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# Language learning and teaching – theory and practice

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## Theory and principles

**87–287 Auerbach, Elsa Roberts** (U. of Massachusetts at Boston). Competency-based ESL: one step forward or two steps back? *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **20**, 3 (1986), 411–29.

Competency-based (adult) education is defined as ‘a performance-based process leading to demonstrated mastery of basic life skills necessary for the individual to function proficiently in society’. While it has become widely accepted as the state-of-the-art approach to adult ESL, there has been little published discussion of its theoretical assumptions or social implications. This article examines eight key descriptors of competency-based education in the light of critiques from the fields of curriculum theory, adult basic education, and second language acquisition theory: (1) a focus on successful functioning in society, (2) a focus on life skills (language as a function of practical communication), (3) task- or performance-centred orientation, (4) modularised teaching, (5) outcomes which are made explicit

*a priori*, (6) continuous assessment, (7) demonstrated mastery of performance objectives and (8) individualised, student-centred teaching. The results of an informal survey of teacher attitudes toward competency-based adult education in ESL are incorporated. The article situates the competency-based approach in its historical context as part of a tradition of socialising immigrants for specific roles in the existing socioeconomic order. It suggests that the system’s demands of this approach (for accountability and ‘social utility’) may impose constraints that get in the way of such pedagogical considerations as student-centred learning. The article concludes by stressing the need for further debate and analysis, rather than uncritical acceptance, of competency-based systems.

**87–288 Bowers, Roger** (British Council, London). English in the world: aims and achievements in English language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **20**, 3 (1986), 393–410.

The last few decades have seen phenomenal growth in the demand for English and marked improvement in language teaching procedures. Yet, a retrospective view of the development of the profession shows that the need to shape teaching programmes to the social, economic, and cultural context of those who seek to learn English continues to be crucial. This article examines issues related to our understanding of what English is, of what language is and how it develops, and of what teaching is and can be, and argues for a pluralistic approach to collaborative

growth in education, one which takes full account of the notions of differential growth and appropriate methodology. The article concludes with a set of goals to guide professional self-examination. These include keeping theory and practice in joint harness, loosening the proprietary grip of the native speaker, stimulating the organic growth of the English language for its full range of purposes, putting technology at the service of those who need it most, improving the flow of professional knowledge, and improving professional training.

**87–289 Danahy, Michael**. On the metaphorical language of L2 research. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **70**, 3 (1986), 228–35.

The ‘metalanguage’ of writings about language teaching has a negative impact on the teaching/learning process. The figures of speech about teaching and about student–teacher interaction fall into two main categories: (1) human/non-human (culinary, gardening, scientific, sporting, artisanal), and (2) human/human (military, family, medical, aesthetic, tourism). The metaphors in the first group encourage us to treat L2 learners as raw materials, deprived of locomotion, volition and judgement.

The metaphors in the second group are less extreme but still misleading. These metaphors make clear the inferior status meted out to the learner, and aggrandise the teacher, so that they promote an element of self-deception. The metaphors have an inner inconsistency: many make little sense unless the student is dynamic and interactive. The L2 teacher does not fit the image of carpenter or physician. If the metaphors are construed as self-images, we are reinforcing the worst qualities of

both parties involved in language learning, instead of trying to promote student involvement and reduce teacher direction. Teachers', as well as

learners', needs must be met: these include a more appropriate self-image, attained perhaps through self-knowledge.

**87–290 Ford, Glyn** (Member of the European Parliament). Languages on the move. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **24**, 2 (1986), 104–11.

Language teaching has a major role to play in dispelling xenophobia and intolerance. Britain is too content to rest on its colonial laurels. Teachers no longer have prestige but they must face realities. There has been continuous educational change over the past 20 years, with parents getting a greater say in the curriculum. Modern linguists are aware of the needs of the full ability range but languages must overcome the stigma of being an elitist subject. The public image of modern languages is poor, and motivation on the part of students is low. Two-thirds of all secondary pupils stop learning a foreign language as soon as they can, usually at age 14. Yet we need languages to keep up our exports, and not only French. The public needs to be told about graded objectives schemes and authentic tasks for the classroom: languages must be (and be seen to be)

useful, practical and relevant. The problem of motivating boys must be tackled. Diversification of languages taught is a priority, with materials being devised to make difficult languages more accessible. Mother-tongue teaching (of Urdu, Gujarati, Bengali, Cantonese, etc.) should be introduced, although materials and staff are lacking. Children should start learning a foreign language as early as possible, at primary level. Languages should be compulsory, but need not necessarily lead to an examination: varied aims should be considered. Cross-curricular links (such as Business Studies, Catering and Secretarial) offer interesting possibilities which are hardly exploited at all. We need an expansionist policy, not a contracting one. If languages are a priority, resources must be found.

**87–291 Gillespie, John H.** (U. of Ulster). Teaching literature in the teaching of modern languages. *NIMLA* (Coleraine, N. Ireland), **14/15** (1985), 92–104.

The place of literature teaching in the modern languages curriculum would be more secure if teachers were more aware of the importance of its role in the teaching of languages and if they were able to adopt more varied and attractive methods. Many teachers find teaching literature in the sixth form very difficult and fall back on an entirely examination-centred approach. Even the best pupils are studying literature in a language they are far from mastering, using critical terms which they do not fully understand from the background of a limited experience of literature. Most are culturally deprived as far as literature in their own language is concerned.

The current emphasis on the teaching of language as primarily a communicative activity could be seen to imply a rejection of literature. However, the opposition of literature and 'real life' is false; literature is merely a development of how we ordinarily use language, and as such is fundamental to the language teaching curriculum. It should co-exist with the study of the society, history and thought of the target language. The student would be exposed through literature to a wide variety of styles and registers. Literature provides the substantial reading content which students need at

more advanced levels. The study of literary texts is valuable because they touch on so many different areas of life and experience, and can reveal national preoccupations and characteristics. The aims of literature teaching should be (1) to show students how to enjoy literature, (2) to demonstrate that books are not simply for a self-appointed élite, (3) to show that language is an open-ended system of signs with a wide range of styles, and (4) to stimulate pupils' intellectual curiosity.

The teaching of literature should be integrated with the teaching of language. Emphasis should be placed on the enjoyment of reading, and on the pupil's own response to the text. Reading which is independent of the set texts should be encouraged. Strategies for teaching a set text are: (a) provision of introductory material (setting, plot, vocabulary lists), (b) consideration of the text as a whole (group projects, discussions in French and English, residential study courses), followed by detailed analysis of key passages, (c) detailed linguistic exploitation of the literary text, (d) look at those aspects of French life which are depicted in detail. These four stages do not have to be followed in strict chronological order.

**87–292 Lehmann, Denis.** Linguistique et didactique: pièces à conviction. [Linguistics and didactics: the evidence.] *Etudes de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **63**, 7/9 (1986), 6–15.

A study of the literature of French as a foreign language reveals that, although the terminology may have changed – *didactique de langues* having replaced ‘applied linguistics’ – this does not necessarily mean that the relationship between linguistics and language teaching is conceived differently. The aim is rather to provide a theory of language

teaching itself. To this end the history, sociology and epistemology of teaching need to be studied and this has already begun. These studies should take account of a context in which major redefinition of the relationship between disciplines is affecting both the study of language and the human sciences in general.

