Teaching particular languages

English

93–206   Barron, Colin (U. of Hong Kong). Cultural syntonicity: co-operative relationships between the ESP unit and other departments. *Hongkong Papers in Linguistics and Language Teaching* (Hong Kong), **15** (1992), 1–14.

Many examples of co-operative projects between ESP units and subject departments have been reported in the ESP literature since Selinker's seminal paper appeared in 1979. Most are case studies of specific ESP programmes. Explanations of the methodologies have not been prominent. This paper is an overview of the different ways in which co-operative methods have been used in ESP programmes. It begins with the history of co-operative teaching methods which indicates that the methods were first used over 100 years ago in engineering. Co-operative methods are categorised into four types according to the level of involvement of the subject specialist in the ESP programme. The advantages and disadvantages of the methods are discussed, concluding that the advantages considerably outweigh the disadvantages. It is suggested that the purposes of the methods are to achieve cultural syntonicity (i.e. coherence) with the content subjects, since academic development and language development go hand in hand. The paper concludes by suggesting that ESP can learn from the experience of engineering in exploiting the advantages it gained from co-operative teaching methods to improve its status.

93–207   Benson, Philip (U. of Hong Kong). Self-access for self-directed learning. *Hongkong Papers in Linguistics and Language Teaching* (Hong Kong), **15** (1992), 31–7.

This paper discusses the relationship between self-directed learning and self-access as a system of organising learning resources. The first part of the paper outlines the skills needed for self-directed learning in a self-access centre. The second part describes how self-access English resources at Hong Kong University Language Centre have been reorganised to help develop these skills. This includes the use of a PC database to help students plan programmes of study.

93–208   Berns, Margie (Purdue U., IN, USA). Sociolinguistics and the teaching of English in Europe beyond the 1990s. *World Englishes* (Oxford), **11**, 1 (1992), 3–14.

This paper describes the need for awareness among English language teaching professionals in Europe of the social and cultural factors influencing the use and spread of English in the European context. It argues that this awareness can be achieved by extending the view of sociolinguistics in language preparation programmes beyond concern with identification of what kind of language is appropriate in interpersonal encounters to recognition of language as a social institution which influences attitudes and behaviours. Sociolinguistic profiles are illustrated as a framework for identifying the features of the uses and users of English in Europe. The framework serves as a means for teacher education programmes to prepare future teachers for the challenges of developing learners' communicative competence in English for communication within and outside Europe in 1992 and beyond.

93–209   Buchholz, E. (Inst. für Angewandte Sprachwissenschaft, Rostock, Germany). Factors influencing the acceptance of CALLware. *Literary and Linguistic Computing* (Oxford), **7**, 2 (1992), 132–7.

Research was carried out at Rostock University to determine how adult learners of English perceived computer-assisted language learning. The experiment lasted one term at the end of which assessment was made by students, who wrote an essay on what the most effective type of CALL program might require.

Students were generally enthusiastic and expressed a preference for pair or individual work, the latter probably undertaken at home. They also preferred structured grammar learning materials with multiple-choice answers to games. They would have liked software which provided information on errors and which could accept more than one answer. They felt that programs authored by German native speakers took greater account of

various learner strategies and used simpler language for instruction than those developed by English native speakers.

In terms of program layout, several improvements were suggested: availability of a help-key; inclusion of a highlighted line with instructions constantly displayed, of simple comments and warnings, of mouse support, of clear instructions on how to leave a program; and the use of colours.

Students also felt they had made little language progress using CALL.

Because of students' desire to work at home and the problem of availability and cost of software recommended by the teacher, it is likely that self-access centres would require to be set up to enable self-instruction, and that programs will have to take account of the wide range of learner needs and preferences.

93–210 Davies, Alan (U. of Edinburgh). The motion of the native speaker. *Focus on English* (Madras, India), **7,** 2/3 (1992), 3–15.

The aim of this paper is to use a sociolinguistic approach to define a native speaker of English in terms of his social identity. Three types of high-mobility language situation [ie. where an individual moves from one speech community to another] are considered, in which the status of the native speaker is criterial: the immigrant minority, nativised or New Englishes, and international English. Problems which arise often concern communicative competence rather than linguistic competence, and also social acceptability. Other issues discussed are which English the speaker is a native speaker of, and the question of identity and attitudes towards community.

