

## Language learning and teaching – theory and practice

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### THEORY AND PRINCIPLES

**86–269 Ager, D. E.** (U. of Aston). Languages in your future. *Modern Languages* (London), **66**, 3 (1985), 161–6.

Over the past 20 years, the UK's main trading partner has become Europe: membership of the European Community has turned the UK's trading attention away from its traditional Empire and North American connections to the non-English-speaking countries of Europe. The nature of trade had changed, too: the UK is now in deficit in manufactured goods. But while imports from EEC Europe have increased, exports to the EEC have declined. In order to sell, effective communication is essential. Students combining a language with management or business enter commercial and industrial careers more readily than those who train specifically as linguists. [Table shows first destinations of language graduates from polytechnics and universities for the 1982 cohort; two graduate 'profiles' are given.]

**86–270 Cross, David** (Ain Shams U., Cairo). The Monitor theory and the language teacher. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **23**, 2 (1985), 75–78.

The five core elements of Krashen's Monitor theory are summarised, i.e. the acquisition/learning, monitor, natural order, input and affective filter hypotheses, and practical implications for the modern languages teacher are postulated.

Teacher talk about rules represents valid input, along with the real language and authentic content displayed in the learning situations envisaged by Krashen. The teacher should explain only the most simple rules, whilst also using the target L2 as much as possible in the classroom. Errors are integral to the acquisition process; student utterances should therefore be assessed on the basis of communicative effectiveness as well as on formal accuracy. Despite the emphases of teacher-based assessment, however, most examinations are still of the monitor, form-based type. Krashen's ideas are useful, if extreme in their strong forms; his movement away from behavioural goals and linguistic artificiality is particularly apposite in the multilingual European context.

**86–271 Edmondson, Willis J.** (U. of Hamburg). Discourse worlds in the classroom and in foreign language learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **7**, 2 (1985), 159–68.

The paper explores the nature of the cognitive processing involved in foreign language learning. The notion of a 'discourse world' as a set of elements against the background of which a unit of talk makes sense is introduced; several such 'discourse

worlds' may be seen to coexist in classroom discourse, in part because of participants' 'awareness' (on some level) of why they are there. The notion of a discourse world is then given a psychological interpretation in terms of frame-theory: the simultaneous activation of several such frames is central to the business of understanding language, and to language learning. The classroom offers rich opportunities for the training of such multi-level perception of foreign language input, with consequent gains in learning. From this perspective Krashen's Monitor theory is implausible.

**86-272 Hawkins, Eric** (U. of York). Awareness of language: la réflexion sur le langage dans les écoles en Grande-Bretagne. [Awareness of language in British schools.] *Langues Modernes* (Paris), 79, 6 (1985), 9-23.

The major failings of British schools in the language area are the lack of uniformity in terminology and approach between and even within subjects, the absence of teaching about language as a phenomenon, and very low achievement levels in foreign languages and in reading and writing the mother tongue. The language awareness programme proposed would require co-operation between teachers of all subjects, would be in addition to, not instead of existing subjects and would continue throughout a child's school career. At primary level, the two priorities would be teaching how to listen, and ensuring, perhaps with the aid of volunteers, that all children had the opportunity of one-to-one conversations with adults. At secondary level, the four new elements would be consciousness-raising about the 'daily miracle' of language; exploring language acquisition (e.g. by observing babies); exploring in a non-prescriptive, inductive way the grammar of the L1; and learning about language families, origins, differences, etc., with perhaps a few words from a variety of languages and associated cultural information.

**86-273 McGowan, Paul** (Multicultural Support Service, Birmingham). La plume de ma tante and all that revisited. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, 23, 2 (1985), 63-7.

Language awareness courses should aim to improve the actual learning and performance of pupils in modern languages, otherwise they will be relegated to the position of 'background studies'. What is taught should derive from what can be deduced about the skills and abilities of successful language learners. Current practice exactly reflects the concerns of the language awareness movement, such as the way primary teachers promote thinking about language by emphasising patterning, word games, etc. Many schools contain huge resources in the form of pupils from many different cultural backgrounds, who themselves are able to operate in more than one language as a matter of course.

Future developments must include (a) the integration of language awareness work into the actual teaching of the languages offered, (b) modern languages and English departments working together, and (c) support and education for teachers themselves to enable them to implement changes.

**86–274 Porcher, Louis** (U. of the Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris III). L'intéressant et le démonstratif: à propos du statut de la didactique des langues et des cultures. [The interesting and the explanatory: on the status of the didactics of languages and cultures. *Etudes de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **60** (1985), 17–21.

The buzz-word 'authentic' is used to mesmerise and to deflect discussion away from the real educational issue. Didactic theory must stand above the fleeting and subjective enthusiasms of teachers and say what needs to be demonstrated and how that can best be done. What is efficacious in this respect will not necessarily be interesting, any more than the laws of science are intrinsically interesting, but we cannot do without them and would never deduce them unaided from our 'authentic' experience of unanalysed nature. Pedagogy has no such well-established laws and no principles of verification so apparently it suffices for certain 'legitimising' authorities to assert that something which is interesting to them is interesting to all, and to confuse this with the demonstrably true. They are even capable of rejecting a true conclusion because it is uninteresting! This is all very unscientific and anti-cultural. Whereas authentic materials can be useful in supplying experience, they are a means not an end; knowledge and insight can be much better supplied by deliberately produced teaching materials.

**86–275 Reeves, Nigel** (Inst. of Linguists). Education for exporting capability – languages and market penetration. *Incorporated Linguist* (London), **24**, 3/4 (1985), 147–53.

The Institute of Linguists was founded in 1910 to improve Britain's linguistic expertise (and so sharpen the competitiveness of its exporting industry) by setting examinations for 'candidates engaged in commerce'. But captive markets in the Empire did not require much in the way of foreign language competence, nor of persuasion, negotiation or adaptation of products. Britain's share of world trade fell gradually in the first part of this century, then more swiftly after World War II. Britain's entry into the European Economic Community in 1973 confirmed a move away from the traditional English-speaking markets and towards Europe – a single trading bloc but a linguistic mosaic. Entry into the EEC did not reverse the downward trend in trade: in 1983 came Britain's first overall trade deficit in manufactured goods, for which West Germany, Japan and Italy are largely responsible.

The main reason for Britain's disappointing performance is the language and culture barrier that separates us from our neighbours. International marketing demands more complex relationships and a greater involvement of personnel than used to be supposed. Communication is essential in an activity resting so heavily on interpersonal and interorganisational relationships. Various studies show that foreign-language competence is essential to successful trading, though British industry is divided in its attitude to the need for language training. A concerted programme is needed to reduce the trading deficit with West Germany and Japan, yet only 5% of schoolchildren begin German. Two other potentially vital markets will be opening up soon, Spain and Portugal; Spanish must be retained in schools and expanded. We likewise need more Japanese-, Arabic- and Chinese-speaking graduates.

**86–276 Savignon, Sandra J.** (U. of Illinois). Evaluation of communicative competence: the ACTFL provisional proficiency guidelines. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **41**, 6 (1985), 1000–7.

The author expresses reservations about the rationale underlying the ACTFL Provisional Proficiency Guidelines, particularly in regard to a perceived inherent tension between communicative and structuralist perspectives. The nature of communicative competence is explored, and it is recognised that without some degree of grammatical ability, no meaningful interaction can take place.

However, there is excessive grammatical emphasis in the guidelines, and the adoption of educated native speaker linguistic norms is coupled with a socio-cultural elitism which would be inappropriate for school programmes. Basically, the potential 'washback' effects of the guidelines could be deleterious. The validity of having 'culture' as a separate skill is also questioned. For these and other reasons, restraint should be used in making recommendations about curricula on the basis of the guidelines. Further data collection (from authentic communicative environments) and research are called for before any decisions are taken.

**86–277 Skinner, David C.** (Hispanic Training Inst., Santa Monica, CA) Access to meaning: the anatomy of the language learning connection. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* (Clevedon, Avon), **6**, 5 (1985), 97–116 (Pt I) and 369–88 (Pt II).

The theories of Piaget, Chomsky, Vygotsky and Cummins may be integrated into a single, unified model of the interactions and connections between and among language, learning and language proficiency. The model serves as an analytical tool for examining the mutual interdependencies of language, language proficiency and learning. The model provides a new perspective that lends further theoretical confirmation to Cummins' ideas on language proficiency.

Part I emphasises the implications of this new construct for primary language acquisition and for learning through use of one's primary language. This treatment establishes a conceptual framework for the examination, in Part II, of the most common assumptions about second language acquisition including a review of the most widely-used second language acquisition methods; it shows how they owe their basic assumptions to those embodied in the Direct Method – a century-old approach to teaching second languages. The two most basic assumptions – that people acquire a second language in the same manner as they acquired their first; and that the most appropriate language of instruction is L2 – are inconsistent with the views of Cummins, Vygotsky, Piaget and Chomsky. Furthermore, when these assumptions are subjected to analysis with the anatomical model they are found potentially to retard and/or delimit both the development of second language proficiency and the learning process of the typical student.

The analyses that the model permits provide clearer explanations for the empirical results generally experienced by students who receive second language instruction through the methods in most common use. Based upon the model, and the resulting analyses, the author outlines some of the principal characteristics that a more

effective second language acquisition approach would incorporate. These characteristics appear to be quite consistent with the principles of bilingual instruction.

**86–278 Smits, Jan.** *Annsluiten bij de leefwereld van de leerlingen: een dilemma.* [Making connections with the real world of the learner: a dilemma]. *Levende Talen* (The Hague), 406 (1985), 599–602.

There is a widely held view that teachers in general, and mother-tongue teachers in particular, should take considerable pains to ensure that what they teach is relevant and meaningful to the children taught. The origins of this view are not entirely clear, but it became particularly prevalent in the 1970s as part of a move towards democratising schools, and its clearest manifestations are to be found in project-based teaching, and the emphasis on children's literature.

At their best, these practices make children more independent and more socially aware. Nevertheless, they also pose a number of problems which have been ignored for too long. Firstly, it is not obvious how teachers should identify the real world of the learner. Each learner lives in his/her own different world, so that a teacher faced with a class of children needs to understand a different world for each child. This problem is manageable, but it implies a high degree of individualisation. Even then, there is the problem that the teacher will always impose his/her own interpretation on the child's world, so that children who do not share the teacher's background may be misunderstood. In addition, such children are unlikely to share the assumptions necessary to make this type of teaching work effectively.

