

## Teaching particular languages

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### ENGLISH

**83–181 de Bot, Kees** (U. of Nijmegen) and **Mailfert, Kate** (Kodak-Pathé, Paris). The teaching of intonation: fundamental research and classroom applications. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **16**, 1 (1982), 71–7.

Research carried out in the Netherlands shows that training in the perception of intonation resulted in a statistically significant improvement in the production of English intonation patterns. The materials used for the experiment were then adapted for the teaching situation and applied in Kodak-Pathé's in-company English courses in France. Results tended to confirm the Dutch findings, but student feedback suggested possible alternative directions to be taken in intonation teaching.

**83–182 Konetskaya, V. P.** О сопоставлении нормативных вариантов в родном и иностранном языке (К вопросу о чувстве языка). [The comparison of normative variants in the native and foreign languages. (An approach to the question of feeling for language).] *Иностранные языки в школе* (Moscow), **6** (1981), 8–12.

Following a general discussion of the nature of the problem – the distinction between conscious and subconscious 'feeling' for language, the role of extra-linguistic aspects, the concept of grammatical idioms – a framework for classifying normative variants is proposed. Eight major categories emerge as a result of identifying the presence or absence in phrases of structural, idiomatic and functional restrictions. These are further distinguished in terms of linguistic, culturo-linguistic, socio-psycholinguistic and paralinguistic factors. The eight basic types are illustrated by examples drawn from English. Conclusions are reached about the frequency of occurrence of particular combinations of factors. A comparative analysis of idiomatic phrases in the native and foreign languages along these lines is a necessary starting point for structuring the development in students of a 'feeling' for the foreign language.

**83–183 Pfanmüller, Peter.** Der Limerick als zentrales Element einer Reihe zur Einführung von Gedichten in einer Fachoberschulklasse 12 für Technik. [The limerick as the focal point in a poetry introductory course for engineering students in the 12th class of a technical upper school.] *Englisch* (Berlin FRG), **17**, 2 (1982), 50–4.

In order to make students in the 12th class of a *Fachoberschule* [technical upper school] receptive to poetry as part of the English syllabus, motivational factors such as length of course had to be taken into account. A brief outline of the course is provided and a description of how the students were sensitised to rhyme and introduced to other formal aspects of poetry by means of Country and Western songs, familiar to them from everyday life. The approach, once learnt, could then be applied to the limerick.

The general characteristics of the limerick are outlined, followed by a description of the limericks used by the author, his reasons for choosing them, and his teaching aims. A detailed plan of the lessons on the analysis of limericks is given. The students were subsequently encouraged to compose their own limericks and to apply the analytical approach learnt to other poems. The course proved generally successful, students showing great interest and increasing readiness to co-operate.

## FRENCH

**83–184 Catach, Nina** (U. of Paris III). Norme et orthographe dans la perspective du français langue étrangère. [French as a foreign language – orthography and the norm.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), **169** (1982), 32–7.

Students both want and need to write French. French orthography is not as arbitrary as it is sometimes made out to be: between 80 and 90 per cent of phonograms (and the most common morphograms) can be represented by 45 or 50 graphemes. Sound/symbol correspondances should be taught systematically, taking as a starting point the ‘minimal’ phonic system with only 11 vowels (French as spoken in the Midi), in preference to the 16-vowel system of Northern French. The French must change their rigid attitudes towards spelling and errors of spelling.

**83–185 Dabène, Michel** (U. of Grenoble III). L’acquisition de la compétence de lecture en français, langue étrangère: courants méthodologiques actuels. [Acquiring competence in reading French as a foreign language.] *System* (Oxford), **9**, 3, (1981), 215–21.

Recent years have seen a renewed interest in reading and understanding the written word in foreign-language teaching. Good readers make use of various strategies in order to discover the meaning of a written text. People who read well in their mother tongue but whose knowledge of the foreign language is slight are better equipped for reading a text in the target language than poor readers with a better command of the language.

