Language learning and teaching – theory and practice

Theory and principles

89–1   Bourne, Jill. (U. of Southampton). 'Natural acquisition' and a 'masked pedagogy'. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **9,** 1 (1988), 83–99.

Natural acquisition theory – the theory that there is an invariant order of acquisition of grammatical morphemes – fails to account or allow for individual differences in learners because production is evaluated in relation to certain norms of standard language. 'Naturalising' the standard language as the target language, and locating its development in the biological preprogramming of the individual, is simply a way of avoiding uncomfortable questions raised by the growing awareness of linguistic diversity. Responsibility for what is perceived as success/failure is placed firmly within the student. Because literacy has not been a major thrust of the 'natural' approach, ESL learners in British schools are not, on the whole, given access to 'valued' standard forms.

89–2   Byram, Michael (U. of Durham). 'Post-communicative' language teaching. *British Journal of Language Teaching,* **26,** 1 (1988), 3–6.

Exclusive concentration on 'practical communication' among the GCSE criteria may mean ignoring some of the other aims, such as encouraging insight into other cultures, and merely training pupils in a few basic skills of survival in a hostile foreign world. We need to find something worthwhile for English people to talk about with foreigners, and for such a conversation a common basis is needed. Rather than focusing on communicative competence (i.e. language), the aim should be socio-cultural competence (language learnt in context). Experience in the target country, in term-time, is essential as an integral part of the course.

89–3   Candlin, Christopher N. (U. of Lancaster). Towards task-based learning. *Lancaster Practical Papers in English Language Education* (Lancaster), **7** (1987), 5–22.

A working definition of a language-learning task might be: 'One of a set of differentiated, sequenceable, problem-posing activities involving learners and teachers in some joint selection from a range of varied cognitive and communicative procedures applied to existing and new knowledge in the collective exploration and pursuance of foreseen or emergent goals within a social milieu.' Consideration should be given to: (*a*) input, the data presented or selected by the learners and the teacher; (*b*) roles of participants in relation to the accomplishment of the task and in respect of their relations with each other; (*c*) settings, the classroom arrangements specified in a task; (*d*) actions, the procedures to be followed in the understanding, execution and accomplishment of the task; (*e*) monitoring of (*a*)–(*d*); (f) outcomes, the goals of the task; (*g*) feedback, evaluation of the task.

A typology of language-learning tasks is outlined along with the educational goals of such tasks. Type 1 focuses on learner training; type 2 focuses on information-sharing; type 3 focuses on research and experimentation; type 4 focuses on learner strategy.

89–4   Corder, S. Pit (U. of Edinburgh). Language teaching – art or science? *Journal of Applied Linguistics* (Thessaloniki, Greece), **2** (1986), 27–36.

The author considers the degree to which scientifically acquired knowledge about language can be used in the design and execution of language teaching programmes. There can be no one universal scientifically-based solution to be applied in every circumstance, because the circumstances and conditions for language teaching are so variable, but some scientific principles need to be applied to the 'what' and the 'how' of language teaching. Classical linguistics provides a description of what we teach

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(but not of what is learned), while sociolinguistics provides principles for selecting what to teach, since it is concerned with what language is used for (what forms are used to perform which functions). Neither rules of formation nor rules of use should be taught independently. Another problem is the organisation and ordering of the syllabus, for which task neither theoretical nor sociolinguistics has yet proved adequate. The reason for this is that applied linguistics has been looking at the wrong thing – we should be focusing not on teaching but on learning.

Research on second language acquisition should alter our whole view of language teaching. It shows that acquisition is a process of creating an internal representation of the structure of the language and the norms of its use, which the learner elaborates as he progresses. Given a wish to learn, a learner will become a fluent performer if he is exposed to copious linguistic data and has adequate opportunity for interaction with other speakers. A syllabus designed to provide opportunities for genuine communicative activities of increasingly demanding kinds (a 'procedural' syllabus) is likely to be the most effective. This requires new attitudes from the teacher, who must evaluate the learner in terms of fluency rather than accuracy. The pedagogical skill of teachers is increasingly more important, and their scope is wider.

89–5 Ellis, Rod (Ealing Coll. of Higher Education). The role of practice in language learning. *Teanga* (Dublin, Ireland), **8** (1988), 1–25.

A model of teaching in which practice is seen as determining learning is simplistic and not tenable. Practice is a form of classroom interaction and, as such, is a varied phenomenon subject to a host of social and personal factors. It is for this reason that quantitative studies of practice have produced conflicting results. Frequently it is acquisition that determines practice, rather than vice versa. The way practice is conducted by the teacher reflects her/his assessment of the proficiency attained by individual learners. In this way practice may serve to reinforce the learners' and teacher's preconceptions about who is succeeding and who is not.

Practice is designed to automatise items that are already part of the learner's interlanguage; qualitative studies suggest that it does not achieve this. Frequently learners fail to produce correct examplars of the target language. Practice may do little more than develop the strategies needed for reproductive competence.

There are strong theoretical grounds for believing that only some grammatical features (i.e. variational features that are computed simply) can be influenced easily by practice. Practice can only facilitate the acquisition of 'developmental' features if the necessary processing prerequisites have been established.

Practice provides input; the learner may select from this input what she/he is ready and prepared to process, irrespective of what structure is the target of the practice. The real role of practice may be to raise the learner's consciousness about language form. This consciousness may not be convertible into implicit knowledge immediately but may facilitate it in the long term.

89–6 Kramsch, Claire J. (Massachusetts Inst. of Technology). Foreign language textbooks' construction of foreign reality. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **44**, 1 (1987), 95–117.

This article deals with the problem of teaching a foreign culture through the foreign language. Analysis of chapters on sport in the eight most widely used first year German textbooks in Amerian colleges has revealed that in terms of both sociocultural and linguistic acquisition there are serious shortcomings. Cultural meaning is not discussed and differences are minimised.

The author concludes that there is inadequate knowledge of the potential influence of the textbook on foreign language acquisition, and suggests that the textbook should serve as a cultural guide as well as a linguistic one and that cultural information should be taught prior to practice of linguistic structures.

89–7 Low, Graham D. (U. of York). On teaching metaphor. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **9**, 2 (1988), 125–47.

Metaphor should be given a more important place in language teaching than it has been in the past, for three reasons. Firstly, it is central to the use of language. Secondly, from a structural point of view it pervades large parts of the language system. And thirdly, enough is now known to make such a reconsideration a feasible proposition. A reinterpretation of some of this knowledge in skill terms is a

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helpful prerequisite to the design of instructional programmes, not just because skills, expressed in one form or another, constitute an important part of most communicative syllabuses, but also because this reformulation suggests ways in which teaching materials can be designed. Some of the methodo-logical implications of the theoretical points are (1) that multi-text exercises constitute an effective and relatively simple design for teaching materials, and (2) that the structure of a number of reference materials could be significantly improved if some, or all, of the theoretical points were taken up.

89–8   Lalonde, R. N. and others. The common view of the good language learner: an investigation of teachers' beliefs. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **44**, 1 (1987), 16–34.

The purpose of this investigation was to see if language teachers held consensual beliefs (i.e. stereo-types) concerning the attributes of the good language learner. Teachers were also assessed to see if they shared a conceptualisation of classroom behaviours representative of the good language learner. In addition, demographic variables such as teacher sex, years experience in teaching, grade taught and preferred teaching method, were examined as potential mediators of consensual agreement. A total of 300 questionnaires were mailed to members of the Ontario Modern Language Teachers' Association (OMLTA). Of these, 192 were returned and 185 were usable. Teachers rated the 'good language learner' on 30 bipolar trait descriptive adjective scales, and on 14 bipolar scales referring to important classroom behaviours. Con-sensus concerning these traits and behaviours was determined using the stereotype differential technique developed by Gardner, Wonnacott and Taylor (1968). The traits yielding the greatest consensual agreement were inquisitive, persevering, involved, meticulous, organised, active, flexible, sociable, assertive, imaginative and independent. The behaviour items identified as highly consensual were actively vocalises corrections, speaks out regardless of making mistakes, and focuses on getting an idea across in the second language. Multivariate analyses failed to demonstrate any meaningful relationship between personality trait of the good language learner and important classroom behaviours, and few effects for demographic vari-ables on consensual ratings were found.

89–9   O'Sullivan, Tony (Christ Church Coll., Canterbury). Coursebook evaluation: focus on motivation and learning. *Modern Languages* (London), **69**, 2 (1988), 88–91.

This article focuses on learner motivation and learning theory in order to fill a perceived gap, i.e. the provision of a sound evaluative base for teachers wishing to select appropriate coursebooks. The assessment implications of four main motivational elements (arousal, expectancy, incentive and organ-isation) are discussed, and a checklist, comprising a set of key questions, it also provided. In regard to expectancy, for example, teachers are encouraged to ask whether a prospective textbook is linked to the real needs of learners (the key consideration in deciding suitability); they might also examine whether it evinces an excessive concern with discrete topics and situations which could obstruct a learner's sense of positive and linked achievement.

In examining the 'Focus on Learning' part of his discussion, the author feels that recent insights into the learning process can be turned to effect as evaluative tools. For example, coursebooks could be assessed· as to whether or not their layouts are balanced and orderly (on a basic *Gestalt* level), or whether the language sample offered between their covers is accurate, current, authentic, useful or learnable.

89–10   Rogers, Margaret (U. of Surrey, Guildford). Developments in applied linguistics and language teaching. *IRAL* (Heidelberg, FRG), **26**, 1 (1988), 1–18.

In the 1950s and 1960s applied linguistics was, for many, synonymous with traditional contrastive analysis. In the 1970s it became associated with language teaching in general, but not linked to any particular model. In the 1980s there seems to be no consensus about its basic approach or scope. One reason why language teachers in the UK have a negative attitude to applied linguistics is their tendency to associate it with contrastive analysis and transformational generative grammar.

There has been very little change in the aims and objectives of language teaching in the UK over the last 40 years. The aspects of linguistics which have had an influence are sociolinguistics and philosophy of language; their influence has been more on teaching methodology than anything else.

There are areas of research in applied linguistics which do have a bearing on language teaching: Krashen's natural order hypothesis; rule variability; 'simplification' as a strategy for learning; parallels with L1 acquisition; the difference between production strategies and learning strategies; differences and similarities between foreign language and naturalistic second language acquisition; the role of instruction in L2 acquisition; Krashen's dictinction between 'learning' and 'acquisition'; the importance (or not) of age in L2 acquisition; the relationship between certain socio-psychological factors such as attitude, motivation, and anxiety level and L2 proficiency.