Secondly, although project work is designed to encourage independence and responsibility, this independence is often only illusory. Classrooms still rely on social control; in modern classrooms this control is more subtle, but nonetheless real. Choice, on the other hand, is often more apparent than real. A third argument is that concentrating on the children's own experience encourages an anti-intellectual approach to teaching. In this case, children whose backgrounds are restricted may be handicapped by teaching that concentrates on that background, rather than extending it.

Learning is supposed to be a liberating experience, but all too often, it is not. Teachers need to be more conscious of the real choices they offer their students, and the possibilities that these choices make available.

## PSYCHOLOGY OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

**86–279 Bebout, Linda** (U. of Windsor, Ontario). An error analysis of misspellings made by learners of English as a first and as a second language. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research* (New York), 14, 6, (1985), 569–93.

About 700 misspelled words were collected from the responses produced on a fill-in-the-blank task by two groups of advanced learners of English, (1) English-speaking children (9–11 years) and (2) Spanish-speaking adults studying English. The spelling errors were coded using a detailed categorisation system (whose use and rationale are described), and the resulting tabulations were analysed for differences

between the two subject groups or differences across error types. The two groups were similar in that they both made proportionally more vowel than consonant errors. On the other hand, significant differences between the subject groups were found in three of the major categories: the Spanish speakers made more errors involving consonant doubling, while the native English speakers made more involving the unstressed vowel schwa (/ə/) and the grapheme silent /e/. It is argued that these differences stem from the language backgrounds and resulting spelling strategies of the two groups, and the paper concludes with a discussion of the need for other studies comparing the spelling errors of first- and second-language learners.

**86–280 Berent, Gerald P.** (Rochester Inst. of Tech.). Markedness considerations in the acquisition of conditional sentences. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **35**, 3 (1985), 337–72.

Two experiments were conducted which were designed to assess adult L2 learners' production and comprehension of English conditional sentences. The analyses provided lend support to the explanatory power of markedness theory in explaining L2 acquisition. Different relative orders of difficulty emerged in the production and comprehension, respectively, of three conditional types, suggesting that form and function may be acquired at different times in the L2 acquisition of syntax. Of real, unreal, and past unreal conditions, the real conditions were the easiest to produce but the most difficult to comprehend. These relative orders of difficulty and other developmental differences that emerged between proficiency levels are explained in terms of the nature of the distinctive features assigned in different domains of grammar. Learners' responses to markedness values in the interacting contexts of morphology, syntax, semantics, presupposition, and discourse provide a more accurate picture of the acquisition process.

**86–281 Boulouffe, Jacqueline** (U. Laval, Quebec). The destabilisation of interlanguage as intent and form fluctuation. *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin* (Utrecht), **8**, 2 (1984), 69–92.

Interlanguage researchers have asked where errors come from, why errors stabilise and whether subsystems and styles in interlanguage stabilise differently. They have failed to observe any disparity of intent and form specific to interlanguage. This disparity comes to light when errors enter the destabilisation process. It appears, in interviews with eight students of English as a foreign language, that the destabilisation of errors may be hindered by a deficient intent, a deficient form or a deficient adjustment of intent and form. A teacher-guided fluctuation in the intent to form relation generates an individualised approximation of target language forms. It is argued that variability in interlanguage depends on the fluctuation of intent and form in each learner's destabilisation process as well as on subsystems and styles being stabilised differently. It may be more helpful and pedagogically more relevant to assist the cognitive operation that promotes the destabilisation of interlanguage and the intake of the target language than provide new exposure or feedback.

**86–282 Bourgonje, Bert and others** (U. of Utrecht). The acquisition of adverbial placement in English as a foreign language: a crosslinguistic study. *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin* (Utrecht), **8**, 2 (1984), 93–103.

This paper reports some findings from a project which looked at adverbial placement in the English of some 600 foreign-language learners in various European countries. The basic aim of this investigation was to determine whether a significant degree of mother tongue (L1) influence could be detected in the data elicited from these learners or, conversely, whether evidence could be gathered in support of the universalist hypothesis as advanced by researchers following the creative construction line of thinking (see Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982). If the evidence pointed towards L1 influence, then further analysis might indicate to what degree this influence was a direct transference of L1 placement rules. If, however, the evidence pointed towards universal patterns in the acquisition of English adverbial placement, then the creative construction hypothesis would receive support from new sources, i.e. from formal (foreign) language learners, from the advanced level, and from syntax.

Results obtained indicate that, although there may be some universal order of difficulty by which some adverbs get learned together with their particular grammatical behaviour earlier than others, the interlanguage systems of these learners are influenced to a significant degree by their respective native languages. In view of the complexity of adverbial placement syntax in all the languages considered this cannot be ascribed to conscious learning of grammatical rules but we must assume that the intuitive acquisitional processes that operate with this type of learner involve the recruitment of mother tongue knowledge to the greater degree than is claimed by the proponents of the creative construction hypothesis. At the same time, a linguistic interference account does not fully explain the results: this is best illustrated by the language-specific results of the German and Dutch groups. Whatever role L1 influence plays in the intermediate stages of acquisition, it cannot be a simple 'mechanical' one.

**86–283 Bruck, Margaret** (McGill-Montreal Children's Hospital Learning Centre). Consequences of transfer out of early French immersion programmes. *Applied Psycholinguistics* (Cambridge), **6**, 2 (1985), 101–20.

Former French immersion students who had transferred to an English programme because of academic difficulty and poor adjustment were assessed after their first year of total English education. Their cognitive, academic, linguistic, and social psychological status was compared to that of children who had remained in the immersion programme despite academic difficulty. Academically, both groups showed similar improvement. Behaviourally, the transfer children continued to be deviant and to show poor attitudes and motivations. After one year out of French immersion, the transfer children maintained previously acquired second-language skills. The data suggest that the child's basic cognitive and affective characteristics rather than factors associated with language of education influence academic achievement as well as school- and language-related attitudes and motivations.

**86-284 Call, Mary Emily** (U. of Pittsburgh). Auditory short-term memory, listening comprehension, and the Input Hypothesis. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **19**, 4, (1985), 765-81.

This article reports the findings of a study which examined the relationship between auditory short-term memory and listening skill. The study was designed to assess the contribution of short-term memory for each of five types of auditory input to differences in standardised listening scores. Memory for syntactically arranged words proved to be the best predictor of listening skill in this battery of tests. The significance of the results of comprehension-based teaching methodologies is discussed.

**86-285 Chaudron, Craig** (U. of Hawaii at Manoa). Intake: on models and methods for discovering learners' processing of input. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **7**, 1 (1985), 1-14.

The notion of intake, as opposed to input, has been inadequately defined and explored. Moreover, there is a perceived need for theory and research to develop consistent processing models, particularly in regard to the interactions between the competing L1/L2 rule systems, and to formulate associated research methodologies. Intake is seen as the operation of the learners' internalised L2 processing and his/her active strategies for effecting second language development. This 'intake as learning' is a complex, multi-stage phenomenon which involves, for example, perception of TL input, recording and encoding communicative (i.e. semantic) information into long-term memory, and the integration of this input into learners' internal grammars.

The article models speech processing in terms of perception and comprehension (preliminary intake); it also discussed several theories of final intake, including Krashen's [diagrammatic information]. Portions of his and other theories (particularly those of Faerch and Kasper) could usefully be experimentally tested to generate new specifications; the resulting explanations of input and intake should be based on research which exerts more control over independent variables, uses standardised measurements of the types of L2 processing used by the learner, and contains a predictive element.

**86-286 Fourakis, Marios and Iverson, Gregory K.** (U. of Iowa). On the acquisition of second language timing patterns. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **35**, 3 (1985), 431-42.

This paper presents the results of an experiment which examined the temporal characteristics of voiceless plosives in American English, Arabic, and Arabic-accented English. Results showed that the temporal implementation of closure duration and Voice Onset Time delay was different for each of the three groups; surprisingly, however, Arabic-accented English fell not between the norms established by Arabic and English proper, but rather departed from the target language goal (shorter closures, longer VOT delays) with longer closures and shorter VOT delays than is characteristic of Arabic itself. This unusual interlanguage phenomenon can be explained in terms of the Arabic speakers having learned that English displays a

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constant voiceless interval (Weismer, 1980) among all places of articulation, but having mislearned that the distribution internal to this interval varies according to positional factors.

**86–287 Glisan, Eileen W.** (U. of Pittsburgh). The effect of word order on listening comprehension and pattern retention: an experiment in Spanish as a foreign language. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), 35, 3 (1985), 443–72.

An important skill which the language learner uses in the listening task is knowledge of the syntax of the target language. This study empirically examines the effect of one aspect of surface structure, word order, on the listening comprehension and pattern retention of native English speakers learning Spanish. The factors of sentence length and position of a sentence in a given context are also analysed. As the basis for the experiment, a brief discussion is presented of theoretical implications of word order processing and memory in listening. A comparative analysis of Spanish and English word order patterns follows, which identifies three principal word order patterns of Spanish: subject–verb–object, verb–subject–object, and object–verb–subject. Results are reported of the experiment which tested the abilities of native English-speaking students of Spanish and native Spanish speakers to comprehend an oral passage and remember the word order of certain sentences. The findings indicate that word order significantly affected the degree of comprehension of the English speakers. In addition, for both groups of participants, sentences which were both longer and in final position in a context were comprehended most effectively. Word order and sentence position significantly affected surface retention of both groups. Further, there is indirect evidence to lend additional support to transformational grammar theory indicating that native speakers and foreign language learners may utilise an aural processing strategy of converting patterns to the basic SVO word order. Implications of this investigation for Spanish foreign-language pedagogy as well as suggestions for further research are included.

**86–288 Hodne, Barbara** (U. of Minnesota). Yet another look at interlanguage phonology: the modification of English syllable structure by native speakers of Polish. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), 35, 3 (1985), 405–22.

Tarone (1980) attempted to show that some syllable structure errors in the interlanguage (IL) speech of learners of English from various language backgrounds were not attributable to language transfer and might provide evidence of a universal tendency to produce open (CV) syllables, an interlanguage process which she argued operates independently of language transfer. The case study presented here follows essentially the same method of investigation that Tarone followed to gather evidence for the hypothesised universal preference for the open syllable, but uses speakers from a different language group (Polish) as subjects. Since Polish features many of the same complex syllable structures that English does, modification of these same complex syllables in the interlanguage would not appear to be attributable to transfer. The next question would be whether the modifications found showed movement toward an open syllable.

