99–531 Wang, Yinquan (Nanjing Agricultural U., China). 'College English' in China. *English Today* (Cambridge, UK), **15**, 1 (1999), 45–51.

The learning of English is now seen by authorities in China as being a key element of higher education in all academic disciplines including Science and Technology. At university level in China, English is taught in two bands: English for majors and English for non-majors or what is termed here 'College English'. The latter group receive only around four hours of instruction per week and the highest priority in their classes is given to an intensive reading course. Reading (and its linguistic or structural analysis) is valued so highly because it is considered that this is the medium through which the majority of Science or Engineering students collect information from English specialists in their field. English instruction also relies heavily on the government-compiled textbook and is strongly influenced by the College English Test. Other factors which deeply affect the nature and quality of the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) provision for College English include issues relating to the supply of suitably qualified and proficient teachers and also knowledge of appropriate cultural background information. Finally, the sheer size of the learner population increases the significance of EFL development in China as a whole.

99–532 Warschauer, Mark (U. of Hawai'i, USA). Technology and indigenous language revitalisation: analysing the experience of Hawai'i. *The Canadian Modern Language Review / La Revue canadienne des langues vivantes* (Toronto, Ont.), **55**, 1 (1998), 139–59.

Hawaiian educators have made ambitious attempts to use new on-line technologies in language revitalisation programmes. These efforts have included developing one of the first bulletin board systems in the world to operate completely in an indigenous language. This paper reports on two years of ethnographic research on the results of these efforts. Issues addressed include the role of the Internet in promoting or hindering linguistic diversity, the relationship of multimedia computing to non-Western patterns of communication, and the use of the Internet as a medium for exploring cultural and social identity. The results are consistent with a critical theory of technology which emphasises that technology is neither culturally neutral nor determinist but rather a site of social struggle.

Applied linguistics

99–533 Bialystok, Ellen (York U., Ontario, Canada). Coming of age in applied linguistics. *Language Learning* (Malden, MA, USA), **48**, 4 (1998), 497–518.

It is argued in this article that further progress in applied linguistics and second language acquisition

(SLA) will be achieved through collaboration with researchers in other fields. Three examples are given of research problems that would profit from collaboration with applied linguists: the definition of language proficiency, the neural basis of language functioning, and the relation between cognitive and language abilities, especially in education. It is claimed that these issues are being investigated by specialists in other fields who lack the necessary expertise in bilingualism, SLA and representation of multiple languages. The article identifies specific areas of expertise that applied linguists could bring to these research programmes.

99–534 Block, David (Inst. of Ed., U. of London, UK). Exploring interpretations of questionnaire items. *System* (Oxford, UK), **26**, 3 (1998), 403–25.

Publications about questionnaires tend to focus on technical issues such as item wording, overall format and the construction of scales. Only a few authors such as Low (1988, *Evaluation and Research in Education*, **2**, 69–79) and Alderson (1992, *Working Paper* **15**, Lancaster U., UK) have researched and discussed the issue of how respondents actually interpret questionnaire items. This paper presents the results of a small-scale study carried out to investigate how a representative sample of 24 students at a large language school in Barcelona interpreted the items on an end-of-course evaluation form. The study aimed to explore two key questions: (1) the extent to which individuals would interpret questionnaire items in similar fashion, and (2) the extent to which they would invest the same meaning in the numbers on a 1–5 rating scale. In both cases, a high degree of variance was found across the respondents.

99–535 Catford, J. C. (U. of Michigan, USA). *Language Learning* and applied linguistics: a historical sketch. *Language Learning* (Malden, MA, USA), **48**, 4 (1998), 465–96.

This article reviews the history of applied linguistics together with the history of the journal *Language Learning*, indicating the journal's particular place in that larger history and honouring its 50th anniversary. A chronological perspective is adopted, starting from antiquity but focusing on developments in Europe and North America in the later 19th and 20th centuries. Evidence is offered that, from the late 1940s onwards, *Language Learning* played a distinctive role in the popularisation and widespread adoption of the term *applied linguistics*, as well as the systematic, theoretical and research orientation associated with it.

99–536 Klein, Wolfgang (Max-Planck-Institut für Psycholinguistik, Nijmegen, The Netherlands). The contribution of second language acquisition research. *Language Learning* (Malden, MA, USA), **48**, 4 (1998), 527–50.

During the last 25 years, second language acquisition (SLA) research has made considerable progress, but it is still far from proving a solid basis for foreign language

teaching, or from a general theory of SLA. In addition, its status within the linguistic disciplines is still very low. It is argued in this article that this has not much to do with low empirical or theoretical standards in the field – in this regard, SLA is fully competitive – but with a particular perspective on the acquisition process: SLA researches learners' utterances as deviations from a certain target, instead of genuine manifestations of underlying language capacity; it analyses them in terms of what they are not rather than what they are. For some purposes such a 'target deviation perspective' makes sense, but it is suggested that it will not help SLA researchers to substantially and independently contribute to a deeper understanding of the structure and function of the human language faculty. Therefore, these findings will remain of limited interest to other scientists until SLA researchers consider learner varieties a normal, in fact typical, manifestation of this unique human capacity.

99–537   Lipski, John M. (U. of New Mexico, USA). Spanish linguistics: the past 100 years. Retrospective and bibliography. *Hispania* (Ann Arbor, MI, USA), **81**, 2 (1998), 248–60.

The entire field of general and Spanish linguistics is circumscribed by the last hundred years of scholarship. Fields as diverse as historical linguistics, phonetics, phonology, syntactic analysis, first- and second-language acquisition studies, morphology, sociolinguistics and dialectology are products of twentieth-century linguistic thought. From the outset, Spanish has enjoyed a prominent place in the evolution of contemporary linguistics. This article seeks to present a survey of the major accomplishments of twentieth-century Spanish linguistics which sets the stage for linguistic research in the next century.

99–538   McGroarty, Mary (Northern Arizona U., USA). Constructive and constructivist challenges for applied linguistics. *Language Learning* (Malden, MA, USA), **48**, 4 (1998), 591–622.

It is argued in this paper that the most productive future directions for theory building and research in applied linguistics derive from the extent to which the field's investigators can enrich their conceptual frameworks and methods with insights from 'constructivist' scholarly approaches. Such approaches are marked by heightened attention to agency and subjectivity, to the generation and interpretation of meaning, and to the constant interplay between individual and group activity. In addition, scholarship from other social sciences is discussed which further illuminates conditions affecting language learning. The presentation focuses on three arenas in which such approaches and additional scholarship have generated important new questions for applied linguistics: (a) the multiple identities of language users; (b) the identification of optimal environments for language acquisition; and (c) the institutional constraints affecting language acquisition and instruction. In each area, constructivist approaches are seen as challenging applied linguists to rethink the bounds of the theories and methods that guide their work.

99–539   Schachter, Jacquelyn (U. of Oregon, USA). Recent research in language learning studies: promises and problems. *Language Learning* (Malden, MA, USA), **48**, 4 (1998), 557–83.

From the perspective of a psycholinguist, the author of this paper discusses three leading questions that have arisen from a number of foundational, descriptive studies of second language (L2) acquisition. First, considering the language to be learned, she asks why it is that certain L2 constructions are learnable and others not; and what it is about these constructions that makes them so difficult to acquire. Second, in considering input requirements, she questions whether adult learners can take advantage of metalinguistic information about the language and negative input; and whether adults differ from child learners in the L2 input requirements. Finally, she asks whether focal attention is required for the acquisition of the syntax and the phonological rules of a target language; and whether we need to notice in order to learn, or can learn subconsciously. Recent studies are reviewed and suggestions made for further investigations.

203