Teaching particular languages

English

93–65 Adams, Roger (Parkwood Coll). Working with bilingual assistants. *Adults Learning* (Leicester), **3,** 8 (1992), 213–15.

Young bilingual literacy assistants are recruited from among the Yemeni, Somali and Pakistani communities. They help those members of their community who have problems with English in their dealings with hospitals, social services, etc., offer one-to-one tuition at home to those who have difficulty in attending organised classes, recruit students to the more formal classes, and assist the tutor in the classroom. Because of the assistants' links with their own communities, the College has been able to increase its ESL provision and be more flexible in meeting the needs of learners.

Several assistants have gone on to higher education, and all of them, especially the women, have gained in confidence. Some of the current team of assistants were themselves among the first learners.

93–66 Bader, Yousef. Curricula and teaching strategies in university English departments: a need for change. *IRAL* (Heidelberg, Germany), **30,** 3 (1992), 233–40.

In this paper, the author looks at literature courses in some English departments. He then shows that the situation in these departments is not as satisfactory as the defenders of literature claim. On the basis of a student survey, it is shown that literature courses, as they are actually taught, do not significantly improve the students' performance because the emphasis is still on the 'content rather than on the mode of expression'. If English departments in Arab (and other Third World) countries are serious about achieving their primary objective, which is to graduate competent users of English, a change or shift in emphasis in the curricula and the teaching methods is not only desirable but also mandatory. Some aspects of the proposed change have already been alluded to in works by several authors. The proposed change will also be found to agree with the surveyed students' wishes and aspirations.

93–67 Christensen, Torkil (Hokusei Junior Coll., Sapporo, Japan). Standard English and the FL classroom. *English Today* (Cambridge), **8,** 3 (1992), 11–15.

Randolph Quirk's concerns about standards in his paper 'Language varieties and standard language' (1990) [*see abstract* 91–473] amount to a wish to see standard English as the only vehicle to be allowed in classrooms where English is taught. In his view, native speakers are the only people who can be trusted to function as valid referees in establishing correct usage, as only they can have developed correct 'intuitions.' This labels non-native speaking teachers as inferior language teachers, with all their work liable to evaluation and correction by native speakers. Yet Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman point out that the 'rules' of English grammar are often variable because of differences in register and dialect. This far more productive and considerate approach recognises that native speakers, through providing a valuable resource, are not omnipotent. Insisting on only standard English in the classroom requires the teacher to assume the role of a socialising force, working to instil an accepted form of English, nor is it possible to accept all student-produced language without a clear strategy to achieve or maintain standards, as this would be detrimental to professional growth and job satisfaction. One characteristic of many classrooms, and particularly those with large student numbers, is the linguistic poverty of the classroom environment, and the constant need to conform to native rules and practices can only exacerbate the problem. A less dogmatic approach would be to require each teacher to set his or her own standards and goals, to establish a linguistic environment that helps to promote the students' studies. How the non-native teacher decides to deal with ungrammatical and non-standard language will depend on the teacher's view of language learning, and will be open to continuous re-evaluation and adjustment.

93–68 Flowerdew, John (City Poly. of Hong Kong). Definitions in science lectures. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **13,** 2 (1992), 202–21.

This paper is an empirical study of the speech act of definition in science lectures. Definitions occurring in 16 lectures by native speaker biology and chemistry lecturers to non-native speaker students

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were transcribed and coded onto a computer data base, according to 28 linguistic and paralinguistic features. Data were obtained regarding frequency, distribution, function, and form of definitions. A total of 315 terms were defined, indicating an average frequency of occurrence of one definition per 1 minute 55 seconds. Definitions were found to fulfil one of two main functions: signposting the logical/discourse structure of the subject/lecture, or helping to maintain comprehension as the discourse progresses. Definitions were found often to cluster together in discourse, but there was no evidence of them being more frequent at the beginning of lectures. Definitions were classified into three major types and one minor type, each of the major types being further subclassified. Findings are reported for ordering of the semantic elements of definitions, syntactic and lexical signalling devices, and various rhetorical and paralinguistic features which accompany definitions. A final section discusses implications for pedagogy.

