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# Language learning and teaching – theory and practice

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## Theory and principles

**94–245 LeBlanc, Raymond.** Language teaching at the university level: the emergence of a field of study. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto, Ontario), **50**, 2 (1994), 250–70.

This paper examines the question of whether or not language teaching for communication belongs at the university level. The answer, affirmative, is based on three propositions: the contributions that language teaching can make to the university, the services universities can render the field of language

teaching and the value of a language of communication for the students. The paper concludes with an example of a university unit where the members were given conditions allowing them to show that language teaching indeed does belong in universities.

**94–246 Swain, Merrill** (OISE, Toronto, Canada). The output hypothesis: just speaking and writing aren't enough. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **50**, 1 (1993), 158–64.

This paper considers the output hypothesis and some of the implications it has for immersion pedagogy and second language learning. According to the output hypothesis, there are four ways in which producing language, either spoken or written, may help language acquisition: it gives the learner (L) the opportunity to increase his/her fluency; it may force the L from semantic to syntactic processing; it enables L to test out his/her hypotheses; and it may generate feedback from native

speakers on the comprehensibility or well-formedness of L's utterances. This has a number of implications for second language pedagogy, but just providing a large number of in-class opportunities for speaking and writing is not enough. It is argued that Ls can be extended both by teacher-led and (even more so) by collaboratively structured (e.g. group work) sessions, in particular where the focus of discussion is the target language itself. Suggestions for areas of activity are given.

## Psychology of language learning

**94–247 Davis, James N.** (U. of Arkansas) **and Bistodeau, Linda** (St. Mary's U., Nova Scotia, Canada). How do L1 and L2 reading differ? Evidence from Think Aloud protocols. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **77**, 4 (1993), 459–72.

A crucial issue for investigators in the field of second/foreign language reading is whether the reading process is fundamentally different in the native language (L1) as opposed to the non-native language (L2). In the research reported here, the authors used data collected from Think Aloud protocols to determine how two groups of adult subjects, who were proficient native language readers, approached reading in their L1 and in their L2. Some of the discussion about differences between

L1 and L2 reading is briefly reviewed, then the method, analytic techniques, and results of their study is presented. Additional research questions raised by the findings are suggested. Finally, based upon results of this study of native readers of English and French, it is proposed that L2 reading researchers adopt a broader context within which to evaluate the performance of subjects from cultures with diverging literacy practices.

**94–248 Dolz, Joaquim** (U. of Geneva) **and others.** L'acquisition des discours: émergence d'une compétence ou apprentissage de capacités langagières diverses? [The acquisition of discourse: one developing competence or the learning of several different language skills?] *Études de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **92** (1993), 23–27.

The notion of competence as something universal, biologically determined and independent of in-

struction, is defensible in Chomsky's original use, when narrowly applied to syntax, but when it is

extended to wider areas of discourse and language performance, as in literary, poetic, social, pragmatic, productive, receptive or communicative competence, it becomes an empty or invalid term. Furthermore, the idea of a unitary competence in these areas, advocated in some form by many cognitive psycholinguists, is not supported by the evidence of differential performance on different text types. Competence-based models are philosophically related to Piaget's idea that children go through certain fixed stages, but in reality children of any age have a whole range of actual and potential abilities which can be developed by

interventionist teaching. Much of what has to be learned in order to perform certain writing tasks, for example, entails mastery of historically recent and socially contingent norms, and cannot possibly be acquired by natural biological processes. The authors therefore see language as activity and language development as social learning. They advocate, and have piloted and tested, a teaching sequence of four phases: reflection and guided production in new interactional situations, study and production of specific text types, generalisation across different text types, and integration of various capacities on the text/discourse level.

**94-249 Donin, Janet and Silva, Maria** (McGill U., Canada). The relationship between first- and second-language reading comprehension of occupation-specific texts. *Language Learning* (Madison, Wis), **43**, 3 (1993), 373-401.

Two within-subject studies were conducted in which detailed discourse analysis techniques were used to analyse 27 nursing students' comprehension of texts typically found in their anticipated workplace (Montreal-area hospitals) in both their first and second languages. The results of these studies support the argument that the use of second-language production tends to underestimate and distort second-language comprehension, at least at intermediate levels of second-language proficiency.

These studies also suggest that the lack of inferencing or higher-level processing that has been attributed to second-language comprehension may be a result of the assessment techniques used. Except when second-language production was employed, the same factors appeared to affect recall and inference in both languages. These studies also stress the importance of text content and structure on text comprehension in either one's first or second language.

**94-250 Eckman, Fred R. and Iverson, Gregory K.** (U. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee). Sonority and markedness among onset clusters in the interlanguage of ESL learners. *Second Language Research* (Utrecht, The Netherlands), **9**, 3 (1993), 234-52.

This paper is intended as a contribution to an evergrowing body of literature on the role played by principles and parameters of Universal Grammar in second-language acquisition theory.

A recent paper by Broselow and Finer proposes that markedness as defined in terms of the multi-valued Minimal Sonority Distance (MSD) parameter is definitive in their subjects' knowledge of certain consonant clusters in syllable onsets. This parameter provides for the characterisation of the various types of consonant clusters allowed in the onsets of syllables in different languages. The object of Broselow and Finer's study was to determine whether L2 learners find clusters which are relatively more marked according to the MSD parameter to

be more difficult to learn than cluster types which are relatively less marked.

This paper, however, argues that it is typological markedness (Hawkins) rather than sonority distance *per se* which better explains L2 learners' knowledge of English clusters in syllable onsets. In line with Clements' comprehensive investigation of sonority relations within the syllable, this paper argues that markedness alone suffices to account for the observed interlanguage patterns. Using Clements' principles, which themselves actually follow from the overall theory of markedness, the interlanguage obstruent results reported by Broselow and Finer fall out automatically.

**94-251 Ellis, Nick C.** (University Coll. of North Wales) and **Beaton, Alan** (University Coll. of Swansea). Psycholinguistic determinants of foreign language vocabulary learning. *Language Learning* (Madison, Wis), **43**, 4 (1993), 559-617.

This paper reviews the psycholinguistic factors that affect ease of learning of foreign language vocabulary and investigates their role in 47 students'

learning of German under Repetition, Keyword or 'Own' strategy conditions. Native-to-foreign learning is shown to be easier the more the FL words

conform to the phonological ( $0.40 < r < 0.63$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and orthographic ( $0.28 < r < 0.45$ ;  $0.05 < p < 0.01$ ) patterns of the native language. However, these relationships are less pronounced (not significant) in foreign-to-native learning. The part of speech ( $0.44 < r < 0.64$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and the imageability ( $0.37 < r < 0.53$ ;  $0.05 < p < 0.01$ ) of the concept are strong determinants of learnability, suggesting an important influence of meaning-

fulness. Keyword effectiveness, particularly in the case of receptive learning, is influenced by the part of speech and imageability of the keyword. But keywords must also share considerable acoustic similarity with their foreign words to be effective reminders in productive learning ( $r = 0.61$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). Otherwise learners must practice these novel phonotactic and orthographic patterns to consolidate them.

**94-252 Gambrell, Linda B. and Jawitz, Paula Brooks.** Mental imagery, text illustrations, and children's story comprehension and recall. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **28**, 3 (1993), 265-73.

