Teaching particular languages

English

94–445 Cumming, Alister. Teachers' curriculum planning and accommodations of innovation: three case studies of adult ESL instruction. *TESL Canada Journal* (Montreal), **11,** 1 (1993), 30–52.

How do experienced ESL instructors plan and organise their teaching practices to make curriculum innovations? The present research sought answers to this question in three different educational contexts, attempting to document the curriculum concepts, pedagogical knowledge, and processes of instructional planning that eight teachers used to create novel courses for adult ESL learners. Findings describe (1) four modes of planning and twelve cycles of information-gathering in the ESL curriculum planning of one teacher, (2) verification of this framework among four additional teachers, as well as (3) an additional framework for documenting teachers' orientations to curriculum content in second language writing instruction, accounting for three teachers' processes of accommodating an instructional innovation into their usual teaching practices.

94–446 Kam-yin Wu (Chinese U. of Hong Kong). Classroom interaction and teacher questions revisited. *RELC Journal* (Singapore), **24,** 2 (1993), 49–68.

This study aims to investigate the relationships among four variables in the ESL classroom in Hong Kong: (1) question types, (2) questioning strategies, (3) student attitudes, and (4) patterns of interaction.

The questions of four ESL teachers in Hong Kong were analysed. The findings indicate that the overwhelming number of responses generated by these questions are restricted rather than elaborate, irrespective of the type of question that elicited them. In addition, referential and open questions are less effective than display and closed questions in eliciting responses from students.

This study suggests that in Hong Kong, ESL students prefer to be modest rather than to show off by giving lengthy responses to teacher questions. In this situation, the use of appropriate questioning strategies, e.g. probing, deserves special attention if teachers want their students to produce longer and syntactically more complex answers.

94–447 Nesi, Hilary (U. of Warwick) **and Meara, Paul** (University Coll. Swansea). Patterns of misinterpretation in the productive use of EFL dictionary definitions. *System* (Oxford), **22,** 1 (1994), 1–15.

This paper describes some of the errors produced by non-native speakers of English when they are asked to use dictionaries to help them write sentences containing unfamiliar words. The data have a close resemblance to similar data collected from L1 speakers by Miller and Gildea, and strongly suggest that many adult language learners systematically misinterpret dictionary entries.

94–448 Nünning, Ansgar. Das Image der (häßlichen?) Deutschen. Möglichkeiten der Umsetzung der komparatistischen Imagologie in einer landeskundlichen Unterrichtsreihe für den Englischunterricht. [The image of the (odious?) German people. Ways of using comparative imagology in secondary schools in the teaching of English.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, Germany), **93,** 2 (1994), 160–84.

The article tries to show how the insights of comparative imagology can be profitably applied in a course for the upper grades of secondary school that deals with English images of the Germans. In order to facilitate the teacher's preparation, the article provides a theoretical outline of the goals of such a course as well as a selection of suitable texts, and makes methodological and didactic suggestions for dealing with the texts in class.

94–449 Oxford, Rebecca L. Progress in tertiary content-based ESL instruction. *TESL Canada Journal* (Montreal), **11,** 1 (1993), 75–97.

Content-based ESL aims to develop communicative competence in the target language along with content knowledge in a specific subject area, such as mathematics. Many forms of CB-ESL are discussed here. English for specific purposes (including but not limited to English for academic purposes) is a very well known type. Other versions – some popular and others less well known – are theme-based, task-based, adjunct, and sheltered CB-ESL. This article analyses tertiary (post-secondary) students' language needs; indicates how CB-ESL treats those needs; highlights key CB-ESL issues in math, social studies, and sciences; and offers implications for instruction and research.

French

94–450 Amor, Séoud (ENS, Sousse, Tunisia). Document authentique ou texte littéraire en classe de français. [Authentic materials or literary text in the French class.] *Etudes de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **93** (1994), 8–24.

Though cast aside since the 1960s as an integral part of a language course, the literary text is now being rediscovered. Authentic texts, written as they are for specific contexts, are effectively de-contextualised, and so de-authenticated, by being brought into the classroom, often having no relevance to the culture in which the class takes place. Literature, on the other hand, is for all time and all circumstances and therefore has much wider appeal.

Two experiments are described, both using texts on the theme of love, one an advertisement and the other a poem. The results are compared and contrasted. The poem is shown to be a rich source for language work and to affect students more at a personal level.

94–451 Baltova, Iva. The impact of video on the comprehension skills of core French students. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **50,** 3 (1994), 507–31.