Where the learners are schoolchildren, they are unlikely to have mastered such strategies or to have attained an adequate level of reading skill. Young learners must be plunged as soon as possible into reading French texts relating to their fields of interest, not in order to analyse or translate but in order to discover and explore, and to improve their reading ability. They must continue to be helped to improve their mother-tongue reading and the teaching of reading in both languages must be integrated.

**83–186 Dabène, Michel** (U. of Grenoble III). Normes d’enseignement: normes d’apprentissage? [Teaching norms: learning norms?] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), **169** (1982), 61–6.

To teach implies choosing what is to be taught. The insecurity felt by non-native teachers of French outside France (and shared by their students) is conducive to excessive concern for correctness and resistance to change or to any deviation from

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accepted standards of what constitutes 'good' French. Non-specialists have difficulty in distinguishing between the descriptive norm, 'the usage currently observed in a given linguistic community', and the prescriptive norm, the model to be followed; for them the norm always implies rules, concepts of correct/incorrect; to teach something incorrect is unthinkable. The attempt to introduce new varieties of French into the classroom runs the risk of failure unless the realities of the teaching situation and the institutional framework are taken into account.

**83–187 Ensz, Kathleen Y.** French attitudes towards typical speech errors of American speakers of French. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **66** (1982), 133–9.

A study is described which aimed to discover which category of errors typically made by French-speaking Americans, errors of pronunciation, vocabulary or grammar, is the most objectionable to French people. The project, conducted in France, involved 250 French people who participated in interviews and registered their reactions to taped speech samples of Americans speaking French. The instrument used was the marked guise test, the only variation being the error content. There were three passages comprising three sets of speech samples; each set contained five guises or versions, distinguished by error content. Each guise can be seen as the outcome of a different pedagogical alternative: (1) stress on pronunciation (student 'sounds good' although mastery of structures is weak), (2) stress on both pronunciation and grammar (student's vocabulary is small), (3) stress on grammar (student's pronunciation and vocabulary are weak), (4) stress on grammar and vocabulary building (student has poor pronunciation), and (5) a control guise, where student has near-native, yet still slightly deviant, pronunciation. [Description of sample French people.]

Mean scores on the guises revealed an order of preference on the part of the French listeners as follows: guise 5, 2, 4, 3, 1. Guise 1, the only guise containing grammar errors, was rated significantly lower than all the other guises. Some subgroups of the sample, including certain regions and a teachers' subgroup, showed a different ordering of guises: all rated guise 4 higher than guise 2. Reactions were found not to be related to sex of the speaker. While errors in grammar are clearly considered the least tolerable, ratings of the other guises did not reveal whether errors in pronunciation or vocabulary are the next least tolerable.

## GERMAN

**83–188 Delisle, Helga H.** (New Mexico State U.). Native speaker judgement and the evaluation of errors in German. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **66**, 1 (82), 39–48.

A study by Politzer and one by the author are compared: both investigated how native speakers of German perceive and evaluate errors made by English speakers learning German. Politzer's study dealt with the spoken, the author's with the written language. In both studies, the subjects evaluating the errors were secondary school

pupils, who evaluated 60 pairs of sentences, each of which contained an error, and indicated which of the two in each pair they considered 'worse' German. The results were rank-ordered according to the seriousness of errors. In Politzer's study, vocabulary errors were considered by far the most serious, whereas in the author's, gender confusion came highest, possibly because of the greater youth of the subjects. The hierarchy established for the older subjects was similar for both groups: vocabulary, verb morphology, word order, gender, phonology, case ending. Spelling, gender and word order errors seem to become less important with age, while case ending, verb morphology and vocabulary errors seem to become more important. Although the studies tested the subjects' tolerance to certain errors, they did not distinguish between the factors of comprehension and irritation.

**83–189** **Glücklich, Hans-Joachim.** *Rhetorik-Unterrichtsmethode und Unterrichtsgegenstand (im Deutsch- und Lateinunterricht)*. [Rhetoric-teaching method and subject of instruction (in the teaching of German and Latin.) *L/LI: Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik* (Göttingen, FRG), **11**, 43/44 (1981), 90–109.