The results obtained here are less categorical than those obtained by Tarone. Although a number of modifications were found which could not readily be attributed to transfer, only about half of these could be said to show clear modification toward an open (CV) syllable pattern. Although it is possible that the preference for the open CV syllable operates as a variable rule in interlanguage phonology, with the native language (NL) background of the learner influencing the extent to which the rule is applied, it is suggested that the patterns of modification found here might best be analysed not in terms of processes unique to IL phonology, but rather in terms of universal patterns of glottalisation and epenthesis found in the speech of persons experiencing stress, whether they are speaking in their native language or in a second language.

**86–289 Lalonde, R. N. and Gardner, R. C.** (U. of Western Ontario, London, Ontario). On the predictive validity of the attitude/motivation test battery. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* (Clevedon, Avon), **6**, 5 (1985), 403–12.

Evidence of the predictive validity of composite measures of the 'Attitude/Motivation Test Battery' is provided. The composite measures of Motivation, Integrativeness and Attitude Towards the Learning Situation were correlated with three criterion measures, 'Behavioural Intention' to pursue French study, final French grade, and a global measure of French achievement. The data were collected in six different areas of Canada over a two-year period. The composite measure of Motivation was found to be a better predictor of all three criteria, whereas no differences were found between the two attitudinal composites in the prediction of the Behavioural Intention measure and French Grades. Integrativeness was found to be superior to Attitude Towards the Learning Situation for the measure of French achievement. The findings support Gardner's socio-educational model of second language acquisition which proposes that Motivation is a direct determinant of language acquisition and should thus be the most relevant variable of the three.

**86–290 Nas, G. L. J.** The effect on reading speed of word-divisions at the end of a line of print. *PRIPU* (Utrecht), **10**, 2 (1985), 45–67.

In four experiments the effects were studied of breaking off words at the end of a line. The first two experiments concerned silent reading, the last two reading aloud. In Experiments 1 and 3 this was done at the textual level, in Experiments 2 and 4 at the level of isolated words. The two experiments with a text addressed the question whether reading a text with words broken off at the end of a line takes longer to read than its counterpart without any word-divisions. This turned out to be true for both reading modes. In the two experiments with isolated words it was investigated whether there is a difference in reading times for words broken off at a syllable boundary compared with words broken off at a point where syllable and morpheme boundaries coincide. No significant difference was found, either for silent reading or for reading aloud. Both the theoretical and practical aspects of these results are discussed, the former in terms of a comparison of the processes of silent reading and

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reading aloud, the latter in terms of the reader-friendliness of texts in which words have been broken off and in terms of the reader-friendliness of the Dutch rules of word-division. Experiment 2 investigated whether the morpheme would be preferable to the syllable as the unit of word-division in Dutch, but no statistically reliable evidence was found for this. This implies that there is no reason to propose changing Dutch rules of word-division. It seems more appropriate to propose avoiding word-divisions altogether, especially if readers are given only limited time in which to read the text concerned.

**86–291 Palmberg, Rolf** (Åbo Akademi, Finland). Solving communicative problems in interlanguage. *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin* (Utrecht), **8**, 2 (1984), 35–49.

This article attempts to show how the notion of problem solving, as an information processing skill, has been viewed in interlanguage studies, and to illustrate the use of communicative strategies by L2 speakers.

Previous considerations of problem-solving have adduced the concepts of process and strategy. The latter can supposedly be subdivided into learning/communication strategies, as well as lower-level 'tactics'. The authors also discuss reduction strategies, wherein the speaker abandons his communicative goal, and achievement, compensatory and co-operative strategies. An example of a direct 'co-operative' strategy would be overt appeals for linguistic assistance, whereas an indirect technique would be to use hesitations and pauses indicating ignorance or difficulty.

An English language experiment centring on the interactive, oral description of geometrical shapes [tapescripts] is outlined. It is concluded that L2 communicative strategies are numerous, and dependent on learner and situational variables.

**86–292 Porcher, Louis**. Motivations ou raisons d'apprendre. [Motivation or reasons more for learning.] *Langues Modernes* (Paris), **79**, 5 (1985), 105–12.

The realities of school life are such that schoolchildren need to succeed and pass examinations. If they are to play the game they must know the rules. Evaluation is an important factor in motivating learners. If the pupils regard success as a matter of chance, learning is not worth the investment of time and energy it requires. Self-evaluation, accompanying not substituting for formal evaluation, has a role to play. Recognition by the group is also a 'motive for motivation'.

To build lessons exclusively around pupils' interests is to keep them enclosed within their own limited horizons. They can, however, be assisted to identify, clarify and formulate their interests and also to acquire new ones. Another motivating factor is the usefulness, as pupils see it, of what is learned – a factor which accounts for the dominant position of English among foreign languages taught in French schools.

**86–293 Tarone, Elaine E.** (U. of Minnesota). Variability in interlanguage use: a study of style-shifting in morphology and syntax. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **35**, 3 (1985), 373–404.

It has been claimed that as second-language learners perform different tasks at a single point in time, their production of some grammatical, morphological, and phonological

forms will vary in a predictable manner. This article reports a study on the English language use of native speakers of Arabic and Japanese in three task conditions: completing a written grammar test, participating in an oral interview, and narrating a story to a listener. Results of the study provide evidence in support of the hypothesis that the utterances of second language learners show systematic variability in some morphological and grammatical forms, a variability related to task. The study shows that the performance of second language learners on a written grammar test varies from their performance when attempting to communicate orally; in some cases, grammatical accuracy is much better in spontaneous oral communication than in scores on a written grammar test. The study shows that more than two styles are evidenced when learners perform more than two tasks, and that when those tasks are ordered in terms of degree of attention to language form required, the styles produced by learners in response to those tasks may be ranged along a continuous dimension.

**86–294 van Helmond, Karin and van Vugt, Margot.** On the transferability of nominal compounds. *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin* (Utrecht), **8**, 2 (1984), 5–27.

This article outlines test data which contradict hypotheses related to the Kellerman (1977) framework, i.e. (1) L1 Dutch speakers are more likely to translate two-word Dutch nominal compounds into German than into English because the former language is felt to be closer, (2) they would be inclined to accept literal German translations of Dutch compounds rather than English ones, (3) proficiency levels would have no influence on speakers' transferability judgement, (4) there is a positive correlation between frequency and transferability and (5) regular, semantically transparent compounds whose meaning can easily be deduced will be transferred more frequently than those which are opaque or idiomatic.

The operation of two transfer determinants, learner perception of language distance and the 'markedness' of L1 structures, is also examined. The falsification or partial confirmation of the above hypotheses had the effect of showing language transfer to be a complex phenomenon not adequately explained by the Kellerman framework. It is impossible, without the development of a new framework and the unambiguous definition of key concepts, to answer such fundamental questions as what linguistic elements learners see as transferable and whether or not transfer can be predicted.

**86–295 Yule, George and others,** (U. of Minnesota). Investigating aspects of the language learner's confidence: an application of the theory of signal detection. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **35**, 3 (1985), 473–88.

In this study of the performance of a group of adult Japanese ESL learners on a listening test, an attempt is made to discover the relationship between correctness in answering and accuracy in judging the correctness/incorrectness of answers chosen. Each time the learners chose an answer, they had to indicate on a 5-point scale how confident they were of the correctness of the answer. While average ratings for correct answers were higher than for wrong answers, two other patterns of 'nonconfident correct answering' and 'very confident wrong answering' were found. In order to investigate these phenomena in terms of the individual learner's performance, some

analytic procedures from the Theory of Signal Detection were applied. An explanation and exemplification of those procedures are presented. The results show that there can be substantial differences in individual performances, despite identical test scores. These differences in terms of self-monitoring ability and confidence are demonstrated and discussed. The study shows that the analytic procedures described can yield a number of important insights into learner performance and that the assumption of a straightforward relationship between accuracy and confidence in answering test items is mistaken.

## RESEARCH METHODS

**86–296 Breen, Michael P.** (U. of Lancaster). The social context of language learning – a neglected situation? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), 7, 2 (1985), 135–58.

Second-language acquisition (SLA) research treats the classroom as an experimental laboratory in which the learner is exposed to a certain kind of linguistic input which should lead to a desirable learning outcome, and in which good language-learning strategies can be reinforced. Any active cognition on the learner's part is disregarded, however. Such research neglects the social significance of the variables concerned. Classroom-oriented research, on the other hand, focuses primarily on the discourse of classroom communication. But it cannot reveal the underlying social psychological forces which generate the discourse, or the social cognitive effects of the discourse. Nor does it reveal what the teacher and learners experience from the discourse.

A third metaphor, that of the classroom as coral gardens, is proposed. It insists that we perceive the language class as a genuine culture and worth investigating as such. Essential features of this culture are that (1) it is interactive – participants should be willing to suspend their disbelief and take part in simulated communication within classrooms – specific interaction; (2) it is differentiated – it presents a different social context for each learner; (3) it is collective – the group psyche is different from the sum of each individual's psyche; the individual has to adapt his learning process to the social – psychological resources of the group; (4) it is highly normative – teacher and taught are in continual judgement of each other; (5) it is asymmetrical – the duties and rights of teacher and taught are different; (6) it is inherently conservative; (7) it is jointly constructed – lessons evolve through negotiation, despite advance planning; (8) it is immediately significant. It is necessary therefore to re-examine our assumptions and ways of collecting information.

Implications for the teacher are that the underlying culture of the class should be mobilised and engaged more directly. It is a reservoir of knowledge and experience of language and communicating. The teaching/learning process requires decisions to be made, and decision-making has high communicative potential. Teachers and students could investigate the language-learning process as it actually happens.

**86–297 Dinsmore, David.** *Waiting for Godot in the EFL classroom.* *ELT Journal* (London), **39**, 4 (1985), 225–34.

Three EFL classes in Japan were observed and audio-recorded. Lessons often seemed to pass from meaningless activity to silence, as teachers and students, like actors in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, worked at passing the time. The teachers were English native-speakers with wide experience, the students were Japanese, mainly businessmen at intermediate level. Tapes were transcribed mainly using Sinclair and Coulthard's system.

In all classes, the main structure occurring in Teacher–Student interactions was Teacher Initiation – Pupil Response – Teacher Follow-up, despite the fact that these were adult classes and the above structure was taken from primary-school classes. The teachers in all three classes remained firmly in control of the discourse for most of the time. Teachers spoke unusually slowly and made use of 'foreigner talk', although their pupils were preparing for a test of communicative ability and a possible posting abroad. Drills were often stultifying and useless. The teachers emphasised form over meaning and accuracy over communication. Teachers should examine more closely what is going on in their classrooms.