89–11 Roller, Cathy M. (U. of Zimbabwe). Transfer of cognitive academic competence and L2 reading in a rural Zimbabwean primary school. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **22,** 2 (1988), 303–18.

Evidence for transfer of academic competence between Shona and English was examined to determine when instruction in L2 reading should begin for native Shona speakers. Third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade children attending a rural Zimbabwean primary school participated in the study. The children, who were receiving reading instruction both in Shona and in English, were randomly assigned to take one of four vocabulary tests. The tests, designed to examine the transfer of academic competence, measured the effects of language (Shona or English), translation (original or trans- lation), and grade level. Analysis of the data indicated that with the exception of the fifth graders, there was little evidence of transfer of language skills between languages. The results suggest that these children might benefit from a delay in the intro- duction of L2 reading. The data are consistent with Cummins's (1985) transfer threshold hypothesis and may explain the inefficiency of L2 reading instruc- tion. However, since the data reported in this study are drawn from a single case of a single rural primary school, the conclusions must be regarded as tentative and subject to replication.

Psychology of language learning

89–12 Arndt, Valerie. Six writers in search of texts: a protocol-based study of L1 and L2 writing. *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **41,** 4 (1987), 257–67.

Following the change of focus in much recent writing research from composition to composing, a number of studies have attempted to probe the second-language writing processes of EFL/ESL students. However, few comparative investigations of writing processes in the first and second languages have been published to date. This article reports one such exploratory study of the composing activities of six Chinese postgraduate EFL students as they produced academic written texts in both their first (Chinese) and foreign (English) languages.

Two findings are discussed. First, while the composing activities of each individual writer were found to remain consistent across languages, there was considerable variation among the writers in their approach to the task of producing written text. Second, a limited awareness of the nature of the task was a common source of difficulty in both languages: there was neither adequate awareness of the nature of written language and the demands its production makes upon the writer, nor was there sufficient exploitation of the creative nature of the activity of writing itself. Finally, some implications of these findings for the teaching of writing at this level are considered.

89–13 Au, Shun Y. (City U., London). A critical appraisal of Gardner's social-psychological theory of second-language (L2) learning. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **38,** 1 (1988), 75–100.

The social-psychological theory of second-language (L2) learning proposed by R. C. Gardner has been one of the most long-standing theories of L2 learning. For the past 25 years, it has generated a substantial number of studies in various parts of the world. This paper attempts to make a detailed evaluation of the theory. It begins with an overview of the theory, which is then analysed into five major propositions, each of which is evaluated in the light of relevant studies.

The major propositions are: (1) integrative motive hypothesis, which maintains that integrative motive is positively related to L2 achievement. This hypothesis was found to lack generality; moreover the notion that integrative motive is a unitary concept is not supported by the empirical evidence.

(2) The cultural belief hypothesis maintains that cultural beliefs can influence the development of the integrative motive and the extent to which it relates to L2 achievement. Because little effort has been expended on defining what constitutes a cultural belief, this hypothesis is a somewhat untested notion. (3) The active learner hypothesis maintains that integratively motivated learners are better learners because they are more active. But relevant studies all suffer from the serious methodological weakness that L2 proficiency levels have never been con-trolled, rendering confirming evidence weak. (4) The causality hypothesis maintains that integrative motive causally affects L2 achievement. But the results obtained using the LISREL technique are of dubious value. (5) The two-process hypothesis maintains that linguistic aptitude and integrative motive are two independent factors affecting L2 proficiency. But the evidence is conflicting: linguistic aptitude measures relate to integrative motive measures only in some studies. [For Gardner's reply, *see abstract* 89–16.]

89–14   Carter, Elaine Fuller (St Cloud State U.) The relationship of field dependent/independent cognitive style to Spanish language achievement and proficiency: a preliminary report. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **72**, 1 (1988), 21–30.

The study sought to discover whether field depend-ence/independence (FD/I) might be differentially related to success on language tasks and in language learning programmes with different orientations (i.e. towards formal linguistic achievement or func-tional language proficiency). A secondary question was whether learners' perceptions of the foreign language learning process are related to the orien-tation of the course and to their own degree of FD/I.

Subjects were students of Spanish at two mid-western universities, some following a course orientated to formal grammar study and some a course oriented explicitly to functional proficiency. Students were assessed for FD/I and were divided into three groups: field dependent (FD), field central (FC) and field independent (FI). Their Spanish linguistic achievement was measured by the normal final written exams for each course, and their communicative Spanish language proficiency was measured by the ACTFL/ETS Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI).

Major findings of this study may be summarised as follows. First, field independence was found advantageous for performance on both formal linguistic achievement and functional language proficiency tasks, while course orientation toward achievement of proficiency appeared to have no significant effect on performance on either kind of task. Second, the general pattern of perceptions regarding the importance of various factors in the language learning process was similar for all cognitive style groups at the two schools. However, FI students at both schools considered focus on meaning to be significantly more important in leaning than did FD students. Third, views of the importance of focus on meaning correlated with performance on both the OPI and the course final exam for subjects in the grammar-oriented course, but did not correlate with performance on either measure for subjects in the proficiency-oriented course.

89–15   Conners, Kathleen (U. of Montreal). Morphological markedness in second language acquisition. *IRAL* (Heidelberg), **26**, 2 (1988), 101–13.

The acquisition of inflectional morphemes by Italian-speaking learners of German was studied. Firstly the learners were assigned a 'syntactic score' on the basis of their position on a pre-established developmental sequence (adverb preposing, separa-tion of constituents in a complex verbal group, subject inversion, post-verbal adverb placement, clause-final verb placement). Then their proficiency in the use of verbal and substantival (determiner and adjective) forms was assessed. It was found that speakers who were relatively poor in syntax used marked verbal forms (i.e. with endings other than -en) more more than they did marked substantival forms (i.e. with endings other than -e). Speakers with relatively native-like syntax, on the other hand, made greater use of marked substantival forms. A similar investigation of English-speaking learners of French was then carried out. Here, however, there was no particular correlation between syntactic development and the ratio of verbal to substantival marked forms; this may be due to the absence of a declensional system in French. Furthermore, any correlation between morphological and syntactic acquisition was relatable to proficiency in verbal morphology rather than in substantival morph-ology. The writer attributes the difference between

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the results for German-learners and for French-learners to the greater dependence between word-order and case in German; alternatively, it may be that the more complex morphological paradigm (substantival in German and verbal in French) is the more sensitive index of the acquisition of other components of the grammar.

89–16   Gardner, R. C. (U. of Western Ontario). The socio-educational model of second-language learning: assumptions, findings, and issues. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **38,** 1 (1988), 101–26.

Au criticises the socio-educational model of second-language learning and argues that the research literature does not offer strong support for it [*see abstract* 89–13]. This article responds to these criticisms, indicating where they are based on invalid assumptions and/or a simplistic interpretation of the model, and reviews research findings that attest to the validity of the model. Au's criticisms are valuable, however, in that they highlight issues in this research area; some of the most important are then reviewed.

89–17   Gass, Susan M. (Michigan State U.). Integrating research areas: a framework for second language studies. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **9,** 2 (1988), 198–217.

A five-stage model is proposed for learners' con-version of ambient speech (input) to output, drawing on concepts from sociolinguistics (input and inter-action), psycholinguistics (overgeneralisation) and general linguistics (transfer and universals). The author seeks to solve various problems with earlier models: that language processing is non-linear, that learner grammars may go either beyond input or less far, that acquisition in L2 is not as uniformly successful as in L1.

The first stage, 'apperceived input', is what is noticed in the stream of speech; this is affected by attention, attitude and prior knowledge, and inter-acts with a parsing mechanism to segment the speech into meaningful units. Next is 'compre-hended input', which differs from Krashen's 'com-prehensible input' in that comprehension is con-trolled by the learner and is not all-or-nothing; various levels of comprehension are possible, and the distinction between semantic and syntactic comprehension is especially important. Analysis at the level of syntax is the more useful for feeding into the third stage, 'intake', seen as a process of mental activity which mediates between inputs and gram-mars. The fourth stage is 'integration', when the language becomes part of the learner's rule system. Even this is not identical to 'output', the fifth stage, for as Swain has shown learners also need 'com-prehensible output', or opportunities to use the language, before they acquire the full range of productive competence.

89–18   Harris, Vee (Goldsmiths Coll., London). 'Natural' language learning and learning a foreign language in the classroom. *British Journal of Language Teaching,* **26,** 1 (1988), 26–30.

A small-scale investigation was carried out into the way pupils approach learning French in the class-room. The study made use of data collected by the Oxfordshire Certificate of Educational Achieve-ment (OCEA) Modern Language Research and Development Group. Pupils from fourth, fifth and sixth year classes of a comprehensive school had been presented with two communicative tasks to perform orally and their performance had been tape-recorded and transcribed.

The first stage of the study compared the order in which the pupils grasped the structures of the language with the order in which French children acquire them. A significant correlation was found between the two orders, suggesting that the sequence in which pupils grasp the structures of French is determined more by the internal acquisition process than by any externally imposed grading and teaching.

The second stage of the study sought to discover more about how the internal acquisition process works. All the errors pupils made were examined and those that were similar to French children's were identified: omissions, archiforms and over-

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regularisation. These errors are not the result of sloppiness but are part of a systematic attempt to communicate, which should be fostered in the classroom. This is likely to be the case if the need to communicate arises naturally from intrinsically interesting activities (those used in the teaching of English as a mother tongue can be useful). Where more structured methods are deemed appropriate, it should still be possible to take account of the acquisition process. The shift to an activity-based syllabus places great demands on the teacher, including a different pattern of interaction with pupils.

All three hypotheses receive support if both kinds of data (judgment severity or relative seriousness) are allowed. If only relative seriousness data are considered, all groups are essentially the same, so the hypotheses are vacuous.

89–19 Jamieson, Joan (Northern Arizona U.) **and Chapelle, Carol** (Iowa State U.). Working styles on computers as evidence of second language learning strategies. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **37**, 4 (1987), 523–44.

Data collected on 33 ESL students working with computerised spelling and dictation lessons were used to infer three learning strategies: advance preparation, monitoring input, and monitoring output. Subjects' cognitive styles were measured by the Group Embedded Figures Test for field independence and the Matching Familiar Figures Test for reflection/impulsivity. English proficiency was measured by the TOEFL. An analysis of amount of strategy use in a variety of situations revealed that all strategies were employed more frequently for the more complex dictation task than for the simple spelling task, and that only one strategy (monitoring input) was used more frequently by the low-level students. Examining the correlates of strategy use indicated that advance preparation and monitoring output were significantly related to field independence, that advance preparation was significantly related to reflection/impulsivity, and that advance preparation and monitoring input were significant, negative predictors of performance on the TOEFL. This research concludes that learning strategies need to be considered in concert with cognitive style, and that computer collection of strategy data is a reliable method for examining strategies on different activities over a long period of time.