Concluding with his own definition of the native speaker, based on six criteria, the author then uses these criteria to discuss whether a L2 learner can become a native speaker of the target language: it is difficult, but not impossible.

93–211 Garrett, Peter and others. Scoring for content in transactional writing: from atomisation to audience awareness. *Bangor Research Papers in Linguistics* (Bangor, Wales), **3** (1991), 19–29.

In a study investigating the effects of using the mother tongue in the oral preparation for classroom writing in a second language, pupils were given the task of describing how to play a game. In the scoring of the protocols at the level of content, it soon became clear that whether and how some information should be included in part depended on the writer's judgement of the reader. Hence the scoring scheme needed somehow to embrace the notion of audience awareness, a concept much talked about in writing pedagogy, but seldom in terms of identifiable linguistic features that might in some way be measured. This paper traces the development of the scheme, which ultimately took into account whether certain information was introduced as new or assumed known, and how far the writer relied on the reader's pragmatic inference.

93–212 Goethals, Michaël. COBUILD, BNC, LCL, Marzano and the others: forging an instrument for vocabulary learning/teaching from word frequency counts, word clusters and other types of vocabulary lists. *ITL* (Louvain, Belgium), **97–8** (1992), 121–51.

It is argued that word frequency counts and vocabulary lists can yield useful information for the language teacher, syllabus designer or writer of teaching materials. The criteria for word selection in a number of established corpuses is discussed. Data from these lists, as well as computer programs which are capable of making comparative frequency counts across corpuses and generating practice materials are currently being used in the development of a vocabulary list for Dutch-speaking learners of English: the Extended English Teaching (EET) list. The EET project aims to define nine levels, or 'sluices' of English, roughly corresponding to years of study. It merges information from a number of lists – from the word counts of the Collins–Birmingham University International Language Database (COBUILD) and the British National Corpus (BNC) to more subjective familiarity counts based on native-speaker intuition – and from a selection of textbooks. With the increasing mobility of professions in Europe and the opening up of Eastern Europe there will be a concomitant demand for teachers of English; in this context it is envisaged that the EET list will be extended, taking as its source a relevant selection of EFL textbooks from all European countries.

93–213 Hartmann, R. R. K. (U. of Exeter). What's the use of learners' dictionaries? *ILEJ* (Hong Kong), **8** (1991), 73–83.

Three widely used EFL learners' dictionaries – ALD, LDOCE and COBUILD – are compared and typical entries analysed. The writer stresses the potential difficulty caused by abbreviations, and the value of usage labels (in all three dictionaries) and of information on syntax and stylistic variants (in COBUILD). He questions the view that monolingual dictionaries are preferable to bilingual ones, and suggests as a compromise 'bilingualised' versions of monolingual dictionaries, with an example from the Chinese ALD. Another approach, with definitions in context in thematic groups, is offered by the Longman Lexicon. The modern learner-centred approach compels us to think carefully about how learners actually use dictionaries to meet their reference needs. It is shown that this can be a complex process of between five and seven steps, and that specific instruction in dictionary use may be needed. Dictionary workbooks are an alternative, but recent research at Exeter on 40 of these found them 'far from perfect'.

93–214 Hirvela, Alan and Law, Eva (Chinese U. of Hong Kong). A survey of local English teachers' attitudes toward English and ELT. *ILEJ* (Hong Kong), **8** (1991), 25–38.

This paper outlines the results of a survey of 246 Hong Kong primary and secondary teachers [respondent profiles], using a 63-item questionnaire, on such issues as mixed-code (i.e. Cantonese/English) instruction in the classroom. The results [tabular data] cast doubt on some findings of the recently issued Education Commission Report No. 4; the authors believe that ECR 4 should have elicited insights/contributions from practising teachers, who have heretofore been denied a significant voice in the creation of policies which affect their working lives.

In particular, ECR 4's purportedly restrictive stand against mixed-code teaching seems not to be supported by the questionnaire sample, teachers favouring such instruction by a 2-1 margin. Also, the belief that local teachers need exposure to expatriates in order to improve their English Language confidence/competence is felt to be similarly unfounded. The authors conclude by distinguishing between 'good' and 'bad' mixed-code teaching, stating that the issue must depend on the subject being taught: mixed-code being especially inappropriate in English or History lessons, for example.