**86–298 Faerch, Claus** (U. of Copenhagen). *Meta talk in FL classroom discourse.* *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **7**, 2 (1985), 184–99.

One way of characterising communication in the FL classroom is in terms of what at a given time is in primary focus. Adopting a basic distinction between transactions with a focus on the FL code (meta transactions) and transactions with a focus on socio-literary or other non-linguistic content (content transactions), two aspects of meta talk are discussed: (1) The occurrence of scaffolded constructions, i.e. syntagms distributed over several turns at speech; and (2) the norms holding for talk about talk, i.e. what counts as an argument about the FL code. Following an exemplification from Danish classroom data (English and German as L2), the author concludes by discussing the learning and pedagogical potential of each of these types of meta talk.

At one extreme comes the use of scaffolded structures in a situation where the teacher is in full control of semantic and syntactic planning. At the other extreme would come student-centred negotiation of rule knowledge with the teacher functioning more as a consultant than a director. There is no reason to take it for granted that classroom communication should resemble non-educational communication, but in fact student-centred activities enable the learners to try out more hypotheses about the FL (with some steering from the teacher as necessary) than is possible in scaffolded structures.

**86–299 Kommenda, Markus and others** (Technische U., Vienna). Ein System zur akustischen Ausgabe von deutschen Text für Personal-Computer. [A system for acoustic output of German written texts for personal computers.] *Germanistische Linguistik* (Marburg, FRG), **79/80** (1985), 57–82.

The aim of the research reported here is the acoustic output of any German text on the basis of an input in normal written text. A newly developed transcription program (GRAPHON) transforms the written form into the corresponding phonetic spelling. The elements of this phonetic spelling serve to direct a commercially available speech synthesiser (VOTRAX). As the latter was originally designed for the production of English speech sounds, the suitability of an integrated LPC-synthesising component (Texas Instruments) was investigated for the generation of a German phonemic inventory.

The transcriptional program was written in a high-level programming language (PASCAL) and implemented on a personal computer (APPLE III). Alongside the transcriptional routines the program also includes an editor, which makes it possible to draw up and modify the lists which are used in the process of translation from symbols to sounds. In addition to the acoustic realisation there is provision for output of the phonetic transcription via screen or printer. In the current version of the program—packet information on stress is ignored. The program and the transliteration lists required a storage capacity of 29 kilobytes. The maximum possible flexibility and ease of expansion were aimed at in the the course of developing the system.

Preliminary tests of the system with varied texts have demonstrated that good translational reliability can be achieved with the 600 rules of German pronunciation currently in use. The quality of the acoustic output is limited by the use of the VOTRAX synthesiser. And it was not possible to improve the quality by using the LPC-synthesiser; this was mainly as a result of the as yet inadequately developed directional parameters for this synthesiser.

**86–300 Kulas, W. and Rühl, H.-W.** Über die Erzeugung einer Satzintonation. [On the generation of sentence intonation.] *Germanistische Linguistik* (Marburg, FRG), **79/80** (1985), 127–38.

Work on the generation of intonation in a reading machine designed to read out written texts is reported on. It is claimed that at present only a syntactic analysis of processed texts is possible. A real time semantic analysis is not currently attainable. Syntactic information suffices to synthesise neutral intonation analogous to that of a news reader. The speech generated by the reading machine is rendered more intelligible as a result of using intonational patterns which structure the flow of information in a linguistic utterance. A preliminary model is presented for the realisation of intonation which depends on the acoustic parameters of pitch, duration of both sound and gaps between sounds, and loudness.

**86–301 Müller, Bernd S.** Regelgesteuerte Umsetzung von deutschen Texten in gesprochene Sprache für das Sprachausgabegerät VOTRAX. [The rule-governed transformation of German texts into spoken language for the VOTRAX-speech synthesiser.] *Germanistische Linguistik* (Marburg, FRG), **79/80** (1985), 83–112.

Speech synthesisers of the VOTRAX-type presuppose the transformation of written texts into phones, when unseen written texts are read out. Preliminary rule systems for such a transformation are in existence but are incomplete. In order to ease the handling of programmes designed to transform written texts into spoken language, the rules need to be openly accessible. The 'Rede' program described in this paper translates written texts into the sound commands of a VOTRAX speech synthesiser. The program is realised as a chain of parsers in which each individual parser transforms the input language step by step into a phonetic output language. In this way the transformation process is segmented to deal adequately with each problem that comes up. The program works on the UNIX time-sharing system on a PDP 11/70. It enables texts to be read aloud in real time; one version also allows rudimentary sentence intonation. Semantic relations are not considered.

**86–302 Piétropaolo-Saura, Brigitte and Roffé, Mary** (U. of Québec). Analyse différentielle et analyse des erreurs: un nouveau regard. [Differential analysis and error analysis: a new look.] *Bulletin of the CAAL* (Montreal), **7**, 1 (1985), 47–55.

This article concerns error analysis of hispanophone adults learning French as a second language. The authors were interested in determining the proportion of errors that are attributable to interference, or to developmental factors, as well as ascertaining if the source of the errors is itself dependent on the type of error made. An oral database was constituted on the basis of interviews obtained at an Immigrant Guidance and Training Centre. Although all lexical, morphosyntactic and phonetic errors were analysed using a new system of classification, this report is limited to the more frequent morphosyntactic errors. The analysis produced some quite surprising results, contradicting, at the same time, both the differential analysis and the error analysis schools of thought. In effect, the authors concluded that 49.1 % of morpho-syntactic errors are interlingual, while 48.7 % are interlingual.

## TESTING

**86–303 Cross, David** (ENS, Abidjan, Ivory Coast). The effects of a change from a structural to a unit-credit course. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **23**, 3 (1985), 145–51.

Two cohorts of pupils from a London comprehensive school, both consisting of top-set pupils who had chosen to continue French after the compulsory three years, were given batteries of 11 tests at the beginning and end of their fourth year. Cohort I had used

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the older structural *Cours Illustré* throughout; Cohort II used the newer unit-credit *Eclair* for three years, then switched to *Cours Illustré*.

It had been hypothesised that each group would score higher on a different set of tests, but the differences were much smaller than expected. At the start of the fourth year there were differences significant at the 1% level in only three of the 11 tests (Cohort II lower in substitution test, higher in fluency and number of utterances), and at the end of the year there was only one such difference (Cohort II higher in cloze test). Fourth-year teachers appeared to have emphasised different skills with each cohort to compensate for the perceived weak points of earlier courses and thus 'iron out' differences.

**86-304 Davidson, Fred and Henning, Grant** (U. of California, LA). A self-rating scale of English difficulty: Rasch scalar analysis of items and rating categories. *Language Testing* (London), 2, 2 (1985), 164-79.

The study sought to demonstrate the utility of Rasch Model scalar analysis when applied to self-ratings of ability/difficulty associated with component skills of English as a second language. Eleven skill areas were rated for difficulty on a seven-point Likert-type scale by 228 ESL students at the University of California. Following appropriate tests of unidimensionality, both skill area items and rating categories were calibrated for difficulty, examined for fit to the Rasch Model, and plotted to provide visual representation of the nature of the item characteristic curves. Specific suggestions were made for the improvement of the rating categories of the self-rating scale, and skill areas most susceptible to self-rating error were identified. It was concluded that scalar analysis of the kind considered here is feasible with self-rating data, and that other rating scale procedures such as those employed to rate proficiency in foreign language speaking or writing would probably benefit from similar scalar analyses.

**86-305 Douglas, Dan** (Iowa State U.) and **Selinker, Larry** (U. of Michigan). Principles for language tests within the 'discourse domains' theory of interlanguage. *Language Testing* (London), 2, 2 (1985), 206-26.

Test takers should use a current version of their interlanguage (IL) to create personalised, prototypical contexts (discourse domains) in order to make test situations intelligible. Learners respond to test texts, for example, by either accessing existing domains, producing a temporary one, or being unable to formulate any control structure at all. Learner control of the operative domain seems to produce enhanced communicative sophistication, particularly in the area of correction and mitigation strategies.

Reference is made to research undertaken by the authors, especially in the collection of SPEAK test data [appended tapescripts], which purportedly underscores the 15 IL/discourse domain hypotheses presented in the article. The latter include suppositions about the need for valid tests to engage relevant learner domains if they are to provide genuine assessment, the seeming linkage between the differential

creation of IL structures and the realities of particular situations, and the idea that training in test-taking strategies can actually help a testee to deploy a misleading 'meta-domain' which might vitiate interpretation of his/her test performance. These and other connections between testing and SLA/IL research provide a richer conceptualisation of the language testing process than has heretofore been possible.

**86-306 Henning, Grant and others** (U. of California, LA). Item response theory and the assumption of unidimensionality for language tests. *Language Testing* (London), **2**, 2 (1985), 141-54.

Considerable controversy has arisen around the assumption of unidimensionality underlying the application of latent trait models of measurement. The intent of this paper is to provide a clearer articulation of the unidimensionality assumption and to investigate the robustness and applicability of a particular unidimensional model, the Rasch Model, for use with language proficiency tests that consist of batteries of subtests in a variety of skill areas and that are applied in the testing of the abilities of students from diverse educational, linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Results of the analysis of response data from the administration of a 150-item, five-subskill ESL proficiency/placement examination to 312 entering university students indicated that unidimensionality constraints were not violated.

**86-307 Lantolf, James P. and Frawley, William.** Oral-proficiency testing: a critical analysis. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **69**, 4 (1985), 337-45.

The authors question the validity of the assessment guidelines produced by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and the Educational Testing Service, particularly in regard to criteria for oral-proficiency testing (OPT). They have not been subjected to sufficient professional scepticism; they are based on untested assumptions about such factors as the number of hours required to produce a proficient L2 speaker, and the correlation between topic interest and spoken accuracy. Moreover, there is a fundamental logical circularity at the core of the guidelines, wherein necessary facts are established *a priori* and then 'proven'.

Learners are gauged in terms of a closed, self-defining system that models rather than mirrors authentic communicative interaction. Despite the criterion-referencing claimed by the guidelines, the rationale really implies norm-referencing. The 'sacred' concept of the educated native speaker, by which L2 learners are evaluated, is artificial, normative and statistically derived. Given the supposed empirical paucity of the guidelines, a call is made for a delay in any decision to implement them in the production of actual teaching programmes.