89–20 Laine, Eero J. (U. of Jyväskylä). Variations in FL learning motivation: some theoretical considerations. *Journal of Applied Linguistics* (Thessaloniki, Greece), **2** (1987), 60–73.

An interpretation of the 'integrative' and 'instrumental' motives can be achieved in a natural way by resorting to the Maslovian idea of a hierarchy of motives. 'Intellectual curiosity' tops the hierarchy of motives and is clearly a 'growth motive' as it grows stronger when fulfilled. An integrative motive can develop to be an end in itself, and thus rise above the status of social motives in the Maslovian sense. We may, however, find elements of a society motive, the motivated individual gleaning a sense of self-actualisation from society's integrative tendencies. Self-assertion presumably develops into self-actualisation in some other, 'higher' form. There is a marked difference in the refinement of the component parts of the 'instrumental motive'. The 'communication motive' in Maslovian terms, is very clearly a social motive which in some context/milieu/society can be developed into an end in itself. Each learner will show an idiosyncratic combination of motives at various stages of development. The hierarchy will show in big samples at a general level.

'Anxiety' fits nicely into the hierarchical construction of motives, among safety needs. 'Self-confidence' (or eventually 'self-concept') is to be regarded as a factor regulating the maintenance and development of FL learning motives rather than an independent form of motivation.

89–21 Lightbown, Patsy M. (Concordia U.) **and White, Lydia** (McGill U.) The influence of linguistic theories on language acquisition research: description and explanation. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **37**, 4 (1987), 483–510.

There have been many changes in the way in which 20th-century researchers have perceived the relationship between theories of language and theories of language acquisition. In this review, some of these changes are examined in the light of differences in expectations for the role of linguistic theories in describing what language learners acquire and explaining how they acquire it. It is concluded that

a theory of grammar will be a necessary component in an explanation of the L1 acquisition of formal properties of grammar, such as syntax, morphology and phonology, and may also be required to explain these aspects of L2 acquisition. Linguistic theories will play no role in other aspects of acquisition, equally important to our understanding of the overall acquisition process, and these must be accounted for in other ways.

89–22 Neapolitan, Denise M. and others (Northwestern U.). Second language acquisition: possible insights from studies on how birds acquire song. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **10,** 1 (1988), 1–11.

Research into general linguistic and cognitive processes in humans has been aided by studies of analogous processes in animals. Studies on how birds develop their species-specific song have been of particular interest to researchers seeking to identify critical variables and universals in first language acquisition in humans. Because of recent studies on exceptional song acquisition, that is, time-independent learning of second dialects or song by birds generally thought to acquire a single song during a limited sensitive period, it is suggested that there also exist significant parallels between human second language acquisition and avian bilingualism. The purpose of this paper is to highlight these parallels and to demonstrate that such interspecies comparisons may provide new insights into the processes of second language acquisition.

The following areas of possible commonality are illustrated: (a) a sensitive phase (if not critical period) affects the ability of humans to acquire nativelike phonology and of birds to produce exact copies of a tutor's song; (b) the quality and quantity of input and interaction are critical variables in the development of both avian and human bilingualism; (c) motivational factors play a similarly important role for successful acquisition of additional communication codes; and (d) birds and humans both demonstrate variation in maintenance and loss of multiple communication codes; possible reasons for these variations range from physiological to environmental.

89–23 Northend, Barbara. Choosing to study a modern language at A-level. *Modern Languages* (London), **69,** 2 (1988), 82–7.

There has been a relative decline in the number of sixth-form pupils studying modern languages during the last 10 years. A research project is described which examines attitudes towards language learning and the general linguistic background of 20 first-year A-level students. Five schools each allowed four pupils to be interviewed. Three were language students of differing abilities and the fourth had shown previous linguistic ability, but had rejected an A-level language course.

The schools were assessed – their examinations, teaching styles, quality of teaching and their pupils' likes and dislikes concerning language work. The pupils were also assessed – their linguistic background; any parental encouragement; any evidence of early speaking or reading; any word-based interests such as writing; their enjoyment and understanding of language; any activities connected with language and their reasons for studying a language.

Four types of pupil were hypothesised from the answers given, all of whom were interested in different aspects of language. The conclusion drawn was that a teacher had to interest and provide an incentive for all four groups, whilst also helping students with little linguistic ability or interest.

89–24 Peck, Sabrina (Los Angeles City Coll.). Signs of learning: child nonnative speakers in tutoring sessions with a child native speaker. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **37,** 4 (1987), 545–71.

Learning acts, which included conversation-maintaining acts and language learning acts, were coded and compared in a group of native Spanish-speaking children (n = 9) during individual tutoring sessions with a native English speaker. In each session, an 8-year-old NS of English tutored one kindergarten child for about 25 minutes at an elementary school. Three kindergarten children had been rated high, three average and three low in overall achievement by their teachers. For each child, the total number of

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words and number of unique words were computed. In the nine tape recordings, the high group ranked ahead of the low group in the quantity and sophistication of their English, and the number of learning acts produced. The medium group resembled the high group more than the low group on most features. Each group had a characteristic pattern of learning act use.

89–25 Pica, Teresa (U. of Pennsylvania). Interlanguage adjustments as an outcome of NS-NNS negotiated interaction. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **38**, 1 (1988), 45–73.

The purpose of the following study was to investigate what Swain has labelled 'comprehensible output'. Negotiated interactions between a native English speaker (NS) and ten non-native speakers (NNSs) of English were examined to find out how the non-native speakers made their interlanguage utterances comprehensible when the native speaker indicated difficulty in understanding them. On the basis of theoretical work and anecdotal evidence from NS-NNS interaction, it was believed that the NNSs would respond to the NS by modifying interlanguage morphosyntax, phonology and lexion and, in so doing, would employ more target-like use of English. Results of the study offered somewhat limited confirmation of these beliefs. The data revealed that the NNSs were indeed capable of modifying their interlanguage in response to the NS's requests for comprehensible output. However, such NNS modifications were relatively infrequent and virtually unnecessary because, typically, when signaling requests for clarification from the NNSs, the NS also modelled target (modified) versions of NNS interlanguage utterances for them.

89–26 Schachter, Jacquelyn (U. of Southern California). Second language acquisition and its relationship to Universal Grammar. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **9**, 3 (1988), 219–35.

For almost 20 years (following Corder, 1967) much study of second language acquisition has been carried out with the assumption or outwright claim that the basic processes underlying both first and second language acquisition are the same. Recent formulations of this notion make use of the currently evolving theory of Universal Grammar, arguing from the module-specific assumption of linguistic knowledge and arguing that adults are faced with the logical problem of language acquisition, just as children are. Such formulations need to be examined seriously in light of the fundamental differences in the two language acquisition cases, including those just mentioned. Four major areas of difference between the first and second language acquisition cases are presented and explored: completeness, equipotentially, previous knowledge, and fossilisation. It is argued that these differences are sufficient to remove the possibility that the underlying processes can possibly be the same in the two cases. The role of Universal Grammar in explaining how second language acquisition occurs will turn out to be much more modest than present claims indicate, with parameter setting, or resetting, as currently envisioned, an impossibility.

89–27 Schneiderman, Eta and others (U. of Ottawa). Second-language accent: the relationship between discrimination and perception in acquisition. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **38**, 1 (1988), 1–19.

This paper reports on a study which measures the relationship between the discrimination and production of segmental and prosodic elements in a second language. The measures employed in the study also served to assess the effects of a phonetic training programme for French as a second language designed by the authors. Two questions are addressed in this study: (1) Is there a systematic relationship between perception and production of the sound system in a second language? (2) What effect does a period of systematic discrimination training in the second language have on this relationship?

The measures employed included tests of discrimination and production for French phones, rhythm and prosody. The subjects' production test results were judged by highly trained, native speakers of French. Subjects for the study included

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a treated group which had undergone the phonetic training programme and an untreated group which had not. Both groups were simultaneously enrolled in French as a second language courses. Testing took place prior to the start of the French courses and at the end of the semester immediately after they had finished.

Although the results of the study indicate that discrimination ability intially exceeds production ability, they also suggest that explicit training may disrupt this relationship.

89–28   Snow, Marguerite Ann and others (U. of California, Los Angeles). Patterns of second language retention of graduates of a Spanish Immersion program. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **9**, 2 (1988), 182–97.

This paper reports on a study of the second language retention of students who completed a seven-year elementary Spanish immersion programme. In the study, the relationship between attitudinal factors, language use, self-assessment of Spanish proficiency, and second language retention was examined. Subjects were 38 immersion graduates, and 20 currently enrolled Grade 6 immersion students. The Modern Language Association (MLA) Co-operative Test of Spanish and a 63-item questionnaire designed to obtain information about opportunities to use Spanish, interest in foreign languages, parental encouragement and ethnocentrism were administered to all subjects. Results indicated that some language loss occurred soon after the formal learning situation was terminated. Significant differences between MLA scores of students with continued formal exposure to Spanish and those who had discontinued Spanish, however,

did not develop until high school. At the high school level, significant differences across all four skills (writing, speaking, reading, and listening) were found with the greatest losses occurring in the productive skills. Exploratory factor analysis of the questionnaire data yielded four factors which were labelled: 'Interest in foreign language', 'Encouragement and pride in work,' 'Integrative orientation', and 'Parental/integrative orientation'. Cross-tabulations revealed significant X^2 values between three of the factors and the productive skills. All of the factors, except integrative orientation, were also significantly related to language-use opportunities. Findings suggest that the attitudinal predisposition underlying the four factors influences the extent to which students retain their Spanish skills in writing and speaking. These factors appear, however, to be unrelated to retention of receptive skills in Spanish.

89–29   Tarone, Elaine (U. of Minnesota) **and Parrish, Betsy** (Esso, Paris). Task-related variation in interlanguage: the case of articles. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **38**, 1 (1988), 21–44.

There is no doubt that second-language learners vary in the accuracy of their production when asked to perform different tasks. For example, Tarone (1985) found that the accuracy with which English articles and other grammatical forms were used by non-native speakers at a single point in time varied depending on the tasks which the learners were asked to perform. Quantitative measures showed that the shifts in accuracy of article use were highly significant. The causes of this variability, however, were unclear. Researchers such as Ardity and Perdue (1979) have suggested a variety of possible causes of task-related variability.