Teaching is a complex communicative situation, where teachers must take into account the interests and personal attitudes of their students, and the latter likewise must consider the personal attitudes of their teachers. In doing so the individual elements of the teaching situations require different rhetorical tactics. In testing the success of what is being taught and in the elimination of a deep-rooted school apathy, however, rhetoric cannot be a full remedy but merely help to cope with these problems. Rhetorical skill is seldom taught at school – critical studies of political speeches and speeches influencing the masses are given priority. The curricula bear witness to these facts. Active rhetorical ability, however, could be trained in the teaching of German by making use of the students' personal experiences, including experiences at school. As a compromise for teachers and students not inclined to turn their experiences and their feelings into subjects for rhetorical exercises, a rhetoric course in the context of Latin instruction is suggested. In this course genuine literary texts – as opposed to texts made up for exercise purposes – are analysed, demonstrating the application of rhetorical tactics in everyday situations. Using Latin texts offers a great advantage, namely that a thorough analysis of a text in a foreign language allows a very effective confrontation of one's own thoughts and feelings with alien ideas in timeless everyday situations, a chance of becoming aware of one's own rhetorical behaviour and of improving it.

**83–190** **Helt, Richard C. and Woloshin, David J.** (U. of Arizona). *Where are we today? A survey of current German teaching methods in American colleges and universities.* *Unterrichtspraxis* (Philadelphia, Pa), **15**, 1 (1982), 110–15.

A short questionnaire was sent to 205 organisers of beginners' German courses at colleges and universities in the United States. The first section asked what the main general objectives of programmes were: 40 per cent of respondents listed grammatical knowledge, 27 per cent speaking, 18 per cent listening comprehension, and 8 per cent

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reading comprehension. Cultural awareness and writing were listed by fewer than 5 per cent. The two objectives most often given top priority, grammatical knowledge and speaking, may indicate a polarisation of methodology between traditional and communicative methods. A question on methodology revealed that 61 per cent of respondents used an eclectic method, and only 27 per cent used a traditional methodology. Responses on evaluation show that 69 per cent test grammar five or more times per term. Likewise responses to a question on the weighting of final grades confirmed a heavy emphasis (20–40 per cent) on grammar.

**83–191 Lutcavage, Charles P.** (Harvard U.) Short-wave radio: an aid to language learning. *Unterrichtspraxis* (Philadelphia, Pa), **15**, 1 (1982), 104–15.

Short-wave radio broadcasts offer a dramatic way for students to appreciate the practical advantages of language learning. The four German-speaking countries of Europe all beam transmissions to North America: *Deutsche Welle* in Cologne, Swiss Broadcasting Corporation in Bern, *Österreichischer Rundfunk* in Vienna and Radio Berlin International in East Berlin. All offer a free schedule of programmes [addresses and transmission details to USA are given]. News broadcasts are particularly suited to classroom purposes because students should already be familiar with many of the issues discussed. Ways of using them in class with students at different levels of aural proficiency are suggested, including directing students to listen for key items, comparison of different political treatment of the same topic, recording the headlines on different stations on the same day, identifying the type of broadcast from very short segments, using recordings in the language lab, and as formal tests of listening comprehension.

Benefits for students include listening to voices other than the teacher, knowledge of regional varieties of German, a sense of accomplishment in listening to authentic, unmodified German. The teacher obtains up-to-date information on the German-speaking world, and valuable contact with the language.

**83–192 Moulton, William G.** Deutsche Sprachnormen im Unterricht an Ausländer. [German language norms in the teaching of foreigners.] *Zielsprache Deutsch* (Munich, FRG), **2** (1982), 24–8.

