Language learning and teaching

75-110 **Christ, Herbert.** Die zweite Fremdsprache als Voraussetzung der allgemeinen Hochschulreife. [FL2 as a compulsory requirement for university entrance.] *Neusprachliche Mitteilungen* (Berlin), **27**, 1 (1974), 1–4.

The teaching of FL1 has been accepted for its benefits in communication and linguistic comparison: is there a case for making FL2 compulsory for university entrants? At present *Abiturienten* from selective secondary schools must have studied FL2 but, federally, there is no uniform length or intensity of courses and their content and aims are imprecise.

Minimal attainments in FL2 should be agreed to facilitate communication and 'survival' abroad, reading skill and extended cultural experience. Starting FL2 later in school life enables teachers to build on pupils' increasing power of abstraction and to use transfer and interference experiences from FL1, and some of these methods have proved effective in adult education. A unified approach to FL2 could rest on the requirements for *Volkshochschule* certificates. In this way a definite aim would be combined with flexibility of treatment.

75-111 **Ervin-Tripp, Susan M.** Is second language learning like the first. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **8**, 2 (1974), 111–27.

A considerable array of evidence has been collected about the order and process of mother-tongue acquisition. These findings are here related to second-language acquisition (learning of French by English speakers) in a natural milieu in which communication rather than form is the learner's focus of attention, and where the language is heard most of the day. The study showed that in many respects the development of comprehension of syntax and of morphological features follows the order in the mother-tongue studies. Older children learned much faster than younger children in the sample in the range of four to nine.

75-112 **Henrici, Gert.** Rahmenbedingungen für ein Fach 'Linguistik' in der Schule. [The framework for linguistics as a school subject.] *Linguistik und Didaktik* (Munich), **5**, 3 (1974), 182–93.

Various reasons have been advanced for introducing linguistics into the school curriculum but the only relevant one is its practical usefulness. Robinsohn's curricular theory provides answers to questions arising in this context. He

108

suggests that one should analyse social situations which require qualifications acquired through curriculum elements.

Apart from being flexible, undogmatic and adaptable, linguistics as a school subject should be adapted to the educated layman rather than the specialist. It should help students to handle social situations and to progress towards self-determination in a democratic society where communication plays a vital role. A pragmatic approach is needed rather than simply describing a system made up of grammar, syntax and semantics, although systematic linguistics is necessary in an ancillary function. Active communication and analysis of communication should be vital elements in this approach. The 'textual theory' advanced by Schmidt, which complements pragmatic linguistics, provides a guide for the teaching of linguistics at school. It is centred around 'communicative action play' [details – schematic of Schmidt's textual theory is also given]. The teaching methods employed should reflect the emphasis on applicability. Teaching through projects, particularly in real-life situations outside the classroom, fulfills these requirements especially well.

75–113 Quinn, Terence. Some social and psychological dimensions of a foreign language curriculum. *Babel* (Victoria, Australia), **10**, 1 (1974), 3–8.

Explanations should be sought, and remedies found, for the widespread failure in foreign-language teaching and learning. Three situations (attempts to teach Standard English to Blacks, to Chicanos, and the bilingual St Lambert project) are cited to show that success or failure in school learning situations is largely determined by social factors outside the school. Relevant social factors in Australia include the low general esteem for language skills (as exemplified by either immigrants or teachers); treating learners as passive recipients and mechanical performers, and divorcing practice from the communicative function which should inform it. A radical approach is recommended in which foreign-language study would cease to be in a separate curricular compartment, but would be integrated with general and community studies, which may well be educationally more valid for Australians. [References.]

75–114 Rée, Harry. Time to deschool languages. *Times Educational Supplement* (London), **3108** (20 December 1974), 2.

The expansion of foreign-language teaching into the primary and early secondary stages in the 1960s has not been a success, as the Burstall report makes clear. There is no point in learning French without mastering it or in expecting pupils of widely differing ability to aim for the same goals. One of the main problems is the restriction imposed by school time-tabling. It is argued that the setting

109

up of language-teaching centres in big cities would be a more efficient and effective system: short intensive courses of about a week, to be taken in sequence, one per term, would be available to learners of all ages, who would attend voluntarily. This may be less egalitarian but would be more genuinely educative. It would also be more advantageous for working-class children.

75–115 **Rohrer, J.** Lerntechnicken: didaktische und linguistische Fragestellungen. [Some questions on the didactics and linguistics of learning techniques.] *Sprachmittler* (Mannheim), **12**, 1 (1974), 13–23.

The *Bundessprachenamt* and universities could usefully co-operate in finding the right answers to the right questions about teaching and learning L2. The receptive skills (listening and reading) cover a large area, offer unpredictable degrees of difficulty and complexity in the texts to be studied and need intensive practice with more emphasis on sense than on morphology and syntax. For the productive skills (speaking and writing), pattern drills, based on taxonomic structuralism and strengthened by use of language laboratories, have been developed; these could be made more effective by application of the cognitive code learning theory.

The priority of these skills depends on the learner's needs, especially in intensive courses, but questions to be settled include: the balance of values of the skills and of oral and written exercises at the various levels of skill; the syntactic minima required for the various skills, and, in selecting these minima, the need to teach the simpler systems, where alternatives exist for practical purposes; how to determine the best balance of constants, repetitive elements and variables in building stimulus–response exercises; and deciding which linguistic phenomena can best be learnt by habit-fixing exercises and which by cognitive exercises.

PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING   *See also abstract 75–132*

75–116 **Asher, Steven R. and Markell, Richard A.** Sex differences in comprehension of high- and low-interest reading material. *Journal of Educational Psychology* (Washington, DC), **66**, 5 (1974), 680–7.

Previous research has found that elementary-school-age boys read less well than girls. This study investigated whether sex differences in reading comprehension are affected by variations in the interest level of the material. Fifth-grade children's interests were assessed using a picture-rating technique. Each child then read material that corresponded to his or her high- and low-interest areas. The cloze procedure was used to measure comprehension. Results indicated that boys read as well as girls on high-interest material but that they were significantly poorer readers of low-interest material.

110

75–117 **Singer, H., Samuels, S. J. and Spiroff, J.** The effect of pictures and contextual conditions on learning responses to printed words. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **9**, 4 (1973/4), 555–67.

The effect of presenting four printed words in four different ways on the acquisition of reading responses of 164 first and second graders was studied. The printed word was presented alone, in association with a picture, embedded in a sentence, or in a combination of sentence plus a picture. The study attempted to resolve the seeming conflict between Samuels' focal attention theory and Goodman's findings that presenting words in a context helps children to identify the words. The focal attention theory contends that picture and context cues deter acquisition of reading responses because they enable the child to identify the word in practice without focusing on its graphic features. Comparing both on trials to a criterion and on correct responses on test trials, the subjects scored best on word alone, next on word plus picture, third on word plus sentence, and worst on word plus sentence and picture. The results are seen as support for Samuels' theory.

75–118 **Weener, Paul.** Note taking and student verbalisation as instrumental learning activities. *Instructional Science* (Amsterdam), **3**, 1 (1974), 51–74.

Note-taking and verbalisation are considered as instrumental student activities which influence the relationship between the learning task and the learning outcomes. Research has demonstrated no significant relationships between the type of test anticipated and the amount of notes taken. The time interval between the presentation of the instructional stimuli and the criterion test influences the amount of notes taken: the more delayed the test, the more note-taking. A student is more likely to recall an item on a test if that item is present in the notes than if it is not present. Studies which compared note-taking to no-note-taking conditions have shown a facilitative effect for note-taking, but the effect is influenced by type of review condition and the time interval between note-taking and criterion test. Research on the effects of verbalisation in instructional settings has failed to show any clear benefits for methods which involve greater student verbalisation. Controlled laboratory studies have shown that overt verbalisation positively influences associational learning, serial learning and discrimination learning. Alternative theoretical explanations for the effects of note-taking and verbalisation are discussed, and a structure for future research on these topics is provided. [References.]

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ERROR ANALYSIS

75–119   **Zydatiß, Wolfgang**. A 'kiss of life' for the notion of error. *IRAL* (Heidelberg), **12**, 3 (1974), 231–7.

The description of language learners' language is discussed in terms of Corder's hypothesis of 'transitional competence'. Two distinct approaches are thought to be preferable: (1) psycholinguistically oriented, in which concepts of 'error' are irrelevant, and (2) pedagogically oriented, in which they are relevant: the latter approach is always contrastive and eventually evaluative. It is important to discover deviations which are permanent and inhibit the learner's progress. The L2 learner concocts rule systems from L1, L2 and 'idiosyncrasies' (rules of neither L1 nor L2). This is Selinker's notion of 'interlanguage', which is a neutral, broad, term, representing a dynamic concept. If native speakers deem a learner's utterances ill-formed or inappropriate, it is right to call them 'errors', recognising also that many utterances will be non-erroneous. Errors should be seen as a sign that learning is going on. [References.]

75–120   **Zydatiß, Wolfgang**. Some instances of 'over-indulgence' and 'under-representation' in German learners' English. *Linguistische Berichte* (Braunschweig), **33** (1974), 47–53.

Error and contrastive analyses may misrepresent students' ability to use L2. These analyses must be supplemented by elicitation procedures involving stylistics and using structural and functional statements. A study of the-matising devices available to German 16-year-olds, such as subjectivisation, passivisation and fronting, shows how they could help to produce a coherent text. The study was based on analyses of *Nacherzählungen*, essays, special translations and multiple-choice tests.

Brief examination is made of: (1) 'interchangeability' arising from the subjectivisation of the Agentive, Objective, or Dative case element with double-object verbs such as *give*; (2) 'verbosity': thus *Dadurch verlor er viele Freunde* was rarely rendered by the concise *This lost him many friends*; (3) 'under-differentiation', especially the wrong use of the passive because it is regarded as *the* translation equivalent; (4) 'over-indulgence in marked themes', e.g. placing the grammatical object in front in English – a particular fault of German learners of English. [References.]

TESTING   *See also abstract* 75–141

75–121   Donnerstag, Jürgen. Differenzierung im Englischunterricht auf der Grundlage lernzielorientierter Tests. [Differentiation in the teaching of English on the basis of objective-oriented tests.] *Der fremdsprachliche Unterricht* (Stuttgart), **8**, 3 (1974), 19–29.