## Psychology of language learning

**87–293 Block, Ellen** (City U. of New York). The comprehension strategies of second language readers. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **20**, 3 (1986), 463–89.

Think-aloud protocols, a version of verbal report in which participants state their thoughts and behaviour, have become increasingly popular as a means of studying the comprehension processes of native English speakers. The study reported in this article used think-alouds to examine the comprehension strategies used by college-level students – both native speakers of English and non-native speakers – enrolled in remedial reading classes as they read material from a college textbook. ‘Poor’ readers (those who had failed the college’s reading proficiency test) were chosen for study because they are the ones at whom college remedial reading programmes are aimed. Furthermore, their use of comprehension strategies has not attained the degree of automaticity found in fluent readers, so they may be more aware of how they solve the problems they encounter as they read. Some of the strategies used by the ESL and native-speaking readers in the study are described. Strategy use is related to measures of memory and comprehension and to academic performance, and implications for teaching are discussed.

Two distinctive patterns of strategy use emerged, those of ‘integrators’ and ‘non-integrators’. The former integrated information, were aware of text structure with relative frequency, and monitored their understanding consistently and effectively. The non-integrators relied much more on their personal experiences to help them develop a version of the text. They tend to focus on details rather than main ideas. Language background did not account for the different patterns: native speakers of Chinese employed similar strategies to native speakers of Spanish. ESL readers used similar strategies to those of native speakers of English. Thus strategy use seems to be a stable phenomenon not tied to specific language features, but there is some connection between strategy use and the ability to learn. There is considerable variation among poor readers, hence prepackaged solutions will probably have limited effect. It appears that think-alouds are a useful learning tool, as they focus the readers’ attention and help them to teach themselves.

**87–294 Groot, P. J. M. and Bourgonje, G. C. J.** Een nieuwe theorie over vreemde-taalverwerving? [A new theory about foreign language acquisition?] *Toegepaste Taalwetenschap in Artikelen* (Amsterdam), **23**, 3 (1985), 32–44.

This paper argues that (a) much of what is presented as Krashen’s new theory of foreign (or second) language acquisition is not new but given a new name (e.g. ‘the affective filter’ for motivational and attitudinal variables) and (b) that what is new is not adequately substantiated by empirical evidence or maintained in spite of contrary evidence. The plausibility of the new part of the theory is questioned on various grounds, one of them being that it does not sufficiently take into account the

possible implications (i.e. for the way a foreign language is mastered) of the differences between the various foreign language acquisition contexts such as age, goal and aptitude of the learner, the kind and/or degree of L2 exposure, formal vs. naturalistic acquisition etc. An example of the kind of research needed is reported, viz. the data resulting from an investigation into the errors against adverbial placement rules made by EFL students with different mother tongues. The aim of the study was to collect

data relevant to the question whether/to what extent errors would be 'universal' (i.e. the same for all learners irrespective of their L1) or language-specific (to one language).

**87–295 Nas, Gerard** (Rijks U., Utrecht). Geheugenstructuren en woordleren. [Memory structures and vocabulary learning.] *Toegepaste Taalwetenschap in Artikelen* (Amsterdam), **23**, 3 (1985), 55–67.

In this article a model of foreign (L2) vocabulary learning is first developed in which the representation of the spelling, the pronunciation and the meaning(s) of a word are stored in their respective networks. Vocabulary learning in a paired associate learning task is then defined as the building of nodes in a network and as the establishing of an associative pathway between each new node (representing the spelling, pronunciation or meaning(s) of a newly learned L2 word) and the corresponding node for its L1 equivalent. In this model differences in spelling or pronunciation between L2 words and their L1 translations are expressed in terms of differences in length of their associative pathways.

On the basis of the above distinctions a prediction was made about a difference in input speed and in

the period of retrievability between two kinds of Arabic–Dutch word pairs. It was predicted that word pairs sharing some phonemic features would be learned sooner and remembered longer than those without any of these features in common. This prediction was confirmed in a group experiment. Moreover, it showed that a resemblance between L2–L1 word pairs had a greater effect on retrievability than on input speed. Finally, the diverging results for one of the testwords were interpreted as indicating that in associate learning of L2–L1 pairs the semantic category to which that word belonged also plays a part. Its abstract meaning was assumed to have negatively affected the time needed to store the word in memory.

**87–296 Schumans, Jos and others** (U. of Nijmegen). Vocabulairekennis in de vreemde taal na beëindiging van het onderwijs. *Toegepaste Taalwetenschap in Artikelen* (Amsterdam), **23**, 3 (1985), 81–9.

This paper deals with the loss of FL–vocabulary in French and German learned in formal secondary Dutch education. Using a cross-sectional design, the authors investigated the development of FL–vocabulary from the end of grade 4 – the moment at which pupils can drop one or two FLs – up to the end of grade 6 – the moment when they take their final exams in the seven subjects they did choose. They compared pupils from grades 4, 5, and 6 who had either dropped the FL, or had chosen it as an exam subject. A French and a German translation task were administered in which pupils had to fill in the target word in a meaningful, but non-coercive

context. The tests consisted of a productive part (translation into the FL) and a receptive part (translation from the FL). Either part consisted of 48 equivalent items, 24 high-frequency and 24 low-frequency target words.

The main finding was that there was a loss of 16% for French in the second year of non-use, and a comparable loss for German in the first year of non-use. However, the loss for German was recovered in the second year of non-use. It was concluded that this may have been due to the cross-sectional design, and that, therefore, longitudinal designs are to be preferred in this kind of research.

**87–297 Wolf, Maryanne** (Tufts U.) and **Gow, David** (Brandeis U.). A longitudinal investigation of gender differences in language and reading development. *First Language* (Chalfont St. Giles, Bucks), **6**, 2 (1985), 81–110.

A four-year longitudinal investigation of gender differences in highly specified linguistic and reading operations in 87 children was conducted in the period before, during, and after reading acquisition. A central focus is the development of automatisations within these operations. Results indicate a clear distinction between a sustained male advantage in

vocabulary and semantic processes and an early female advantage in rate for basic language and reading processing. The findings point to different, gender-influenced sequences in reading acquisition by some females and males. The relationship between these findings and the predominance of males with early reading failure is hypothesised.

**87-298 Zawadzka, Elzbieta.** Psycholinguistische Probleme der Selbst-Kontrolle in der Fremdsprache. [Psycholinguistic problems of self-checking in a foreign language.] *Zielsprache Deutsch* (Munich, FRG), **17**, 2 (1986), 24-32.

In this article attention is drawn to the importance of the mechanism of 'self-checking' (monitoring) in speaking a foreign language. The author considers the different acoustic and psycholinguistic factors affecting the mechanisms such as the physical transmission of acoustic signals, anticipation, consciousness and automatization. She points out differences between self-checking in the mother tongue and in a foreign language, in particular the greater use of conscious self-checking in the latter. The

results of the author's own research with students of German as a foreign language with regard to the practical expression of self-checking (i.e. self-correction) are analysed and the conclusion drawn that it does not occur spontaneously, is not sufficiently well developed in advanced students and must be taught by means of appropriate exercises and teaching aids, so that it will not only be used effectively by the teacher, but can be developed in students.