93–69 Freudenstein, Reinhold (Marburg U.). Communicative peace. *English Today* (Cambridge), **8,** 3 (1992), 3–8.

In an increasingly aggressive world, peace education and the teaching of English – and of any other foreign language – should be inseparably combined both in official documents and in classroom activities. Communicative competence, internationally accepted as the most important objective in the teaching of English, should be expanded into 'communicative peace' (Gomes de Matos). Some social groups, such as the elderly and the handicapped, have traditionally been disregarded or misrepresented in teaching materials, and broad educational objectives have often been subordinated to formal aspects of grammar, translation and vocabulary. Classroom activities aimed at promoting peace are virtually non-existent, but the idea is gaining ground, and various conferences on the theme of peace education in the foreign language classroom took place in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Peace education should become an explicit learning goal in all curricula for English as a foreign or second language. Content areas must be identified and described in detail, for example the relationship between peace and social responsibility and the role of peace in international understanding. At the textbook level, peace-orientated texts could be studied and discussed in just the same way as texts about going shopping or asking the way. Even in traditional materials, the idea of peace can be made the focus of attention, for example by designing and teaching communicative acts of a positive nature, or by devising tasks like changing aggressive vocabulary into language which is used in a positive way. Teachers should be guided towards methods of including peace activities in their daily teaching, even with less advanced students. Classroom activities could include role plays in which different people have to find peaceful solutions in a difficult or hostile situation, and reading assignments to identify positive vocabulary in literary texts. A cooperative teacher/student relationship and a relaxed classroom atmosphere are integral parts of peace-orientated approaches.

93–70 Gurnah, Ahmed (Sheffield United Multicultural Education Service). Editorial. *Adults Learning* (Leicester), **3,** 8 (1992), 196–200.

High unemployment among Sheffield's black communities followed the closure of the area's heavy industries and highlighted the need for literacy and vocational training. The LEA set up the Sheffield United Multicultural Education Service (SUMES) to meet the needs of black people in the city. The black literacy campaigns, of which the Yemeni Literacy Campaign is the first, are strongly community-based and responsive to community needs.

The Literacy Assistants, who are recruited from among the young, bilingual, British-educated unemployed members of the black communities, receive training two and a half days a week at the Sheffield City Polytechnic. In addition to helping their community, the assistants earn a recognised qualification which entitles them to an undergraduate place in the Polytechnic itself, something which had previously been beyond their expectations.

As a result of the campaign the different factions in the Yemeni community are uniting, and women are coming forward to receive education. Other communities are now involved. The black literacy campaigns are growing fast: their success is due to their leadership being firmly rooted in the community.

93–71 Hinkel, Eli (Ohio State U.). L2 tense and time reference. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **26,** 3 (1992), 557–72.

The meanings and forms of tenses are complex and often difficult for non-native speakers to acquire. The concepts associated with time which differ among language communities can present an additional level of complexity for learners. In a survey, 130 ESL students were asked to describe the meanings of English tenses in terms of time concepts used in ESL grammar texts. The results suggest that speakers of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Arabic associate different temporal relationships with the terms *right now, present,* and *past* than do native speakers. An implication of this finding is that grammar teaching that utilises descriptions of time accepted in English-speaking communities to explain usages and meanings of English tenses can produce a low rate of learner comprehension.

93–72 Holliday, Adrian (Christ Church Coll., Canterbury). Intercompetence: sources of conflict between local and expatriate ELT personnel. *System* (Oxford), **20,** 2 (1992), 223–34.