Increased emphasis on oral communication ability requires greater concentration on testing speaking ability in the teaching of English. A qualitative test oriented towards a learning target or criterion is favoured over the norm-referenced or standardised test. The basic condition for such a test is the operationalised description of learning targets. Such a description must be based on an exact determination of the behaviour by which it can be proved that a pupil has reached the objective. Learning objectives formulated in an abstract way have to be translated into concrete behaviour, because vaguely formulated aims are unsuitable for testing purposes. Difficulties are encountered when trying to predict the pupils' speaking behaviour, therefore the discrete-point approach is recommended, dividing 'speaking' into components, for each of which exact objectives can be set. Opinions vary as to whether speaking skills can be satisfactorily tested at all. It seems that complete operationalisation cannot be achieved; instead, an expressive performance objective is put forward, together with a scale of assessment factors [details].

A classification of learning objectives with five classes by Valette and Disick is described and compared with other systems. [Examples; lists illustrate the determination and classification of learning objectives.] Taking into account the qualitative differences in objectives, graded courses can be devised for learning groups. With the help of taxonomy, differentiation in the teaching of English can be systematic, comprehensive and long-term.

75–122   Harrison, Andrew. Written production at the advanced level: testing an alternative to prose. *Audio-Visual Language Journal* (Birmingham), **12**, 3 (1974/5), 179–83.

The prose as a test of written production in a foreign language should not lightly be abandoned. Alternatives, in the form of stimulus material or a battery of objective tests, are discussed but are felt to be less satisfactory. The prose is convenient for teachers and examiners and is an efficient testing device. An A-level candidate should be able to choose between different kinds of expression in writing, but must be restricted for the sake of a consistent mark scheme. An experimental test in French (called a 'reorientation' test) tried out in 1974 is described as a possible alternative to the prose. A passage was divided into two parts and candidates were asked to rewrite each part from a different point of view [details]. Language had to be suited to the particular account being

113

written. Key-words, printed in italics in the text, represented 'events' in the story which the candidates were told to make the basis of their answers. About a third of the candidates included irrelevant material or overwrote, but nearly all understood the rubric. An ability to understand different points of view is vital in communication, hence this is felt to be a useful test. [Details of marking scheme.] [References.]

75–123 Nübold, Peter. Sprechfertigkeitstest: Lernzielgerechte Leistungs-kontrolle im Sprachlabor und ihre technologischen Probleme. [Oral productive ability: goal-oriented learning in the language laboratory and its technical problems.] *System* (Linköping), **2**, 3 (1974), 10–20.

Oral productive ability is accepted to be the major teaching aim of foreign-language instruction at the level of *Sekundarstufe I* in West German schools. It is usually by means of written tests, however, that a pupil's progress is judged. The reason for this contradiction is not so much a lack of oral production tests as the fact that such tests can be carried out adequately only in an AAC language laboratory and that the expense of carrying them out is enormous.

The application of a new recording device would reduce this expense to a reasonable amount. As the oral production of a whole test-group could be directly recorded onto a single magnetic tape or disc, production tests could be carried out in an AA lab as well. Scoring could be done anywhere at any time without the need to remove the tapes from the students' booths or to copy them tediously one after the other in order not to obstruct the lab. An additional advantage would be a reduction in the space required for the necessary filing of tests.

75–124 Stubbs, John Bartow and Tucker, G. Richard. The cloze test as a measure of English proficiency. *Modern Language Journal* (St Louis, Mo), **58**, 5/6 (1974), 239–41.

A cloze test was administered as an integral part of the English Entrance Examination (EEE) for the American University of Beirut, which consisted of five parts: structure, vocabulary, miscellaneous tests of language aptitude, reading comprehension and the cloze passage. The sample consisted mainly of native speakers of Arabic. The test was scored twice, for exact responses and for contextually acceptable responses (the latter to test whether local English teachers could score them reliably). [Table of results.]

Both scoring methods yielded a high positive correlation with the total EEE scores; this indicates that a cloze test scored for exact replacement could be used

by a non-native teacher of English. The cloze-exact scores correlated best with the sub-tests of reading and miscellaneous aptitude; the cloze-acceptable scores correlated best with miscellaneous aptitude. Average difficulty level of each item and average item-discrimination level were both as acceptable as comparable data for the standardised EEE. The most difficult parts of speech were found to be conjunctions and prepositions. From this it is claimed that the cloze technique is a powerful and economical measure of English language proficiency as well as a useful diagnostic tool for the teacher. [References.]

SYLLABUS DESIGN

75–125   Stelzer, John and Kingsley, Edward. Axiomatics as a paradigm for structuring subject matter. *Instructional Science* (Amsterdam), **3**, 4 (1975), 383–450.

A comprehensive model of instruction should include as one component a representation of the instructional subject-matter. In order to represent subject-matter, a theory for structuring subject-matter is required. A general theory for structuring and describing such structures is provided. Subject-matter structure is composed of two components: content and tasks. The theory presented to structure content is based on the paradigm of axiomatics. Content elements consist of 'primary notions', 'secondary notions', 'basic principles' and 'established principles'. Two relationships, 'used in the formulation of' and 'used to establish', provided the basic structure relating these constituents. Co-ordinating relations associate task subsets with content constituents. Task subsets provide the theoretical analogue to criterion tests. The notion of dependency is introduced and investigated briefly. A method is provided for developing the complete set of dependency relationships for content constituents. [Three examples clarify the theoretical model.]

TEACHER TRAINING

75–126   Maier, H. and Strecker, B. Fernstudium Englisch: Objektivierung und Individualisierung im Bereich Sprachpraxis. [Distance study of English: objectivisation and individualisation in the field of speech.] *System* (Linköping), **2**, 1 (1974), 37–51.