93–215 Holliday, Adrian (Canterbury Christ Church Coll.). Tissue rejection and informal orders in ELT projects: collecting the right information. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **13**, 4 (1992), 403–24.

Despite advances in curriculum design procedures, there is often failure within ELT projects to produce innovation which is in the long term meaningful and acceptable to the host institution. In other words, 'tissue rejection' takes place: the innovation is sooner or later rejected because it does not fit. In this paper the author analyses the extent to which tissue rejection in projects can be attributed to informal orders within the host educational environment, and to the difficulty which project managers have in finding out about them. This analysis demonstrates the problematic nature of appropriate information collection, and the need for an ongoing, ethnographically oriented means analysis to inform appropriate project design.

93–216 Mangelsdorf, Kate. Peer reviews in the ESL composition classroom: what do the students think? *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **46**, 3 (1992), 274–84.

Peer reviews, where students read drafts of their fellow students' essays in order to make suggestions for revision, are common in first-language composition pedagogy. This technique fosters the idea that writing is a process of communicating to an authentic audience. How beneficial are peer reviews for ESL composition students? This article explores the question from the perspectives of 40 advanced ESL writing students who were asked about their experiences with peer reviews. Many of the students reported that peer reviews had helped them revise the content of their drafts. However, some students commented that their peers were not able to give useful advice. These students' responses suggest that

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peer reviews can be helpful to students during the drafting process, but that the task must be carefully structured in order for the students to become successful critics. Suggestions for organising effective peer review sessions are given.

93–217 Richards, Jack C. and others (City Poly. of Hong Kong). The culture of the English language teacher: a Hong Kong example. *RELC Journal* (Singapore), **23,** 1 (1992), 81–102.

This paper reports on a study of the culture of teachers of English in Hong Kong. A questionnaire was administered to a group of Hong Kong teachers in order to identify their beliefs, goals, practices and judgements about their teaching and the teaching of English in Hong Kong secondary schools. A relationship was found between teachers' goals, values and beliefs, on the one hand, and their teaching experience, training and approach to language teaching on the other. Beyond their differences however, the teachers in this study were found to share much common ground as professionals, thinking and acting responsibly to help develop their students' learning of English.

93–218 Ryan, Ann and Meara, Paul (University Coll., Swansea). The case of the invisible vowels: Arabic speakers reading English words. *Reading in a Foreign Language* (Oxford), **7,** 2 (1991), 531–40.

This paper investigates the hypothesis that Arabic-speaking learners of English, because of the lexical structure and orthography of their L1, will tend to rely heavily on consonants when attempting to recognise English words. A pilot experiment showed that Arabic speakers tended to confuse words with similar consonantal structures. In the main experiment, different groups were compared for their ability to notice missing vowels in word matching tests. Arabic speakers made more errors than either non-Arabic speaking learners of English, or native speakers. They were also much slower than the other groups in performing the tasks. The authors conclude that these results are compatible with their hypothesis, but that further experiments using words with missing consonants will be needed to confirm it fully.

93–219 Schröder, Konrad. Diversifizierter Fremdsprachenunterricht und Englisch als 1. Fremdsprache. [Diversified foreign language teaching and English as the first foreign language.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main), **91,** 4/5 (1992), 474–91.

Even in a diversified model of (lifelong) foreign language learning, English is usually the first – and in many cases the only – foreign language learned in school. This article focuses on the implications of this fact for the teaching of elementary English. The article mentions 10 general areas in which work needs to be done, including sensitisation to many different languages; sensitisation to the problems of foreign language acquisition; clarification of the phenomenon of the relationships between languages; clarification of parallels and contradictions in language systems; clarification of language-related affects and clichés; acquisition of learning techniques; sensitisation to the interrelationships between language and culture; practice in the neighbouring culture. The individual areas are described in brief, including ideas for methodological approaches.

93–220 Sinclair, Barbara and Ellis, Gail. Survey: learner training in EFL coursebooks. *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **46,** 2 (1992), 209–25.

Current interest in theories of how people learn a foreign/second language have increasingly led to the inclusion of elements of learner training, or learning to learn, in ELT coursebooks. The authors surveyed four currently popular coursebooks for adults (*Flying Colours*; *Blueprint*; *Headway Advanced*; and *Fast Forward 3*) and four for younger learners (*Outset 1*; *Early Bird 1*; *Stepping Stones 1*; and *Adventures in English 6e*). It can be difficult to make explicit the skills required for learning without overshadowing the actual language learning aims of the materials; such explicitness was often absent or inconsistent. Learner training which is more closely integrated into the language learning materials is likely to be more meaningful and memorable. Coursebook scores in this category varied widely.