In this study, a more fine-grained quantitative and qualitative analysis of the Tarone (1985) data focuses on the function which articles played in the different tasks. It is found that different tasks elicited

different types of noun phrases, which in turn demanded different uses of the article. In addition, it is found that there was some tendency of learner accuracy with articles occurring with one type of noun phrase to change across the tasks used. It is argued that this change in accuracy is due to the communicative demands and discourse character-istics of the tasks. Finally, it is argued that task-related variability in interlanguage must be due, not to a single variable called 'attention to form', but to a complex of variables, at least one of which must be the differing communicative functions which forms may perform in different tasks, as, for example, when these tasks place different degrees of com-municative pressure upon the speaker, or elicit discourse which varies in its cohesiveness.

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Language learning and teaching

89–30 Vilke, Mirjana (U. of Zagreb, Yugoslavia). Some psychological aspects of early second-language acquisition. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* (Clevedon, Avon), **9,** 1/2 (1988), 115–28.

In this paper some results of a study of children's acquisition of foreign languages (in this case English) at an early school age are discussed. The study on which the paper is based has been conducted in formal classroom situations with children aged eight being exposed to English for a couple of periods per week and being surrounded by the language and culture of their native country. Consequently, this is a case of foreign language learning rather than second language acquisition. The focus of the analysis is the motivation of the learners and the sources of difficulties during the learning process.

The advantages of an early start with a foreign language are discussed: the familiarisation with the linguistic properties of the foreign idiom at an age when it is readily accepted; the beneficial effect upon the cognitive growth of the individual; and the prevention of the development of ethnocentric tendencies in later life. Since 1984 when the first generation of 'early starters' reached the final year of their primary school, their attitude to English has been observed and compared to the control groups who started English at a later age. In the paper some findings of the observations are reported.

Several characteristics of children's performance in English as a foreign language constantly recur in the course of the learning process: (1) They can master the phonological system of English with the greatest ease. (2) Vocabulary items for which they have not developed concepts in their own culture present difficulty. (3) They can understand basic relationships in a sentence, especially spatial relationships expressed by prepositions, and the concept of plurality, etc. (4) Difficulties in learning structural elements stem from two main sources: (*a*) interference of the mother tongue (this can be seen in the use of articles); (*b*) immaturity, which makes certain concepts in both the primary and secondary language hard to grasp. (5) Interference from the mother tongue manifests itself at both the linguistic and the conceptual level.

None of the children has become bilingual yet because the contact hours have been too few, but motivation to learn English has developed significantly. No detrimental effects on native language, education or intellectual development have been observed.

89–31 Williams, Jessica. Non-native varieties of English: a special case of language acquisition. *English World-Wide* (Heidelberg), **8,** 2 (1987), 161–99.

Similarities across non-native institutionalised varieties of English (NIVES) and between NIVES and second language learners' English are discussed. The article system in NIVES and in second language learners is often modified to make a specific/non-specific distinction rather than a definite/indefinite distinction. Two general explanations for this are offered: (1) there may be subsystems or structures which are potentially difficult for both kinds of learners; (2) there may be some underlying production and comprehension principles which operate in acquisitional settings.

Production principles are discussed. Regularisation is a feature of NIVES, e.g. reclassification of mass nouns as count so *fruits, furnitures*…NIVE-speakers tend selectively to produce redundant markers, e.g. suffix *-s* in third person singular and in plurals are often not produced. NIVE-speakers often attempt to make the relationship between form and meaning as transparent as possible, e.g. *she did looked* instead of *she looked.* Completive aspect is generally marked more overtly in NIVES, e.g. *I have read this book last year.* The tendency towards maximum salience has a number of manifestations.

89–32 Zhang Shuqiang (U. of Hawaii). Cognitive complexity and written production in English as a second language. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **37,** 4 (1987), 469–81.

An experimental study was conducted to investigate the effects of cognitive complexity upon the written production of learners of English as a second language (ESL). Sixty-three intermediate ESL learners provided written responses to questions at high

and low cognitive levels. Their performances at the two cognitive levels were rated for total number of words produced, syntactic complexity, and linguistic accuracy. It was found that a higher order of cognition increased both the amount and the order

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of syntactic complexity of written English responses. But across the two cognitive levels, the degree of inaccuracy remained stable. It was also found that an increase in cognitive complexity increased variability in terms of total amount of production and syntactic complexity but reduced the dispersion in error incidence. Comparisons between standard deviations and standard errors of estimate pointed to substantial inaccuracy of prediction if generalisations were to be made about ESL performance at a high cognitive level from a knowledge of performance at a low level.

Research methods

89–33 Mainil, D. (U. of Mons). Etudier la compréhension du langage chez l'adulte: problème méthodologique. [Studying language comprehension of adults: a methodological problem.] *Revue de Phonétique Appliquée* (Mons, Belgium), **86** (1988), 1–21.

This article aims to determine whether experimental methods used in psycholinguistics for studying sentence comprehension do not influence the data which they produce. The author compared, for given linguistic material, the performance of 17 adult subjects on three comprehension tasks. The collected data are largely different. The influence of some variables on comprehension is indeed linked to the nature of the task carried out by the subject. In the same way, some tasks establish better discriminations in the linguistic material than others. Thus experimental data effectively depend on the method used to produce them. Thenceforth investigations should question the very foundations of the techniques which they use.

89–34 Rankin, J. Mark (U. of California, LA). Designing think-aloud studies in ESL reading. *Reading in a Foreign Language* (Oxford), **4**, 2 (1988), 119–32.

Thinking-aloud as a research method in the study of second language learning and use involves the subjects reading (usually silently), and at intervals reporting their thoughts on the text and on their reading processes to the investigator. This paper aims to provide a practical manual for the design and implementation of research on thinking-aloud. It describes a general framework for research design and explains how options within that framework can allow research to be tailored to the collection of specific types of data. Thinking-aloud studies in reading have been used for a variety of purposes: to find out what strategies readers actually use, as a teaching method, to test the effect of instruction on strategy use, and as a means of investigating reading as problem-solving. It is especially well suited to the task of providing the most direct access we have to the mental processes involved in reading while it is actually going on.

Advice is given on setting up projects, selecting appropriate reading materials, planning the sessions, procedures (practice and recording), and working with data (transcription, analysis).

Error analysis

89–35 Birdsong, David (U. of Florida) **and Kassen, Margaret Ann** (U. of Texas). Teachers' and students' evaluations of foreign language errors: a meeting of minds? *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **72**, 1 (1988), 1–12.

This study tested two main hypotheses: hypothesis I predicts that student and teacher error judgments will better conform if teachers have the same native language as their students. Hypothesis II predicts that, relative to those of beginners, advanced students' error judgments will better conform to teachers' judgments. A third hypothesis predicts that the greatest conformity will be observed among advanced students and teachers with the same native language as the students. Participants included French native speakers (FNS), English native speakers (ENS) (all teachers of French), second-language learners (L2L), some of whom were in their second semester of French (L2L-A) and some of whom were in their fifth semester of French (L2L-B). The test instrument was a set of 32

deviant French sentences with errors distributed equally across four broad categories: morphology, syntax, lexicon, and phonology. The criterion for evaluation was 'seriousness of error', defined for subjects in terms of a realistic conversational context. Raters evaluated errors on a five-point scale.

Results showed that there was a tendency among teachers, especially FNS, to rate items more harshly than students. Divergent patterns of evaluations emerged among the four groups of raters. ENS subjects were not quite so biased towards assigning severe ratings as FNS, L2L-A responses were much less harsh but in contrast, L2L-B responses were nearly as harsh as ENS's. It appears that harshness in error judgments correlates well with exposure to the target language. There was agreement among groups on the seriousness of a given error relative to another error.

All three hypotheses receive support if both kinds of data (judgment severity or relative seriousness) are allowed. If only relative seriousness data are considered, all groups are essentially the same, so the hypotheses are vacuous.

Testing

89–36 Bachman, Lyle F. (U. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign). Problems in examining the validity of the ACTFL oral proficiency interview. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **10,** 2 (1988), 149–64.

The primary problems in measuring speaking ability through an oral interview procedure are not those related to efficiency or reliability, but rather those associated with examining the validity of the interview ratings as measures of ability in speaking and of the uses that are made of such ratings. In order to examine all aspects of validity, the abilities measured must be clearly distinguished from the elicitation procedures, in both the design of the interview and in the intepretation of ratings.

Research from applied linguistics and language testing is consistent with the position that language proficiency consists of several distinct but related abilities. Research from language testing also indicates that the methods used to measure language ability have an important effect on test performance.

Two frameworks – one of communicative language ability and the other of test method facets – are proposed as a basis for distinguishing abilities from elicitation procedures and for informing a programme of empirical research and development.

The validity of the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) as it is currently designed and used cannot be adequately examined, much less demonstrated, because it confounds abilities with elicitation procedures in its design, and it provides only a single rating, which has no basis in either theory or research. As test developer, ACTFL has yet to fully discharge its responsibility for providing sufficient evidence of validity to support uses that are made of OPI ratings.

89–37 Brown, James D. (U. of Hawaii). Components of engineering-English reading ability? *System* (Oxford), **16,** 2, (1988), 193–200.

This study explored variables which may contribute to the ability to read engineering English. A test of engineering-English reading comprehension ability and a cloze test of general English language proficiency were administered to four groups of graduate students ($n = 29$ for each): (1) American engineers; (2) Americans in TESL; (3) Chinese engineers; and (4) Chinese in TEFL. The cloze test had 50 items with a seventh-word deletion pattern. The engineering reading test contained 60 items based on three passages.

The results indicated that the engineering reading test significantly ($P < 0.01$) separated the mean performance of Chinese engineering and non-engineering students – thus supporting previous study of the validity of that measure. In addition, a clear-cut pattern emerged in the mean performances of the four groups which was also further found to exist for each and every one of the ten different item types (including both linguistic and engineering factors) on the engineering test. Finally, it appeared that as much as 62 per cent of the variation in scores on the engineering reading text was accounted for by general English language proficiency rather than by components specific to engineering English. The discussion includes many questions that arose from these results.

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89–38 **Budd, Roger** (Christ Church Coll., Canterbury). Measuring proficiency in using English syntax. *System* (Oxford), **16,** 2 (1988), 171–85.

This study looks at researches carried out by Hunt (1970), which aimed at finding ways of measuring the growth in syntactic proficiency of American schoolchildren. It then explores the possibilities of applying the measures he arrives at (T-units) to groups of EL2 and EL1 speakers in the UK. The merits and shortcomings of his methodology are presented, and from this a description is made of various ways the results of Hunt's research could be developed, both for testing and teaching.