This study investigated the effects of instructions to induce mental imagery and attend to text illustrations on fourth graders' reading comprehension and recall of narrative text. The 120 subjects were randomly assigned to one of four treatment conditions: instructions to induce mental imagery (nonillustrated text version), instructions to attend to text illustrations (illustrated text version), instructions to induce mental imagery *and* attend to text illustrations (illustrated text version), and general memory instructions (nonillustrated ver-

sion). After receiving instructions according to treatment condition, subjects silently read a narrative story, rendered a free recall, and responded to 16 cued recall questions (8 text explicit and 8 text implicit). The major findings of this study were that images and illustrations independently enhanced reading performance, and that, in combination, these two strategies resulted in impressive increases in children's comprehension and recall of stories. The authors interpret these findings as support for the imagery-illustration interaction theory.

**94-253 Gaonac'h, Daniel** (U. of Poitiers). Quelles compétences dans les activités de langage en langue étrangère? [What kinds of competences are involved in language activities in a foreign language?] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), special number Aug/Sept (1993), 43-50.

Foreign language competence consists of a number of discrete elements. Operations which are automatic in the mother or dominant tongue may need to be deliberate and conscious in the second language. Specific strategies may be evolved to overcome shortcomings in particular areas.

It is necessary to distinguish between the product, or language activity, and the process, or the means

by which it is achieved. In the case of a second language, the product may be the same as in the mother tongue but the process is likely to be different. Evaluation of learners' knowledge and command of a foreign language should also take into account the diverse sub-competences which go to make up their foreign language competence.

**94-254 Halsall, Nancy D.** Attrition/retention of students in French immersion with particular emphasis on secondary school. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto, Canada), **50**, 2 (1994), 312-45.

A study of the issue of attrition/retention in secondary school French immersion programmes was undertaken. The first part of the study synthesised the information found in extant reports and discussions of attrition/retention. The second part analysed a questionnaire sent by Canadian Parents for French (CPF) to coordinators of French immersion programmes in school boards across

Canada. The questionnaire explored the attitudes of school boards toward the attrition/retention issue. Some information regarding attrition/retention at the elementary school level was included in both parts of the study. The primary emphasis, however, was on attrition/retention from secondary school programmes.

**94-255 Heilenman, L. Kathy** (U. of Iowa) **and McDonald, Janet L.** (Louisiana State U.). Processing strategies in L2 learners of French: the role of transfer. *Language Learning* (Madison, Wis), **43**, 4 (1993), 507-57.

This study compared the comprehension processing strategies of 15 monolingual English native speakers and 8 bilingual French native speakers to 112 second language (L2) learners of French, using stimuli containing word order and clitic pronoun (type and agreement) cues in French. Results indicated differential dependence on cue use by the two native speaker groups, with English native speakers de-

pending more on word order for interpretation and French native speakers depending more on clitic pronoun agreement. Interpretations produced by L2 learners of French indicated an immediate abandonment of L1 word order strategies with a much later onset of clitic pronoun agreement strategies. Results are discussed within the framework of the Competition Model.

**94-256 Lennon, Paul** (U. of Kassel). The advanced learner: affective, social and motivational factors. *Language Learning Journal* (Rugby), **8** (1993), 39-43.

There is ample evidence that the native language becomes more difficult to acquire as puberty approaches (the 'critical period' hypothesis), but the case is by no means proven for foreign languages. Vocabulary expansion in the native language continues into adulthood and there is no reason why it should not do so in EFL as well. The strongest evidence that foreign language acquisition may be age-constrained is in phonology: there appears to be an inverse relationship between age of first exposure to the language and likelihood of attaining pronunciation largely free of foreign accent. Some researchers speak of 'sensitive' rather than critical periods for foreign language acquisition, and suggest that there may be multiple sensitive periods for various aspects of language. The belief that after puberty there are such insuperable obstacles to acquisition of a second language by exposure that adults can only learn by instruction and the exercise of their cognitive faculties is not supportable. Lack of acculturation may be a factor in adults' com-

parative lack of success in picking up languages naturalistically. The great acculturating influence on the child is schooling, although this shows itself in ultimate attainment rather than initial rate of progress. Because cognitive, attitudinal, social and psychological development is not completed, the child is far more open to new cultural and linguistic influences than the adult. Advanced learners must try to cultivate an openness to new patterns of behaviour. They are often wary of losing face or experimenting. Teachers should try to downplay their high status and be aware of the impact of their own personality. It is in circumstances where the individual feels unthreatened and unchallenged that the affective filter is most likely to be lowered and 'ego permeability' increased. Three elements of learner motivation must be present for success: effort, desires and attitudes. The highest levels of oral proficiency will be achieved by those who develop emotional involvement with the language so that it becomes part of their behaviour.

**94-257 Meara, Paul and others.** The effect of cognates on the applicability of YES/NO vocabulary tests. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto, Canada), **50**, 2 (1994), 296-311.

This paper presents the results of a study investigating the effect of cognates in a L2 vocabulary test. French L1 subjects took two YES/NO vocabulary tests, one containing no English words cognate with French and one containing 50% cognates. The results suggest that, if the proportion of cognates in a test is very high, the learner's

vocabulary size may be slightly overestimated. If the number of cognates is close to the proportion actually occurring in the language, the test remains valid and continues to correlate highly with other measures of language skills. The number of subjects that produced data difficult to interpret (18 out of 107) requires further investigation.

**94-258 Meyer, Bonnie J. F. and others.** Text processing variables predict the readability of everyday documents read by older adults. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **28**, 3 (1993), 235-48.

A model is presented to predict the readability of documents encountered by older adults. The doc-

uments studied are contained in the Educational Testing Service's Test of Basic Skills (1977 edition)



and require readers to answer questions about charts (e.g., bus schedules), labels (e.g., plant spray labels and prescriptions), and forms (e.g., tax forms). The components of the model came from theoretical and empirical work on discourse processing and include such factors as discourse structure, emphasis, and position of an answer in a linguistic analysis of the everyday document.

A sample of 482 adults from 52 to 93 years of age took the everyday problems test as well as a

psychometric ability battery. The correlation was 0.54 ( $p < 0.01$ ) between the readability scores for test items predicted by the model and the percentage of older adults correctly answering those items. In addition, the more difficult test items as identified by the model were correlated more highly with fluid intelligence abilities (figural relations and induction), crystallised intelligence abilities (vocabulary, experiential evaluation), and with memory span.

**94-259 Perdue, Clive** (U. of Paris VIII). Comment rendre compte de la 'logique' de l'acquisition d'une langue étrangère par l'adulte? [How can one account for the 'logic' of adult foreign language acquisition?] *Études de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **92** (1993), 8-22.

This article is based on a study of European immigrant learners of Dutch, English, French, German or Swedish under natural conditions, i.e. without formal teaching. Each learner's language reached one of three stages, labelled StrNom, StrVrb and StrFlé, and based on nouns, unconjugated and conjugated verbs respectively. The author seeks to account for the stages by considering their different capacities for solving communicative problems. The fact that some learners move to higher stages

whilst others do not may be explained by different strategic solutions to communication problems, e.g. compensatory versus avoidance strategies, which in turn relate to differences in motivation. Other important variables include the text types attempted by learners and their different rhetorical demands (e.g. for chronological markers), and differences between languages in whether particular semantic elements are expressed lexically or grammatically (e.g. *descendre* vs. 'go down').