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Learner training also needs to be appropriate and relevant to the language level and age group of the learners. All the books for adult learners scored relatively well here, but it was evident that young learners' course books for beginners pose a real problem for writers in presenting explicit learner training activities in an accessible way.

Learners should ideally be exposed to a variety of approaches to language learning, to accommodate a wide variety of learning preferences, and all the coursebooks surveyed did provide such variety. Materials should provide learners with a sequence of reflection on, experimentation with, and evaluation of different learning and practice strategies. It has been suggested that much of the reported failure of learning strategies being transferred to new learning tasks is because metacognitive information is often not combined with a cognitive approach, that is, enabling learners to have hands-on experience with, and to evaluate, what they have been encouraged to reflect on. The coursebooks for adult learners encouraged reflection and experimentation, but little evaluation after the event. The books for younger learners provided many opportunities for experimentation, but very few for reflection, either before or after. If a materials writer's aim is to enable learners to acquire some responsibility for their learning, there must be opportunities for learner choice and self-direction. In this category, the books for younger learners were more impressive than those for adults, in spite of the constraints of the school curriculum.

There is at present a discernible tendency to jump on the learner-training bandwagon without fully considering its implications. Many of the coursebooks reviewed were not sufficiently explicit about the learning process. Teachers need more support; course writers cannot yet assume that all teachers are familiar with the theory and practice of learner training.

93–221 Skelton, John (U. of Surrey). Distance education: flexibility, access, costs. *English Studies Information Update* (London), **7** (1992), 12–15.

The article describes some of the advantages afforded by a distance education programme in applied linguistics, such as the MA in Linguistics (TESOL) at the University of Surrey. Students work on their own or in local centres around the world, the only equipment required being a tape recorder. The nature of distance learning means that more students have access to education. This is a result of the flexibility of access it offers regarding time (the student negotiates the timetable), money (the student need not give up work, and the cost may be as little as ten percent of a full-time course) and mode of delivery. One procedure, consisting of nine stages from the selection of the student to the awarding of the degree, is suggested here. This includes three possible cut-off points which enable struggling students to be identified and if necessary advised to leave without embarrassment or shame. For distance education to succeed the students must be independent and highly motivated, and must be given local support.

93–222 Yule, George and others. On reporting what was said. *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **46**, 3 (1992), 245–51.

This article presents a range of examples from written and spoken discourse to illustrate how speakers and writers report what was said using forms and structurers which receive virtually no coverage in the textbooks available to English language learners. It is argued that the mechanical exercises for converting direct to indirect speech typically presented in such textbooks provide little preparation for the interpretation of many types of naturally occurring reported discourse in official records, literary narrative, and casual conversation. To improve students' ability to interpret reported discourse, both teachers and students would benefit from a greater awareness of the wider range of forms and constructions used in contemporary English for reporting what was said.

French

93–223 Blanchet, Philippe (U. of Rennes and MAFPEN, Nantes, France). Phonétique et enseignement: le problème de la diversité linguistique (du français langue maternelle aux langues étrangères). [Phonetics and teaching: the problem of linguistic diversity (from French mother tongue to foreign languages).] *Langues Modernes* (Paris), **86,** 3 (1992), 13–19.

The national curriculum (*Instructions Officielles*) for teaching French as a mother tongue in France requires pupils to use 'standard French' as the basis for phonetic spelling of words and descriptions of pronunciation. This is based on a stereotyped, prescriptive, monolithic view of language, and is not even pedagogically realistic, as it assumes that pupils are already native speakers of the form they have to describe. The differences between standard French and other widely spoken varieties are substantial: the former has 14 or 16 vowels, but in Provence, for example, there are only 9; major prosodic differences are found in many regions; consonant differences include the post-vocalic /n/ and its allophones, widespread in the South.

The harmful effects of ignoring these differences include fostering feelings of inferiority and impeding the teaching of spelling. Even foreign language teaching is adversely affected: similarities between foreign sounds and the learners' own regional French sounds cannot be exploited, and the prescriptive approach may lead to ethnocentrism and rejection of foreign turns of phrase as 'stupid'. Teaching phonetics without also teaching (and training teachers in) relevant sociolinguistic concepts is thus misguided, and all teaching should relate to the way the learners themselves speak.