## Research methods

**87-299 Beretta, Alan** (Sultan Qaboos U., Oman). Program-fair language teaching evaluation. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **20**, 3 (1986), 431-44.

A basic, but inadequately fulfilled, requirement of evaluation studies comparing the effects of teaching programmes is that the tests used should be 'programme-fair', i.e. valid for measuring different programmes. In this article, attention is first of all drawn to the potential for misinterpretation of experiments lacking programme-fair criteria. Second, the strategies adopted by various researchers to come to terms with the issue are considered from the perspectives of: (a) standardised tests, (b) specific tests for each programme, (c) programme-specific

plus programme-neutral measures, (d) common/unique objectives, and (e) appeal to consensus. It is concluded that while the issue remains largely unresolved, there are some general principles which can be gleaned from past experience: programme evaluation is only as good as the criterion measures used; standardised tests are inappropriate tools for comparing programmes; at the very least, the claims of each specific programme must be taken into account in test construction if competing interests are to be represented fairly.

**87-300 Chaudron, Craig** (U. of Hawaii at Manoa). The interaction of quantitative and qualitative approaches to research: a view of the second language classroom. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **20**, 4 (1986), 709-17.

The qualitative and quantitative approaches to research on second-language learning are distinguished as follows: the qualitative approach involves naturalistic, uncontrolled, subjective and process-oriented observation, while the quantitative approach is obtrusive, controlled, objective and product-oriented. Nevertheless, the two categories are interdependent in practice. Whatever the ap-

proach, researchers have much the same goal - to determine which classroom processes are most conducive to learning and why.

Quantitative research has revealed relationships between classroom processes and student learning. Categories of analysis have continued to be refined qualitatively [example of the case of research on teacher questioning].

**87-301 Henning, Grant** (U. of California, Los Angeles). Quantitative methods in language acquisition research. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **20**, 4 (1986), 701-8.

This article aims to clarify and define quantitative research as it is applied in the study of language acquisition. Quantitative research is the kind of research which involves the tallying, manipulation, or systematic aggregation of quantities of data. It may involve the use of descriptive or inferential

statistics, and may or may not involve formal hypothesis testing. There appears to be a distinct trend towards the quantitative in language acquisition research, and a greater use of inferential statistics. While hypothesis-testing has increased, it has declined as a proportion of all quantitative research,

though many researchers adopt a hypothesis-testing mode without ever formally stating the hypothesis. Another common flaw is the tendency for quantitative research studies to be labelled 'experiments' when they are not. Moreover, the majority of studies which involve measurement of linguistic phenomena make no effort to provide an estimate

of the reliability or validity of the instrumentation and procedures used to elicit data. [Some procedures are suggested which can help with quantitative research when small samples are involved, including ANOVA designs, chi-squared methodology, path-analytic methods, latent trait models and factor-analytic techniques.]

**87-302 McDonough, Jo** (U. of Essex). English for Academic Purposes: a research base? *English for Specific Purposes* (Washington, DC), **5**, 1 (1986), 17-25.

Courses in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) are often regarded as self-contained entities, and insufficient attention is paid to interrelations with other aspects of language teaching or to relevant sources of research, such as text comprehension, the definition of a 'good language learner', the role of memory in language learning, and discourse analysis. Areas where as yet there is little research help for teachers relate to (1) proficiency assessment – a reliable apparatus is needed to map an individual's competencies onto the language-related study demands of the various departments in an institution. At present, tests of a student's progress are not able

to be predictive. (2) Subject knowledge – is it a student's English which is preventing him from exhibiting his knowledge, or is the subject-knowledge itself defective? (3) The ability of the student to grasp concepts – some students are unable to deal with the westernised concepts of academic investigation.

Language-teaching research should be seen as a two-way process. Researchers should be more sensitive to the hunches of classroom practitioners ('craft knowledge'). Teachers should learn to synthesise more effectively the outcome of relevant research to solve classroom-related issues.

**87-303 Poulisse, Nanda** (Katholieke U., Nijmegen). Retrospectie als hulpmiddel bij de analyse van compensatie-strategieën. [The use of retrospection in the analysis of compensatory strategies.] *Toegepaste Taalwetenschap in Artikelen* (Amsterdam), **23**, 3 (1985), 68-80.

This paper deals with the procedures followed to identify the strategies in the Nijmegen project on the use of compensatory strategies by Dutch learners of English. The project aims to shed light on the relationship between foreign language proficiency level and compensatory strategy (CpS) use. For this purpose three groups of 15 Dutch learners of English, of three different proficiency levels, were asked to carry out four tasks. Two of the tasks comprised rather formal elicitation techniques; the subjects had to describe concrete and abstract pictures. The two other tasks, a story retell task and an oral interview, were aimed at obtaining more natural language data.

To identify the CpS use was made of problem indicators such as pauses, repetitions, intonation, sighs, laughs and ongoing commentary. In addition, it was decided to collect retrospective data from the subjects on the two more natural tasks, as in these tasks CpS are particularly hard to identify,

due to the relative inaccessibility of the subject's intended meaning.

In this paper criticism of the use of retrospective data is discussed, as well as the conditions under which retrospective data can reliably be collected. A description of the procedures illustrates that, on the whole, these conditions are met in this case. The usefulness of retrospective data is then illustrated by means of a comparative study of two identification procedures, one with and one without use of retrospective data. The results indicate that the additional use of retrospective data increased the number of identifiable CpS by 33%; raised the degree of confidence which can be put in the author's identification in 64% of the cases; and enabled them to discover a small number of incorrectly identified CpS. It was therefore concluded that retrospective data can be considered a reliable and valuable resource in the analysis of CpS.

**87-304 Wolfson, Nessa** (U. of Pennsylvania). Research methodology and the question of validity. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **20**, 4 (1986), 689-99.

The article discusses the advantages and disadvantages of various research approaches to the study of everyday speech behaviour. Such ap-

proaches are roughly of two types: observation and elicitation. The latter includes all techniques in which subjects are aware that what they say is being

studied by a researcher. Such awareness may well endanger the validity of the data collected. Even the use of native-speaking informants inevitably entails the use of native-speaker intuition, so the data collected are intuitive data rather than actual spoken speech as it occurs in everyday use.

Observation includes fieldwork which may or may not involve participant observation. Increasingly, anthropologists and sociolinguists are investigating speech behaviour among speakers of their own languages, even among groups of which they are members. The research can thus observe everyday behaviour without causing selfconsciousness on the part of those being observed. The disadvantage of observing without intervening is that there is no way of controlling for any particular variable. This problem can be offset to some extent by a very careful analysis of the data, to determine, for example, whether different patterns of inter-

language emerge in different settings. The researcher must allow for different social attributes of the speakers themselves as well as differentiating the various speech settings or contexts.

Just as there is variation in the production of interlanguage, so foreigner talk is likely to vary with situation and interlocutor. One of the main advantages of an ethnographic approach is that the hypotheses come out of the process of collecting and analysing the data, and can be counter-intuitive. A two-pronged approach to data collection and analysis is necessary: first, carrying out systematic observation, allowing hypotheses to emerge from the data themselves, then developing an elicitation instrument which is sensitive to what has been found actually to occur; the hypotheses which have emerged can be tested for generalisability and validity.