89–39 **Clark, John L. D. and Clifford, Ray T.** (Defense Language Inst.). The FSI/ILR/ACTFL proficiency scales and testing techniques: development, current status, and needed research. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **10,** 2 (1988), 129–47.

The major purposes of this article are briefly to describe the rationale and history of development of the 'proficiency-based' testing movement in the United States, its current status, and areas in which additional research and development work are recommended to enhance both the psychometric validity and practical value of this approach.

89–40 **Davies, Alan** (U. of Edinburgh). Communicative language testing. *Journal of Applied Linguistics* (Thessaloniki, Greece), **1** (1985), 22–23.

'Communicative' tests are difficult to define, and emphatically involve the testing of communicative language, but not necessarily the communicative testing of language. Such tests are positioned along a continuum comprising three main distinctions, i.e. discrete point v. integrative, direct v. indirect and norm-referenced v. criterion referenced evaluative methods. As a rule of thumb, it is posited that communicative tests are likely to be more integrative and criterion-referenced, less indirect and also much more concerned with sociolinguistic realism.

However, by reference to commercially available tests such as the JMB Test in English (Overseas) and ELTS, the author highlights practical problems in achieving authenticity or in basing tests firmly upon needs analyses. In the latter case, there is too little evidence to justify generalisation from particular identified language items to constitute, for example, a distinct or all-embracing 'variety' such as medical English. The author opts instead for Oller's view, wherein pragmatic tests (which need not be authentic or needs related, and indeed can be quite 'artificial') can effectively sample linguistic ability. Dictation could thus be seen, for instance, as a good test of communicative language.

89–41 **Lantolf, James P. and Frawley, William** (U. of Delaware). Proficiency: Understanding the construct. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **10,** 2 (1988), 181–95.

This article argues against a definitional approach to oral proficiency and in favour of a principled approach based on sound theoretical considerations. Four problematic trends in the oral proficiency movement as it is currently conceived are identified: the tail wagging the dog, false authenticity, premature institutionalisation and the psychometric posture. The rudiments of a principled theory of oral proficiency are then offered, based on the theory of higher forms of human cognitive activity developed by the Vygotskyan school of psycho- linguistics. The theory entails bringing into focus such factors as open systems, the individual speaker, functional systems and intersubjectivity. From this perspective, it is argued that if the construct of oral proficiency is to have any significance at all for language teaching and testing, researchers must come to understand what it means for real speakers (natives as well as non-natives) to interact with other real speakers in the everyday world of human activity rather than in the world circumscribed by language tests.

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Language learning and teaching ■

89–42 Marsh, David (U. Brunei Darussalam, Brunei). Judging another by one's own standards: what pragmatics reveals in the evaluation of language use. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **26**, 1 (1988), 50–3.

This article considers cross-cultural misinterpretation as it occurs in language use, in this case specifically relating to marker assessment of candidates who sat a 'Conversation' examination at a Finnish university. The concept of 'pragmatic blunders' is discussed, wherein deficiencies in sociolinguistic, contexualised language competence are seen to be more serious than mere structural errors because they are felt by the native-speaking community to reflect adversely upon the personality of the L2 speaker. In the Finnish example, marker criteria varied significantly between the Finnish and British examiners, not least because of a divergence in sociopragmatic conventions/expectations. There appears to have been a prescriptive view of language performance evinced by the native speakers, wherein certain kinds of non-native language delivery (e.g. hesitation/reluctance to initiate topics) were unduly penalised, candidates frequently being characterised as 'wooden'. Pragmatic breakdowns like this occur when attitude and meaning are conveyed via one set of principles/sociolinguistic rules and intepreted through another, i.e. across a cultural divide.

The nature of correct, permissible or appropriate language usage needs to be re-evaluated so as to obviate any notions of linguistic superiority.

89–43 Partington, John (U. of Nottingham). Towards a science of question-setting in the GCSE. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **26**, 1 (1988), 45–9.

With respect to the two-tier examination prescribed by the National Criteria for French, the author discusses the lack of objectivity and specificity involved in differentiating between and within the Basic and Higher levels. The question of accurately describing levels of difficulty is sensitive for teachers; being unable to say exactly why one question type or task is more difficult than another is frequently impossible, boiling down in the end to the subjective 'hunch' of experts.

Current question-setting practice involves moderation, which only attempts to determine whether questions are acceptable, not why they are hard or easy. The theoretical basis of much GSCE question setting is believed to be, *de facto*, rather limited, and much work needs to be done in relating individual question types to grades.

Two task examples are cited, which reveal that testing on the basis of prescribed lists of vocabulary/structures is inadequate, since communicative competence involves a number of processing subskills, including the ability to draw inferences and conclusions. The skills required to achieve each grade should be listed in a cumulative hierarchy, and less emphasis given to mere syllabus content.

89–44 Pedley, Alan (U. of Exeter). Discrepancy identification tests: an exercise in concentrated listening. *Modern Languages* (London), **69**, 2 (1988), 75–80.

Too many FL listening comprehension tasks rely excessively on the use of English, particularly in classroom/textbook instructions, thereby militating against the production of the target language by both teachers and students. Multiple choice questioning is felt to be unethical since distractors aim to trick learners; this article focuses upon an exercise which involves integrated language skills (i.e. listening, reading and writing); discrepancy identification testing could ask learners to compare a tape recording of, for example, a French news interview [excerpts provided] with a slightly amended tape-script. Learners are asked to underline substantive differences between the two versions, at the lexical or phrase level, and then provide corrections.

It is maintained that such comparative activities train students to listen intensively, read carefully, seek actively the meaning of target language words (via synonyms/paraphrases) and become more familiar with FL spoken registers. The end result could be, it is hoped, an improvement in the learner's own spoken French.

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89–45 Shohamy, Elana (Tel-Aviv U.). A proposed framework for testing the oral language of second/foreign language learners. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **10,** 2 (1988), 165–79.

Within the proposed framework, oral tests consist of several different speech interactions, each of which encompasses a variety of contextual variables that affect its output. These interactions are performed as simulations in order to tap unmonitored language, which approximates the most stable discourse style, namely, the vernacular. The sample of speech interactions included on an oral test is randomly selected from specifications of those interactions most relevant to the specific context and purpose of the assessment. The language samples are then assessed with rating scales, whose criteria vary according to the intended use of the test results. The accuracy of the scores, the quality of the test as a whole, and the assumptions made about oral language are examined through the relevant types of reliability and validity as well as through extensive research.

Curriculum planning

89–46 Beier, Rudolf and Möhn, Dieter. Fachsprachlicher Fremdsprachen-unterricht. Voraussetzungen und Entscheidungen. [Teaching languages for special purposes. Context and decisions.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **87,** 1/2 (1988), 19–75.

The authors distinguish between a number of complex and interrelated variables, including variations in learners' prior knowledge and needs, the teachers' subject knowledge and the institutional and organisational circumstances, which together determine the nature of LSP teaching and account for the great variety of courses and textbooks. From these variables five topics are derived and discussed in detail: (i) The nature and description of specialised texts. The communicative needs of the work place form both the starting point and goal of LSP. The function and structure of texts are therefore examined in relation to the work situation in which they are created. Systematic models of economic activity and of activities within a large industrial firm taken from Möhn/Pelka (1984) and text examples from *Drehstrom-Generatoren* are presented. (ii) The determination of LSP target needs and the problem of the learners' subjective requirements. Much attention has been paid recently in the GDR to the danger of too much emphasis on technical subject matter (textbooks, scientific essays, monographs) rather than situational/communicative needs. At the same time research in the Federal Republic has shown that FLs may be required in a wide variety of situations. Area and cultural studies may be helpful to the learner. It is emphasised, however, that learner's needs are only one of a number of complex variables. (iii) The role of skills in LSP teaching and the problem of a skills–orientated selection of texts. All the traditional skills need to be specifically taught through authentic texts as only these synchronise with real life, provide models which can be copied, and enable strategies for understanding to be adequately developed. Further study is needed of the way skills may in practice be combined, e.g. listening and writing (telephone). (iv) The degrees of specialisation in the teaching of LSP. The idea that broad courses are useful is rejected on the grounds that such courses are inevitably limited to area studies, culture, etc; grammar; broad text functions, and study skills. (v) Problems of teacher education. In order to select texts and to motivate students, teachers need specialised knowledge. In practice this means they should receive further and in-service training in the technical subject concerned. [Notes and bibliography.]

89–47 Byram, Michael (U. of Durham). Rethinking foreign language teaching in the UK: what curriculum for a multiethnic society? *Journal of Curriculum Studies* (Glasgow), **20,** 3 (1988), 247–55.

The Swann Report fails to argue for the equal status of British ethnic minority languages in all spheres of public life or for their use as a medium of instruction in schools. It presents a 'learning deficit' view of ethnic minority pupils, albeit quite a refined one. The teaching of such minority languages is only recommended because loss of language is seen as a cause of learning problems, for cognitive or affective reasons.

Swann wants to assimilate minority languages to

the instrumental utilitarian view of foreign language teaching. This view distorts the meaning of the language for a member of the minority; it is divorced from the issue of identity. Nor does it take account of the educational purposes of the teaching of languages spoken outside national frontiers. The meanings and purposes of minority languages for their speakers and of foreign languages for mono-lingual British pupils are quite different. To place these two kinds of pupil in the same setting creates problems because of this clash of purposes. There would be a clash of methods too – to transfer foreign language teaching methods to minority language teaching for bilingual pupils is quite misguided.

89–48 Freudenstein, Reinhold. Landeskunde als Prinzip fächerübergreifenden Unterrichts. Überlegungen zu einem Theorieansatz im Fremdsprachenunterricht. [Area studies as a principle for interdisciplinary teaching. Towards a theory in foreign language teaching.] *Praxis des neusprachlichen Unterrichts* (Dortmund, FRG), **35,** 2 (1988), 115–22.