**94-260 Poulisse, Nanda** (U. of Amsterdam) and **Bongaerts, Theo** (U. of Nijmegen). First language use in second language production. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **15**, 1 (1994), 36-57.

This article reports the results of a study undertaken to provide data relevant to the development of a model of bilingual speech production. The data which were used for this purpose are 771 unintentional language switches which occurred in a 35-hour corpus of L2 learner English collected from 45 Dutch learners at three different proficiency levels. The occurrence of the language switches turned out to be related to the learners' proficiency in English. This finding is interpreted as support for a spreading activation account of lexical access in bilingual speakers in which the relative frequency of L1 and L2 words in the learner's repertoire plays an

important role. The authors also examined whether their findings could be accommodated with Myers-Scotton's (1992) matrix language frame model for intrasentential code switching and with de Bot's (1992) suggestions to adapt Levelt's (1989) model of speaking for bilingual speech production. In general, this proved to be the case, but the data suggested it was also possible to draw some more specific conclusions. These concerned the storage of inflected word forms in the (bilingual) mental lexicon, the existence of a lexical checking device, and the relationship between lemma access and phonological encoding.

**94-261 Rees-Miller, Janie** (State U. of New York at Stony Brook). A critical appraisal of learner training: theoretical bases and teaching implications. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **27**, 4 (1993), 679-89.

In recent years, characteristics of the good language learner have been identified and classified. It has been proposed that learning strategies based on these characteristics can be taught to students, and a number of resource materials for learner training are available. However, published data indicate that success in language learning may be more complex

than such an approach would suggest. Attempts to translate the theory behind learner training into practice have produced only qualified success. Among some of the factors complicating implementation of learner training are cultural differences, age, educational background of students, students' and teachers' beliefs about language

learning, and varying cognitive styles. Until empirical data, particularly in the form of longitudinal studies, are gathered to answer questions about the

usefulness of learner training, teachers should approach the implementation of learner training in the classroom with caution.

**94-262 Ricciardelli, Lina A.** (Charles Sturt U., Australia). An investigation of the cognitive development of Italian-English bilinguals and Italian monolinguals from Rome. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* (Clevedon, Avon), **14**, 4 (1993), 345-6.

The cognitive development of Italian-English bilinguals and Italian monolinguals was studied on measures of metalinguistic awareness, creativity, nonverbal abilities, and reading achievement. On

the whole, results were found to be consistent with Cummins' Threshold Hypothesis, in that an overall superiority was found only for those children who had attained a high degree of bilingualism.

**94-263 Sasaki, Miyuki** (Nagoya Gakuin U., Japan). Relationships among second language proficiency, foreign language aptitude, and intelligence: a protocol analysis. *Language Learning* (Madison, Wis), **43**, 4 (1993), 469-505.

This protocol analysis supplements Sasaki's earlier study, which used structural equation modelling to investigate the relationships among measures of second language proficiency (SLP), foreign language aptitude, and two types of intelligence (verbal intelligence and reasoning). In this study, six participants randomly selected from the same subject pool took different types of SLP tests, a foreign language aptitude battery, and an intelligence test. The researcher attempted (a) to test Bachman and Palmer's (1982) hypothesis that a general SLP factor is related to the amount of information processing required for solving a given item, (b) to compare cognitive processes and strategies employed for different types of aptitude/intelligence tests, and (c) to compare the quality and quantity of test-taking processes employed by students with different levels of SLP.

The results provided important information not captured in the previous product-oriented psychometric study. First, Bachman and Palmer's (1982) hypothesis only partly supported the data. The size of the general second language proficiency (SLP) factor effect on test scores did not completely correspond to the amount of information processing required by these tests. Second, the protocol analysis helped to check the validity of the tests. Most of the tests appeared to measure what they were supposed to measure. Lastly, the results revealed differences in information processing between the high and low SLP groups. The high SLP group differed from the low SLP group in assessment, planning, and execution of problem solving processes.

**94-264 Symons, Sonya and Pressley, Michael.** Prior knowledge affects text search success and extraction of information. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **28**, 3 (1993), 251-9.

The impact of prior knowledge on locating information in textbooks was assessed. Undergraduates enrolled in a full-year introductory psychology course searched an introductory psychology textbook not used in their course to locate answers to questions related to fall- or spring-term content. Three groups of students were compared in their search and fall- and spring-relevant material - one in September, one in January, and one in May. Search efficiency varied with the state of prior

knowledge: search for fall- and spring-term contents was more efficient after the fall and spring terms respectively. In particular, once search was narrowed to a specific portion of the text, greater prior knowledge was associated with greater likelihood of recognising the answer when it was encountered. No group differences in search were found in a textbook for which there were no systematic group differences in prior knowledge.

**94–265 Uhry, Joanna K. and Shepherd, Margaret Jo.** Segmentation/spelling instruction as part of a first-grade reading program: effects on several measures of reading. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **28**, 3 (1993), 219–33.

This study was based on evidence from Bradley and Bryant (1983) and Ehri and Wilce (1987) that instruction in isolating sounds in words (segmenting) and representing these sounds with letters (spelling) would have a beneficial effect on beginning reading. Subjects ( $N = 22$ ) in 'whole language' first-grade classrooms were given supplemental training involving two 20-minute periods a week for  $6\frac{1}{2}$  months. Experimental subjects were trained to segment and spell phonetically regular words, while controls were trained to read letters, words, and

text. Both groups used computers for a portion of the training. Trained subjects made significant gains and were better than controls by posttest in measures of reading nonsense words, real words, and oral passages, but not of silent comprehension. They also had an advantage in segmenting and spelling, suggesting a causal relationship between training and reading. Results suggest an advantage in the blending or 'cipher' strategy, in contrast to Ehri and Wilce's findings that trained kindergarten children used a 'phonetic-cue' strategy.

**94–266 Weinert, Regina** (U. of Hull). Some effects of a foreign language classroom on the development of German negation. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **15**, 1 (1994), 76–101.

This paper investigates the development of German negation by 42 Scottish classroom learners aged 10–16. The purpose of the study is to establish whether there are any differences between naturalistic and classroom *course* of development which can be related to the nature of the classroom. In particular, the author is interested in the effects of form-focused practice activities in the first few months of instruction which require learners to produce complex target-language forms which in naturalistic development emerge with frequency only at later stages. The results of her study suggest that learners are able to produce early complex target-like negation through memorisation of complex forms in confined linguistic contexts. Target-like production decreases in linguistically more

open contexts and over time, but there is some indication that a certain number of complex forms are retained and possibly used as a basis for extension of patterns. The results also suggest that the early production of complex forms leads to the first stage of naturalistic development being more or less skipped. A side-effect of formally constrained practice and emphasis on correct target-like production is the learners' reluctance to use communicative negative formulas. Finally, this paper raises a number of questions regarding the relationship between the memorisation of complex forms and language development in classroom SLA on the one hand, and the renewed interest in the role of formulaic language in SLA in general.

## Research methods

**94–267 Matsumoto, Kazuko.** Introspection, verbal reports and second language learning strategy research. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto, Canada), **50**, 2 (1994), 363–86.

