy, Sheryl (Pennsylvania State U.). The heuristic of lecture notetaking: perceptions of American and international students regarding the value and practice of notetaking. *English for Specific Purposes* (New York), **8**, 1 (1989), 33-50.

There is general consensus among American college students and professors alike that taking notes on lecture information assists in the process of learning and retaining the information; however, it is uncertain whether this perception of the value of notetaking is a universal one. Do students from other cultures also perceive notetaking to be a valuable strategy to adopt while they are listening to lectures (1) in their native language, (2) in a language other than their native language (e.g., English)? Previous research suggests that cultural differences exist between the perceptions of American and British students regarding the value and practice of notetaking, and it was the purpose of this study to determine whether differences of opinion exist between American students and their international peers concerning the usefulness and

methods of notetaking. One-hundred-sixty-four American and international students enrolled at a research university in the East responded to a questionnaire assessing their attitudes toward the usefulness of taking notes during English-lecture presentations. Results revealed that significant differences exist in the perceptions of the American and international students regarding: (1) their estimations of the adequacy/inadequacy of their notetaking skills, (2) the sense of time pressure experienced during listening and notetaking, and (3) the amount of notes taken during lecture presentations. However, many similarities of opinions also surfaced in the data. Implications of the findings for lecturer presentations and notetaking study skills programmes are suggested.

89-471 Fish, Harold. Playing with plays: increasing student involvement with dramatic texts. *ELT Documents* (London), **130** (1989), 68-74.

When communication is successful the area of shared knowledge between participants is extended. Pre-reading activities ensure that the student is aware of some of the ideas contained in the text. In order to increase the intensity of interaction between learner and text it is often advisable to alter the original text in some way, e.g. deleting or jumbling parts of it (words, sentences or paragraphs). The view of meaning underlying these techniques is that meaning is not simply there in the text waiting to be 'unloaded' by the reader, but is the result of the interaction between the reader and the text.

A simple three-part technique is presented that

can engage students to the extent that they become emotionally committed to the reading of a text or part of a text. It consists of presenting students with the cast list of the play and getting them to draw up hypotheses concerning the play, themes, and possible aspects of the plot. They are also given a section of the play with the names of the characters deleted, and are asked to try to deduce who the characters are. The third activity consists of some pre-text questions which may prompt students to consider key themes in the play. These activities are likely to stimulate motivation and lead to a more successful reading of the text.

89-472 Gainer, Glenn T. (Fukuoka U., Japan). Clozing in on oral errors. *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **43**, 1 (1989), 45-9.

Correction is provided in the oral language classroom to help learners identify problematic areas, reformulate rules in their minds, and thus speak more accurately. However, many correction techniques seem to frustrate and intimidate rather than enlighten. Certain features of the cloze procedure can be adapted into a simple correction procedure which is effective in eliciting self- and peer-corrections from students. When the student makes

an error, the teacher writes the correctly produced portions of the utterance on the blackboard and draws cloze-type blanks at the trouble-spots. This indicates the exact location of the error/s to the student, with the advantages that (a) he/she has time to think, (b) the attention of the whole class is focused on the error/s, and (c) all the students can participate in the correction process. [Examples.]

89-473 Hafiz, F. M. and Tudor, Ian. Extensive reading and the development of language skills. *ELT Journal* (London), **43**, 1 (1989), 4-13.

A three-month extensive reading programme using graded readers was set up involving one experimental group and two control groups of learners of ESL in the UK. The programme, inspired by Krashen's Input Hypothesis, was designed to investigate whether extensive reading for pleasure could effect an improvement in subjects' linguistic

skills, with particular reference to reading and writing. The results showed a marked improvement in the performance of the experimental subjects, especially in terms of their writing skills. A number of recommendations are made regarding the setting up of extensive reading programmes.

89-474 Hall, Geoff. Mikhail Bakhtin's language based approach to literature: a theoretical intervention. *ELT Documents* (London), **130** (1989), 30-8.

EFL teachers are turning to literature in the classroom without having sufficiently carefully theorised what literature might offer and how this potential can best be exploited. The linguistic nature of literature is stressed. The value of the Bakhtin Circle's work is to have recognised the strengths of formalism's formulations and yet, through a sociological critique of formalism's limitations, to have pointed the way to a more satisfactory mode of studying literary texts. In the study of literature, student-centred activities must be derived which utilise response to semantic content, including investigation of historical-cultural reference and background, and sociolinguistic features of style and register. In order to say anything meaningful about any utterance, we must move beyond the purely 'linguistic' level to a 'metalinguistics' of 'discourse',

not afraid to speak of the wider historical, sociological and ideological contexts of production and reception which contribute to meaning construction.