The extension of English teaching to all German secondary schools has obliged teachers to give language instruction while themselves lacking the necessary pedagogical training and also a suitable oral competence in English. The German Institute for Distance Teaching (DIFF) at the University of Tübingen has from 1968–72 evolved a method of in-service training in these skills using a

combination of brief intensive courses, correspondence material, and especially tape cassettes, a full course taking some two years to complete. The study packets have been constructed in independent but interlocking units to allow for flexibility and individualisation. The material has been extensively revised in the light of experience and fundamental criteria for the fields of phonetics, intonation, grammar and vocabulary are given. The successive phases of individual units and of the course as a whole are described, as well as the media employed, with particular emphasis on the use of teaching and testing cassettes, and on the recent development of special correction cassettes, which have proved to have many advantages.

75-127   Wingard, Peter. Teaching practice. *English Language Teaching Journal* (London), **29**, 1 (1974), 46–52.

Teaching practice (TP) refers here to all parts of a training course which involve the planning, teaching and evaluation of lessons, including lesson observation and demonstration teaching. Less than half the current courses on TEFL/TESL in the UK include actual teaching in their training. Many of their students are already trained and experienced teachers but new theories need a practical demonstration if they are to take effect. Even if conditions for overseas teachers are very different in Britain from those at home, TP may still suggest valuable new approaches, while British trainees need as much varied experience as possible. Courses can never be too short or conditions unsuitable for TP. Teachers have too little opportunity to discuss techniques and watch others teaching.

Among modern TP techniques, closed-circuit television is more useful than film, which tends to be artificial. The advantages of micro-teaching and team teaching are stressed. It is best if a student works in a team of two to four; he then participates in the planning and teaching of many more lessons than he could take on his own. [Outline of a TP scheme in current use at the University of Manchester, in which students work in small groups with a tutor; part-time TP is integrated with theoretical classes.]

TEACHING METHODS   *See also abstracts* 75–115, –140

75-128   Jurčić, Mirjana. Najznačajniji faktori lingvističke didaktike. [The most important factors in language teaching.] *Strani jezici* (Zagreb), **3**, 2 (1974), 101–12.

Current thinking on language teaching and recent learning theory are reviewed, particularly Carroll's (1966) findings. It is stressed that in Yugoslavia the study of foreign languages was never based exclusively on principles specific to the

audio-lingual method. The guiding principle in selecting methods must be that language learning is a combination of conditioned or mechanical instruction and conceptual learning. The five principles proposed by Titone are listed.

75–129   Petzschler, H. and Zoch, I. Die Rolle dialogtypischer Wortverbindungen und Wendungen bei der Vervollkommnung sprachlichen Könnens auf dem Gebeit des dialogischen Sprechens. [The part played by word groups and phrases typical of dialogue in the improvement of speaking ability in dialogue.] *Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (Leipzig), **11**, 4 (1974), 209–16.

The aim is to develop oral skills in advanced students by a variety of guided exercises to achieve productive mastery of 4,000 lexical units and receptive use of a further 3,000. The method is to seek connecting points to develop special skills, using language which expresses factual content of interest to adults and that which expresses opinion or evaluation. Both types of language are built into a communicative strategy leading to fluency.

Dialogue-typical expressions, whether structurally and lexico-semantically invariant or communicatively and grammatically variant, whether groups of words, clauses or interjections, are to be exercised to produce convincing speech, rich in alternatives. They can be obtained from an analysis of radio plays and tapes or from using progressively arranged texts, and should lead the student to solve non-mechanical problems. The exercises are of two types, based on work by psychologists in the USSR and DDR: (1) receptive/absorptive, e.g. recognition, identification, arrangement, classification, generalisation; (2) productive/developmental, e.g. exchange, completion, addition, direct evaluation, rendering into the FL. [Examples.]

75–130   Postovsky, Valerian A. Effects of delay in oral practice at the beginning of second language learning. *Modern Language Journal* (St Louis, Mo), **58**, 5/6 (1974), 229–39.

The assumption that intensive oral practice should be the basis of the initial stage of foreign-language teaching is challenged on the basis that auditory input must be processed before speech output can be generated. Aural comprehension therefore becomes a priority [experiments described]. An experiment on the effect of delaying oral practice was carried out in 1969–70 at the Russian Department of the Defence Language Institute, California. Subjects were military personnel of college age. [Details of procedure.] Experimental treatment lasted for the first four weeks of a twelve-week course, and consisted of two different methodological approaches: the experimental group concentrated on written instead of oral responses and the control group followed the regular

audio-lingual programme with emphasis on drills and oral practice. Identical teaching materials were used. [Tables and graphs of results.]

Conclusions were: (1) in learning Russian, adult students develop better overall language proficiency when oral practice is delayed, provided that the pre-vocal period is devoted to training in aural comprehension and written practice from spoken input; (2) with the same proviso, there is high positive transfer of learning from writing to speaking; (3) in the initial stage of teaching, when written practice from spoken input is compared with oral practice of the same drill material, written practice develops better control of grammatical structure, and (4) introduction of the writing system (Cyrillic alphabet) before intensive pronunciation practice creates no greater problem of graphic inter-ference than the usual (reverse) sequence of presentation. [References.]

BILINGUAL TEACHING   *See also abstract* 75–149

75–131   Condon, E. C. Bilingual education. *System* (Linköping), **2**, 2 (1974), 16–32.