Stylistic norms do indeed exist already, but they are very difficult to formulate as rules and difficult to teach to foreigners. The non-native speaker finds it easy to identify the linguistic norms of polite social intercourse, and anyway simple rules are readily available. Correct grammar does not present a problem. Rules have been clearly formulated and they must simply be learnt. Accent, however, is a less straightforward matter. The foreigner should not be expected to strive to speak like a native, with the loss of identity which this entails. Many Germans refuse to give up their regional accent because it is closely connected to their individual identity. The student of German should not be taught only one sort of perfect, educated German, but in the course of his studies should encounter many dialects. When teaching German to foreigners, the native speaker should not be encouraged to modify his authentic regional speech (though there are occasional exceptions to this rule).

**83–193 Phillips, David** (U. of Oxford). A thoroughly respectable language – pupils' views on German and other 'second' foreign languages. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, 20, 1 (1982), 23–9.

While developing a German aptitude test, the author asked some simple questions to first-year pupils in five comprehensive schools, to ascertain the degree of their vicarious knowledge and preconceived ideas about the language. They were also asked to list their first choice among German, Italian, Russian and Spanish, assuming they had an equal chance to study any one of these as a second foreign language. They showed a clear preference for German and some interest in Spanish and Italian. Reasons given were (1) interest, (2) usefulness, (3) easiness, (4) no reason. The majority mentioned holiday or travel purposes, but many claimed a liking for the language. Questions about the pupils' present knowledge of German vocabulary revealed that five of the most frequently recorded items for boys had a war/Nazi/military connection. Asked if they had any idea what German sounded like, the children thought it was 'like French', 'like English', 'heavier/harder than French', 'like Scottish', 'cross between Russian and Swedish'. Some children mentioned its guttural sound, 'very jerky', 'sounds all spiky', 'strong and bumpy'. Some impressions were associated with the childrens' notions of the German character, 'very stern', 'very coarse, hard', 'strict', 'sounds like an order'. A question on the Germans and Germany elicited answers from one third of the sample about the War, aggression and/or Hitler, but only 6 per cent of responses were overtly negative. This stereotyped view of the Germans has not changed much since the War, though many other children recognised that the stereotype was inaccurate.

**83–194 Pommerin, Gabriele**. Normverstoß und sprachliche Kreativität im Sprachgebrauch ausländischer Kinder. [Contravention of the norm and linguistic creativity in the language used by foreign children.] *Zeitsprache Deutsch* (Munich, FRG), 2 (1982), 3–11.

The children of guest workers in West Germany tend to make a lot of mistakes when speaking German, and because of this contact between them and German children is made more difficult. This in turn has a negative effect on their acquisition of German and increases their isolation in society. It frequently happens that, when a foreign child tries to use language creatively, the teacher regards his attempts merely as reflecting his inadequate linguistic grasp. Foreign pupils should be encouraged to use their creative language abilities by means of a structured course of linguistic games, exercises in paraphrase and grammar, well chosen texts, etc. The teacher would need to be trained to make him aware of, and sensitive to, the special needs of foreign pupils.

**83–195 Steinmüller, Ulrich**. Normprobleme im Sprachunterricht ausländischer Schüler. [Problems of establishing a norm in teaching language to foreign pupils.] *Zielsprache Deutsch* (Munich, FRG), 2 (1982), 11–18.

Children of foreign workers in Germany need to use German as a means of communication and integration well before they have fully mastered its grammar and

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structures. They tend therefore to develop an interlanguage by filtering out certain elements of the target language, German. This interlanguage varies from individual to individual and has its own set of rules consistent within themselves though not always with those of the target language [examples]. The interlanguage rules are not static but change systematically as the child develops towards the target language. It is recommended that more attention and respect be given to interlanguage rules and their changes as a means of discovering more about the language acquisition process itself.

Although communication is the most important factor and the interlanguage usually adequate for this purpose, children should nevertheless be guided towards standard German to enable them to integrate fully into German society and life. While each child's interlanguage must be taken into account, the ultimate aim should be to have him approximate as closely as possible to the language of his German classmates. Teaching methods must be found which cater for the German and foreign student alike.

**83–196 Wilms, Heinz.** Deutsch als Fremdsprache – Deutsch als Zweitsprache: Übersicht und Positionssuche. [German as a foreign language – German as a second language: a survey and an attempt to take a stand.] *Deutsch Lernen* (Mainz, FRG), 4 (1981), 3–21.