This article first discusses two types of verbal-report data (i.e. concurrent and retrospective) and four major introspective methods used in second language (L2) research (i.e. thinking-aloud, questionnaires, interviews, and diary-keeping). It then presents a methodological review of verbal-report L2 research conducted to date from ten perspectives which serve as criteria for classifying and evaluating the introspective L2 studies. It concludes with a discussion of presently controversial issues among researchers over the use of introspection as a research

method for tapping L2 learners' inner cognitive processes, suggesting ways of minimising concerns raised about verbal reports. It is argued that, although verbal reports from informant-learners may be an incomplete reflection of actual internal processing and care is always needed in data collection and interpretation, they nevertheless contain useful information concerning learners' mental processes including their use of learning strategies which will not be satisfactorily accessed through observational studies.

**94-268 Ridgeway, Victoria G.** (Clemson U., SC). A methodological analysis of teaching and learning strategy research at the secondary school level. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **28**, 4 (1993), 335–49.

This article evaluated the 98 secondary reading strategy studies reviewed by Alvermann and Moore (1991) in their chapter in the *Handbook of Reading Research*, Volume II, using the criteria for internal and external validity developed by Lysynchuk *et al.* (1989). Three areas of interest were addressed: experimental design, data collection, and statistical analysis. Strengths of the body of research identified included (a) use of control groups, (b) explicit description of independent variables, and (c) explicit description of dependent variables. Problems iden-

tified included (a) lack of sufficient sample description; (b) lack of information about subject mortality, time on task, and experimental material readability; (c) failure to address specific assumptions underlying statistical procedures; (d) inappropriate units of analyses in statistical tests; (e) inadequate training of subjects; (f) lack of delayed measures; and (g) lack of measures of transfer. Suggestions for improvement of intervention research are offered in the areas of design, data collection, and statistical analysis.

**94-269 Rose, Kenneth R.** (Hong Kong Baptist Coll.). On the validity of discourse completion tests in non-Western contexts. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **15**, 1 (1994), 1–14.

This paper reports the results of two questionnaire studies which primarily address the issue of speech act data collection in non-Western contexts. The first employed a discourse completion test (DCT) and was initiated as a contrastive study of requests in Japanese and American English. The second used a multiple-choice questionnaire (MCQ) as a means of exploring the validity of open-ended questionnaires in non-Western contexts. Based on the results of

both studies, there are reasons to suspect that DCTs may be inappropriate for collecting data on Japanese, but more research is needed to show this conclusively. These studies do make some headway, though, in addressing these two central issues of speech act research, and they help to underscore the fact that more work is needed to both extend the scope of speech act studies and refine the methodologies used in them.

## Error analysis

**94-270 James, Carl and others** (U. of Wales, Bangor). Welsh bilinguals' English spelling: an error analysis. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* (Clevedon, Avon), **14**, 4 (1993), 287–306.

Prioritising communicativity has resulted in increased tolerance toward imperfections in second language users' grammar and pronunciation. Imperfect spelling however can not be disregarded, and it incurs severe social penalties. In this paper the authors ask whether, to what extent, and in what respects the second language English spelling of young Welsh-English bilinguals is systematically idiosyncratic. Data are from free compositions written by 10 to 11-year-old children in bilingual

Gwynedd. Almost 40% of attested misspellings are attributable to Welsh L1 pronunciation and spelling rules. Target language overgeneralisation is also a potent influence on spellings. Special problems surface in the areas of lexical cognates. A model is presented of the second language spelling process in the form of a 'decision tree', with suggestions for its use for descriptive, diagnostic and remedial purposes. Areas wanting further research are identified.

**94-271 Webber, Pauline** (U. of Rome, Italy). Writing medical articles: a discussion on common errors made by L2 authors and some particular features of medical discourse. *UNESCO ALSSED-LSP Newsletter* (Copenhagen, Denmark), **15**, 2 (1993), 38–48.

The purpose of this study was to analyse errors made by non-native writers of medical articles and to see how far they are influenced by writing habits of native speakers who publish in reputed medical

journals. The commonest errors were found in the area of (1) lexis, (2) articles, (3) prepositions and (4) verb tenses – results which concur with the findings of authors in other registers. Although in lexis there



is a high incidence of errors presumably owing to L1 interference, in other areas many of them are not affected by L1 interference at all. On the hypothesis that certain errors may originate in a mistaken imitation of native speakers' publications, a large number of papers published in well-known biomedical journals was studied to see if there were correlations between unusual or deviant uses found

in the publications and the errors made by L2 writers. It was found that choice of lexis and article use were based on conventions within the specific register, whereas other features, such as word order, were used either for text cohesion or as part of the rhetorical devices of scientific discourse for purposes of emphasis and persuasion.

**94-272 Zalewski, Jan P.** (Illinois State U.). Number/person errors in an information-processing perspective: implications for form-focused instruction. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **27**, 4 (1993), 691–703.

Errors in inflectional morphology have usually been called local on the assumption that they do not interfere with comprehension. Such errors have been considered to be the cause of negative emotional reactions rather than comprehension problems. However, the ESL data presented in this paper show that the grammatical categories of number and person can play an important role in establishing cognitive continuity of textual occurrences (i.e. can have discourse-cohesive functions). In such cases, the number/person errors are not local but global, as they do affect text com-

prehension. Such global problems point to the cognitive salience of the number/person inflections in some contexts. Because incomplete acquisition of these inflections can be attributed to their being not salient enough on most occasions to capture the selective attention of adult learners, it is likely that we can facilitate their learning by increasing their occurrence in language input contexts that raise their cognitive salience. Doing this will ensure that the feature is noticed and processed for meaning more often, thereby made easier to learn.

## Testing

**94-273 Dunkel, Patricia** (Pennsylvania State U.) **and others.** The assessment of an L2 listening comprehension construct: a tentative model for test specification and development. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **77**, 2 (1993), 180–91.

When attempting to develop either traditional and/or more innovative types of tests (e.g. computer-adaptive tests) of L2 listening comprehension, the developers must first examine the nature of a listening comprehension construct and identify the critical aspects of listening comprehension assessment that need to be addressed. In this article, these

various aspects are proposed in a tentative framework/model which specifies the person, competence, text, and item domains and components of assessment. The specifications focus on identification of the factors that relate to the purpose, object, and agent of assessment.

**94-274 Elder, Catherine** (U. of Melbourne). How do subject specialists construe classroom language proficiency? *Language Testing* (London), **10**, 3 (1993), 235–54.

Recent research on rater variation raises the question of whether 'linguistically naive' subject specialists may be better equipped than language experts to judge the effectiveness of particular areas of non-native speaker communication. This question is investigated with reference to a classroom-based observation schedule which was developed to assess the English language proficiency of non-native speaker graduates training as secondary mathematics and science teachers. The article examines aspects of rater behaviour as evidenced in recent trials.

The schedule was applied to observations of actual performance in the maths and science

classroom as well as to the viewing of a number of videoed segments of classroom interaction. Ratings were elicited from two groups of assessors: nine ESL teachers and eight subject specialists (maths/science teachers/teacher trainers). Findings reveal significant correlations between subject specialists' and language teachers' overall judgements of communicative effectiveness, but differences between the two groups with respect to their ratings of particular dimensions of language use and to the weighing of these dimensions in relation to global proficiency assessments.