Intercompetence is an intermediary stage in behavioural competence which occurs during confrontation with a new culture. It is a common, two-way phenomenon within ELT when expatriate personnel work within foreign institutions – when (a) local and expatriate colleagues belong to different professional–academic cultures, and (b) the expatriates fail to understand the protocols of the host institution. Each party thus fails to behave appropriately within the terms of the other. By looking at four cases, the paper demonstrates how intercompetence can pervade and damage the effectiveness of many aspects of ELT work. An ethos of change is inherent in the professional–academic culture of Western ELT. Failure to recognise and address intercompetence can increase local perceptions of this change as cultural imperialism in ELT. Intercompetence may be significantly decreased if management strategies are introduced to provide all parties with opportunities to observe, reflect upon and learn about the new situations within which they are working. These strategies should capitalise on ELT expatriates' experience of learning new cultures, acquired while working in a range of culturally marginal situations.

93–73 Johnson, Jeff (Brevard Community Coll., Florida). Literature, political correctness and cultural equality. *English Today* (Cambridge), **8,** 2 (1992), 44–7.

A current trend amongst editors of general survey literature, particularly in the United States, aims to eradicate a perceived racial, cultural and gender bias in the selection of texts. Such a bias is seen to impose upon readers an elitist canon chosen from classics of Western thought. Traditional canonical works are, under this new approach, replaced with texts of greater cultural diversity which are deemed to be 'politically correct'. Ethnicity- and gender-based 'revisionists' have thus brought to the fore the issue of what constitutes canonical authority. Opponents of political correctness argue that minor texts chosen to create cultural diversity are foregrounded at the expense of classics; that art suffers at the hands of politics. In this light it may be the case that equality at the cost of quality is too high a price to pay. It is argued that revised anthologies do not democratise the canon but merely shift the bias from one set of texts to another.

German

93–74 Bærentzen, Per. Die deutsche Wortstellung in kontrastiver Sicht. [German word order from a contrastive viewpoint.] *Deutsche Sprache* (Mannheim, Germany), **2** (1992), 111–26.

Word-order is a fundamental problem in the teaching of German as a foreign language. It would be easier for the non-German learner to cope with if rules for ordering words were formulated in a more general way. This paper presents word-ordering rules in a way that makes them equally applicable to German and to other languages. Such rules enable us to make contrastive analyses which bring out the similarities and differences between German and other languages.

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93-75 Lutcavage, Charles. Authentic video in intermediate German. *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German* (Philadelphia, Pa), **25,** 1 (1992), 33–40.

This article delineates assorted techniques for introducing authentic German video into the intermediate language curriculum. Television commercials, weather forecasts, and news programmes are investigated as tools for enhancing listening comprehension and for expanding the students' cultural awareness. The paper also highlights various types of preparatory activities, listening and viewing tasks, as well as follow-up assignments.

Italian

93-76 Nardi, Antonella. Werbespots im Italienischunterricht: Ein Beispiel zur Anregung Kreativen Schreibens. [Advertising spots in the teaching of Italian: how to use them in the teaching of creative writing.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, Germany), **91,** 3 (1992), 238–53.

One of the main objectives of foreign-language teaching is to stimulate the learners' creativity. This article reports on experience in the use of authentic television material to develop the creative writing skills of students learning Italian. Advertising spots are presented to students either without the sound or without the image; the group writes down what it has understood on a worksheet, then completes the spot by creating the missing elements. Although a fair amount of guidance is required in the beginning, the students are eventually able to work more independently. The final task assigned to them is to design and write the copy for their own audiovisual advertising spot based on a piece of music they hear.

Japanese

93-77 Schulte-Pelkum, Rudolf (Japanese Language Inst., Bochum). Japanisch an deutschen Hochschulen. [Japanese in German high schools.] *ZFF: Zeitschrift für Fremdsprachenforschung* (Bochum, Germany), **3,** 1 (1992), 58–70.

The article gives a short introduction to the Japanese language and its writing system. After a synopsis of the historical development of Japanese Studies in Germany, an attempt is made to give an evaluation of Japanese language programmes at German universities, and some proposals for improvements are made.