Bilingual education in the USA is discussed in terms of its official status, financial and legal support, and target audience. Commonly used terms are defined. The aim is to produce balanced bilingualism/biculturalism and to equalise learning opportunities for non-English speakers. Transitional bilingual education is more prevalent than true bilingual education (a total programme covering all levels). Methods of organisation and teaching are briefly described. The role of ESL instruction within a bilingual programme is to improve pupils' English by expanding on subject matter taught in the native language [example]. The importance of pre- and in-service teacher training is stressed, and problems in finding suitable teaching and testing materials are outlined. [Appendix: statistical data about Puerto Ricans in New Jersey.]

CLASS METHODS: PRONUNCIATION   *See abstract* 75–137

LANGUAGE FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES   *See abstract* 75–148

118

READING   *See also abstracts* 75–88, –116/17, –143

75–132   **Barr, Rebecca C.** Instructional pace differences and their effect on reading acquisition. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **9**, 4 (1973/4), 526–54.

Exploratory investigation of the influence of homogeneous and differential pacing of classes on basic word learning and mastery, and the effect of basic word learning on general reading achievement, is described. In one case, 19 pupils paced homogeneously were compared with 20 students paced differentially; in a second case, 45 pupils from four classes that differed in differential pacing were compared. Children were classified in terms of aptitude, and multivariate analysis was used to test the effects of various levels of pace on the word learning of pupils. In classes that were differentially paced at relatively high rates, mean level of word learning and variance were higher than for classes differentially paced at slow rates or for those homogeneously paced. Generally a faster rather than a slower pace facilitated the learning and mastery of a sight vocabulary for most high-aptitude and some average pupils. All low-aptitude pupils were paced slowly; their word learning and mastery tended to be low in comparison with that of other children. For students paced differentially, basic words learned during first grade account for a considerable portion of the variance of word recognition measured at the end of first grade and of vocabulary and comprehension measured at the end of second grade. Although the trends are the same for pupils paced homogeneously, the percentage of shared variation is considerably less.

75–133   **Downing, John.** Some curious paradoxes in reading research. *Reading* (Manchester), **8**, 3 (1974), 2–10.

Four seemingly paradoxical research findings have a common underlying explanation. (1) Earlier letter-name knowledge is highly correlated with reading achievement yet teaching letter names does not help children to learn to read. The child first develops understanding and forms a concept, then tries to label the concept: thus letter-name knowledge is only a symptom of his conceptual growth, and trying to teach it before the concept is understood results in 'cognitive confusion'. (2) Some reading disability cases are superior to normal readers in visual discrimination. Seeing the differences between printed letters is less important than knowing when to ignore differences. The successful reader is flexible in categorising unknown symbols, and the thinking process of categorisation can be more important than visual discrimination of letters. (3) Learning to read two languages is easier than learning to read only one. Mexican Indian children taught to read their own language before learning Spanish were more successful in reading Spanish than those who started with

119

only Spanish. In beginning with their own language, the children were able to learn basic concepts which they could then transfer to learning a second language. (4) It is easier to learn to read in two alphabets rather than in one. It has been shown that the best way to learn to read traditional orthography (t.o.) is to learn to read in the initial teaching alphabet. i.t.a. enables pupils to decode written English more easily than with t.o. They thus develop cognitive clarity which makes the transfer to t.o. relatively easy. The conclusion is that the way children think and learn should be the starting point for all teaching work. [References.]

75–134 Klare, George R. Assessing readability. *Reading Research Quarterly* (*Newark, Del*), **10**, 1 (1974/5), 62–102.

One of the problems in public education and mass communication is how to tell whether a particular piece of writing is likely to be found readable by a particular group of readers. Two major solutions are possible: measuring and predicting readability. Measuring, by judgements or tests, involves using readers. Predicting by readability formulae does not involve readers but instead uses counts of language elements in the piece of writing. Formulas and related predictive devices since 1960 are here reviewed. Four categories are presented: (1) recalculations and revisions of existing formulas; (2) new formulas, for general purpose or special purpose use; (3) application aids, for both manual and machine use, and (4) prediction of readability for foreign languages. Suggestions for choosing a formula are made, based upon the following considerations: (*a*) special v. general needs, (*b*) manual v. machine application, (*c*) simple v. complex formulas, (*d*) word length v. word list formulas, and (*e*) sentence length v. sentence complexity. It is stressed that formulas provide good indices of difficulty, but do not indicate causes of difficulty or say how to write readably. [References.]

75–135 Schulz, Reinhard. Lesen/Verstehen (reading comprehension). Ein wichtiger Teil rezemptiver Kompetenz. [Reading comprehension. An important part of receptive competence.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt), **23**, 5 (1974), 429–41.

Comprehension means understanding, plus a grasp of, and insight into, the quintessential; to achieve it speech competence must be supported by factual knowledge. For L2 learners, L1 reading skills have the disadvantages of negative interference, the temptation to suppose equivalents to be identical and the risk of false cultural concepts. The aims of reading comprehension can be achieved by intensive and extensive reading. Silent cursory reading can be adversely affected by tiredness or overstrain, resulting in a separation of the

apperceptive and perceptive processes. Strategy in selecting and using productive clues simultaneously and interdependently (graphophonic, syntactic or semantic) is needed. Non-cursory reading involves more discursive thinking, in which apperception plays a greater role.