Inter-disciplinary teaching is not a current issue in modern language teaching. Among German diction-aries of education only the *Pädagogische Lexikon* has much to say on the subject and this reveals that it is generally taught only in the *Hauptschule*, where FLs are only a minor subject. It is commonly argued that inter-disciplinary teaching creates problems of co-ordination and timetabling, that it takes away time from teaching the FL, that it is impossible to maintain the monolingual principle, that pupils are unclear what subject they are learning and teachers are not qualified to teach it. Yet project-oriented teaching is accepted. As with projects, topics can be dealt with in all their aspects, and there is more time and more scope for observing pupils' strengths and weaknesses. The difference is that interdisciplinary teaching is teacher-planned and teacher-led within a defined curriculum. It already exists in bilingual schools and in the use of the FL to describe objects in the classroom. Cooperation could mean basic treatment of, for example, English geography in the FL classroom, followed by a more detailed study in Geography; selected texts of the *résistance* in French could be accompanied by a broader approach in History. Area studies are in reality essential to communicative language teaching and introduce a wide range of subjects into the FL classroom. Since area studies are essentially interdisciplinary, the FL teacher, whether working in conjunction with teachers from other disciplines or not, has a responsibility beyond the formal teaching of language.

89–49 Kite, Ulla Renton (Goldsmiths Coll., London). Multilingualism and cultural exchange in Great Britain – with special reference to London schools. *British Journal of Language Teaching,* **26,** 1 (1988), 42–4.

This article discusses the implications of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) policy on multi-ethnic/multicultural education. ILEA finds the idea of assimilation and integration of ethnic minority groups misguided and inadequate, since the child is absorbed into the existing education system and losses its own cultural identity. In ILEA, 157 different languages are spoken by around 45,000 school children coming from the ethnic community. In one London borough there are schools with a Bengali-speaking majority between 67 and 80 per cent: it would seem nonsense to make English the dominant language of use in such schools. A 1984 survey showed that one in six children in ILEA speak English as their second language. The ILEA policy pleads for bilingual children to be given the chance to study their home language as a subject on the main secondary school curriculum. More teachers need training in this area. An experimental teaching programme was devised at one London school whereby instead of commencing with French in the usual way in the first year, a 'taster course' was run for two or three weeks in several different languages, all spoken by some pupils and staff in the school. Many Language Awareness schemes are in operation; they were created to provide a foundation for foreign language study, not to replace it.

89–50 O'Malley, J. Michael (Georgetown U., Va). The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA). *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* (Clevedon, Avon), **9**, 1/2 (1988), 43–60.

The 'Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach' (CALLA) is designed for limited English proficient (LEP) students who are being prepared to participate in mainstream content area instruction. CALLA provides transitional instruction for upper elementary and secondary students at intermediate and advanced ESL levels. This approach furthers academic language development in English through content area instruction in science, mathematics and social studies. In CALLA, students are taught to use learning strategies derived from a cognitive model of learning to assist their comprehension and retention of both language skills and concepts in the content areas. This paper first discusses the rationale for CALLA and the theoretical background on which the approach is based. This is followed by a description of the three components of CALLA: a curriculum correlated to mainstream content subjects, academic language development activities and learning strategy instruction. Suggestions for integrating these three components in a lesson plan are presented, followed by a discussion of efforts to implement the approach.

89–51 Rea, Pauline (U. of Lancaster). Communicative curriculum validation: a task-based approach. *Lancaster Practical Papers in English Language Education* (Lancaster), **7** (1987), 147–65.

The author outlines some of the putative problems in evaluating communicative curricula, not least the perceived difficulty in quantifying the unquantifiable and unpredictable: language behaviour. Despite these problems, evaluation is integral to the notion of a dynamic curriculum, along with the content provided by the syllabus and the methodology outlined by 'process' elements. Evaluation is not seen to be in conflict with the democratic and social goals of communicative programmes.

An evaluative model is presented [diagrams] which allows curriculum validity checks along a theoretical/empirical continuum by extracting qualitative and quantitative data via an eclectic assortment of information-gathering methods (e.g. course questionnaires, post-course reports and feedback from subject specialists). A curriculum could be assessed theoretically in terms of its description of language as communication as well as the learner/teacher characteristics it defines. In empirical terms, assessors would be concerned with determining construct (content-referenced) and criterion (i.e. needs)-related validity.

The principles advanced are then applied to a Communication Skills in English (EAP) programme at the University of Dar es Salaam.

Course/syllabus/materials design

89–52 Aplin, Richard (University Coll. of Swansea). Languages for vocational purposes in the 16–19 age-range: a review of some current practice. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **26**, 1 (1988), 18–25.

Despite the fact that modern languages teachers have been urged to address the needs of industry and commerce in their courses, response within schools has on the whole been disappointing. There is nonetheless a wide variety of syllabuses containing (or claiming) a vocational bias, available on a national scale, from which teachers could choose. This article describes in detail 11 of these, and discusses the results obtained on questionnaires sent to schools registered for at least one of the syllabuses/examinations; the latter include, for example, RSA French for Catering Students, B/TEC National Award (Modern Languages) and the LCCI Secretarial Language Certificate. The availability of different languages in each scheme is discussed, as are the testing activities typically used (e.g. translation, project work, dictation).

The survey revealed that most modern language classes were small and showed a higher proportion of females; commercially available materials typically used by teachers were listed, and student-favoured activities (i.e. oral work) indicated. The statistical sample is too small to be representative, but the results may assist teachers interested in setting up appropriate courses.

Language learning and teaching ■

89–53 Breen, Michael P. Learner contributions to task design. *Lancaster Practical Papers in English Language Education* (Lancaster), **7** (1987), 23–46.

Language learners inevitably interpret any task which they are given in a way different from that intended by the task setter, imposing their own ideas of task purpose, content and method, and relating these to their perceptions of language, of language learning and of themselves. Even questions such as whether a task focuses on form or content cannot be resolved objectively but depend on what each learner makes of the task. It is pointless to call some approaches right and others wrong, as each individual has a different optimal learning style. One solution is to involve the learners themselves in task design, alerting them to options in the areas of purpose, content, method and evaluation, and encouraging awareness and re-examination of the perceptions.

89–54 Jordan, Geoff (Esade Idiomas, Barcelona). Designing and exploiting CALL programs in the classroom. *System* (Oxford), **16**, 2 (1988), 141–50.

The article concerns approaching the computer as a tool for teachers to use and exploit, rather than as a 'stand alone', substitute teacher. The first part looks at three areas of design which are affected by adopting this 'teacher-based' approach, and the second part looks at simulations and mazes as good examples of programs that lend themselves well to this approach. In the second part, the design of such programs is discussed, and some ways of exploiting computer-based mazes are examined. Examples of programs illustrating the design points are given, and the overall objective is to argue: (i) that designers need to take a wider view of the computer's role in language learning, and, specifically, to take more account of the teacher's presence; (ii) that teachers have to contribute more to CALL sessions, using their skills and imagination to bring the programs to life.

89–55 Low, Graham (U. of York). The need for a multi-perspective approach to the evaluation of foreign language teaching materials. *Evaluation and Research in Education* (Clevedon, Avon), **1**, 1 (1987), 19–29.

Ten perspectives on the evaluation of language teaching materials are outlined and discussed. The ten – the learner, the parent, the teacher, the head or principal, the teacher trainer, the curriculum committee member, the inspector, the educational researcher, the publisher and the materials designer – all approach evaluation from a different viewpoint with different criteria for judging success. Any attempt to correct or improve teaching/learning needs to take account of these different evaluations and be aware of how they might be influencing, or influenced by, each other.

89–56 Somerville-Ryan, R. B. Taking the slow learner to task. *Lancaster Practical Papers in English Language Education* (Lancaster), **7** (1987), 93–119.

This paper considers the suitability of a task-based syllabus for teaching English literacy to slow learners in Singapore. Although a traditional syllabus based on language items is unsuitable for such learners, much the same can be said of an 'extreme' task-based syllabus of the kind favoured by Prabhu, in which teacher interference is seen as positively harmful: with such an approach the better learners can succeed, but there is nothing to draw the least successful out of their habits of failure, and, still worse, teacher accountability for their failure is evaded. Instead, the author offers another kind of task-based syllabus, with teacher intervention, not in the futile exercise of supplying language rules, but in giving procedural guidance and structuring approaches to tasks. A practical activity, e.g. making paper darts, forms the basis for the further phases of discussion with the teacher, structuring an (oral) text, reading, writing and illustration. [Sample teaching materials are given.]

89–57 van Ek, Jan A. (U. of Groningen). On determining the quality of foreign language teaching materials. *Journal of Applied Linguistics* (Thessaloniki, Greece), **2** (1986), 118–29.

The author presents an analytical model organising the various factors involved in the evaluation of language teaching materials, followed by a procedural model [diagrams/flow chart] outlining the subsequent assessment process; he then applies these models to a particular learning/teaching situation, i.e. the development of communicative ability in adolescents, in a school setting, as part of a general educational programme. The aim of the article is to provide an overall evaluative framework which can be easily applied in a range of situations.

The analytical model involves matching the 'markers' relating to learner characteristics and classroom context with the content/objectives and methodological approaches evinced by the target materials. Markers are defined as specific limiting factors such as age range, proficiency level, cultural setting, learning time and so on. Materials markers are felt to be identical with learner variables. The procedural model aims to establish the degree of correspondence between materials and learner, followed by an internal evaluation of the materials themselves, especially in regard to how well they contribute to the autonomy of the learner and how varied, flexible and authentic the content actually is.

Teacher training

89–58 Richards, Jack C. and Crooks, Graham (U. of Hawaii at Manoa). The practicum in TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **22**, 1 (1988), 9–27.

A questionnaire was sent to 120 institutions in the United States which offer courses leading to a master's degree, half of which led to degrees in teaching English as a Second or Other Language (the remainder only being subsidiary courses in ESL), concerning the nature of the teaching practicum, its objectives, activities employed, etc. The objectives of a practicum course were ranked in order of importance, the most important being 'to provide practical experience in classroom teaching'. The most frequent settings for teaching practice were in an ESL programme on the campus (46 %), in a high/elementary school (36 %), in a community college or adult programme (29 %) and in a private ESL programme off campus (21 %) – more than one answer was possible. Campus-based experiences may well not offer realistic teaching experiences, unless the facilities are good. For most programmes the practicum was compulsory, taking place mainly over a single semester, near or at the end of the degree programme. Even if students have had teaching experience, they should not be exempted from the practicum.

Activities within the practicum were ranked by frequency of mention. The top three were: (1) observation of experienced teachers, (2) supervised classroom teaching, and (3) individual conferences with supervisor. Most time was spent on (2). The activities cited show a mix of direct and indirect teaching experiences. Unsupervised classroom teaching provides little opportunity for diagnosis or evaluation. More focused training experiences, such as microteaching, are more valuable. Supervised classroom teaching depends for its success on the choice of co-operating teacher and the kind of supervision provided. The supervisor may well have no control over a substantial portion of the content of the practicum; liaison and communication is essential between the supervisor and the master teacher in charge of classroom practice.