**94-275 Freedle, Roy and Kostin, Irene** (Educational Testing Service). The prediction of TOEFL reading item difficulty: implications for construct validity. *Language Testing* (London), **10**, 2 (1993), 133–70.

The purpose of this study is to predict the difficulty of a large sample ( $n = 213$ ) of TOEFL reading comprehension items. A related purpose was to examine whether text and text-by-item interaction variables play a significant role in predicting item difficulty. It was argued that evidence favouring the construct validity of multiple-choice reading test formats requires significant contributions from these particular predictor variables. Details of item predictability and construct validity were explored by evaluating two hypotheses: (1) that multiple-choice reading comprehension tests are sensitive to 12 categories of sentential and/or discourse variables

found to influence comprehension processes in the experimental literature; and (2) that many of these categories of variables identified in the first hypothesis contribute significant independent variance in predicting item difficulty. For the first hypothesis, correlational analyses confirmed the importance of 11 out of the 12 categories, while stepwise regression analyses, accounting for up to 58% of the variance, provided some support for the second hypothesis. The pattern of predictors showed that text and text-by-item variables accounted for most of the variance, thereby providing evidence favouring the construct validity of the TOEFL reading items.

**94-276 Langouet, Gabriel** (U. of Paris V, CNRS). Les fonctions de l'évaluation. [Functions of assessment.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), special number, Aug/Sept (1993), 19–27.

Assessment has been a part of education for many years, but it is only recently that it has become an object of study itself, in line with the development of new educational technologies. There has often been confusion as to exactly what is being assessed and in this article the author seeks to clarify some aspects of the situation.

Some indication is given as to what types of assessment are suitable in given circumstances –

whether one is evaluating the progress or the proficiency of the pupil, the efficiency of the teacher, or, indeed, that of the system. It is important to have the aims of various aspects of the pedagogy clearly in mind in order to select the most suitable assessment techniques. Subjectivity and objectivity are discussed, with particular reference to studies showing that people marking assignments can vary very widely in their assessments.

**94-277 Page, Brian**. The target language and examinations. *Language Learning Journal* (Rugby), **8** (1993), 6–7.

The move towards a communicative approach in foreign language teaching has revived in a more acute form the old controversy about how much the foreign language should be used in the classroom, and now the National Curriculum puts the weight of government policy behind the principle that it should be the normal method of communication there. The principle is also increasingly extended to examining, requiring the questions and answers, and also probably the instructions, to be in the foreign language. This raises a number of old and new problems. If the instructions are in the foreign language, how does the tester know whether a defective performance arises from misunderstanding the instructions or failing to do the task? Today's rubrics often amount to scenarios for the tasks, are often detailed and no longer predictable from year to year. If such instructions are in the target language, examiners cannot assume candidates will understand them correctly. Next, if answers are

required in the foreign language, either the quality of the language has to be taken into account or it does not. If the former, the validity of the test is imperilled as the result depends in part on language production rather than comprehension. If the latter, the production of sub-standard language is encouraged. Authenticity of task is a requirement for GCSE, but if comprehension questions are in German to be answered in German, this is not simulating any activity candidates could meet in the everyday world. The authenticity of listening comprehension tasks can be made dubious in the same way. Using the foreign language for questions, answers and instructions would not only reduce the available range of tasks, but also make it difficult to sample the syllabus adequately. The paradox is that the more communicative and authentic the tasks in examinations become, the more English has to be used on the examination paper to safeguard both the validity of the test and the authenticity of the task.

**94-278 Short, Deborah J.** (Center for Applied Linguistics). Assessing integrated language and content instruction. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **27**, 4 (1993), 627-56.

Integrated language and content instruction has become a popular alternative to traditional ESL instruction. Researchers have recommended this instructional approach to develop students' academic language ability and facilitate their transition to mainstream classes. Practitioners have also favoured this approach for several reasons: to prepare students for mainstream classes, increase student motivation and interest with content themes, and make ESL students feel part of the mainstream school curricula. Over the past 10 years, much progress has been made in developing, implementing, and refining strategies and techniques that effectively integrate language and content instruction. However, the

issue of assessment is still being resolved. Neither traditional language tests nor content achievement tests are adequate. The difficulty with assessment centres on isolating the language features from the content objectives so one does not adversely influence the other. This article addresses the issue of assessment in integrated classes and provides a framework for organizing assessment objectives. It recommends using alternative assessment measures, such as checklists, portfolios, interviews, and performance-based tasks. Examples of the framework being implemented in elementary and secondary school integrated language and content classes are also included.

## Curriculum planning

**94-279 Carter, Ronald** (U. of Nottingham). Proper English: language, culture and curriculum. *English in Education* (Sheffield), **27**, 3 (1993), 3-14.

The aim of this inaugural lecture is to show the close connection between language and culture and their relationship to the teaching of modern English in the curriculum. It is argued that language simultaneously reflects and encodes social and cultural patterns and is thus subject to constant change; that since the curriculum reflects the language of the dominant culture, there is a close association of language, culture and the curriculum, and that language use cannot be seen independently from the power of those who use it or control its use. Notions such as 'proper English' and 'standard English' are explored.

Finally, the author's ideal curriculum for the study of modern English language is put forward, based on four main principles: the language must be rooted in texts and contexts, with social and political concerns to the fore; study must be principled and systematic, with the comparative study of spoken and written varieties; the history of the language should be studied, and the study of literature should be a central feature, with a wide variety of texts, not only literary texts in the accepted sense.

**94-280 Flowerdew, John** (City Poly., Hong Kong). Content-based language instruction in a tertiary setting. *English for Specific Purposes* (New York), **12**, 2 (1993), 121-39.

This paper reports on an approach to the development of a large-scale content-based language instruction curriculum in an English medium, tertiary setting. It describes (a) the antecedents and theoretical basis for content-based language instruction, (b) how this relates to the background and rationale for the project under review, (c) the original curriculum framework for the project, and (d) the revised framework developed in the light of experience. Although certain prerequisites are necessary for the adoption in other contexts of a content-based approach such as the one reported, the main strength of the project is emphasised as its ability to reduce tension between learners, content-teachers, and language teachers, as illustrated by

specific features of the programme. This paper reports on a large scale experimental content-based language curriculum which has been developed over the last decade at Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman. Although there is considerable literature based on various aspects of this programme, there is no single paper which provides an overview of the project. This paper sets out to describe the rationale, planning, implementation, evaluation, and revisions for the project as a whole. The paper is presented as a case study of how content-based language instruction can be applied in a situation where a more traditional ESP-type programme would normally be employed.

**94-281 Martin, Cynthia** (U. of Reading) **and Mitchell, Rosamond** (U. of Southampton). Foreign language assistants in the primary school. *Language Learning Journal* (Rugby), **8** (1993), 6-7.