The first learning stage involving graphophonic, syntactic and semantic aspects uses only familiar material; the second should include authentic L2 material. Exercises for reading comprehension should include: gap-filling using words and structures, wrong/right alternatives, non-matching words, correction of errors (e.g. homophones), re-ordering of structures, directed and undirected reading both for detail and gist [detailed example].

75–136 **Wilkinson, Andrew.** Oracy and reading. *Elementary English* (Urbana, Ill), **51**, 8 (1974), 1102–9.

Reading is a process of transferring recognition of sounds to visual symbols. Abilities in the four language arts are distinct but overlapping; there is sufficient research evidence to justify attention to oracy as a means of developing literacy. The child masters basic language structures by the age of four, using syntactic structure with greater certainty than semantic [examples]. His ability to make use of constraints, to make predictions from language and the situation, is an important contribution to reading, and springs from his awareness of the possibilities of language.

Children's oral language is more advanced than the language of textbooks used in the teaching of reading, but one advantage of written material as distinct from spoken is that well-formed sentences make assimilation easier in the early stages because they are more predictable. Reading therefore utilises existing skills and knowledge. The importance of the ability to translate visual symbols has been over-stressed, at the expense of meaning: children need to become aware of possible patterns and sentences by hearing them read aloud. [References.]

SPEECH *See abstracts* 75–129, –146

AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

75–137 **Horga, Damir.** Optimalna forma akustičkog kanala u učenju stranog jezika. [The optimum form of the acoustic channel in foreign-language learning.] *Strani jezici* (Zagreb), **3**, 2 (1974), 85–91.

The increasing use of audio-visual methods in language teaching has raised new problems and led to a full realisation of the importance of sound and good pronunciation. Technical advances have greatly assisted language teaching but

tape-recorders have been found to be inadequate as an aid to self-correction. This is in part due to the linear form of the acoustic channel generally employed. The 'verbal-tonal theory of listening', which forms an integral part of the audio-visual/global-structural method of foreign-language learning developed by Guberina and Rivenc, is an attempt to solve some of the many questions raised by this problem. The focal point of their interest is the potential interference along the chain of communication from speaker to listener, identified by Shannon and Wiener as 'semantic disturbance', and arising from a lack of coincidence between the codes used by the speaker and listener respectively. Correct perception of speech depends on separating the information factor from the non-essential elements of the signal; Guberina has developed electro-acoustic devices for this purpose – the Suvag Lingua apparatus. This makes use of filters to separate the various elements of speech: rhythm, intonation, individual voice frequencies, etc. Two devices have been developed: one for use in the class-room, and the more complex Laboratory Suvag Lingua which permits a wide range of combinations and forms of acoustic signals. [Diagrams of the functions of Suvag Lingua equipment are included.]

75–138 Lademann, Norbert. Projektionsfolien im Englischunterricht. [Overhead projector transparencies in English teaching.] *Fremdsprachen Unterricht* (Berlin), **18**, 6 (1974), 305–10.

The overhead projector is useful for demonstration purposes as it communicates information more objectively than many other methods, though pupils may interpret the information subjectively. Its advantages lie in its flexibility in concealing and revealing information, the easy preparation of transparencies which are reusable, and the relative positions of teacher and class, face-to-face, during use. Experience has shown that words and sentences can be shown to good effect and that the projector, used with discretion, enhances motivation and concentration better than the blackboard. For pupil writing practice, however, the blackboard is usually better. The main function of the projector is to impart information and reinforce and activate knowledge. With vocabulary work it is important that the written form follows quickly on the spoken word in English. For reinforcement, texts with gaps or multiple-choice completions can be used [examples]. With grammar the need to recognise different constructions and learn how to use them can be accomplished with visual material on the projector [examples]. It is also particularly effective in oral work in building up monologues and dialogues [examples].

PROGRAMMED INSTRUCTION

75–139   Ariew, Robert. Teaching French on PLATO IV. *System* (Linköping), **2**, 1 (1974), 1–7.

French is taught by Computer-Assisted Instruction at the University of Illinois [detailed description of the PLATO IV terminal]. Advantages of this equipment are a graphic display panel, a slide selector, a touch input device activated by the student's finger as an alternative means of response to typing, and the random-access audio message selector for student recording and audio reinforcement. All these resources can be used at the same time. Written feedback for the student can take various forms, including short *yes/no* messages and long written explanations [examples]. A letter-judging and feedback programme is also available. Written or touch exercises and audio exercises have proved useful [examples]. Research is being carried out to explore PLATO's further possibilities for teaching languages.

LANGUAGE LABORATORIES   *See also abstract* 75–123

75–140   Riley, P. The language laboratory: implications of the functional approach. *Mélanges Pédagogiques* (Nancy), 1974, 53–64.

Communicative competence, i.e. knowledge of rules of use and the ability to apply them, is leading towards a functional approach to language teaching. The structuralist and the transformation approaches both concentrate on syntax; the functional approach requires the use of authentic materials for practice. A taxonomy of functions as a basis for the construction of drills is the first need. The materials produced will be not traditional serial-development courses but modular presentation. The language laboratory will be important in listening comprehension work as an 'aural blackboard' demonstrating situations, accents, voices: sound libraries rather than laboratories. Research shows that the laboratory is no more efficient a teaching method than any other [details]. Arguments against it include isolation of activity; the exclusion of non-verbal aspects of communication, which may be more important in signalling function than the verbal, which has the additional disadvantage of stressing the reporting functions of language, and idealising performance. Video-laboratories may not be the answer, but, rather, abolition of the laboratory and more sound libraries and a variety of a-v equipment. The emphasis in the future should be on comprehension rather than production. [References.]