## Error analysis

**87–305 Doushaq, Mufeeq H.** An investigation into stylistic errors of Arab students learning English for academic purposes. *English for Specific Purposes*, (Washington, DC), **5**, 1 (1986) 27–39.

This study was conducted to investigate the writing problems of Jordanian Arab students at university level studying English for academic purposes. The study indicates the most important problems facing university students in using English for written communicative purposes and attempts to specify the main sources of these problems. It is suggested

that these sources can be grouped into three main categories: problems at the sentence level, problems at the paragraph level and problems of content. The research has also confirmed that weakness in writing skills in the foreign language is due to some extent to an original weakness in the mastery of Arabic writing skills.

## Testing

**87–306 de Bot, Kees and others.** Het meten van culturele orientatie in relatie met taalvaardigheid. [The measurement of cultural orientation in relation to language proficiency.] *Toegepaste Taalwetenschap in Artikelen* (Amsterdam), **22**, 2 (1985), 33–49.

Recently, numerous studies evaluating bilingual education programmes have shown that cultural orientation and language attitude play an important role in achieving sufficient proficiency in both the first and second language. Despite a long tradition of research in the field of attitude measurement, no test measuring cultural orientation in young second language learners is readily available. In this article a description is given of the development of such a test for Turkish and Moroccan children learning Dutch as a second language in primary school. The test is based on Zirkel and Jackson's (1974) Cultural Attitude Scales.

The reliability and validity of the test have been

investigated in two studies. In the first (Buster *et al.*, 1985) 850 children were tested, and their scores on the cultural attitudes scales were compared to other measures that might reflect cultural orientation (questionnaires, sociograms) and to language proficiency tests. The reliability appeared to be fairly high, but there was no significant relation between cultural attitudes and language proficiency.

In the second study (Verhoeven & Extra, 1983) cultural attitude scales were used with individuals rather than with groups. Test scores were compared with data from interviews with the children tested, their parents and their teachers. On the whole this study suggests that the validity of the cultural



attitude scale is sufficiently high. If certain requirements (e.g. regular revision because of the changing socio-cultural setting) are met, the cultural attitude

scales appear to be a useful instrument in bilingual education research.

**87–307 Douglas, Dan** (Iowa State U.). From school to university; language policy and performance at the University of Khartoum. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* (Amsterdam), **61** (1986), 89–112.

This article focuses upon the linguistic resources of students at the University of Khartoum, considering amongst other things the relationship between Arabic/English language proficiency and academic performance. The article is based on the Study Habits Research Project completed by the author in 1977. Language policies at the University and in the Sudan generally are outlined, and reference made to the differences between both school and university academic standards and the 'official' and 'practical' learning situations operating within the university itself. The author describes a test battery (consisting of Arabic/English reading and dictation elements) administered across the Arts, Economics, Law and Science faculties. Cloze passages represented a significant part of the battery. In general the results

[tabular data] highlighted such points as the fact that most humanities students were unable to comprehend what they read in English and that women in the science faculty seemed less proficient than men in reading ability. Also, differences in Arabic test scores were felt to suggest real differences in academic performance terms between rural and urban students.

It is concluded that this linguistic assessment revealed problems in the divergent educational/language policies at the secondary and university levels and in different regions; in fact, native staff and students were becoming less proficient in English because of these inconsistencies, with a deleterious effect on the academic work of the University.

**87–308 Ducroquet, Lucile** (Portsmouth Poly.). Practical problems for communicative and language testing. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **24**, 3 (1986), 147–51.

In testing terms, most language teaching professionals have adapted the communicative approach without following it to its logical conclusion; the author's comments are based on administering APLL French tests to 60 students at 30 schools in Bristol, England. Public tests, even if purportedly communicative, involve such artificial methods as discussions in the L2 between people having the same L1 or who must pretend the existence of a biographical information gap (i.e. teachers might ask students questions to which they already know the answers). The asking of inordinately personal questions (which will never arise in real life) is

another pitfall, as is the fact that actual students have activities and lives that do not fit the 'textbook' formulations provided in classrooms.

A wider interpretation of 'communicative competence' is called for, which would allow message transmissions by both linguistic and non-linguistic means. Communicatively appropriate (if not textbook perfect) alternatives should also be acceptable and literal translations discouraged. The use of prompt pictures which are of a high graphical quality and unambiguous in content is also called for by the author.

**87–309 Littlewood, William** (University Coll., Swansea). GCSE: some problems and opportunities. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **24**, 2 (1986), 63–9.

The GCSE offers an opportunity to integrate some important strands of development within foreign language teaching: new definitions of language teaching aims, moving towards what people can do with the language; new orientations in teaching methods – communicative activities; new expectations from assessment – evaluating ability in global terms, and assessing in positive terms; new views about how people learn – the importance of unconscious 'acquisition' which takes place when language

is used for communication, and a gradually evolving mastery of the system as learners form their own rules (in this view, errors are inevitable). In a broader educational context, the GCSE embodies modern trends such as developing learning programmes based on learners' needs and wants, assigning active learning roles, involving the whole person, and viewing knowledge as something which learners construct. The more positive approach to evaluating performance and the use of



common scales for all learners, offer greater prospects of devising broadly comparable approaches for all learners. The GCSE is not a new theory, but a new framework.

The work which remains to be done involves sorting out problems in three main areas: (1) the assessment system itself, (2) the kind of teaching needed, and (3) the introduction of the new assessment and teaching into the whole of the language teaching population. Under (1), the notion of 'effective communication' or 'appro-

priacy' needs to be defined in operational terms which mean the same to all assessors. Norm referencing will give way, over the next few years to criterion referencing. Under (2), although there is a common goal for all learners, there can be many routes to that goal. Innovations do not simply involve adjustments in techniques, but changes in aims and attitudes. Only a meagre in-service training programme is envisaged so teachers will have to try to extend the spirit of dialogue and co-operation which already exists.

**87-310 Whelpton, Tony** (Trent Poly.). The assessment of oral performance at O and A level. *NIMLA* (Coleraine, N. Ireland), **14/15** (1985), 29-37.

The aim of an oral examination is to assess the extent of the candidate's ability to communicate in a foreign language. Grammatical accuracy is only one of the aspects which are taken into consideration. The AEB examination is criterion-referenced, not norm-referenced. The format of the O level oral examination was re-designed in 1975 to include role-playing, standardisation being provided by a series of pictures about which the candidate had to relate the story. The response of the examiner in the

role-play is not known beforehand. The longest section of the exam consists of general questions, testing ability to sustain a conversation. The examiner is interested in what the candidate produces, not what he/she has understood. The examiner tries to find out what each candidate can do - i.e. his/her linguistic ceiling. The marking is positive - a flawless performance is not expected at this level.

## Curriculum planning

**87-311 Marland, Michael** (North Westminster Community Sch.). Towards a curriculum policy for a multilingual world. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **24**, 3 (1986), 123-38.