**86-308 LeBlanc, Raymond** (U. of Ottawa) and **Painchaud, Gisèle** (U. of Montreal). Self-assessment as a second language placement instrument. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **19**, 4 (1985), 673-87.

This article reports a sequence of experiments leading to the use of self-assessment as a placement test. These experiments dealt with such questions as, Do students have

the ability to evaluate their own performance? Does the type of instrument used affect that ability? Can students be satisfactorily placed by self-assessment results alone? The conclusion is that at least under the conditions described, self-assessment must be considered a very valuable tool as a placement instrument.

**86-309 Markham, Paul L.** (U. of Maryland). The rational deletion cloze and global comprehension in German. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **35**, 3 (1985), 423-30.

The intersentential sensitivity of the rational deletion cloze procedure was examined in this investigation. A total of 84 college-level students of German participated in the study. One group of subjects complete a sequential cloze task, and a second group completed a scrambled cloze task. The results revealed no significant differences between cloze test scores in the exact word or the acceptable word (synonyms allowed) scoring conditions. It is suggested that the cloze procedure may not yield a valid and reliable assessment of global comprehension in the second-language context.

**86-310 Mitchell, Rosamund** (U. of Edinburgh). The use of role-play tasks in assessing FL communicative performance. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **23**, 3 (1985), 169-72.

Communicative competence includes at least four main elements: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence. To be 'certified' as communicatively competent in any foreign language, the learner must actually be required to display this full range of skills, but existing assessment practices focus too narrowly on the learner's linguistic knowledge. Communicative competence can only be inferred indirectly, from actual performance. The problem for the tester is to devise tasks and activities which will elicit an adequate sample of the learner's attempts at communicative performance. Role-play tasks are commonly used for this purpose in graded test schemes, but the criteria of interaction, unpredictability and of real-life performance constraints are frequently not met. More open-ended role-play tasks are needed. Teachers, moreover, need training to conduct such tests. The high-status figure of the teacher, as interlocutor in the test, may have an inhibiting effect on pupil performance.

The author studied an experienced teacher administering open-ended role-play tasks to pupils in their second year of French. She sustained her 'French' roles fairly consistently, but both she and the pupils modelled conversational strategies on previously studied coursebook examples. She varied her responses to different pupils but this partly depended on her prior knowledge of the individual pupil's FL ability and self-confidence. The resulting discourse structure diverged from real-life norms: conversations tended to be constructed out of autonomous question/answer exchanges. The validity of role-play tasks, even open-ended ones, for all-sided assessment of communicative performance, can therefore be questioned, though such tasks undoubtedly have potential for the purpose.

**86-311 Morrow, Keith.** The evaluation of tests of communicative performance. *Prospect* (Adelaide, Australia), 1, 2 (1985), 32-44.

This article first sets out the rationale and specifications underlying the Royal Society of Arts 'Communicative use of English as a Foreign Language' examinations, and then considers criteria for evaluating communicative tests in general. The competence descriptors for the three RSA levels are discussed in terms of such factors as accuracy, appropriacy, range and flexibility; the author emphasises the authentic nature of the tests.

The traditional test criteria of validity and reliability should be expressed practically; the author coins the terms 'washback' and 'operational' validity. The former refers to the actual effect of tests on particular teaching situations, while the latter concentrates on the internal characteristics of the tests themselves. Operational validity is related to predictive validity.

The scientific and indirect measures which typify classical test evaluation are irrelevant when applied to communicative examinations. A call is made for a distinction between orthodox language testing and that which examines, in a commonsense, rough and ready way, language use by individuals in the real world.

**86-312 Spolsky, Bernard** (Bar-Ilan U.). What does it mean to know how to use a language? An essay on the theoretical basis of language testing. *Language Testing* (London), 2, 2 (1985), 180-91.

Language testing and linguistic theory must both try to define language knowledge and use. There are three main approaches. The Structural claim, which assumes that knowledge can take the form of a grammar or structural description of the language, forms the basis of the discrete point tests. The Functional approach assumes that the nature of language knowledge is best captured by listing the various uses to which it can be put; it is embodied in the communicative competence model, the notional-functional curriculum, and the interest in teaching and testing pragmatics. The General Proficiency claim is based on the notion that individuals vary in possessing measurable amounts of an indivisible body of knowledge. It underlies arguments for a general factor underlying batteries of tests or for the trait measured by certain test methods like the cloze. The theoretical strengths and weaknesses of these approaches and the impossibility of showing that any one is completely correct forces us to consider all three as basic to testing. Anybody who knows a second language must be assumed to have all three kinds of knowledge, so that we can only achieve the full picture of language proficiency if we use many different measuring methods and know what trait is being tapped by each test.

**86-313 Verhoeven, Ludo and Vermeer, Anne.** Assessment procedures of oral second language proficiency: spontaneous speech vs elicitation data. *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin* (Utrecht), 8, 2 (1984), 50-68.

This article compares the utility of direct versus indirect testing techniques in assisting Dutch teachers to evaluate individual proficiency differences. The concurrent validity

of both techniques is established in this study by means of teacher evaluation of native and non-native Dutch-speaking pupils. The linguistic model at work is a hierarchically built grammatical system that distinguishes ability levels in phonological, lexical, syntactic and text-processing terms.

The authors review previous research in validating direct (i.e. spontaneous) and indirect (elicitation) L2 oral assessment, and then describe a study which analysed the abilities of Turkish and Dutch working-class students. The elicitation test procedures included such tasks as Auditory Discrimination, Sentence Comprehension/Imitation and Text Comprehension. The operation of each task is described, as are the results [tabular data].

It is concluded that spontaneous speech and elicitation measures correlated well, both with each other and with subjective teacher evaluation, but indirect measures related better to such 'external' judgements. A battery of easily administered and interpreted elicitation tests is the best way of identifying and diagnosing those learners experiencing linguistic difficulty.

**86-314 Woods, Anthony** (U. of Reading) and **Baker, Rosemary** (U. of Edinburgh). Item response theory. *Language Testing* (London), 2, 2, (1985), 117-40.

This is a highly algebraic introduction to the concepts underlying item response theory supported by tables of examples from actual language tests. Despite earlier criticism, the analysis of text items via the Rasch Model can complement classical methods and provide insights otherwise not easily obtained since it shows difficulty independently of testee ability, yet measures both on the same scale.

Estimates of difficulty of different items in a test are positively correlated with each other and will depend on the abilities of the subjects who happen to appear in the sample. Item difficulty is a transitive property in that, if all items are assessing the same unidimensional skill, then theoretically an individual who answers one correctly has that skill and therefore should answer the others correctly. This never happens in practice, suggesting that the skill is contaminated or a random distraction has influenced the result.

The Rasch Model, however, states that the response of a particular person in a sample to a particular item in a test can be expressed as a function of subject ability and item difficulty when random error in both has been discounted. The Rasch Model implies that a subject whose ability is exactly equal to the difficulty of a given item will have the same probability of answering the item correctly or incorrectly. Equivalently, the difficulty of an item can be defined as the ability of a subject who will have equal probabilities of passing or failing the item. The model assumes that, however able subjects may be, they are never certain to give the correct answer even to an easy item. The stability of difference between item difficulties on the Rasch Model facilitates the banking of items whose relative difficulties are known without the need to test all the items in the bank simultaneously. Once a bank of items has been established, the apparent ability of a subject will not depend on which items are included in his test, though the standard error will depend both on the number of items and on their difficulties.

**86-315 Zheng Chen and Henning, Grant** (U. of California, LA). Linguistic and cultural bias in language proficiency tests. *Language Testing* (London), 2, 2 (1985), 155-63.

This study examined the English as a Second Language Placement Examination (ESLPE) employed at the University of California, to determine the nature, direction and extent of bias present for members of two linguistically and culturally diverse subgroups of the sample of examinees. By comparison of the response patterns of 34 native speakers of Spanish and 77 native speakers of Chinese from among a total sample of 312 students tested with one form of the test, it was possible to identify test items exhibiting bias in their respective skill domains. Included is a discussion of the nature, direction, extent and implications of the bias detected.

Only four vocabulary recognition items out of 150 were found to exhibit bias. These consisted of English words for which close cognate forms existed in Spanish but not in Chinese. It was concluded that as long as lexical items in the test are randomly and broadly sampled, and do not exceed the proportion existing naturally in the languages in question, there is no need for concern about fairness, even through Spanish speakers have a natural advantage.

## CURRICULUM PLANNING

**86-316 Richards, Jack C.** Planning for proficiency. *Prospect* (Adelaide, Australia), 1, 2 (1985), 1-17.

Language proficiency relates to performance, i.e. observable and measurable behaviour; whereas competence refers to knowledge of the rules of using a language, proficiency refers to how well we can use such rules in communication. Proficiency is not a single global capacity but can only be defined with reference to specific kinds of performance. It also implies the notion of skill, and is hence measurable along a continuum. It refers to the integration and application of a number of subskills in performing particular tasks. Grammatical skill is one component, but not the essence of proficiency.

A proficiency-orientated curriculum is organised around the kinds of communicative tasks the learners need to accomplish. Its goal is to enable learners to develop the skills needed to use language for specific purposes, e.g. study skills, occupational tasks or interactional tasks. Language itself is only one of the means needed to realise non-linguistic goals.

If language proficiency rather than language is taken as the core of the language curriculum, language teaching might be described as 'criterion-referenced teaching'. The implications for curriculum development processes are considered in terms of (a) task selection, (b) learning theory, (c) levels of proficiency, and (d) methodology. (a) The curriculum derives from task analysis and needs analysis. The Malaysian Communications Syllabus is an example of a task-based curriculum model. In the Bangalore Project, the tasks are linked to a conventional grammar syllabus. (b) The

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information-processing theory of learning is the most appropriate to language proficiency. It views learning as the transfer of schemes, plans and operating procedures from short-term to long-term memory. The learner gradually develops through practice automatic control of the underlying plans for different kinds of language use. Acquisition comes about through practising tasks and activities which are initially under the domain of controlled processing. (c) Determining appropriate levels of performance for syllabus tasks is an essential phase of curriculum development. General descriptions of levels of proficiency can be used both in programme development and in evaluating learning, e.g. the ACTFL proficiency guide-lines. (d) Methodology refers to the role of pedagogic tasks and activities in building up fluency in particular aspects of proficiency – a dynamic process. Particular ‘methods’ such as Silent Way are likely to be inappropriate to a proficiency-based approach, as they fail to focus on learner needs or proficiency outcomes.