93–224 Harley, Birgit (Ontario Inst. for Studies in Ed.). Patterns of second language development in French immersion. *French Language Studies* (Cambridge), **2,** 2 (1992), 159–83.

In this cross-sectional study of the acquisition of French by English-speaking immersion students in Ontario, Canada, patterns of second language development are examined with particular reference to verbs. The analysis focuses on second language production data from interviews with 36 early immersion students at three different grade levels, along with comparison data from a group of late immersion students and two groups of native French speakers. The study documents the learners' well-developed ability to negotiate meaning in context and the continuing impact of the first language in various aspects of their verb use.

93–225 Herron, Carol A. and Hanley, Julia (Emory U., Ga). Using viedeo to introduce children to a foreign culture. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **25,** 5 (1992), 419–26.

In this study, two methods for presenting cultural information to students in a French FLES programme were compared. Fifty-six English-speaking students enrolled in two fifth-grade classes served as subjects. Eight cultural themes were identified and assigned to one of two teaching conditions for one class section; each theme was assigned to the opposite condition for the other section. In both teaching conditions, students read a passage in French and a subsequent cultural note in either English or French. Both the passage and the note centred upon the same targeted cultural theme. In the Experimental condition, students viewed a video, prior to the reading of the texts. This brief video module was related in cultural theme but scripted differently from the reading passage and cultural note. In both conditions, student learning, pertaining to the cultural theme, was assessed on the same day as the presentation. Performance was better in the Experimental condition. This finding is interpreted as support for utilising video to enhance the teaching of culture to the child foreign language learner.

93–226   Thompson, Peter S. (Moses Brown Sch., Providence, RI). Cognitive styles and the student as teacher. *French Review* (Baltimore, Md), **65,** 5 (1992), 701–7.

This article examines the theory and practice behind the assertion that the student-as-teacher approach is highly adaptable to the different learning styles of students. The author considers the use of cloze passages and dictations prepared by a group from a taped stimulus. The deletions in cloze passages lead to group discussion led by the most confident students, producing more efficient learning than students working alone. Students are often more willing to accept contributions and corrections from their peers than from a teacher. In the rehearsed dictation, a group spirit develops and a lessening of anxiety results. Students may develop cloze passages themselves, as well as games, conversational gambits and stimulus-response drills. The disaffected student is involved and different learning styles accommodated. The author distinguishes theoretically between field-dependent and field-independent learners. The possibilities for allowing students to design new materials and explain grammar may be limited, but there are many ways in which students can take charge of review exercises, drills and games.

German

93–227   Heald, David (U. of Kent at Canterbury). Untranslatables, particles and pitfalls in German. Practical problems in the classroom. *UEA Papers in Linguistics* (Norwich), **32,** (1991), 27–36.

The author deplores the erosion in GCSE and A Level examinations of grammar, translation and literature elements in favour of role-playing, comprehension and creative free expression. Candidates are being awarded A grades without being able to cope with the basics of spoken or written German. Classroom translation work will become more rather than less important for students with passive rather than active linguistic skills. The author views the language laboratory, the video and the cassette tape sceptically, seeing little evidence that they are effective. Translation into German should be an integral part of language teaching. Translation should be fun rather than mechanical, working with very different registers. It should make the student think of the differing syntactical, semantic and psychological features of each language. The author discusses *faux amis* and particles, giving many examples. Classroom translation is not an alternative to oral work, but complements it. It should be the most valuable and stimulating aspect of language teaching, touching on semantics, morphology and philology. It should result in an ability to understand and write German fluently and correctly.

93–228   Matthies, Jürgen and Bölger, Joachim (U. of Jyväskylä). Fächerübergreifende finnisch-deutsche Faschsprachenkurse an der Universität Jyväskylä. [Finnish–German academic language courses integrated across subjects at the University of Jyväskylä.] *Finlance* (Jyväskylä, Finland), **10** (1991), 55–65.

A distinction is made between *fachübergreifender Unterricht* – teaching (in this case academic German) to students of different academic subjects – and *facherübergreifender Unterricht*, which actually integrates the instruction in these subjects, by considering selected topics from various subject-specific perspectives. The article is based upon a group of courses to which both labels apply, provided for Finnish students of economics, music, education and literature at Jyväskylä.