This paper describes an experimental study of video as a tool for the teaching of a second language. The study explores the importance of visual cues in the process of listening to French as a second language. Grade 8 core French students were exposed to a French story under different conditions: video-with-sound, video-without-sound and sound-without-video and their comprehension with video was compared to that with audio. Results indicated that visual cues were informative and enhance comprehension in general, but did not necessarily stimulate the understanding of text proper. It was also found that teaching with video had some affective and attentional advantages.

94–452 Borrás, Isabel and Lafayette, Robert C. (Louisiana State U.). Effects of multimedia courseware subtitling on the speaking performance of college students of French. *Modern Language Review* (Madison, Wis), **78,** 1 (1994), 61–75.

Some 44 university students of French at upper intermediate level were shown a French video and given a related description or narration task to perform, and their level of oral communicative performance was assessed. The subjects were divided into four groups to measure the effect of two variables – they saw the video either with or without French subtitles, and completed either a lower-level task (simple description) or a higher-level task (requiring more detail, inference and judgement). Subjects worked at their own pace in viewing the video and preparing their own taped 'sample' for assessment.

Statistical analysis of results showed that subtitling had a strong positive effect on learner performance, whereas level of task had no significant effect. One reason for this seems to be that learners with access to subtitles spend longer on the activity as a whole (viewing plus task), though they actually spend less time on the first viewing. There are strong arguments for giving learners access to subtitling, as an option under their own control, in video-based self-access study.

94–453 Delas, Daniel (U. of Paris X-Nanterre). De la litterature à la culture ou à l'inverse? Le fait francophone. [From literature to culture or vice versa? Using literature from francophone countries. *Etudes de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **93** (1994), 90–9.

Many children in French schools come from immigrant families and traditional French culture is alien to them, as it is to many present-day native-born French children. The high culture of the school is far removed from the culture of ordinary everyday life. Literary texts should be studied for themselves in the first instance (not as supposed models for literary style nor for their place in the history of literature), with the reader subsequently proceeding to an examination of aspects of culture and cultural identity. Works by francophone authors are particularly appropriate since of their nature they relate to a dual culture. [A poem by a Caribbean poet is used to illustrate the approach.]

94–454 Denbow, Signe (Western Michigan U.). Teaching French to singers: issues and objectives. *French Review* (Baltimore), **67,** 3 (1994), 425–31.

The standard beginners' French course with its emphasis on speaking and understanding modern colloquial French is unsuited to singers. University courses which aim to provide a reading knowledge of French are also inappropriate as the language they offer is usually specialised and technical.

Singers need to be able to sing French songs with the correct diction and to have sufficient comprehension of written lyrics to be able to interpret them artistically. They should also acquire some understanding of French culture. A course has been devised which also includes study of the International Phonetic Alphabet, fundamentals of French grammar sufficient to read and understand the songs, and the common poetic vocabulary found in song and opera lyrics. The course is based on the songs of Gabriel Fauré and students also do an indepth study on a song of their choice. The instructor should speak French, have a solid background in French phonetics, know correct singing pronunciation as well as the technicalities of the art of singing.

94–455 Francesconi, Marco and Scotto di Fasano, Daniela. L'échange à part soi: un point de vue psychoanalytique sur expérience d'échange linguistique. [Exchange of self: a psychoanalytic view of educational exchanges.] *Français dans le Monde: Recherches et Applications* (Paris), Feb/Mar (1994), 133–41.

Diaries kept by 20 Italian adolescents on exchange visits to counterparts in France afforded illustrations of the views and theories of, among others, Fornari on the psychology of adolescence, Bion on the depressive position, Funari and Petrella on the *alter ego*, and Winnicott on the transition object. The researchers comment on the adaptability and capacity for self-discovery that these young people displayed. They propose a period of preparation prior to the exchange itself to assist those taking part to confront change and the shock of the new.

94–456 McCool, George J. (Towson State U., MD). Teaching the formation of questions: lessons from new French. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **78,** 1 (1994), 56–60.

Recent studies show that the colloquial spoken language of educated urban speakers of French is diverging substantially from the written language, to the extent that several linguists think that the written language is becoming a dead language and that the grammar being taught is that of this 'dead' language. The formation of questions is one manifestation of the difference between what speakers say and what learners are taught. The studies reviewed here show that the inverted form of question and, to a lesser extent, *est-ce que?* have been substantially replaced by the use of question intonation with the non-inverted form [*Viens-tu?* replaced by *Tu viens?*]. A study of first- and second-year textbooks since 1986 revealed that inversion is still being taught as the main question form, and that the actual state of usage is only reflected in small minority of textbooks.

Suggestions are given for ways in which question formation can be taught and when inversion should be introduced.