All language is dialogic inasmuch as it does not exist until it 'means', which it can only do by entering into the ongoing 'stream of discourse'. Bakhtin's work is seen as a theoretical intervention designed to provoke critical-theoretical thought rather than demonstrate particularly impressive readings of some given text. Linguistic and literary competence are indivisible, both necessary conditions of a meaningful reading encounter. Reading must be personalised, but also dialogised in a responsible fashion, and here the teacher has an important part to play.

89-475 Harmer, Jeremy. Evaluating grammar techniques. *Anglo-American Studies* (Spain), **8**, 1 (1988), 19-25.

The decline in grammar teaching which accompanied the focus on communicative skills in the EFL classroom is giving way to a renewed interest in the methodology and practice of grammar teaching. Six types of grammar exercise were assessed by teachers in terms of the extent to which the grammar teaching was covert or overt, student-centred or teacher-centred, creative or non-creative, helpful or unhelpful. The activities involved word ordering,

error detection, information finding, distinguishing between *going to* and *will*, picture selection following an oral description, and participation in a board game.

Although teachers' reactions were fairly consistent as far as assessment criteria were concerned, that is, all activities were judged to be reasonably student-centred but few were considered to be creative, it became clear when students participated in one

workshop that students' views were completely different from those of teachers. It is recommended that in order to bridge the gap between teaching

and learning there should be more frequent student assessment of methods and materials.

89-476 Harper, Sandra N. (Ohio Wesleyan U.). Strategies for teaching literature at the undergraduate level. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **72**, 4 (1988), 402-8.

Lecturers in literature at university are feeling a need to reassess their methodology: while language teaching has developed a student-centred approach, the teaching of literature has remained traditional – teacher-centred, with a minimum of student participation. The author suggests that literature teaching methodology should (a) individualise learning, (b) incorporate the perspectives of the students in the teaching/learning process, and (c) provide structured and sequenced activities to

facilitate reading comprehension. The paper gives a detailed description of the proposed methodology, which consists of a three-phase sequence: pre-interpretation activities, guided activities for interpretation, and synthetic or summative activities. Activities are selected to suit the level of the class, and the whole methodology is aimed at making the classes more enjoyable – and therefore more beneficial – for the students.

89-477 Hutchinson, Tom (U. of Lancaster). Making materials work in the ESP classroom. *ELT Documents* (London), **128** (1988), 71-5.

This paper sets out some basic principles of learning which can provide a reasoned basis for the interpretation of ESP language needs into an effective ESP methodology. The principles are: (1) learning is development – learners use their existing knowledge to make sense of the flow of new information; (2) learning is a thinking process – materials should oblige learners to think and teachers should help them become aware of what they know and how it can be used; (3) learning is an active process – processing activity in the brain is more useful than psycho-motor activity (merely producing or receiving communication signals); (4) learning involves making decisions – tasks should give learners the opportunity to be wrong; (5) learning a language is not just a matter of linguistic knowledge – the learner's conceptual/cognitive capacities must be respected as well (in ESP, the

learner's subject and general knowledge can be a vehicle for language learning); (6) second-language learners are already communicatively competent – even if linguistically infantile; (7) learning is an emotional experience – second language learning is stressful because it strikes at the heart of our psychological security, so the teacher should try to minimise the negative effects of the learner's emotional reactions and try to boost the positive ones, e.g. by using pair and group work, enabling learners to show what they know rather than what they do not, giving them time to think, and by making activities enjoyable; (8) learning is not systematic – learners must create their own internal system; and (9) learning needs should be considered at every stage of the learning process – methodological considerations should ideally be a determining factor in the whole process of course design.

89-478 Mudre, Lynda Hamilton (Dublin Schools, Ohio) and **McCormick, Sandra** (Ohio State U.). Effects of meaning-focused cues on underachieving readers' context use, self-corrections, and literal comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **24**, 1 (1989), 89-113.

Parents of underachieving readers were trained to use selected strategies to tutor their children in a programme conducted in the summer between the children's first- and second-grade school years. These strategies involved: (a) prompting corrections of miscues only when the miscue changed the meaning and only after waiting to give the child a chance to self-correct; (b) using sustaining cues to encourage the child to use context to identify words; and (c) praising the child for self-corrections and use of context. Data analysis of parents' tutoring behaviors

showed an increase in their use of these strategies. The authors found a statistically significant decrease in children's error rates, and significant increases in the children's use of context, number of self-corrections, and literal comprehension. Furthermore, the children appeared to generalise the strategies learned to a different type of text, and were continuing to use these strategies according to two maintenance measures conducted after termination of the study.

89-479 Richards, Jack C. Profile of an effective L2 reading teacher. *Prospect* (Adelaide, Australia), **4**, 2 (1989), 13-29.