There are five major problems which we have to address when considering languages in British schools: (1) a fear of the multilingual world leading to a 'conspiracy of deafness' towards the 'other' languages of Britain; (2) a dislike of, even distaste for, distant, non-European languages; (3) reluctance to teach in or through the mother tongue of bilinguals; (4) a language-teaching base which is both weak and ineffective and (5) inadequate research and policy development.

A whole-school policy is required: a coherent curriculum which prepares all pupils for a multilingual world and at the same time meets the needs and strengths of bilingual pupils. A ten-point plan is put forward. (1) Every way possible must be found of changing attitudes to bilingualism and to non-European languages in particular. (2) There should be a broad-based 'languages foundation course' which could include a number of languages, non-European ones among them. (3) More languages

should be offered for examinations. (4) The teaching of community languages should take place in schools. (5) There should be provision for teaching through the mother tongue. (6) There should be an induction course carried out largely in the pupil's mother tongue for bilingual pupils who have recently arrived in the country. (7) There should be a greater awareness of language; in particular, although there is a need for specialist E2L classes, E2L should be 'across the curriculum'. (8) Ways should be sought of providing pupils whose strongest language is not English with proper pastoral care - 'complementary tutoring' is one possibility. (9) Additional needs-based staffing involving teams of bilingual and E2L teachers is required. (10) We must find ways of stimulating more publishing in minority languages and thereby introduce more books in and on these languages into our schools.

**87-312 Tollefson, James W.** (U. of Washington). Functional competencies in the U.S. refugee program: theoretical and practical problems. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **20**, 4 (1986), 649-64.

In the past decade, the functional, competency-based approach has come to dominate ESL curriculum development. Though the approach is widely praised, some ESL specialists have recently criticised competency-based 'survival ESL.' This article examines theoretical and practical deficiencies in how curricular objectives are selected for the functional approach, the central role of values in functional curricula, and limitations in validating

tests of functional competence. It is argued that these problems seriously undermine efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of ESL programmes using functional curricula. These issues are illustrated through an analysis of the functional curricula of the U.S. Refugee Processing Centres, the largest survival ESL programme ever created to prepare immigrants for resettlement in America.

## Materials design

**87-313 Markee, Numa.** The relevance of sociopolitical factors to communicative course design. *English for Specific Purposes* (Washington, DC), **5**, 1 (1986), 3-16.

It is essential for syllabus designers and materials writers working in Third World countries to appreciate the importance of sociopolitical factors to course design. Materials design projects in certain Third World countries should be seen as educational-language-policy solutions to educational-language-policy problems. More specifically, the task of the materials writer is to produce materials that can work within the system for which they are designed. Although an institution may officially be English-medium, the students' competence in English may preclude its exclusive use as the medium of

instruction. Thus, course designers must know how the institution is supposed to operate (the formal system) and how it actually operates (the informal system) in order to write appropriate materials. Furthermore, given that educational institutions in developing countries are often undergoing rapid structural change, materials writers must evaluate what change is likely in the foreseeable future. In this way, they can build an element of survivability into their courses, which ensures that the materials will not become obsolete when the projected changes are implemented.

**87-314 Schmale, Günter.** 'Excuse me. Can you tell me how to get to George Square?' – Die linguistische Beschreibung von Interaktionseinheiten für den Fremdsprachenunterricht am Beispiel von 'Asking/telling someone the way'. [The linguistic description of units of interaction in the teaching of foreign languages as exemplified by 'Asking/telling someone the way'.] *Bielefelder Beiträge zur Sprachlehrforschung* (Bielefeld, FRG), **13**, 1 (1984), 26-51.

One of the causes of lack of success in the teaching of foreign languages is inappropriate and unrealistic teaching materials. The author describes the development of a model which facilitates the analysis and description of all the elements of a typical conversation which would be relevant in the teaching of foreign languages. The model is then applied to a sample conversation concerned with

asking/telling the way, and this in turn is compared with several text book conversations; these reveal numerous defects. For example, in some textbooks little attention is paid to placing the conversation in an authentic social setting; in others the natural sequence of a typical conversation is not evident, to the extent that even the customary closing words of thanks are omitted.

**87-315 Talansky, Sandra B.** (U. of Macerata). Sex role stereotyping in TEFL teaching materials. *Perspectives* (Rome), **11**, 3 (1986), 32-42.

Twelve textbooks widely used in teaching English as a foreign language in Italian universities, published between 1978 and 1984, were examined for signs of sexism or stereotypical treatment of women. Overall

there were more references to men than women (roughly in a ratio of 60% to 35%). A few texts show women as having interesting careers, but most portray them only in a domestic role. Situational

sex role stereotyping was found in almost all the texts, though a few were more realistic. The traditionally ascribed occupations for women figured largely; men enjoyed a much wider range of occupations. Women are frequently made the butt of jokes and are portrayed as being shallow and illogical. The use of authentic materials in teaching

demands a more realistic treatment of both men and women in textbooks. Teachers need to be aware of sexist forms of language, treat both sexes equally in the classroom, be sensitive to their own use of the target language, and try to avoid using sexist materials or reinforcing sex role stereotyping in role-play situations.

## Teacher training

**87-316 Edge, Julian** (U. of Birmingham). TEFL and teacher training – principles of integration. *English Language Research Journal* (Birmingham), **5** (1986), 1–9.

The author presents five principles which should inform the implementation of integrated programmes for the pre-service training of non-native EFL teachers. These are (1) the coverage of central training objectives through modules on language improvement, applied linguistics and TEFL methodology, (2) the interaction of these components throughout the programme, (3) the use in the language improvement phase of teaching techniques later recommended in the methodology sessions, (4) the need for a movement from experience to understanding, and (5) from instruction to independent learning, on the part of the trainees.

In language improvement terms, the graduates of the four-year programme described should be proficient users, analysts and teachers of English;

they should also have a full repertoire of TEFL techniques and a theoretical knowledge sufficient to evaluate the methods they use. The study of applied linguistics is seen as a way to improve the trainees' own language skills and to provide such theoretical awareness; it is therefore best taught as both a content and a skills area. The ideal programme should progress from language improvement to methodology, with trainees being given experience of unfamiliar teaching concepts in action.

It is concluded that the articulation of principles could provide a basis for more widespread co-operation amongst academic institutions on problems of programme organisation and implementation.

## Teaching methods

**87-317 Ahrens, Patricia**. It wouldn't work in my classroom. *Focus on English* (Madras), **2**, 3 (1986), 31–36.

Teachers who attend in-service or pre-service training courses are usually encouraged to try to include some communicative practice in their regular classroom work. Many seem to find this daunting and reply that it is not possible in their teaching circumstances – classes are too big, they have no time for games, the pupils' English is too weak, the classroom cannot be re-arranged, the pupils will make too much noise, there is no time or money to prepare the necessary materials.