ENGLISH   *See also abstracts* 75–120/1, –124, –126/7, –131, –135

75–141   Dobrowolska, Janina. Efektywność nauczania języka angielskiego w liceum ogólnokształcącym. [The effectiveness of teaching English as a foreign language in secondary schools.] *Języki obce w szkole* (Warsaw), **18**, 4 (1974), 224–30.

Research was conducted into the effectiveness of the English teaching in a Warsaw secondary school, with pupils in the final year of a four-year course. The morphosyntactic test used examined pupils' ability in dictation and written tests as well as their ability to communicate. Results were interpreted from the point of view of areas of difficulty for the pupils. The grammatical test showed that the past simple and present perfect tenses were most easily identified, the present simple, past continuous and the sequence of tenses gave more difficulty, and recognition of the past perfect was most difficult. In the test of ability to construct sentences, pupils were only able to handle the past simple satisfactorily; knowledge of the past perfect, in particular, was negative.

The overall results indicated that pupils had least difficulty in understanding written texts, followed by ability to communicate, aural comprehension and writing. It was concluded that the language programme and textbooks should be revised, particularly the grammatical material and the exercises, which needed to be more practical. Language teachers should place less emphasis on grammatical correctness and allow pupils to express themselves more freely.

75–142   Manuchehri, Parivash. Explaining problems of Iranian students by comparing English and Farsi verb forms. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **8**, 2 (1974), 171–6.

In comparing the English verb system with that of Farsi, differences are found which help account for errors frequently made by students from Iran. Many ideas which are expressed in English by simple verbs require the use of verb+complement combinations in Farsi while certain tense distinctions essential to English are not part of the Farsi system. Some implications of these and other differences are explained, and suggestions are offered for helping students learn to use English verbs.

75–143   Marbé, Alan. Longer than the sentence…Some para-syntactic guidelines for a methodology of reading comprehension. *English Teachers Journal* (*Israel*) (Jerusalem), **12** (1974), 33–7.

A methodology is proposed for training pupils to read for total comprehension by an analytical approach to the various aspects of discourse. Six systems by which language signals meaning, as proposed by Bormuth (1969), are discussed

124

with practical emphasis, and include the use of the dictionary and fill-in exercises, motivation for the choice of particular structures in a text (e.g. choice of active or passive voice), function of conjunctions, punctuation marks and sentence connectors (e.g. *on the other hand*), recognition work on deixis and reference, and study of rhetorical organisation [classroom and homework activities are suggested].

75-144 Menzies, David A. Mixed ability teaching in the early stages. *Teaching English* (Edinburgh), **8**, 1 (1974), 4-10.

The problems connected with mixed-ability teaching (of English as the mother tongue in Scotland) are partly due to the uneven pace of comprehensive organisation, partly to various 'dilutions' such as banding, separate remedial classes or a 'high-flyers' section. A committed policy is needed particularly in connection with (1) liaison with transferring primary pupils: primary and secondary teachers need to co-operate on a regular basis (perhaps a common summer-term project, which makes for a more reassuring transfer for the pupils and enables the secondary teacher to get to know about his new class); (2) remedial provision: five possible alternatives are discussed, but the best solution is to train or re-train every English teacher so that he is capable of devising his own remedial schemes.

What constitutes a satisfactory English course in the early stages? Bulletin No. 1 of the Scottish Central Committee on English describes an ideal English programme, but the organisational implications for the teacher are formidable [summary]. It is suggested that S1 pupils might be placed all together, instead of in several different classes, under the guidance of a team of teachers, thus providing a flexible arrangement for small group work and particular needs. In addition, an individual achievement record for each pupil would be a meaningful basis for assessment.

FRENCH *See also abstracts* 75-111, -114, -122, -139

75-145 Alden, Douglas W. The status of French. *French Review* (Champaign, Ill), **48**, 1 (1974), 7-16.

A conference of representatives of the French teaching profession in the USA found that French at college level was continuing to decline [figures]. A major cause is thought to be the removal of the language requirement in 1968: side-effects of the removal included the emergence of courses in French-in-translation. Students feel that French has no practical application, and prefer 'civilisation' and language courses to literature courses. Spanish is more frequently taught than French in colleges and schools [figures], probably because

125

it is more readily usable and is seen as the language of the proletariat whereas French seems to be a bourgeois idiom. The French teaching profession in the USA needs one main organising body for all levels to co-ordinate action to improve the situation.

75–146   Bate, Michèle. Techniques d'enseignement du français oral. [Techniques of teaching oral French.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), **107** (1974), 36–42.

The four-year BA course at Reading University is based on the primacy of oral French, and its development over the past six years shows satisfactory results. Traditional-type conversations, the presentation of summaries, and commentaries on written texts have been rejected as unreal and insufficiently stimulating. The course is based on the stimulation of creativity and spontaneity of expression, supported by and arising out of language laboratory sessions, and leading to expansion of vocabulary and control of more complex and analytical oral registers.