94–457 Orban, Clara (De Paul U., USA). The multi-skills commercial second language curriculum meets the videocamera. *French Review* (Baltimore, MD), **67,** 3 (1994), 414–24.

The use of a video camera in the business language classroom is particularly effective for work on oral skills; it also motivates students and can capture paralinguistic as well as linguistic features, thus making it invaluable for self-evaluation. An overview is given of the special needs of the business language curriculum, of textbooks in the area and the most important features of active video. There is then a detailed description of the curriculum created by the author, based on a specially-written workbook, for teaching the four skills and a cultural element.

94–458 Poirier, François (U. Paris-Nord). Documentary analysis in civilisation studies: the French approach. *Language, Culture and Curriculum* (Clevedon, Avon), **6,** 1 (1993), 45–51.

The paper examines the approach to civilisation used in a number of universities and secondary schools in France. The traditional technique of *explication de texte*, associated in the past with philology and the translation of classical texts, re-emerges in a new form as a viable compromise between the conflicting demands of the communicative approach for practical language skills and the broader linguistic and cultural objectives of foreign language learning.

94–459 Tame, Peter (Queen's U. of Belfast, N. Ireland). Techni-culture: bridging the gap. *French Language Studies* (Cambridge), **36** (1994), 20–34.

The textbook *Scientific and Technical French for Engineers* was devised for those students from various branches of Engineering attending language classes in the Department of French at Queen's University. All have some previous knowledge of French and receive 50 contact hours tuition over one year. Students sit the *Certificat de Français des Professions Scientifiques* of the Paris Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The textbook and accompanying course materials provide practice in reading, writing, understanding and speaking in authentic situations and aim to equip the learners with the cultural and linguistic know-how needed by a foreigner living in France. A general all-purpose scientific/technical vocabulary is used and too much specialisation is avoided. Structure and syntax and the cultural context in which they are used is regarded as more important than lists of technical terms and the attempt is also made to bridge the gulf between the scientific and other cultures.

Spanish

94–460 Klink, Hella. Die literarische Ganzschrift im Grund- und Leistungskurs Spanisch – am Beispiel des Romans *'No pasó nada'* von Antonio Skármeta. [Using an unabridged literary work in the teaching of basic and advanced Spanish – with the example of the novel *'No pasó nada'* by Antonio Skármeta.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **93,** 2 (1994), 148–59.

The article outlines didactic-methodological approaches to the tradition of a complete (un-abridged) literary work in basic or advanced courses in Spanish as a foreign language that is learned in upper grades. Antonio Skármeta's *No pasó nada* is presented as an example. Teaching methods are suggested for approaching the work in a con-ventional classroom setting, on the one hand, and for project-oriented teaching, on the other.

94–461 Nuessel, Frank (U. of Louisville). Recreational problem-solving activities for teaching vocabulary in elementary and intermediate Spanish. *Hispania* (Worcester, Ma), **77,** 1 (1994), 118–24.

Recreational problem-solving activities such as word searches, crossword puzzles, tic-tac-toe, scrambled words, and word creation represent interesting and challenging opportunities for students to acquire Spanish vocabulary. This article discusses practical strategies designed to elicit vocabulary without translation and presents examples of a cross-skills approach that requires students to utilise different linguistic abilities to generate appropriate lexical responses. Figures at the end provide specific examples to demonstrate how these exercises may be constructed.

Turkish

94–462 Heafford, Michael (U. of Cambridge). Tackling Turkish: courses and problems. *Language Learning Journal* (Rugby), **8** (1993), 63–5.

The author sampled five beginners' courses in Turkish: *Get by in Turkish* (BBC), *Turkish in a week* (Hodder & Stoughton), *Quick and easy Turkish* (Hodder & Stoughton), *Turkish for travellers* (Berlitz) and *Teach yourself Turkish* (Hodder & Stoughton). None of the courses assumes any previous knowledge, but statements of objectives were not explicit, this lack of precision emerging most clearly in the relationship between book and tape. Rather than being accorded primacy in developing listening and speaking skills as one might expect, the tapes were mostly a mere appendage. Each book provided a useful initial guide to pronunciation, but pronunciation sections on the tapes were of more dubious value, giving the impression that pronunciation must be perfected before serious language learning can begin. General layout of vocabulary was good in all the courses. All the courses provided an overview of essential structures, but course content was unmotivating. None of the courses offered advice on subsequently maintaining or developing one's acquired knowledge.

In courses designed for individual self-study, it is important for learners to exploit periods of 'dead time' during the average day, without constant recourse to a book. Taped material needs to be independent of the book, and to maintain interest over several playings. The main aim of language courses should in fact be to direct the learner away from themselves into contact with 'real language' as soon as possible.