89–59 Trafford, John (U. of Sheffield). The intensive day: a motivating force. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **26**, 1 (1988), 7–9.

An intensive French day is described which is carried out as a collaborative venture between a school and the PGCE department at Sheffield University. It gives a focus to method work assessment and an opportunity for practice and evaluation. The students operate in pairs, each with a group of 16 children who stay together for the day. Students teach alternate lessons, which are observed and evaluated by their partner. Topics for the day are negotiated with the school in advance, taking into account the children's experience and interests. Teaching methods and materials are at the

student's discretion. Each student has to submit a lesson plan and an evaluation. The observer reports on the lessons taught by his/her partner. The lessons observed contain a significant amount of oral participation from pupils and teacher, and the pupils' enthusiasm is sustained throughout the day. Lively presentation engages the children's interest, especially the game activities. The pupils feel they have made progress and their interest in French is sustained or heightened – this continues long after the intensive day.

The advantages for the trainee teachers are several.

The outcome of their preparation is more clearly identifiable than when documented simply for the eyes of a university tutor. They have to establish a relationship with the pupils rapidly and then sustain it, and the dual roles of teacher and evaluator allow them to focus during the day on different aspects of classroom interaction. The school receives 10 extra teachers for the day, and staff are welcome to look in at lessons in progress. This method allows the school to innovate in a way which would not be possible using existing resources, and for the university it provides a focus for method work assessment.

Teaching methods

89–60 Allwright, R. L. and others (U. of Lancaster). Investigating reformulation as a practical strategy for the teaching of academic writing. *Applied Linguistics,* (Oxford), **9,** 3 (1988), 236–56.

This paper is about the use of reformulation as a strategy for the teaching of academic writing, but more especially about the exploratory investigation of the use of reformulation for such purposes. Its main aim, therefore, is to add to our understanding of the workings of such a strategy. In the first part of the paper the reformulation strategy is itself described, as it has been developed and used with non-native writers of English in a British university setting. The strategy generates a rich database of writing samples which permits the pursuit of a number of precise research questions. In the second part of the paper the selected text measures are described, and the third part then reports the

preliminary application of these text measures to the data from two case studies, in response to the research questions already established. In conclusion it is emphasised that although the results are consistent with a generally positive interpretation of the strategy's effects they should be seen as helping us understand the reformulation strategy rather than as attempting to prove its validity. In particular they suggest that the class discussion that follows the provision of the reformulated version may be crucial to the strategy's successful operation, and perhaps more influential than the reformulation itself.

89–61 Fitzgerald, Jill (U. of North Carolina). Research on revision in writing. *Review of Educational Research* (Washington, DC), **57,** 4 (1987), 481–506.

Revision used to be thought of as written alterations to a completed piece of writing. Recent definitions have considered that revision can happen at any time in the 'composing process'; can involve major changes in style and content; and involve a mental process. Research methods for examining revision are reviewed: coding systems; process training methods; participant-observer method; simulation-by-intervention method; and an error detection method.

Research on the problem-solving approach has focused on the reasons for difficulties in the revision process. Seven possible factors are identified. Writers often revise work, more competent writers revise

more than less competent or younger writers. Revision occurs throughout, but able writers may revise more at an earlier stage. Surface revisions predominate for all writers, but more able writers make more changes in sentences, theme and meaning, and for them revision tends to improve quality.

Helpful interventions are considered – procedural support, direct instruction, teacher or peer feedback and giving instructions. They yield positive results, although benefits may not be long lasting. Further research is advocated and suggestions made about theoretical, methodological and design issues. [Extensive references.]

89–62 Glisan, Eileen W. (Indiana U. of Pennsylvania). A plan for teaching listening comprehension: adaptation of an instructional reading model. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **21,** 1 (1988), 9–16.

A strategy for teaching listening comprehension which aims to integrate various listening and cognitive skills is presented, based on the premise of certain similarities existing between the processes involved in reading and listening. The strategy aims to guide the student through sequential linguistic processing and help the listener work towards gaining global listening proficiency.

Stage 1 involves preteaching/preparation. The teacher introduces the message/passage and asks students to speculate as to possible content to follow. This 'scene setting' is crucial because students' expectations often determine how they will reconstruct our existing knowledge to internalise new information. Stage 2 involves skimming/scanning, allowing students to focus on a limited amount of oral input. Students progressively acquire a global view of the oral message while acquiring listening skills which they can appy in other listening situations. Stage 3 is the comprehension stage during which students can be engaged in a number of different activities depending on the task(s) set (e.g. native language summaries, choosing a title, a series of 'SAADs' in oral or written form, blank-filling, completion of statements...). Because new information will be understood better if it can be linked in a meaningful way to existing schemata or cognitive structures, stage 4 should provide students with opportunities to: (1) internalise new information, (2) develop ideas and attitudes and evaluate judgments while integrating listening with speaking and writing skills, and (3) receive additional practice in applying their listening strategies to other similar kinds of spoken message. For example, students might debate orally in groups, interview in pairs/groups, role-play, change the beginning or ending, write character sketches and so on.

89–63 Hammond, Robert M. (Catholic U. of America). Accuracy versus communicative competency: the acquisition of grammar in the second language classroom. *Hispania* (Worcester, Ma), **71,** 2 (1988), 408–17.

This article rejects the claim that grammatical accuracy should be acquired before communicative activities are embarked upon, so as to avoid grammatical errors becoming permanent. The claim was not sustantiated by research, but was merely intuitive.

In order to test the assertion, experiments were carried out in two American universities, using the traditional grammar teaching methodology and the new communicative methodology. It was found that in the same tests students learning through communicative activities achieved better results than those learning by traditional methods, thus indicating that the initial assumption lacked validity.

89–64 Johns, Ann M. (San Diego State U.) Reading for summarising: an approach to text orientation and processing. *Reading in a Foreign Language* (Oxford), **4,** 2 (1988), 79–90.

'Summary' is a superordinate term for a number of related discourse types found in business, industry and academia. Most summary instruction is product-based; students are provided with rules for a written summary and expected to understand how to follow them. However, if summarising is viewed as a complex *process*, then reading skills rarely considered in language coursebooks must be examined. These include reader orientation to the text, and procedures for working through the discourse in a manner which encourages selection and organisation of main ideas. The approach to reading for summarising described here focuses upon these skills, i.e. it requires the foreign language student to process and reformulate the entire original text before creating a summary product, thereby encouraging the development of reader schemata and the exploitation of special vocabulary which signals both the text type and the relationships among the propositions.

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89–65 Judy, Judith E. and others (Texas A & M U.). Effects of two instructional approaches and peer tutoring on gifted and nongifted sixth-grade students' analogy performance. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **23**, 2 (1988), 236–56.

The authors examined the effects of two instructional approaches, combined with peer tutoring, on gifted and non-gifted sixth-grade students' performance of a verbal analogy and a comprehension task. Subjects were 194 students in nine intact language arts classes; classes were randomly assigned to two treatment conditions and a control condition. Students in treatment classes received analogy training via either direct instruction or an enquiry approach. Following training, 24 subjects were randomly selected as peer tutors for 24 control students matched on the basis of gender and ability. Peer tutoring sessions were audiotaped, transcribed, and qualitatively analysed. Quantitative analysis indicated that students who received direct instruction performed significantly better than students trained in enquiry on the analogy task, and significantly better than control subjects on the comprehension task. Gifted students consistently outperformed non-gifted students on all measures, and tutored students performed comparably to students trained by the investigators. Finally, results of an error analysis on the multiple-choice comprehension task indicated a different response pattern only for gifted students who received direct instruction. Qualitative analysis of peer tutoring sessions showed that tutors employed the same instructional approach by which they were trained, and that direct instruction tutors were more accurate and effective than their enquiry training counterparts.

89–66 Kukulska-Hulme, Agnes (Aston U., Birmingham). A computerised interactive vocabulary development system for advanced learners. *System* (Oxford), **16**, 2 (1988), 163–70.

The article begins with an analysis of the process of recording newly encountered vocabulary items in a typical language learning situation. It is argued that three aspects of this process can be significantly improved: the discovery and recording of meaning, subsequent retrieval of items for productive use and, thirdly, their retention in memory. A computerised system of vocabulary storage based on database management software is demonstrated to be an excellent means of implementing these improvements. The notion of vocabulary development at an advanced level is explored, leading to the conclusion that vocabulary learning can be a systematic and interactive process.

89–67 Laihiala-Kankainen, Sirkka (U. of Jyväskylä). The theoretical basis of intensive teaching. *Finlance* (Jyväskylä, Finland), **7** (1988), 65–91.

The term 'intensive teaching' in the Soviet Union refers not only to quantity – typically four to six hours daily over a short period – but to a specific approach, which is claimed to raise internal learning intensity by activating normally unused resources of the learner. This approach, inspired by but different from suggestopedia, is founded on Vygotsky's psychological theory of activity, Petrovsky's psychology of the collective, and Leontier's principles of pedagogical communication.

Learning should take place in a 'collective,' a group united by a common purpose; the teacher should at first be authoritarian in establishing the norms of the collective, then friendly and unassertive as the group takes over responsibility. There are two main types of exercise, relating to 'speech habits' (command of language system) and 'verbal skills' (creative communication adapted to circumstances). Three phases of teaching can be distinguished theoretically, the first and third both described as speech/synthesis/deductive, the second as language/analysis/inductive. In the first phase learners use language, without full syntactic understanding, to achieve a communicative purpose (interim goal); in the third stage, after analysis, they master and internalise this language.

89–68   Littlejohn, Andrew and Hicks, Diana. Task-centred writing activities. *Lancaster Practical Papers in English Language Education* (Lancaster), **7** (1987), 69–91.

Language tasks should have two basic characteristics: (*a*) they should provide opportunities for communication and (*b*) they should be motivating and absorbing and exploit the learners' prior experience.

Frequently writing materials involve students in activities which are designed to develop grammatical control largely at the expense of any communicative purpose. What we need are genuine writing activities which students find interesting and motivating. One possibility is the use of simulations. The key feature of these activities is that students, in pairs or in groups, are required to simulate a situation where writing as a means of communication would occur naturally, e.g. the exchange of letters, the design of a proposal for a marketing campaign.

Typically the simulation technique used by the writers begins with some lead-in material which sets up the general context. The class can then be divided into groups, each labelled as different parties to the same event, each having a vested interest in securing a certain outcome. Each group can then be given individual role-cards to establish the first task. A piece of writing can then be delivered to the appropriate group. At this point students can be given a new card which introduces new information and a group rethink may be required. Further cards can be issued as and when required until some of the groups reach agreement. Finally, a debriefing session looks at how effectively the students communicated and at the degree of formal accuracy in their writing. A detailed example of a particular simulation is given.