Although the National Curriculum at present excludes modern languages from the primary foundation curriculum, their place in the early years of schooling has become the focus of renewed debate, and the National Association of Head Teachers recommends progress towards the introduction of FL learning before the age of 11. Primary FL initiatives have been running in Scotland and, on a smaller scale, in England. The Basingstoke Primary Schools Language Awareness Initiative, unusual in that it has received substantial commercial funding, uses foreign language assistants (FLAs) to bring a foreign language element into the primary curriculum. Four FLAs, two from France, and one each from Austria and Spain, worked in six primary schools, all feeders to a single secondary school where all three of the languages were on offer. It is not the intention to 'teach' a modern language, but rather to foster general language learning skills and positive attitudes transferable to systematic FL learning at secondary level. Each primary school has had autonomy over use of FLA time, resulting in variety of practice, but it proved possible for FLAs to offer primary pupils a wide variety of activities,

including role play and cooking sessions. The FLAs require substantial support in planning and devising linked activities with simple language demands, and can perform most effectively if work can be planned in collaboration with an FL and a primary specialist. Not all FLAs will have prior experience with younger children, and host schools must be very realistic in their expectations. Special induction programmes are required in addition to general schemes organised by Local Education Authorities. FLAs should first be given the chance to observe skilled primary teachers talking to their pupils, and should preferably also observe the classes with which they will be working. Issues of variety, continuity and progression can be tackled by the FLAs working to a common overall plan, and record-keeping is particularly important because of the annual recruitment of most FLAs. Dual experience of both primary and secondary work under a shared arrangement might increase job satisfaction for FLAs. Basingstoke teachers reported that pupils enjoyed the FLAs company, found sessions fun and were uninhibited when imitating.

## Teacher training

**94-282 Bourdages, Johanne S. and Champagne-Muzar, Cécile** (U. of Ottawa). La formation des enseignants en phonétique. [Training teachers in phonetics.] *Bulletin of the CAAL* (Montreal, Canada), **15**, 2 (1993), 51-62.

This paper deals with the necessity of integrating a phonetics component in second-language teacher training, and presents an overview of such training. It is possible that phonetics will never be included in a syllabus, as teachers are not initiated in it during the course of their training. A teacher training

course in phonetics should include basic knowledge in phonetics and phonology, knowledge of the development of phonetic skills, as well as knowledge of the methodology and resources for teaching phonetics.

**94-283 Bryrnes, Fran** (AMES, NSW, Australia). Resistance to change in teacher training courses. *Teacher Trainer* (Canterbury), **6**, 1 (1992), 4-6.

The nature of resistance in learning situations is discussed, in particular, the resistance of the teacher who is in the role of learner. Attention is focused on resistance to change, as opposed to learner non-cooperation or non-involvement resulting from physical or psychological discomfort.

Teacher learners, competent and confident resisters of change, can react to the subject matter, the organisation of learning, the learning method and/or the trainer. The ways in which this resistance manifests itself are discussed and are seen as a way

for both trainers and trainees to measure the degree of significance of the issues or ideas being presented.

Resistance can be a positive force to be utilised in training provided the trainer works with it in a positive, effective way. Suggestions are given for trainers to listen openly, to guide learners to understand their own reactions, to give the floor to participant presentations, to negotiate courses, and to lower their own personal investment in session input.



**94-284 Cooper, Richard.** Video, fear and loathing: self-viewing in teacher training. *Teacher Trainer* (Canterbury), **7**, 3 (1993), 8–13.

Videotaping teachers in training can be detrimental to confidence if done thoughtlessly or inexpertly. Discomfort on viewing oneself arises from trainees not being used to seeing themselves on TV, and being used to highly edited, professional TV

programmes. A number of activities are suggested that help trainees to get to know the video camera and screen and their video-selves step-by-step, thus lessening the shock of being filmed and the pain of being shown.

**94-285 Courchêne, Robert** (U. of Ottawa). Teacher-training at the Canada/China Language Centre: description and reflections. *Bulletin of the CAAL* (Montreal, Canada), **15**, 2 (1993), 63–83.

In setting up new programmes in cross-cultural settings, the training of teachers from both the host and donor country is frequently given little importance. In this article, the author describes a teacher-training programme enabling Chinese and Canadian teachers at the Canada/China Language Centre to implement a new curriculum with a predominantly Canadian content. Problems related

to the implementation of a team-teaching experiment along with difficulties experienced by the Chinese teachers in trying to teach and interpret culture are documented. The author concludes the article with a series of reflections on the role of culture in language teaching and teacher preparation.

**94-286 Jones, N. and Phillips, L.** Transacting TEFL. *Teacher Trainer* (Canterbury), **7**, 2 (1993), 18–22.

Transactional analysis (TA) is a theory of personality and of communication devised by Eric Berne. This article explains the basis of TA which is the concept of the parent, adult and child ego-states. The ego-states and their sub-states are related to the jobs of teaching and teacher-training. They are all seen as necessary in different situations.

The possible interactions or 'transactions' between two or more people in similar or different

ego-states are discussed and three types (complementary, crossed and ulterior) are outlined and exemplified within an EFL context. This leads to a discussion of predictable transactions, or games, that teachers and students tend to play. The games have nicknames such as 'Stupid' and 'Yes, but'. The article offers TA as a framework for identifying and solving professional problems in educational settings.

**94-287 Moore-Flossie, Ann and Glynn, Lourdes.** Explanations and explaining. *Teacher Trainer* (Canterbury), **6**, 3 (1992), 8–11.

Little literature can be found on the preparation of language teachers as explainers. This article, an edited version of two papers submitted as part of a teachers' distance learning diploma course, collates points useful for an initial discussion of the topic of explanation.

The following questions are discussed: What is explanation? Who explains? What is explained? When does the explanation come? How far do we

explain? How often do we explain? What is a good/bad explanation? How do we explain? A teacher needs to utilise a great variety of explaining techniques in order to reach every learner in a group and in order to bring learners to the point where they can explain to themselves. [A table setting out learning styles, their characteristics and the implications of these for explaining.]

**94-288 Woodward, Tessa** (Hilderstone Coll.). Training for medical general practice: assessment techniques and what we can borrow for EFL teacher training. *Teacher Trainer* (Canterbury), **7**, 1 (1993), 10–13.

In training for medical general practice in England, assessment and teaching go hand-in-hand. Many assessment/teaching procedures are used continuously and simultaneously and are applied to one

trainee. A selection of procedures such as 'mapping' and 'rating', attitude statements, audit of work, multiple essay questions, sitting-in and feeding back, prepared tutorials, the viva and critical reading



passages are explained in the article. After each explanation there is a comment discussing how the procedure could be adapted for EFL teacher training contexts. All the procedures throw up interesting and often neglected areas in EFL teacher training. Examples are: language student-centredness, pot-

ential resentments in teachers, criticism of EFL publications.

A plea is made for trainers in different fields such as management, drama, counselling and law, to share information on the techniques they use in all areas that are crucial to training.

## Teaching methods

**94–289 Atkinson, David** (U. of Sunderland). Teaching in the target language: a problem in the current orthodoxy. *Language Learning Journal* (Rugby), **8** (1993), 2–5.

There are good reasons for questioning the widely held assumption that teachers and learners should always use the target language in the classroom. It is important to create opportunities for ‘sub-conscious’ acquisition ‘by osmosis’, and the more the target language is used as the medium of instruction, the more such opportunities can arise, but this can be taken too far, as it has been by Krashen. There are theoretical and empirical weaknesses in a radical ‘acquisition over learning’ position. Another debatable assumption is that use of the mother tongue undermines promotion of authenticity in the classroom. Whether or not this is so, care must be taken that over-emphasis on the authentic does not drive out the use of certain perfectly valid pedagogical techniques, as well as appropriate scripted materials

and other ‘unrealistic’ elements of classroom methodology. Teacher trainers who do not teach, and thus have no current practice of their own to rely on, should be highly circumspect about adopting extreme, dogmatic positions on any aspect of methodology. There are both sociocultural and methodological arguments against the 100% direct method. Banning the mother tongue from the classroom can lead to alienation of learners, depriving them of their cultural identity. Some activities are relatively easy to conduct in the target language, whereas others are virtually impossible, and serious consideration must be given to when use of the mother tongue might be justifiable on methodological grounds.