## COURSE/SYLLABUS DESIGN

**86–317 Gompf, Gundi.** The early start of English – recent trends and new directions in the Federal Republic of Germany. *International Review of Education* (Hamburg, FRG), **32**, 1 (1986), 3–22.

New trends in the early start of a foreign language, especially the teaching of English, are compared with past innovatory measures in structure, curriculum and syllabus at a primary level of education in various *Länder* of the Federal Republic of Germany. The article concentrates on experiments in the *Land* Hesse, which is carrying out the most expanded pilot scheme on the Early Start of English (ESE) this year (1985). The primary objectives of the syllabus, its monolingual approach, the criteria for selecting appropriate topics, the part ESE plays in primary education, its links with other subjects at primary level as well as problems of teacher training and finance are discussed *inter alia*. The article critically reviews past research on the early start of foreign language teaching and concludes by emphasising the need for a new, qualitative approach in ESE research work in the future.

**86–318 Kennedy, Chris** (U. of Birmingham). Vocabulary teaching in an ESP reading course. *ESPMENA Bulletin* (Khartoum, Sudan), **20** (1985), 19–25.

Lacking input from research and materials, vocabulary teaching has remained traditional and has emphasised product- rather than process-based learning, such as acquisition of ‘words’ rather than exploration of their relationships within a text. A reading programme designed for second-year undergraduates in a Business Studies Institute of the University of Tunis is described. Texts were taken from various ‘lay’ sources and non-technical magazines for the working businessman. Topics related both to general business issues and those connected with social and environmental problems in the Third World. Pre-reading, while-reading, vocabulary extension and the glossary are briefly discussed. The latter consists of simple vocabulary exercises on items likely to cause difficulty to be completed before reading the text.

**86-319 Stølen, Lars** (Information Centre for Language Teaching, Oslo). Bakgrunnen for arbeidet med terskelnivåbeskrivelse for norsk. [The background to the work of defining a threshold level for Norwegian.] *Kontaktblad for Norsk som andrespråk/fremmedspråk i Norge*, 1/2 (1985), 22–24.

Work on the definition of a threshold level for Norwegian began in 1983, and is being carried out by a team at the University of Bergen in collaboration with the Information Centre for Language Teaching, Oslo. The initiative in attempting to define the minimum content required in a beginner-level language course for communicative competence to be achieved was taken by the Council of Europe Modern Languages Project in the early 1970s. A threshold level (T-level) for English for adult learners was published in 1976 [1975-Ed.], and since then, T-levels have been defined for a number of other Western European languages, including French, German, Spanish and Italian. In Scandinavia, ideas from the T-level projects have been incorporated in curriculum developments for the teaching of English and Swedish as foreign languages at school level in Finland. Projects have also led to the definition of T-levels for Swedish and Danish.

The rationale behind T-level definition is familiar to many language-textbook writers in Norway, where the last decade has seen an expansion of the teaching of Norwegian as a foreign language, mainly as a result of the urgent basic language needs of immigrants and refugees. Despite the experience many teachers and textbook writers have gained in this period, a need is still felt for a more coherent and unified account of precisely what the content of a course in Norwegian as a foreign language should, and can, be. It is unsatisfactory in the long-term to rely on the Swedish or English T-levels, or some modified version of them. What is required is an independent development project from a Norwegian perspective, incorporating in the final product the collective wisdom of the T-level definitions for other languages. The definition of a T-level for Norwegian will be of great value in a number of areas, including curriculum development and teaching materials design. The Norwegian T-level, although essentially aimed at adult learners, will also be of interest at school level. There are moves towards increased Scandinavian co-operation in migrant education, and since an established system of training in the languages of the host countries is vital if this collaboration is to succeed, the definition of the Norwegian T-level will be indispensable for Norway's full participation in the scheme.

## TEACHER TRAINING

**86-320 Falk, Rüdiger.** Berufsfelder für Fremdsprachenlehrer in der privaten Wirtschaft. [Professional openings for foreign language teachers in private business.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main), 84, 5 (1985), 556–66.

By comparison to other teachers who are currently unemployed, those with training in foreign languages have relatively good chances of finding a satisfactory position in the business world. Basically, they have two options, involving either a direct

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application of their skills, e.g. by taking courses to qualify as an interpreter or foreign language correspondent, or an indirect application of their skills and capabilities in a position within a firm's business operations. In this case, a good knowledge of the firm's operations often leads to opportunities in the area of distribution. The latter course would therefore seem to be the more promising, if viewed in terms of having an occupation which is commensurate with one's qualifications and the potential for long-term career opportunities.

**86-321 Hoch, Frances S.** (North Carolina Dept. of Public Instruction). Computer literacy and the foreign language teacher. *CALICO Journal* (Provo, Utah), 3, 1 (1985), 17-18 and 32.

Computer literacy is defined as a process consisting of a graded sequence of skills, not all of which are required for the teacher to be able to use computers as an effective teaching aid. In-service training in the use of computers is essential, particularly in the field of foreign language teaching. Training that is specifically designed to meet the special needs of foreign language teachers should provide information concerning the role of the computer in foreign-language teaching. It should include demonstrations of the use of the computer and of types of software, workshops on the evaluation of software, and hands-on experience. The foreign-language teacher will then be able to understand the potential and recognise the limitations of the new technology in the classroom.

**86-322 Nott, David** (U. of Lancaster). The initial training of foreign language teachers. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, 23, 3 (1985), 127-37 and 142.

This article proposes reforms in the initial training of British FL teachers which could reasonably be achieved despite the financial constraints imposed by government educational policy. Two or more FLs represent the most useful degree subject combinations, with French taking a primary position. On the other hand, current trends towards FL/Business Studies combinations are also welcomed, and teachers should be encouraged to develop a more varied, non-literary educational background.

The criteria for judging prospective teachers need to be altered; a good language teacher should have high FL oral proficiency, demonstrate a sophisticated grammatical awareness, possess a sympathetic yet objective first-hand knowledge of the target culture and, just as important, be an effective personal 'mediator' between that culture and the students.

The pragmatic nature of the author's views is underscored by recommendations about such matters as the extent of trainee/trainer negotiation about relevant course content. A 21-week training programme is outlined, for possible use by school department heads and LEA advisers as a checklist for the induction of probationary teachers.

**86-323 Svindland, Arne** (U. of Bergen). Språklæring og kulturlæring. [Language learning and culture.] *Kontaktblad for Norsk som Fremmedspråk i Norge* (Oslo, Norway), 3/4 (1984), 31-9.

Language and culture are closely interconnected. In order to understand, and be able to use, a language, one must be aware of its cultural context; in order to learn a new language, one must not only master its linguistic system, but also acquire the related cultural competence. In traditional foreign language (English, German and French) teaching in Norway, cultural differences are relatively small, and teaching can focus on linguistic aspects. In the teaching of Norwegian as a second language to migrants and refugees of, for example, Turkish origin, the learners must cope with a situation in which both the linguistic system and the cultural context are fundamentally different from their own.

Consequently, teacher training in Norwegian as a second language must aim to produce teachers who are capable of seeing their own language and culture from an outsider's perspective, and who are aware of the diversity of types of linguistic and cultural self-expression, and the impossibility of making any qualitative comparison between them. Training courses should involve both linguistic and cultural aspects. The former should comprise: a general linguistic component dealing with linguistic description, language typologies, and specialised terminology; a language-specific component, giving instruction in the mother tongue and in relevant minority community languages; a language learning component, covering language acquisition and learning, with the emphasis on second-language learning/teaching; and a methodological component. The cultural content of the course should include: a general sociological component, dealing with different types of social organisation and with migration; a culture-specific component; and a psychological component, focusing on the problems of refugees and migrants. There may be difficulties in integrating the linguistic and cultural elements of the course, as few individuals or departments have the appropriate interdisciplinary experience. Teacher trainers from different subject backgrounds must co-operate to produce a new type of course.

## TEACHING METHODS

**86-324 Abraham, Roberta G.** (Iowa State U.). Field independence-dependence and the teaching of grammar. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), 19, 4 (1985), 689-702.

The cognitive style of field independence (the tendency to differentiate objects from their surroundings) has been shown in a number of studies to be related to success in second-language classrooms in which deductive teaching dominates. The purpose of the study reported in this article was to discover whether less rule-oriented teaching might prove more beneficial for field-dependent students. A pretest/post-test design was used to compare the effectiveness of two ESL lessons on participle formation for subjects at various points along the field independent/dependent continuum. One lesson was based on a traditional deductive approach; the other provided no rules but

directed attention to many examples of participles in context. A regression analysis showed a significant interaction between field independence and lesson, with field-independent subjects performing better with the deductive lesson and field-dependent subjects better with the example lesson. Examination of individual items on pre- and post-tests provided evidence that the majority of subjects in both lessons had engaged in step-by-step rule building. Implications for teaching and further research are discussed.

**86-325 Allix, Christian and Kodron, Christoph.** *Correspondre—communiquer.* [Corresponding and communicating.] *Langues Modernes* (Paris), **79**, 6 (1985), 33–43.

The authors report a continuing series of projects in which pairs of classes in French and German schools have produced and exchanged portfolios of material about aspects of their own culture. The topics chosen so far have been environment, school, television, cooking, festivals and fairy stories, and the material has included written documents, audio- and video-tapes and realia. The receiving group makes pedagogical use of the material and sends back reactions and requests for information. Expected benefits include increased inter-cultural understanding, experience of real, unpredictable language use, and fostering of habits of democratic co-operation with reduced reliance on the teacher. Interim results have been encouraging.

**86-326 Balcom, Patricia** (U. of Ottawa). Should we teach grammar? Another look at Krashen's Monitor Model. *Bulletin of the CAAL* (Montreal), **7**, 1 (1985), 37–45.

Krashen's Monitor Model has gained wide currency among second-language teachers. One of the basic ideas of his model is that grammar should not be taught because 'learning' does not become 'acquisition'. However, the evidence that learned material cannot be used to generate utterances is weak. Given the conceptual framework of the Monitor Model, it is argued that grammar not only can, but should be taught. Teaching grammar can (1) make input more comprehensible, i.e. enable learners to organise the language they are exposed to; (2) help learners segment the incoming speech signal into more efficient units of comprehension; and (3) confirm or disconfirm learners' current hypotheses on the grammar of the target language. General guidelines as to how grammar should be taught, based on current learning theory (the 'multistore' theory) are also presented.

**86-327 Bassano, Sharron** (Santa Cruz Adult Sch., California). Helping learners adapt to unfamiliar methods. *ELT Journal* (London), **40**, 1 (1986), 13–19.