The exercises, each occupying one week only, and varying from week to week, are grouped as: (1) comprehension, (*a*) from written stimuli, ranging from jumbled sentences (first year) to analyses of creative literary word play (fourth year) [examples], and (*b*) from spoken stimuli, ranging from songs to the analysis and discussion of taped interviews, and so to the construction of a news broadcast [details]; (2) spontaneous oral expressions, from the beginner's self-introduction to the class, via various forms of dramatic sketch [list of themes and stimuli], to verbalised reactions to taped noises, isolated or in sequence [examples] and the verbalisation of tactile sensations; and (3) analytical expression, stimulated by wordless cartoons or comic strips, optical or perspective illusions, caricatures, paintings and advertisements [details]. The course succeeds in expanding the students' active vocabulary, involving all members of the class, introducing a typically French environment, and integrating the oral work into the total studies of the department.

75–147   Muller, Charles. Comment concevoir une enseignement du français – langue maternelle qui amène les élèves à découvrir les principes fondamentaux qui commandent la structure et le fonctionnement de la langue? [How can we produce a method of teaching French as a native language which helps pupils to discover the basic principles which control the structure and function of the language?] *Bulletin CILA* (Neuchâtel), **19** (1974), 17–27.

One explanatory system for language functions employs formalised analysis of deep phenomena; the non-specialist language teacher accounts for surface

phenomena in a confusion of language, logic, sense and construction, while the school confronts the primary pupil with 'principles of reason' in the native language (almost explicitly designed to perpetuate a class division between the 'cultivated' and the 'workers') which provide a body of information quantifiable by examination.

To enable the child to discover the laws governing the structure and function of the language, it is necessary to break the grip of socio-historic forces and, simultaneously, to establish a relation between the laws of cognitive development and the total language data. The primary school will fulfil its function when its leavers can express content and handle concepts. The 'teaching' of the native language, unlike that of foreign languages, must be based on the child's existing competence in phrase-structure rules, and on its need for training in discourse grammar. This requires activity in five fields: overcoming those factors which resist change, prevent the establishment of broad, long-term aims and perpetuate a rigid, compartmented regime; circumventing the domination of symbols, both graphic and lexical; opening up the sociolinguistic view of language as communication; recognising the language data already possessed by the pupil, and training the conceptual ordering of external reality. Such a scheme would free both pupil and teacher from the sterile formalism of syllabus and textbook. [Algorithm and bibliography].

75-148   **Paton, R. J.** Teaching French by case-study on HND Business Studies courses. *Modern Languages* (London), **55**, 4 (1974), 178-81.

Language teachers in technical colleges, who have no business experience, find difficulty in teaching commercial language in specialised courses. Practical suggestions include scanning of French management publications by the teacher in order to recognise the general connotation of technical expressions, and to enable him to give the student a framework of French vocabulary (English equivalents can be discovered later). On a course for the Higher National Diploma, time for practising commercial and technical vocabulary is very limited; the case-study method is recommended, and details of teaching procedures, with a sample case study about an exporting company, are given: first a brief exposition of the case by the teacher, then questions from students, then role-playing of the various aspects of the case. As a follow-up, students can be asked to prepare a written report on the case, in French. Advantages are that interest in the problem motivates communication, and role-playing ensures participation, with the emphasis on using a structured vocabulary. [Reference books are recommended.]

75–149 Swain, Merrill. French immersion programs across Canada: research findings. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **31**, 2 (1974), 117–29.

Research findings on many French immersion (FI) programmes in Canada are discussed, and tentative conclusions are given. (1) Early and late FI programmes lead to the development of French skills which are superior to those of students following a course of French as a second language. Students in the FI programme, however, may be developing and reinforcing their own classroom dialect of French. (2) Early partial FI programmes appear to have no advantages over early total FI programmes. They do not guarantee that students will keep up with their peers in the regular English programme on English skills nor with their peers in the total FI programme on French skills. However, they do result in the development of French comprehension skills equivalent to those of students exposed to similar amounts of instruction in French. (3) Students in an early total FI programme quickly catch up with their English-educated peers in English reading skills if they are introduced to formal instruction in English Language Arts at the grade two, three or four level. (4) The introduction of reading in the second language in early FI programmes prior to the introduction of reading in the native language appears to foster rapid transfer of reading skills. The teaching of English reading followed by the introduction of French reading appears to have negative effects on reading in both French and English. (5) Students in a late FI programme who concurrently take a course in English do not fall behind in the English reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge. (6) Where achievement in subjects areas taught in French has been examined in English, French immersion students perform as well as their English-instructed peers. [References.] [The whole issue is concerned with bilingual education.]

GERMAN   *See also abstract* 75–112

75–150 Whitton, Kenneth S. Whither German? – An enquiry into the teaching of German in the county of Yorkshire. *Modern Languages* (London), **60**, 4 (1974), 188–92.

A questionnaire sent out in 1973 to 97 teachers of German in Yorkshire elicited the following information: the teaching force is predominantly 'un-specialist', i.e. most also teach French; the majority were teachers with 10 years' experience or more; only about a quarter of the schools had a full-time German assistant; the number of periods taught is only 20–30. These results indicate that German is far from an alternative first language. Most children begin German in the third school year; numbers decline drastically in the fourth year, when options begin to operate. Numbers going on to higher and further education are much

the same as in the past, although school numbers as a whole have risen. More teachers were pessimistic than optimistic about the future of German teaching. [Table of results; statistics.]

RUSSIAN *See abstract* 75–130