The article shows how most of these difficulties can be overcome by describing the introduction of communicative practice with large classes in a Gujarati-medium school in their second and third year of English. It was necessary to enlist the help of a Gujarati-speaking colleague. The game of 'Find the difference' was selected, and before each stage of

presentation the colleague explained to the pupils what was going to happen and why. Guided practice was followed by pair work, making pictures and further practice in pairs. Despite large classes of pupils whose English was not very good, and who were not used to this kind of work, the activity was successful at the first attempt. The pupils were noisy at first but became quieter later, the materials were made out of scrap, and most were made by the pupils themselves. They enjoyed the activity. Their regular teacher was, however, not convinced that they had learned anything (except the items *the same* and *different*, which were the aim of the exercise). Teachers will need to accept the value of communicative activities before they are prepared to leave the safety of the textbook and try something new.



**87-318 Arndt, Horst and others.** A neurological view of prosody and its importance in human communication. *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **85**, 5/6 (1986). 581-610.

Neurological evidence shows prosody and language are complexly interrelated in the brain. Functional interaction between these co-systems is important to human communication. Both systems signal propositional (cognitive) and nonpropositional (affective) information. Sometimes they do this cooperatively, sometimes independently. Prosodic signals often confirm verbal messages, but they can

also modify or contradict them as the situation requires. This is what makes prosody such an indispensable feature of speech. Without at least rudimentary propositional and nonpropositional prosodic skills, a language learner has difficulty avoiding misunderstandings with native speakers. This paper discusses these issues and offers suggestions about how to teach prosodic skills.

**87-319 Barron, Roderick W.** (U. of Guelph). Word recognition in early reading: a review of the direct and indirect access hypotheses. *Cognition* (Lausanne), **24**, 1/2 (1986), 93-119.

Research on the development of word recognition, like that on fluent word recognition, has been strongly influenced by the dual-route model. One route is non-lexical and indirect because access to lexical meaning is mediated by pre-lexical phonological representations assembled through the application of grapheme-to-phoneme correspondence (GPC) rules. The other route, which is independent of the first, is regarded as lexical and direct because orthographic representations of whole words are used to retrieve lexical meanings or postlexical phonological representations. Evidence is reviewed for two opposing developmental hypotheses based on the dual-route model: fluent readers use both direct and indirect access to lexical meaning, while beginning readers use (1) only indirect access or (2) only direct access. It was concluded that neither

mode of access predominates in early reading. A review of other evidence suggests two reasons why the dual-route model fails to provide a satisfactory account of the development of early word recognition. First, it does not offer an adequate characterisation of the orthographic units represented in early lexicons. Second, the independence of the two routes prevents lexical information from being acquired through the application of GPC rules. Finally, alternatives to the dual-route model are discussed. One of the most promising is a single process lexical model in which it is proposed that acquisition and performance in word recognition can be accounted for by interactions among orthographic and phonological units of various sizes in the lexicon.

**87-320 Caré, Jean-Marc** (BELC, Paris) **and Richard, Christian** (Auberville Municipal Theatre). Jouer, improviser. [Acting and improvisation.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), **204** (1986), 52-7.

Now that prime importance is accorded to communication in the teaching of languages it becomes necessary to simulate reality in the classroom and therefore to use mime, roleplay and improvisation. Improvisation, however, proceeds according to strict rules which have to be learnt and certain basic constraints must be observed. In the classroom it gives scope to creativity, invention, imagination, uses all available resources in the expression of ideas

and concepts, and takes advantage of the unforeseen. From improvisation students can learn to listen to each other, to work together on a common task, to accept the differentness of others, to overcome their own shyness and lack of confidence, and to cope with the unpredictable. A number of games, exercises and dialogues are proposed, to be practised in pairs, in groups or in teams.

**87-321 Clarke, David F.** (U. of East Anglia). Vocabulary acquisition, the computer and the database. *UEA Papers in Linguistics* (Norwich), **25/6** (1986), 21-42.

As an alternative to traditional word-list learning, which is tedious and lacking in motivation, com-

puters can provide an interesting and motivating environment for independent acquisition of lexis.

The Textexplore reading project at the University of East Anglia has identified various ways in which games and a competitive element can be used as a stimulus for vocabulary learning. The games involve, for example, the use of inference, context, synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, collocation, and

consultation of dictionary definitions. Despite the experimental and finite nature of the current database, it is envisaged that the corpus will be of interest to materials designers, as will the student record file indicating frequency of certain difficulties.

**87-322 Crow, John T.** Receptive vocabulary acquisition for reading comprehension. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **70**, 3 (1986), 242-50.

This article argues in favour of a receptive vocabulary component for foreign language courses. 'Productive' knowledge of a word is what one needs to know about a word in order to use it while speaking or writing; 'receptive' knowledge is what one needs to know in order to understand it while reading or listening. Participants are actively involved during both types of performance. A much larger body of knowledge is required for the former than for the latter. By concentrating on the minimal amount of information needed to access the semantic fields of words in context, the learner can acquire rudimentary receptive control fairly quickly. This does not usually involve learning new concepts or learning how to use words. Rather, it involves learning new labels for semantic areas and develop-

ing the ability to recognise these labels in context as an initial bottom-up processing aid.

In teaching vocabulary, it is important that the students should be made to realise that they are not expected to gain productive control over every word encountered. Decontextualised approaches, such as word lists, should be discouraged. The learner must be allowed to accept temporary vagueness in the early stages of familiarising a word – reading for gist is a step in the right direction. There is strong theoretical support for approaching vocabulary acquisition on an inter related, network basis, rather than word-by-word. Working within semantic fields is a more effective preparation for future reading. All activities should be contextualised.

**87-323 Ellis, Rod.** Developing interlanguage through fluency. *Focus on English* (Madras), **2**, 3 (1986), 1-15.

Fluency work takes place when interactions between students are unplanned. Such work necessarily implies (1) a focus on meaning and (2) learner control over the linguistic resources used. When linguistic correction occurs neither of these two conditions can be met. Handing over topic and management control to students can also enhance the quality of fluency work.

There are a number of ways in which interlanguage development can take place spontaneously as a result of unplanned interaction. Formulas such as *I don't know*, *What's this?* and *I don't understand* are learnt as part and parcel of activating strategic

competence. Some simple and early interlanguage rules may be derived from vertical constructions. For example, *You work inside?* eliciting a response *No work inside. Outside.* from a learner suggests s/he is 'borrowing' a chunk of the teacher's utterance. Comprehensible input provides data which the learner can act on to create intake. Rules derived from comprehensible input may be 'projected' so that additional, implicated rules are automatically acquired. One possible limitation of language teaching based exclusively on fluency work is that learners may end up communicatively proficient but linguistically inadequate.

**87-324 Emanuelli, A. J.** (U. of East Anglia). Artificial intelligence and computer assisted language learning. *UEA Papers in Linguistics* (Norwich), **25/6** (1986), 43-56.

This paper describes some of the possible uses of the computer programs of Word-Trainer, in which certain artificial intelligence techniques are exploited, in the acquisition of foreign language vocabulary. Such techniques are already in use in the fields of medicine and chemistry. Associative or semantic networks can be incorporated and extended in the database. The learner 'teaches' the program about words and how to distinguish

between them. Various ways are detailed of how the learner and the program interact in relation to phrasal verbs, modal auxiliaries, adverbials, and negation.

It is anticipated that increasing flexibility of computer use in language learning will lead to a corresponding increase in interesting foreign language learning environments.