Ways are suggested of dealing with resistance or negativity on the part of students faced with unfamiliar classroom methods or materials. The teacher should be aware of students' past classroom experiences and their assumptions about language learning – resistance can then be better anticipated. The teacher needs to build the

students' confidence in his/her expertise and qualifications. He/she should make sure that students (particularly adults) perceive the purpose behind any classroom task. The teacher should begin where the students are and move forward slowly, gradually changing the strategies used. Students should always be shown their achievement: immediate results overpower resistance. Free choice should be allowed for as much as possible, especially for the most resistant students. It is essential for the teacher to be aware of the students' interests and concerns, their goals and objectives. The most motivating lessons are those that relate directly to the world of the student. They can choose their own favourite topics, and their own priorities as to language skills.

**86-328 Bebermeier, Hans.** Die fachgerechte Fehlerkorrektur auf dem pädagogischen Prüfstand. [Error correction strategies under the microscope.] *Der fremdsprachliche Unterricht* (Stuttgart, FRG), **71** (1984), 184-90.

Although theorists recommend that errors, especially those not impeding communication, be accepted as necessary for learning and not corrected, teachers often behave otherwise. Reasons include their personal values, beliefs and interests (in correct language, error typologies, etc.), pressures of time (correction and explanation often seems like a short cut), and pupils' expectations in particular cases. Can a study of interlanguage lead to an appropriate strategy of correction in cases where the pupil is cognitively ready?

We must judge errors by the standards of real-life (non-classroom) performance, so that, for example, incomplete sentence may be acceptable. We must also recognise that some errors are due to the demands imposed by a particular task, e.g. insufficient time, content difficulties with prior input, embarrassment in front of class, competition. Error treatment should stress help and support, and aim, following Krashen, not to reveal weaknesses but to provide input for further acquisition.

**86-329 Carrell, Patricia L.** (Southern Illinois U.) Facilitating ESL reading by teaching text structure. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **19**, 4 (1985), 727-52.

Recent research has shown that the rhetorical organisation of narrative and expository texts interacts with the formal schemata of native English-speaking readers (the readers' background knowledge of and experience with a textual organisation) to affect reading. Researchers have recently shown that formal, rhetorical schemata have similar effects on reading in English as a second language. Moreover, the research in native-English reading has shown that explicit teaching of various aspects of text structure can facilitate first-language reading.

This article reports a controlled training study designed to answer the related question for second-language reading, Can we facilitate ESL reading by explicit teaching of text structure? The results indicate that training on the top-level rhetorical organisation of expository texts significantly increased the amount of information that 25 intermediate-level ESL students could recall.

**86-330 Finkenstaedt, Thomas.** Der Schülerwettbewerb Fremdsprachen 1979-1984: Versuch einer Bilanz. [The foreign languages competition for schools, 1979-1984: an assessment.] *Die neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **84**, 5 (1985), 476-83.

A privately sponsored, nationwide competition in foreign languages, for senior secondary-school pupils, ran for five years until replaced by an official federal competition. The author denies charges of elitism, with the arguments that society needs outstanding performances of all kinds, that participation was voluntary, and that the function was to encourage, not to select. Winners did not all come from the same social class, and foreign workers' children did not have an unfair advantage.

**86-331 Gerth, Klaus** (Académie de Lille). L'enseignement international et bilingue dans l'Académie de Lille: approches méthodologiques. [Methodological approaches to bilingual and international education in two 'départements' in Northern France.] *Langues Modernes* (Paris), **79**, 6 (1985), 25-31.

In the two *départements* of Nord and Pas-de-Calais in Northern France which together constitute the Académie de Lille, 1,800 pre-elementary children are enrolled in bilingual or international classes. They receive 27 hours teaching in French and 6 in the partner language (Italian, Portuguese or Flemish). In order to promote the necessary co-operation between the French and the foreign teacher, the syllabus is planned jointly. Teachers observe each other's classes, visit other establishments where the same programme has been introduced, and attend talks, discussions, demonstrations, and training sessions where they can exchange ideas and experiences.

Communicative competence in L2 and learner autonomy are important objectives. Grids have been devised on which events in the class can be recorded but these need to be simplified and made easier to use. Other teaching material is currently being prepared. There are plans to continue the programme at secondary level.

**86-332 Hezemans-Dirkmaat, Mieke and Hülsenbeck, Claartje.** Thematisch werken in de meertalige klas in het basisonderwijs. [Thematic teaching in the multilingual primary class.] *Levende Talen* (The Hague), **406** (1985), 611-17.

Some of the difficulties inherent in teaching language in a multilingual class can be overcome by the use of thematic teaching, where children work in small groups on a project. A lot of thematic project work tends to emphasise differences between racial groups and to encourage stereotyping, but this can be avoided, provided teachers are consciously anti-racist. Most teachers are trained in the basics of language teaching, but in some ways these skills are less important than a readiness to learn about new cultures and a readiness to listen to what the children have to say.

Language learning takes place best in situations where language is used for communication, and this idea fits well with project work. This idea is developed through a detailed account of how children might learn to ask questions in the course of a project on the Neighbourhood.

**86-333 Hill, Brian** (Brighton Poly.). Adult language learners: the way ahead. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **23**, 2 (1985), 79-84.

Looking ten years ahead, any innovations are likely to be in methodology rather than content, since in the latter area the work of the Council of Europe's experts will prove definitive. Publishers will make concessions to the principle of learner choice. A course would be flexible: it might comprise course book, sound cassette, computer-tape/floppy disc and perhaps video disc. It would assume three to four hours per week maximum for home study and make provision for irregular patterns of study. In the early stages the course would concentrate on survival language, then build up listening and speaking skills based on themes and vocabulary acquisition. Attention would be paid to keeping learners motivated and actively involved. Specially constructed material would be provided to keep active language which is known rather than teaching new material. The course would concentrate on training students to understand both text and speech and to use the language orally. Language study would be linked to cultural background and use made of authentic materials. The course would include carefully presented grammar and structure practice after the survival stage. It would develop a more pastoral role towards the student, with producers and publishers offering a voluntary after-sales service.

**86-334 Holmes, Betty C.** (Pennsylvania State U.). The effect of four different modes of reading on comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **20**, 5 (1985), 575-85.

The purpose of this study was to determine which of four modes of reading (oral reading to an audience, oral reading to oneself, silent reading, silent reading while listening) best facilitates the answering of post comprehension questions. The comprehension questions included gist, literal recall of details, inferences, and scriptural comparisons. Forty-eight subjects read an expository passage in each of the modes and answered the questions. The results supported equivalent comprehension following silent and oral reading to oneself. Both of these modes were superior to oral reading to an audience. In addition, silent reading was found to facilitate comprehension to a greater extent than did silent reading while listening to the text being read.

**86-335 Lecomte, Philippe.** 'Pourquoi votre fille est muette...' ou réflexions sur la motivation en didactique des langues. ['Why your daughter is silent...' or the role of motivation in language teaching.] *Langues Modernes* (Paris), **79**, 5 (1985), 19-27.

The long-term goals of learning a language are too remote to motivate schoolchildren immersed in the 'here and now'. The lessons themselves must supply motivation. Classes must be interesting, take place at a good time of day and in a pleasant place. Long-term aims must be broken down into a series of clear-cut, easily attainable objectives; success motivates, failure discourages. The group feeling of the class must be fostered. The personality of the teacher is crucial. The materials used should be appropriate; feeling and emotion count for more than discussion and rationality.

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There should be variety in content, methods, activities, techniques; there is no single, always-valid method. The teacher should think in terms of how to interest the class, not what to teach, and the pupils should be encouraged to assume responsibility for learning – languages are not taught in the traditional sense of the term. Teachers must themselves be motivated, and must try to put themselves in their students' place.

**86-336 Lewis, Derek** (U. of Dundee). The computer-controlled tape recorder, a new development in language teaching. *Incorporated Linguist* (London), **24**, 3/4 (1985), 198–200.

A description is given of the Tandberg computer-controlled tape recorder (TCCR), and how it interfaces with a BBC microcomputer. The computer sends signals to the tap-recorder and receives messages back. The TCCR's potential for language work incorporating an audio component includes a multiple-choice question/answer program and a dictation-type exercise. Some attempts have been made to develop software with the aim of training the machine to handle open-ended language and to interact intelligently with the learner: these include the interpreter package and a listening comprehension package.

**86-337 Littlejohn, Andrew** (University Coll. of Bahrain). Learner choice in language study. *ELT Journal* (London), **39**, 4 (1985), 253–61.

Learner-centred approaches normally focus either on the design of syllabuses that relate specifically to an analysis of students' needs or on the provision of classroom activities that encourage more student participation. This article, however, argues that a truly learner-centred approach should instead be concerned with allowing learners a greater role in the management of their learning, by providing opportunities for learner choice in the method and scope of study. Such opportunities could be introduced into the traditional classroom with minimal problems, and some suggestions for this are put forward. Learner choice as a more fundamental aspect of a language course can be provided through the establishment of self-access centres, and the article reports on experiments conducted at the University College of Bahrain. A 'self-access centre' is a room where learning materials are provided for learners to use, working at their own pace without direct teacher supervision. They can evaluate their work with answer keys. Most materials are available as worksheets coded according to the level and the main skill involved. Other materials include readers, tapes and books. Students are encouraged to work together. Teachers' and learners' attitudes to the centre are discussed, and it is suggested that more needs to be done to guide both teachers' and learners' expectations in order to make learner choices an active feature of foreign-language study.

**86-338 McDonough, Steven** (U. of Essex). Academic writing practice. *ELT Journal* (London), **39**, 4 (1985), 241–7.

This article discusses ways of providing sufficient scope in writing exercises for EFL students on postgraduate courses to gain speed and confidence in handling English

to express their knowledge of their subject and answer examination questions. The advantage of getting students to set their own questions is that this gives the teacher a selection of relevant topics in fields in which he/she has no expertise. The first instructional stage is to rewrite the student's questions in the usual examination format, which involves re-casting them into acceptable tasks. Practice in writing the answers can be graded by allowing reference books and dictionaries in the early stages, then steadily withdrawing them. Early sessions can be prepared in detail, later sessions written unseen. They begin by aiming at accuracy, but are later urged to go for quantity, to increase their writing speed. Some more general, teacher-set questions can also be tried to give a comparison of different answers to the same question.

**86-339 Moody, H. L. B.** (British Council, Columbia). Approaches to the study of literature: a practitioner's view. *ELT Documents* (London), **115** (1983), 17-36.