A foreign language is one which is not a mother tongue in the country in which it is being taught. The student of a second language, however, hears that language around him every day and he is under pressure to be able to communicate in it. He tends to be a member of society's immigrant lower class. Comparative research into the fields of foreign- and second-language learning has been undertaken, and a survey of findings is given.

The linguistic demands on immigrant children are truly immense if one expects them to fit in to the normal school system in a short space of time. Foreign children cannot be expected to integrate into the German system by their own efforts. They need the help of specialist teachers and classes planned specifically for the young immigrant. They need to be taught the following: to express what they know in German; to differentiate clearly between the mother tongue and the second language; to study independently and to get used to German teaching and learning methods. The gaps in their knowledge must be filled so that they reach the required standard in the specialist subjects. They also need to know about the structure of the educational system in West Germany and about the job training schemes.

## RUSSIAN

**83-197 Kozhina, M. N.** О диалогичности письменной научной речи. [The dialogue style in scientific prose.] *Русский язык за рубежом* (Moscow), **6** (1981), 77-82.

Characteristics of dialogue such as direct address to an audience and consideration for their reactions are present in scientific prose, albeit modified to a greater or lesser extent. This phenomenon is related both to the distinctions currently made between spoken dialogue and monologue and to the nature of thought processes. Three tendencies are noted: the need the writer feels to address colleagues or students, an urge to involve the reader in debate and the internal dialogue which the writer conducts with himself. These result in the use of first- and second-person forms of address, persuasive techniques, rhetorical questions and the invocation of authorities and evidence. Such tendencies are more or less marked depending upon whether a text is theoretical, descriptive or discursive [extensive examples]. A distinction is further drawn between disciplines. Effective teaching of the use of scientific prose requires that the student should be made aware of the need to involve the reader in the process of developing thoughts and ideas, a process which is essentially that of dialogue.

**83-198 Kreindler, Isabelle** (Tel Aviv U., Israel). The changing status of Russian in the Soviet Union. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* (The Hague), **33** (1982), 7-39.

The development of government policies towards the teaching of Russian and the languages of other nationalities in the Soviet Union is examined in detail, starting from Lenin's slogan 'national in form, socialist in content' up to the present day, when the need to spread the knowledge of Russian as the language of international communication is unquestioned at the official level. This change is associated with the recent emphasis on the particular historical and cultural role played by the Russian nation both before and after the Revolution, and with the role of Russian as the 'language of Communism'. It is demonstrated that the changes in policy do not include any open attack upon the role of the languages of other nationalities, but rather a more or less systematic withdrawal of support. Current policies are compared with those of the Tsarist empire. The problems of implementing these policies in schools are examined in terms of school curricula and of the reactions to them, which may be extrapolated from the measures being taken as well as from published articles.

**83-199 Trufanova, V. Ya** (Moscow Inst.im.M.Toreza). Индивидуальное и общее в интонации в аспекте преподавания. [Intonation: individual differences and general characteristics as they affect teaching.] *Русский язык в национальной школе* (Moscow), **6** (1981), 9-14.

Intonation patterns which contribute to individual styles are explored, together with their implications for the teaching of Russian as a foreign language. Recorded



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performances of three actors – Koonen, Smoktunovsky and Leonov – are analysed using Bryzgunova's Intonation Constructions. Favoured rhythms are noted and the general tone or style of each actor is thus characterised. The intonation features which led to Koonen being described as 'a tragic actress even in sentimental dramas' are contrasted with the strategies which comprise the more persuasive, oratorical style of Smoktunovsky. While the latter is an appropriate model for the development of normal conversational skills because of his manner of addressing an audience, involving explanation, persuasion and an emphatic style appropriate to these, Leonov's use of dynamic rather than melodic variation, and his tendency to fragment texts into phrases of equal length rather than to intone with emphasis on meaning, make him a less useful model for any but advanced students.