**87-325 Fox, Jeremy** (U. of East Anglia). CALL learning environments and the wherewithal. *UEA Papers in Linguistics* (Norwich), **25/6** (1986), 75-93.

This paper focuses on ways in which language acquisition can be increased by using computers and word processors, and suggests that current language teaching methodology can provide useful insights for the design of software and hardware. The following recommendations are made: provision should be made of a range of materials appropriate to the needs and pace of the individual learner; meaningful interaction between student and com-

puter, by means of different kinds of feedback, for example, should be developed; the learner should be able to contribute to the learning process by exploring and interrogating the database.

CALL can, in addition, provide practice exercises, and assist in the development of creative writing skills. Other advantages include the possibility of storing records of student progress, and of gaining access to a range of databases.

**87-326 Gambrell, Linda B.** (U. of Maryland) and **Bales, Ruby J.** (Charles County, Maryland, Public Schools). Mental imagery and the comprehension-monitoring performance of fourth- and fifth-grade poor readers. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **21**, 4 (1986), 454-64.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of mental imagery upon the comprehension-monitoring performance of poor readers. Sixty-two fourth-grade and 62 fifth-grade poor readers were randomly assigned to two treatments: imagery instructions or general instructions. Subjects read two passages, one containing an explicit inconsistency and one containing an implicit inconsistency. Following silent reading of each passage, the

subjects responded to a 10-item instrument designed to elicit information concerning their awareness of the inconsistency embedded in the text. The subjects who received instructions to induce mental imagery identified both explicit and implicit inconsistencies in text significantly more often than did the subjects in the control group. The results are interpreted as support of the use of mental imagery as a comprehension-monitoring strategy.

**87-327 Goldenstein, Jean-Pierre** (U. of Paris III). Lire un texte intégral. [Reading the whole text.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), **204** (1986), 58-61.

Recent years have seen the growth of the semi-logical and the structural approach to the study of texts but these, although illuminating, are not sufficient in themselves. It must not be forgotten that a writer works with words. A short story by Maupassant is used to demonstrate the importance of knowing exactly what the words mean, and more particularly what they meant to Maupassant,

taking into account the semantic shifts that have occurred over the years. It is also important to understand the historical context; both that in which the story is set and also in that in which it was written. By working together, students develop the skills they require to achieve a genuine reading of the text.

**87-328 Götz, Joachim and Müllmann, Horst.** Von der Textaufgabe zum Ziettext (Teil I). [From text analysis to target text (Part 1).] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **85**, 4 (1986), 357-80.

The article provides a critical examination of the *Textaufgabe* (text analysis), which has now become almost the only officially recognised means by which pupils in the upper classes of German secondary schools can demonstrate their written proficiency in English (including the *Abitur*). The article points out the shortcomings of this standardised form of text analysis. Firstly, it cannot satisfactorily be related to the normal work of the class: for example, to choose an extract from a

book being studied involves playing 'hide and seek' with the pupils. Secondly, in real life one must react to texts in many different ways, and not always according to the pattern form-content-evaluation; conversely, real-life writing is often a response to something other than a single written text. Thirdly, this stereotyped form fails to foster such official curricular objectives as responsiveness, creativity, individuality and out-of-school relevance. [Alternative solutions will be suggested in Part II.]

**87-329 Hartley, Anthony F.** (U. of Bradford). Graphics-driven CALL. *UEA Papers in Linguistics* (Norwich), **25/6** (1986), 94-104.

This article outlines a new research project involving the design of CALL materials in LSP teaching. The linguistic activity on which it focuses is that of producing linguistic descriptions of non-verbal data such as graphs and other diagrams. The CALL software, which interfaces with independently available graphics and CAD (computer-assisted design) software, comprises two modules. An expertise module verifies the factual and linguistic accuracy of the student's descriptions against the

graphically displayed data. A tutoring module maintains a record of student errors and can adjust accordingly the exercises offered to the user. The validity of the approach is discussed, and it is concluded that graphics can be a powerful force in LSP, where figures and text are commonly provided. Where data and relationships are dynamic, the computer has unrivalled potential for providing self-instructional opportunities.

**87-330 Horowitz, Daniel M.** (International Christian U., Japan). What professors actually require: academic tasks for the ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **20**, 3 (1986), 445-62.

Writing assignment handouts and essay topics given out by various faculties at one American university were examined, and the writing tasks classified: summary of/reaction to a reading, annotated bibliography, report on a specified participatory experience, connection of theory and data, case study, synthesis of multiple sources, and research project.

The most striking feature of the sample was the controlled nature of much of the writing required. A basic issue is how to understand the distinction between controlled and free writing. What students do when they write depends on what they are given to begin with: whether they are given a thesis statement, whether the demands of the audience are

clear, whether the source of propositional material is specified, or whether there are lexical constraints. The task of the academic writer is not to create personal meaning but to find, organise and present data according to instructions.

Ways in which teachers can simulate university writings tasks are suggested. Material or information to work on is necessary – this might come from academic support courses in another subject, or be created around topics of general interest. With this body of information, students can practice academic-type tasks which will include the information processing skills of selecting relevant data, reorganising it in response to a given question, and encoding it into academic English [examples].

**87-331 Hudson, Sally A.** (U. of Northern Iowa). Context and children's writing. *Research in the Teaching of English* (Urbana, Ill), **20**, 3 (1986), 294-316.

This study, a description of children's views of the contexts surrounding their writing, examines five contextual factors (ownership, setting, audience, purpose, and genre) from the perspectives of 20 children in grades 1 to 5. Two boys and two girls at each grade were asked to collect home and school writing for three months. In three individual meetings, each child labelled selected products for

each contextual factor. Categories thus derived were further analysed to examine the range of audiences, purposes, and genres across grades within three common writing situations: self-sponsored writing at home, self-sponsored writing at school, and assigned writing. This article discusses patterns in the type and number of categories reported.

**87-332 Kenning, Michael** (U. of Essex). An interdisciplinary approach to CALL software development. *UEA Papers in Linguistics* (Norwich), **25/6** (1986), 128-44.

If software and courseware are to be produced and developed in the most effective way possible, an interdisciplinary team of specialists is required: language consultants, applied linguists, software engineers, etc. Successful software needs expertise in design, implementation, validation and documenta-

tion. An environmental framework must also be established in the initial stages of any large-scale project since this will have implications for development.

CALL software is required to be user friendly, able to cope with the learner's input, and have

standard procedures for use. In addition, it must ensure that keyboard and screen are managed effectively, and that comprehensive documentation is provided. The hardware needs of the home

learner should also be taken into account. Teachers are urged to investigate the capabilities of the computer, to become familiar with its use, and to search for more effective ways of exploiting it.

**87-333 Martin, Jean-Pol.** Für eine Übernahme von Lehrfunktionen durch Schüler. [Why pupils should take over teaching functions.] *Praxis des Neusprachlichen Unterrichts* (Dortmund, FRG), **33**, 4 (1986), 395-403.