**94–290 Baur, Rupprecht S. and others** (U. of Essen, Germany). Zur Ausbildung einer fachsprachlichen Handlungsfähigkeit bei Schülerinnen und Schülern mit der Herkunftssprache Russisch [Towards the development of competence with subject-specific text among schoolchildren with Russian as their first language.] *ZFF: Zeitschrift für Fremdsprachenforschung* (Bochum, Germany), **4**, 2 (1993), 4–38.

The project Essen Integration Model is to do with the cultural assimilation and linguistic integration of emigrants from the former Soviet Union. Most of the children and juveniles of Russian-speaking origin possess very little or no knowledge of German when they arrive in the Federal Republic. These pupils who are used to German as a Foreign Language course face increasing language difficulties when they join regular school classes already in progress. At this stage, it is no longer the language but knowledge of the subject matter which is the main focus of learning. However, at the same time, capability in technical language is relevant especially when the subject matter of the teaching is imparted through technical texts.

The comprehension of school subject-specific texts can be assessed more reliably when the pupils are given the chance to reflect on the texts in German as well as in their native language. As the next stage, the authors are anxious to know which comprehension strategy can best resolve the pupils’ difficulties in understanding. Here also the recourse to Russian makes sense, especially if there is as yet not enough cognitive basis in German to mould the learning process in one language. Apart from the school learning situation, the fostering of bilingualism should also be of educational and socio-political concern.

**94-291 Beacco, Jean-Claude** (U. of Maine). Cultures grammaticales et demande metalinguistique. [Cultural constraints and pressures in the area of grammar and metalanguage.] *Études de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **92** (1993), 51–64.

Decisions about teaching methods need to take account of research in three areas: descriptions of target language, learners' interlanguage, and the social-political contexts of the classroom. Methods such as Krashen's, without explicit grammar teaching, are consumer-oriented and attractive and time-saving in some contexts, but more traditional 'philological' approaches can and should survive in many educational institutions. There is also often a learner demand for 'grammar' explanation, to which teachers, even if not totally convinced of its value, may find it expedient to yield, at least in part.

Interlanguage research shows that we cannot be

sure of the effects of our grammar teaching, but does not show that it has no effect: the aim should be to guide and enrich the personal set of metalinguistic ideas which each foreign language learner unavoidably forms. To do this well, we must be aware of inter-cultural differences and metalinguistic terms which are not complete synonyms (*word/mot/parola; discourse/discours/discorso*). Even contrastive analysis, though unfashionable among academics, seems to work in enabling teachers to predict errors. [Examples for French and Italian.]

**94-292 Borrell, A.** (U. of Toulouse II). Relation entre les aspects articulatoires et les aspects acoustiques en phonétique: quels outils utiliser en didactique des langues? [The relationship between articulatory and acoustic aspects in phonetics: what tools should be used in language teaching?] *Revue de Phonetique Appliquée* (Mons, Belgium), **107** (1993), 97–111.

When a teacher is interested in phonetics aspects, he consults what has been published on articulatory phonetics. We know very well, especially the verbotonalists, that if a learner produces the sound of a foreign and/or second language badly it is because he perceived it badly and not because of any articulatory inability. It is important, therefore, to react in acoustic and perceptive terms but not in

articulatory terms, so as to make an accurate diagnosis of the errors as well as correcting them.

On the other hand, the relationship between the acoustic data and articulatory data has been known for a long time. This knowledge enables the teacher to have a synthetic view, which clarifies the problem. That is what the author emphasises here, by calling for better training of language teachers.

**94-293 De Vriendt, M.-J.** (U. de Mons-Hainaut). Initiation précoce à une langue étrangère? Un jeu d'enfant? ... Peut-être, mais... [Early initiation into a foreign language? Child's play? Maybe, but...] *Revue de Phonetique Appliquée* (Mons, Belgium), **107** (1993), 113–24.

Although teachers who initiate young children (from 3 to 8 years old) into a foreign language are different from one another as far as their training is concerned, they are similar as far as their discourses are concerned: school practice should be pupil-centred, it should be organised like a game, interactions should be conducted in oral language. Nevertheless through their demands, they express how insecure they feel about the supports, about the

ways to provoke oral performances and to evaluate objectives.

Nowadays those teachers need to be proficient in (about) the foreign language by self tuition. Moreover they need to become skilful and critical observers of their own behaviour. Finally, they should collaborate with partners defending other perhaps contradictory interests.

**94-294 Evans, Michael** (U. of Cambridge). Flexible learning and modern language teaching. *Language Learning Journal* (Rugby), **8** (1993), 17–21.

In recent years there have been changes in the perception of the aims of foreign language teaching, away from language learning *per se*, and towards giving pupils language learning tools that will enable them to continue language learning

according to their needs. This is best achieved by independent learning, but the implementation of this approach in the methodology has been slow to come.

The first part discusses the rationale behind

independent learning, which devolves responsibility for learning from the teacher to the pupil. Motivation of both students and teachers and the role of the LEA are studied. The second section consists of a description of a flexible learning programme in a GCSE French class, with a detailed look at resources

used (including many outside the classroom) and the new role of the teacher. The programme greatly improved the motivation of the pupils, of whom 80% preferred it to the traditional teaching methods they had had before. Teachers' own enjoyment was also enhanced.

**94-295 Krashen, Stephen D.** (U. of Southern California). The case for free voluntary reading. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **50**, 1 (1993), 72-82.

This is a review of evidence showing that free voluntary reading (FVR) benefits language acquisition and literacy development more than formal instruction does. It is argued that FVR can be a bridge between the initial knowledge of a language and advanced knowledge, and that 'light reading' can lead to an appreciation of literature. There is

discussion of: the extent to which reading inside and outside school helps literacy and language acquisition; aspects of the 'output hypothesis'; FVR as a source of ideas and information; the benefits of being absorbed in enjoyable activities; the effects of FVR on life success and verbal memory.

**94-296 Maiguascha, Raffaella Uslenghi** (York U., Canada). Teaching and learning vocabulary in a second language: past, present and future directions. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **50**, 1 (1993), 83-100.

Vocabulary teaching in the past was very much the poor relation of language teaching. In recent years, however, there has been growing awareness of the importance of vocabulary and evidence of its enhanced status, at least where ESL is concerned, is to be found in the new dictionaries, course materials, research findings and bibliographies which have been published in the 1980s and early 1990s.

Still lacking, however, is a frame of reference for the teaching of vocabulary, comparable to that which exists for the teaching of grammar. The next task should be to discover the regularities and patterns of the lexicon and the rules which govern the systematicity of lexical knowledge in order to construct a comprehensive model of lexical competence.

**94-297 Mar-Molinero, Clare** (U. of Southampton). Modern languages open learning in higher education. *Language Learning Journal* (Rugby), **8** (1993), 44-6.