89–69   Major, Roy C. (Washington State U.). Balancing form and function. *IRAL* (Heidelberg, FRG), **26**, 2 (1988), 81–100.

There is a tendency in the teaching of foreign languages to swing from one methodology to another: to emphasise grammatical skills, accuracy, rules and error correction or, alternatively, to focus on communicative activities. However, there is a consensus that no single method can lead to competence in all aspects of language. The formal and functional approaches to teaching need not be mutually exclusive. It must be recognised that the content of a course, in terms of form and function, should be suited to the course objectives, and accepted that although negotiation of a business contract requires complex linguistic and socio-cultural skills, survival in a foreign culture does not. It is clear too that effective error correction depends on the sensitivity and ability of teachers. More research comparing different methodologies is needed, and both methodologies and materials require improvement.

89–70   Murtagh, Lelia. A review of research on second language reading. *Teangeolas* (Dublin, Ireland), **24** (1988), 13–19.

Research on second language (L2) reading is reviewed in order to present a more complete picture of the various processes at work and the manner in which they interact to produce comprehension, than has previously been attempted. A wide range of topics are examined: the way in which L2 students read and learn to read; a discussion of the notion that the same basic perceptual, cognitive and linguistic skills underlie all reading; the role of orthography, phonological decoding and syntax in L2 reading; the use of background knowledge; the study of word identification.

Much evidence suggests that L2 reading involves many skills associated with native language (L1) reading. The greater the L2 reader's proficiency in the second language, the more easily L1 reading skills can be transferred to L2. The wisdom of teaching L2 reading skills before L1, or vice versa, depends on a combination of socio-economic, linguistic and cultural factors. The characteristics of a good L2 reader are described – someone who processes words fast and automatically and is able to use more information than is present in the text. Possible teaching techniques are summarised.

89–71   Rhodes, Nancy C. and Oxford, Rebecca L. (Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, DC). Foreign languages in elementary and secondary schools: results of a national survey. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **21**, 1 (1988), 51–69.

The Center for Language Education and Research (CLEAR), through funding from the US Department of Education, sought to address the issue of the *status of foreign language instruction by conducting* a national survey of elementary and secondary schools. This article presents the results of questionnaires completed by principals and foreign language teachers at 1,416 elementary schools and 1,349 secondary schools. The respondents represented public and private schools, ranging from nursery school to grade 12, throughout the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The main purpose of the survey was to provide a national picture of foreign language education at the elementary and secondary levels in terms of specific categories, such as public and private schools. The survey questions covered six main areas: background demographics, amount of foreign language instruction, foreign language offerings, foreign language curriculum, teacher qualifications and training, and major problems. The results revealed that more than one-fifth (22 per cent) of the responding elementary schools and 87 percent of the responding secondary schools taught foreign languages in the 1986–87 school year.

89–72   Schiffler, Ludwig (Free U., Berlin). Suggestopédie: peut-on apprendre 500 mots en trois ou quatre heures? [Suggestopedia – can one learn 500 words in three or four hours?] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), **217** (1988), 63–6.

Re-running Lozanov's famous experiment (on the basis of which he claimed that suggestopedia enabled learners to memorise a very high number of previously unknown words) on four separate occasions and with certain modifications achieved a success rate almost as high as Lozanov's. It appeared that the more words students were asked to learn the better they performed and that the use of mime and gesture was the most significant variable. However, retesting after one month showed that a high proportion of the new words had already been forgotten and failed to substantiate Lozanov's assertion of greater success in retaining words memorised through suggestopedia.

89–73   Schröder, Konrad. Fremdsprachenwettbewerbe zwischen Pädagogik und Politik. Einige eher grundsätzliche Erwägungen. [Foreign language competitions between pedagogy and politics. Some fairly basic considerations.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **87**, 3 (1988), 245–59.

Although foreign language competitions in the Federal Republic are now flourishing, they are a recent development, the language festivals which were once common in German schools having completely disappeared. A possible reason is the association in the public's mind of foreign languages with selection in schools and access to university. The first competition not devoted to the promotion of a single language and culture was the *Schüler-wettbewerb*, a multilingual competition for upper secondary school pupils started in 1979. Among its aims was the promotion of a wider range of FLs. It soon became clear, however, that a competition for younger pupils was also needed, and in 1984 a working party was set up by the Federal Minister for Education and Science to produce a plan for a Federal competition (*Bundeswettbewerb Fremdspra-chen*). This competition, which is gradually being extended to further areas after successful trial runs, is divided into three sections: the *Mehrsprachen-wettbewerb*, which replaces the *Schülerwettbewerb*, the *Gruppenwettbewerb* (group competition) for lower secondary pupils, and the *Einzelwettbewerb* (competition in a single language) for the ninth and tenth classes. Whereas the *Mehrsprachenwettbewerb* is centrally run, the other competitions are decentralised to the *Länder* and are limited to school languages. A central committee, which includes representatives of the *Länder* actively involved in education, oversees the competitions and ensures that tasks are within achievable limits. Accompanying measures include seminars and personal supervision as well as meetings with pupils from other countries. It is desirable that the competition should be extended in stages to the whole Federal Republic and that eventually its scope should be widened. International relationships should also be developed. Language imperialism, fossilisation, and cheap imitations should be avoided.

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89–74 Sitler, Edward V. (formerly Justus Liebig University, Giessen, FRG) **and Valette, Rebecca M.** (Boston Coll.). Audio-immersion: a new vocation for the language laboratory. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **44**, 1 (1987), 134–45.

This article describes the Sittler Audio-Immersion project developed in the early '70s. One of the fundamental hypotheses of this project was the primacy of hearing in second language acquisition. Experiments were carried out with the audio-immersion method to try to improve English language skills of students at a German University. Two groups of students, of which the individual members had spent similar lengths of time in English-speaking countries, were tested, one group following a traditional course, the other the audio-immersion method which made available to the students a tape library of a wide range of English in terms of levels and subject-matter. At the end of the experiment all the students felt positive about the effectiveness of the method, and their results showed improvement in proficiency, some in fact a significant increase in proficiency. More recent uses of the method in English and French have also proved successful.

More research is required, especially into the integration of the method into existing language courses. Libraries must be developed, which will consist of an extensive collection of tapes of scripted dialogues, authentic spontaneous discussion, etc., and, if possible, videos and films. Individual access and responsibility for selection must be given to students.

89–75 Spinelli, Emily and Siskin, H. Jay (U. of Dearborn-Michigan). Activating the reading skill through advance organisers. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **44**, 1 (1987), 120–33.

Advance organisers are devices that activate relevant background knowledge; the concept is based on the work of Ausubel, who showed that learning entails relating new material to existing cognitive structures. To help students progress from the decoding stage to the comprehension stage in reading, teachers should anticipate difficulties in texts and provide appropriate organisers, which may be of three main types: (i) linguistic advance organisers, e.g. helping students to recognise cognates, prefixes and suffixes, to predict meaning from context and to identify pronoun referents; (ii) cultural advance organisers, e.g. presenting background information with pictures and slides, and inducing students to reflect on their own culture; (iii) process strategies advance organisers, e.g. predicting content from titles, finding definitions of unknown words within the text, anticipating direction of discourse.

89–76 Sternfeld, Steven (U. of Utah). The applicability of the immersion approach to college foreign language instruction. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **21**, 3 (1988) 221–6.

The immersion approach to second language teaching differs from conventional skills-based instruction in that in immersion the target language is used primarily as a vehicle for teaching other subjects in the school curriculum. Extensive evaluation has shown that immersion students, when compared to students in traditional language courses, develop higher levels of language skills and more positive attitudes towards language study. While the results of the Canadian immersion programme have already led to the creation of similar programmes in over a dozen school districts in the United States, its impact on the design of college foreign language instruction has yet to be felt. This paper argues that the research on immersion and subject-matter teaching indicates this approach to be both a feasible and desirable alternative to traditional skills-based instruction for college foreign language programmes.

89–77 van Lier, Leo. What's wrong with classroom talk? *Prospect* (Adelaide, Australia), **3**, 3 (1988), 267–83.

Before turning to textbooks and other sources it is useful to consider the ways in which the classroom, by virtue of being a social context within which people interact, can provide authentic input. Control is usually expected to be in the hands of the teacher, but must be shared by teachers and learners. This

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leads to 'proactive' involvement (planning of activities, gathering of material, etc.) Activities of a ritual character, such as pattern practice, chants and games, play an important role. Many can be designed so as to allow for meaningful participation through 'scaffolding' (providing a framework for developing interaction) and 'handover' (gradual removal of the scaffold).

Questions are tools of power and control. When control is delegated, learners will ask more questions and interaction will no longer be unidirectional. Attention needs to be focused on the functions which questions serve in the classroom and on the amount of cognitive and interactional work they require.

In a well-balanced classroom, there are appropriate times for error correction, and also for more conversational forms of repair. Teachers need to conduct their own classroom research in order to understand the teaching/learning process, and to find out what works, and why.

89–78 Wajnryb, Ruth. V is for vulnerability: some reflections on learning and the learner. *Prospect* (Adelaide, Australia), **3,** 3 (1988), 339–51.

'Vulnerability', as used in this article, refers to the inner negative feelings that can be experienced by learners in the learning context. It consists of many different layers: (1) the vulnerability of the learner (any learner of any thing); (2) the vulnerability of the adult learner in a symbolically infantile environment (the classroom) coupled with the need for approval and a set of expectations about what will occur; (3) the vulnerability of the adult language learner – being unable to communicate properly in the foreign language erodes the learner's self-concept and identity; (4) the vulnerability of the adult second language learner, which has a political dimension – the powerlessness of the immigrant for whom language and acculturation become the key to success in the adopted country. These layers often overlap; their impact is cumulative, and the implications tend to be destructive. Learners who feel vulnerable are dependent on the teacher: their feelings of anxiety may be manifested in open hostility and withdrawal (both physical and emotional).

The best place to try to break the cycle is at the point of dependence. Learners and teachers alike need a radical shift in self-perception, and training in classroom procedures which breed independence. Learners will first need a foundation of self-confidence. A shift in curriculum emphasis is also needed, to allow for autonomy training. Key principles for the latter are (1) the importance of making learners sensitive to the reality of their own language (error analysis, self-correction), (2) encouraging learners to become their own diagnosticians and (3) training them to exploit the English around them.