Pupils should be set complex tasks, which lead to authentic FL discourse and activate a 'dynamic cycle' based on information processing theory: initial interest in information, then intake, processing, storage, re-activation and application. The examples quoted, based on a 5-year experiment in a German *Gymnasium*, involve grammar work (other topics are said to be equally possible), with one pupil asking another teacher-like questions about morphology and spelling. The author points out that the

percentage of pupil talk is much higher than in conventional lessons (70-75% against 20%), and that useful phrases such as *How do you say...?* have been habitualised in the FL (French). Pupils develop various competences: epistemic (metalinguistic understanding), heuristic (forming and testing hypotheses) and social (bringing others into the discourse). Learner-centred methods may paradoxically revive the original philological orientation of FL study.

**87-334 Piper, Alison** (Ealing Coll. of Higher Ed., London). Computers and the literacy of the foreign language learner: a report on EFL learners using the word-processor to develop writing skills. *UEA Papers in Linguistics* (Norwich), **25/6** (1986), 145-61.

This paper reports on the ability of the word-processor to assist small multilingual groups or individuals to develop writing skills in English. Initially lessons consist of teaching students how to type and how to use the machine, which necessitates the acquisition of a word-processor metalanguage. While this is in progress the students are given tasks which involve practice of certain language points, for example, past simple and present perfect tenses.

Classroom experiments have revealed that a number of highly motivating factors are involved in

the use of the word-processor, which lead to the conclusion that it is a worthwhile activity for foreign language learners. Motivating factors include a sense of achievement following experimentation, manipulation and production of English on the screen, and the instantly visible improvement. Throughout the activity the students' work retains the appearance of a finished product, and, even if limited, the discussion in English of a specific writing task reflects a degree of negotiation of meaning.

**87-335 Rinehart, Steven D.** (Alderson-Broadus Coll.) and others. Some effects of summarization training on reading and studying. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **21**, 4 (1986), 422-38.

The study reports the direct and indirect effects of a summarisation training programme on the reading and studying skills of 70 sixth-grade students. The training improved recall of major but not minor information on a studying task. Path analyses showed that the summarisation training affected recall of major information indirectly, through its effect on the amount of major information in students' notes, confirming a metacognitive hypo-

thesis. The training also improved summaries of paragraphs that had main ideas stated within the paragraphs, but not those in which the statement of main ideas had to be invented. These results indicate that summarisation training is an effective tool for improving reading and studying skills. The findings also suggest ways to improve the summarisation instruction for children of this age.



**87-336 Schatz, Elinore Kress** (Greater Miami Hebrew Academy) **and Baldwin, R. Scott** (U. of Miami). Context clues are unreliable predictors of word meanings. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **21**, 4 (1986), 439-53.

Three studies were conducted to determine the extent to which context helps students infer the meanings of unknown words. In Experiment 1, students in Grades 10 and 11 were randomly assigned to either a context or a no-context condition. The no-context group read low-frequency words in isolation. The context group read the same words embedded in passages taken from novels. Experiment 2 was a repeated-measures study in which 39 students in Grade 11 read sets of words in isolation

and also in passages taken from four different content areas. Experiment 3 was a systematic replication of Experiment 1 in which subjects were required to write definitions for the low-frequency words instead of choosing the definitions in a multiple-choice format. In none of the three experiments was there any statistically significant effect due to the context. The conclusion is drawn that instructional strategies that prioritise context clues should be reexamined.

**87-337 Schoffman, Laura** (Habsor Regional Sch.). Language acquisition theory and computer-aided instruction. *English Teachers' Journal* (Jerusalem, Israel), **33** (1986), 39-44.

This assessment of some of the problems of integrating programmed learning into foreign language teaching suggests that despite various limitations there are advantages. Computers are mainly of use in practice and testing, and are restricted to the written mode. Additional constraints involve time-tabling, availability of graded programs, technical breakdowns. Emphasis tends to be on form and structure rather than content and

meaning. On the other hand, there is a very high level of student motivation.

It is concluded that the computer is more effective in reinforcing acquired knowledge than in teaching new material, although in relation to acquisition the teacher could use the computer for recording and testing student progress, and the student for self-assessment.

**87-338 Shih, May** (San Francisco State U.). Content-based approaches to teaching academic writing. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **20**, 4 (1986), 617-48.

In content-based academic writing instruction, writing is connected to study of specific academic subject matter and is viewed as a means of promoting understanding of this content. A rationale is presented for adopting content-based instruction to meet ESL composition goals; it is argued that such instruction develops thinking, researching, and writing skills needed for academic writing tasks and does so more realistically than does traditional instruction that isolates rhetorical patterns and stresses writing from personal experience. Five

approaches for structuring content-based writing instruction are defined and exemplified: topic-centred 'modules' or 'minicourses,' content-based academic writing courses (reading and writing intensive), content-centred English-for-special-purposes courses, composition or multiskill courses/tutorials as adjuncts to designated university courses, and individualised help with course-related writing at times of need (through faculty in writing-across-the-curriculum programmes, tutors, and writing centre staff).

**87-339 Stanovich, Keith E.** (Oakland U.) Matthew effects in reading: some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **21**, 4 (1986), 360-406.

A framework for conceptualising the development of individual differences in reading ability is presented that synthesises a great deal of the research literature. The framework places special emphasis on the effects of reading on cognitive development and on 'bootstrapping' relationships involving reading. Of key importance are the concepts of

'reciprocal relationships' - situations where the causal connection between reading ability and the efficiency of a cognitive process is bidirectional - and 'organism-environment correlation' - the fact that differentially advantaged organisms are exposed to non-random distributions of environmental quality. Hypotheses are advanced to explain how



these mechanisms operate to create rich-get-richer and poor-get-poorer patterns of reading achievement. The framework is used to explain some persistent problems in the literature on reading disability and to suggest areas for future research.

**87–340 Thiel, Joachim.** Die Textzusammenfassung im Fremdsprachenunterricht. [The role of the summary in foreign language teaching.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **85**, 4 (1986), 381–405.

After reviewing the often unsatisfactory guidelines of various French and German authorities, the author provides his own checklist of principles for students writing text summaries, together with marking criteria which match these. The main principles include: factual correspondence with original text, recognition of main ideas and connections, correct length of whole and proportionality of parts, logical sequencing, coherence and

comprehensibility, objectivity, correct text type and tenor. The language of the original should not simply be selectively quoted, but must normally undergo syntactic and often lexical modification; the summary, however, must be intelligible without recourse to the original. Setters of summaries should choose their text carefully and try the exercise themselves.

**87–341 van der Geest, Ton and Berenst, Jan** (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen). Communicatief tweede-taalonderwijs: onderzoek en interventie. [Communicative second language teaching: research and intervention.] *Toegepaste Taalwetenschap in Artikelen* (Amsterdam), **22**, 2 (1985), 94–104.

Language acquisition research is dominated by three major hypotheses: the innate hypothesis, the cognitive hypothesis and the interactive input hypothesis. An attempt is described to find support for any one of these hypotheses in a pilot study of the effects of two teaching methods of Dutch as a second language. One method employed a communicative approach in an experimental group of 12 learners, the other method a linguistic approach

in a control group of 8 learners. The dependent variables were linguistic (word order, conjugation, vocabulary, length of utterance, word deletion, etc.) and interactive (15 subvariables). The results suggest that the learners in the experimental group made more progress than those in the control group, thus providing support for the interactive input hypothesis. Plans for future research are presented.