Faced with increasing numbers of students and limited space and time in which to teach them, the author aimed to devise a programme that would shift the focus of her course from a weekly class to more pro-active language learning activities in the Open Learning Resource Centre. With so little class time the students had to take more responsibility for their own learning. The culmination of their work was to be a videoed debate on a specific topic, but more important was the preparation they had to do using new materials in the Resource Centre. The whole project was studied and evaluated by a classroom researcher.

As a result of the project, a more positive attitude and heightened autonomy were created among the students; they learned to work collaboratively, demanded more materials, and some transferred their activities to other languages. However, the inability of some students to understand the objectives of the approach and to evaluate their own success needs to be addressed. Although the teacher did not fully achieve her objectives, she was encouraged by the results of the project to develop the programme further.

**94-298 Meara, Paul** (University Coll., Swansea). What do students do on a language course? *Language Learning Journal* (Rugby), **8** (1993), 26-31.

Selected aspects are discussed of a 1986 questionnaire study, within the Nuffield Modern Languages Inquiry, of how 586 British undergraduate students of modern language spent their working week. The

general impression was of traditional methods, not very different from the author's own experience at Cambridge in the '60s: over half the students reported one or no lectures in the foreign language,



there was little use of language laboratories and computers and limited oral work, but 76% spent two hours or more per week on translation, and only 4% did no translation at all. As for private study, a typical student spent only about two hours per week reading in the foreign language, and another two hours writing it, but there was great variation, with some claiming to do no reading or

writing at all, in any language, and others spending over ten hours on each. The activity which students found most enjoyable and useful was speaking with the foreign assistants; ironically, this is the element most under threat from budget cuts, and the author warns against replacing assistants with cheaper computers.

**94-299 Nobuyoshi, Junko** (Kanda Inst. of Foreign Languages, Tokyo) **and Ellis, Rod** (Temple U., Japan). Focused communication tasks and second language acquisition. *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **47**, 3 (1993), 203–10.

This report on a small-scale study provides evidence that 'pushing' learners to produce more accurate output does contribute to acquisition (as per the 'comprehensible output' hypothesis). It also shows how this can be achieved by the use of focused communication tasks and considers the place of such tasks in language pedagogy.

Communication tasks are discussed and the extent to which they can be focused to produce a particular linguistic feature naturally, by methodology (i.e. by the way in which they are conducted) rather than

by design. The study found that in tasks designed to practise the past tense, an apparent request for clarification of meaning led to the learner producing an accurate form of the past tense. However, some learners are impervious to this sort of treatment, which may derive from their being functionally, rather than structurally, orientated. This raises the question of the extent to which the teacher allows communicative competence to dominate grammatical accuracy.

**94-300 Rumley, Glynis** (Kent LEA) **and Sharpe, Keith** (Christ Church Coll., Canterbury). Generalisable game activities in modern language learning. *Language Learning Journal* (Rugby), **8** (1993), 35–8.

The 25 games described here are context-free and can thus be used to practise a variety of language points. Besides encouraging interest and motivation, real communication and plenty of repetition, these 'all-purpose' activities have formats which are, or will become, familiar, so avoiding lengthy in-

structions. All activities are non-language-specific and can be adapted to serve different language-teaching purposes. Each activity is described under the headings 'aim', 'materials' and 'method', with illustrations where necessary.

**94-301 Sénéchal, Monique** (Carleton U., Canada). Vocabulary acquisition through shared reading experiences. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **28**, 4 (1993), 361–74.

This study was designed to assess whether preschool children learn new vocabulary from a single reading of a storybook and whether certain conversational devices used by parents during joint book reading facilitate vocabulary growth. Some 80 four- and 80 five-year-old children listened to a story. The narrative was constructed to introduce 10 target words not typically known to young children. Children were pretested for their knowledge of the vocabulary words, were posttested immediately after the reading, and were posttested again one week later. Dependent measures included tests of

expressive and receptive vocabulary. The two age groups were able to recognise approximately the same number of words on the immediate posttest. After one week, however, five-year-old children remembered more words than four-year-old children. Although receptive vocabulary learning was robust, there was no evidence of differential learning of vocabulary under different conditions, including active participation. A single reading of the storybook was not sufficient to enhance children's expressive vocabulary.

**94-302 Singh, R. K. and De Sarkar, Mitali** (Indian Sch. of Mines, Dhanbad). Writing subject-specific composition: a report on peer-interactional feedback. *UNESCO ALSED-LSP Newsletter* (Copenhagen, Denmark), **15**, 2 (1993), 19–37.

To meet the EST communication needs of various professions, the B.Tech. students of the Indian School of Mines are exposed to a process of reading → analysing → writing → feedback → rewriting approach in their writing course. The report is based on their response to items in the Questionnaire-Cum-Checklist, introduced as part of interactional feedback to improve their written performance. The statistical analysis of the data reveals that more than 80% of students become aware of the 'what' and 'how' of academic writing, showing distinct improvement in the final draft.

The Interactional Process Approach to academic communication in writing at tertiary level is aimed at making students aware not only of the basic

elements of composition but also to sensitise them to a three-stage process (of planning, writing, and rewriting) which can trigger their best written responses. The process entails assigning a discipline-specific topic for writing an essay, which is exchanged among classmates with a questionnaire-cum-checklist (QCC) for comments. After recording their response to the feedback sheet, students hand in both the draft essay and QCC along with their observations for re-distribution to the authors who re-write their essays, considering the peer-comments. The approach, besides integrating writing and reading for writing, lays stress on academic skills, style, and form of technical writing and inbuilt evaluation.

**94-303 Trevisse, Anne** (U. of Paris X – Nanterre). Acquisition/apprentissage/enseignement d'une langue 2: modes d'observation, modes d'intervention. [Acquisition/learning/teaching of a second language: modes of observation and intervention.] *Études de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **92** (1993), 38–50.

The main question addressed is whether 'natural' non-guided language acquisition has anything to tell us about what is desirable in 'institutional', guided learning. There is, however, no simple dichotomy between the two kinds, but rather a continuum, whose (rare) extremes would be: totally unguided acquisition, without help or feedback, to meet pressing real-life needs; and highly controlled learning, with selected and programmed input and no 'natural' contact with the target language. Natural learning is by no means ideal, as language often fossilises in a highly ungrammatical state.

Nevertheless, it is far from proven that explicit grammar teaching directly feeds into learners' production.

An approach is advocated here which brings together the structural and communicative approaches, and which teaches three kinds of knowledge: about the linguistic system, about the world, about the activity of language production. Grammar teaching has a role here, not because it has been proved to work, but because it raises learners' awareness and leads them on to further, self-directed learning.

**94-304 Wlomainck, P.** (U. de Mons – Hainaut). Entraînement de la conscience phonologique en vue de l'acquisition de la lecture chez les malvoyants. [Training in phonological awareness to help visually handicapped children learn to read.] *Revue de Phonetique Appliquée* (Mons, Belgium), **107** (1993), 179–90.

Visually handicapped children can practically equal the performances of normal children both in reading and in writing as long as they are provided with appropriate material and programmes. For this research, two programmes were prepared, one for visual stimulation and the other to set up the necessary pre-requisites for learning to read: these

latter concern in particular aural stimulations to develop phonological awareness. These programmes were used with seven visually-handicapped children aged 5, 6 and 10 years old. The results encourage the recommendations to use such programmes in infant schools.