Although second-language reading theory has been revitalised in recent years, we have little information about what effective teachers actually do in the reading classroom. It is necessary to look beyond quantifiable and low-inference classroom behaviours and investigate high-level concepts and thinking processes to understand how effective teachers arrive at instructional decisions. One such teacher was observed in a second-language reading classroom using the SRA reading kit. The lesson

was divided into four activities – inferencing skills, reading fluency, vocabulary exercises and extensive reading. Nine teaching principles were established from observation of the lesson, most of which were dependent on the teacher's understanding and theory of second-language reading rather than on quantifiable, low-inference classroom investigations. Observing good teaching and reflecting on it is of greater value than looking at the results of a particular investigation.

89-480 Scott, Virginia M. (Vanderbilt U.). An empirical study of explicit and implicit teaching strategies in French. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **73**, 1 (1989), 14-22.

The concept of 'proficiency-orientated teaching' raises the question of whether grammar should be taught through explicit explanation or through implicit exemplification. This paper describes an experiment carried out on students from two advanced French conversation classes. French relative pronouns and the subjunctive were taught, both by the explicit and the implicit method. Measurement of progress was computed from the results of tests (both written and oral) both before

and after the experiment. The results showed that in the oral sections of the test the students performed equally well. However, in the written sections the group that had explicit instruction performed better. The author posits three possible reasons for this and concludes that students learn grammar structures better when those structures form the content of the lesson. However, more research needs to be done in this area before any changes are adopted in the classroom.

89-481 Sendmeier, Walter F. (Max Planck Inst. für Psycholinguistik, Nijmegen). Aufmerksamkeitssteuerung als Methode eines Hörtrainings im Fremdsprachenunterricht. [Attention steering as a method of auditory training in foreign language teaching.] *Deutsche Sprache* (Berlin, FRG), **1** (1989), 40-51.

This paper presents results of psycholinguistic research in speech perception in L2-acquisition, which show that the perception of the sounds of a foreign language is influenced by the phonetic-phonological system of the native language. The design of a sophisticated auditory training programme for second-language teaching is introduced,

building upon research from the fields of audiology, psychophonetics and educational psychology. The central principles of the training procedure consist of a shift of attention and the focusing of features by means of phonetically modified speech stimuli used in discrimination and identification tasks.

89-482 Tudor, Ian (Free U. of Brussels, Belgium). A comparative study of the effect of two pre-reading formats on L2 reading comprehension. *RELJ Journal* (Singapore), **19**, 2 (1988), 71-86.

The article reports on a study of the effect of two pre-reading formats, a text summary and a set of pre-questions, on the text comprehension of a population of L2 learners at three proficiency levels. Two main points were investigated – the overall facilitative potential of the two treatments and the possible interaction of L2 proficiency with pre-reading treatment. Both treatments produced com-

prehension facilitation with lower proficiency groups but not with the more advanced group. Levels of facilitation were similar for the two treatments, though the summary showed a consistent but limited lead over the pre-questions. No significant level-treatment interaction emerged. The results are discussed in relation to the use of prereading in L2 comprehension development.



89-483 Twarog, Leon I. and Pereszlenyi-Pinter, Martha (Ohio State U.). Telephone-assisted language study at Ohio State University: a report. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **72**, 4, (1988), 426-34.

This report discusses telephone-assisted foreign language programmes at Ohio State University in 1985-86. Students work on their own, with teacher assistance when needed, at a Learning Centre or over the phone. There are oral and written tests, resulting in A and B grades only.

Almost all 1985 students were in college or had previous language experience. Many had studied French or Spanish as main subject, and were revising these languages rather than learning from scratch. Reasons for enrolling were business, family, travel,

course requirements, general interest, self-improvement, and job qualification. Students of French or Spanish believed their language skills improved because of the course.

The programme can be used effectively to learn foreign languages and can be an effective and time-saving method of revision. Busy professional people found the programme particularly rewarding. It is not intended to replace the classroom, but for the less commonly taught languages or for a low-enrollment language course, it is cost-effective.

89-484 Wodinsky, Marilyn and Nation, Paul (Victoria U. of Wellington, New Zealand). Learning from graded readers. *Reading in a Foreign Language* (Oxford), **5**, 1 (1988), 155-61.

A word frequency study was made of two graded readers and an unsimplified text to determine the contribution that graded readers can make to vocabulary learning. Assuming that 10 repetitions are needed for learning, it was found that in order to master the vocabulary at a particular level, it would be necessary to read several texts at that level.

It was also found that when moving from one level to another, it is not necessary to learn the vocabulary of the new level, or indeed to master all the vocabulary of the previous levels, in order to read successfully at the new level. Graded readers also provide suitable conditions for unknown words from context.