For a variety of sound cultural and pedagogic reasons, literary studies should have a fundamental role in education. Literature itself is defined as a varied set of linguistic artefacts, i.e. spoken or written texts, intended either for private or public communicative purposes. A relevant, up-to-date theory of literature and a systematic approach to textual analysis are required to regenerate the status of literary studies. The author opts for an eclectic theory whose central tenet is that literature can be both a reflector and a mainstay of cultural identity. Any pragmatic approach to studying the texts themselves, should see them as evincing extrinsic (e.g. biographical/historical) and intrinsic (i.e. grammatical, lexical and cultural) elements.

Such an approach is illustrated by detailed extrinsic/intrinsic analysis of four 'notable' literary texts. A sample of the author's complementary teaching material for one of these texts is described. The teacher's role in literary studies involves providing learners with the basic information they need to comprehend the target text, and designing exercises which will encourage them to develop flexible reading/text analysis skills.

**86-340 Mydkarski, Donna.** How communicative can a computer be? *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **42**, 1 (1985), 75-82.

This paper identifies those elements of communicative theories in second-language learning which can be realised through the use of a computer. Reference is made to language games, adventure games, task-oriented activities, problem-solving, simulated conversation, subject matter learning in the target language, and authoring systems. Problematic issues are discussed, as is the computer's ability to generate small group interaction. In conclusion, the author discusses the place and acceptability of computerised exercises within a communicative language-learning environment.

**86-341 Ostin, Paul and Godin, Pierre.** RALEX: an alternative approach to language teaching. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **69**, 4 (1985), 346-55.

A teaching method is described which supposedly permits a language teacher to double the quantity of material learned by students, while at the same time helping them to achieve significantly enhanced long-term retention. RALEX stands for Rehearsal, Audition, Lexicon and Expression.

Lexis is the key to fluent expression and comprehension; a minimum core of 5,000 words is necessary for effective decoding/encoding. Oral practice occurs far too early in the standard 'communicative' classroom, and actually inhibits learning. The five main RALEX principles are the independence of learners from the teacher, the validity of L1 use in checking comprehension, the exploitation of a non-linear 'back-tracking' approach to teaching and the integral role of micro-listening as a means of providing massive doses of aural input. The latter must precede any attempt at spoken output. Implementation of RALEX is described by means of a four-stage sample lesson taken from a standard EFL textbook.

**86-342 Pica, Teresa and Doughty, Catherine** (U. of Pennsylvania). The role of group work in classroom second language acquisition. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **7**, 2 (1985), 233-48.

The shift in language classroom organisation from teacher-fronted to student group work has received a growing amount of theoretical and empirical support. However, this practice is becoming so popular that it is in danger of turning into yet another ESL bandwagon. This study was conducted, therefore, to evaluate the role of group work in the classroom, specifically in regard to its possible effects on classroom second language acquisition. Comparisons were made of three ESL classrooms during group *v.* teacher-fronted classroom interaction on decision-making tasks.

Analysis focused on three broad categories: (1) grammaticality of input, (2) negotiation of input, and (3) individual input/production. Significant differences between the two participation patterns were indicated only in the increased amount of input and production for individual students during group interaction. Task, rather than participation pattern was shown to be a more important variable with regard to parameters (1) and (2). These results suggested that group work has a useful but somewhat restricted role in classroom second-language acquisition.

**86-343 Reinking, David** (Rutgers U.) and **Schreiner, Robert** (U. of Minnesota). The effects of computer-mediated text on measures of reading comprehension and reading behaviour. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **20**, 5 (1985), 536-52.

This study investigated a theoretical connection between computer technology and current understandings of reading comprehension. Current models of reading emphasise that reading comprehension is an active cognitive process requiring the reader to interact with text-based information and to monitor comprehension in a quest for

meaning. The options for interacting with text displayed on the printed page are limited by conventional print and the reader's internal strategies. Hypothetically, computer technology might influence these processes by manipulating text in ways not available or feasible on printed pages. To explore this possibility, intermediate-grade good and poor readers read short expository passages in four experimental conditions which varied as to the medium of presentation (the printed page or the computer), the availability of computer-mediated textual manipulations, and whether the computer or the reader controlled these manipulations. A three-way analysis of variance on passage comprehension scores revealed main effects for reading ability and treatment as well as a significant Passage Difficulty  $\times$  Treatment interaction. Results indicated that computer-mediated text can influence reading comprehension and that comprehension was most consistently increased when manipulations of the text were under computer control.

**86-344 Rohrer, Josef.** Lernpsychologische Aspekte der Wortschatzarbeit. [Cognitive psychology and vocabulary work.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **84**, 6 (1985), 595-612.

The author makes use of considerations and findings in the field of the cognitive psychology of memory in order to develop and explain retention-promoting vocabulary exercises. He suggests that thought is intended, among other things, to process information in such a way that the memory can store and retain it for a long time. Thus, primarily verbal modes of thinking, e.g. conceptual, taxonomical, associative and deductive thinking, are employed as the basis for devising vocabulary-building techniques which may prove to be more effective than the time-worn forms of learning by pair association.

**86-345 Sabbione, Anna Maria** (U. of Melbourne). To CALL or not to CALL: small talk about computer-assisted language learning. *Bulletin of the Society for Italian Studies* (Cambridge), **18** (1985), 27-31.

Because mistakes were made with language laboratories in the late '60s and '70s, we should not be deterred from investigating the possibilities of computer-assisted language learning (CALL). CALL can help teachers pay more attention to the individual needs of learners by providing back-up and revision programs, leaving the teacher more classroom time for more complex linguistic aspects. The computer forces the student to think: it could be programmed to flash an image or bleep if the student was wasting time. Advantages include 'keeping scores' of students' progress, giving confidence to shy students, offering simple explanations for incorrect responses, and providing a variety of revision exercises. Computers could be used for 'group programs'. Teachers will need to spend a certain amount of time and energy at first, but this should be amply repaid.

**86–346 Wenden, Anita L.** (City U. of New York). Facilitating learning competence: perspectives on an expanded role for second-language teachers. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **41**, 6 (1985), 981–90.

The paper considers the implications of research on learner strategies for the role of the second-language teacher. Research shows that teachers should help learners learn how to learn by teaching them how to use effective learning strategies. The step is to discover what strategies the students themselves use with different learning tasks. Teachers will need not to acquire new skills but to apply in the domain of learning the skills already developed in the teaching of language, such as tuning in to the learning process, i.e. being sensitive to language/learning competence, perhaps by considering their own experience of learning a language, and how they learn other skills. Learning competence can be diagnosed systematically by gathering data on their students' proficiency through unstructured and semi-structured interviews, and using the insights gained to develop materials to refine awareness further.

Adults may resist learner training because of their prior expectations about the roles of teacher and student and their desire for an immediate return for their efforts. There are hardly any commercial materials which aim to integrate learner training with language training, so teachers will need to adapt materials to their students' needs. An example of how this can be done is given for listening comprehension.

**86–347 Wenden, Anita** (City U. of New York). Helping language learners think about learning. *ELT Journal* (London), **40**, 1 (1986), 3–12.

Semi-structured interviews of 34 adult language learners of ESL revealed that they had explicit beliefs about how to learn a second language. Most held one or a mix of the following beliefs: (1) language should be learned the natural way, i.e. by using it to communicate in normal social contexts; (2) language should be learned systematically, by taking courses; it is a conscious process; (3) personal characteristics are important – they can facilitate or inhibit language learning. Teachers should try to discover what their students' beliefs are and how they may influence their approach to language learning. The students themselves should be given opportunities to think about their learning process.

A unit of eight modules is described which was designed to help students in this area. The modules also provide opportunities for aural/oral practice. They cover beliefs about learning, both in general and related to language learning, and encourage students to examine the beliefs of other language learners, to consider the importance of personal factors and to come to conclusions about their own beliefs. They discuss what makes a good language learner, noting the relationship between beliefs and approach, and finally compare their own approach with that of the good language learner. The modules can be sequenced in various ways with different groups of learners. Such activities can bring to the surface for examination, evaluation and possible change, the expectations that adults bring to their language learning. They introduce students to the importance of diagnosing their language problems and setting objectives. At the same time, they serve as a diagnostic tool for the teacher.

**86-348 Whitaker, S. F.** (University Coll. of North Wales, Bangor). Give me a long sentence. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **23**, 2 (1985), 71-3.

'A long sentence' in reply to a teacher's question is unnatural in the context in which it is being asked for and is usually inefficient. A vital part of communication is judging what information it is appropriate to provide in the circumstances. The length of the utterance should be determined by the amount of information that it is judged appropriate and possible to supply. A good tactic for teachers is to think what responses it would be possible and useful to elicit and then to consider ways of calling them forth, rather than perpetuating the well-intentioned but ill-considered practice of asking for 'a long sentence'.

**86-349 Williams, Ray** (Coll. of St Mark and St John, Plymouth). 'Top ten' principles for teaching reading. *ELT Journal* (London), **40**, 1 (1986), 42-5.

The author's 'top ten' principles for teaching reading are: (1) In the absence of interesting texts, very little is possible. If in doubt, ask learners to assess their texts as 'interesting', 'all right' or 'boring'. (2) The primary activity of a reading lesson should be learners reading texts (not listening to the teacher, not reading comprehension questions or writing answers to them, not discussing the content of the text). (3) Growth in language ability is an essential part of the development of reading ability. (4) Classroom procedure should reflect the purposeful, task-based, interactive nature of real reading, e.g. inter-learner discussion of the text and associated tasks such as completion of a diagrammatic representation of the text. (5) Teachers must learn to be quiet: all too often, they interfere with and so impede their learners' reading development by being too dominant and talking too much. They should become learning managers. (6) Exercise types should, as far as possible, approximate to cognitive reality. (7) A learner will not become a proficient reader simply by attending a reading course or working through a reading textbook. Extensive reading is essential, perhaps through the use of graded readers. (8) A reader contributes meaning to a text. This can be encouraged by including questions or tasks which require readers to combine what they have in their heads with what is in the text. (9) Progress in reading requires learners to use their ears, as well as their eyes. Learners should be encouraged to listen to texts to improve their internal prosody and hence their comprehension. (10) Using a text does not necessarily equal teaching reading: in TALO (text as linguistic object) work, the text is a carrier for the teaching of language. In the TAVI (text as vehicle for information) approach, however, the learner has to develop appropriate cognitive strategies to reconstruct the author's original message. Such strategies are transferable outside the reading lesson.