   Features of the courses include a careful analysis of what German texts the students will need to read, and of what kinds of writing they will need to do, with special attention to features that the four subjects have in common. For reading, a list of objectives was formulated, under four headings – reading skills, linguistic, cognitive/sociological and general/pedagogic. The courses include a 'German Studies' element with some discussion in Finnish. Many obstacles have been faced – the dominance of English, lack of central planning, little guidance available in pedagogical reference books – but student reaction has been very positive.

93–229 Rings, Lana (U. of Texas at Arlington). Cultural meaning in German verbal and nonverbal behaviour and the teaching of German: a progress report. *Die Unterrichtspraxis: Teaching German* (Philadelphia, Pa), **25,** 1 (1992), 15–21.

In the last decade the close relationship between language, meaning and action has become a prime concern of linguistic pragmatics. Interviews with native speakers of German and English reveal the misunderstandings which arise because United States Americans and native speakers of German do not understand the conventional intentions or situational use of specific language and nonverbal behaviour in the other culture. Even seemingly innocuous one-to-one definitions such as vocabulary lists in foreign language textbooks embody individual and cultural connotations and values which, without explicit clarification, can deter understanding. The values native speakers assign words, phrases, paragraphs, discourses and texts of all kinds must be taught to students. Since we live within our own cultural framework, we will never understand the values others assign language strings unless we explicitly study and clarify them. Small talk, formulaics, greetings and other set expressions do not have parallel uses and functions within the two cultures and tend to cause misunderstanding or negative emotional reactions. Nonverbal behaviour and other cultural concepts are also often perceived differently from culture to culture. Interviews with native speakers revealed this to be the case in aspects of shopping, cleanliness, religion, use of space, use of body, and use of money.

What additional measures can be taken to help students understand the cultural values inherent in the target and native languages? Students must be taught that since any statement or action can grow out of widely divergent motives and intentions, it is not safe to trust our instincts about its 'meaning'. They must begin to see differing points of view within their cultural context and 'cultural logic'.

93–230 Stalb, Heinrich. Allgemeinsprache, allgemeine Wissenschaftssprache oder Fachsprache(n) als Lernziel? [General language, general academic language or specific-purpose language(s) as the learning objective?] *Zielsprache Deutsch* (Munich, Germany), **23,** 2 (1992), 83–9.

It is widely agreed that those studying academic subjects in German can be helped by German language classes, but opinions differ as to how far this should be general or academic German. The author advocates a mixture, at least for long-stay students in Germany itself. Academic German fails to equip learners for social life, dealing with authorities, developing critical powers and responsibility for their own learning. The inadequacy of general German by itself is suggested by the academic problems of some German-born foreigners, fluent in everyday German, who have attended non-German schools.

Another question is whether courses should be in general academic German or in the narrower languages of specific academic subjects. Often the former approach is better, for reasons including the impossibility of defining a single variety of e.g. 'German for chemistry', the wide and unpredictable future needs of many students and the lack of subject expertise among teachers. Where students have immediate practical needs, however, some more specific supplementary language teaching may be desirable. A possible course is now being planned in Frankfurt, for which language teachers and subject teachers are working together to find texts and devise exercises. Language teachers alone are not capable of preparing and teaching such courses: they do not understand the subject well enough and cannot evaluate alternative solutions offered by students. Subject-specialists, on the other hand, understand only imperfectly what is distinctive about the language of their subject. Analysis in terms of text-types is advocated, and a flow-chart for syllabus design is presented which entails listing language features, strategies, selection criteria and activity types.

93–231 Stalb, Henrich. Wie gewinnt und wie beschreibt man das Ausgangsmaterial für fachsprachliche Übungen? [How is the source material for specific-purpose language exercises selected and described?] *Zielsprache Deutsch* (Munich, Germany), **23,** 3 (1992), 138–47.

In selecting source material (texts, films, videos, etc.) for teaching foreign languages for academic purposes, we should concentrate not on commercial materials, which often over-simplify either the language or the content, nor on academic papers and similar material, which many university or pre-

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university students will hardly encounter, but on material used for teaching the subjects concerned, supplemented if possible by tapes and/or transcripts of classroom discussion. Such material cannot be chosen at random, however, but must be analysed to ensure that the selection is representative. Several systems of analysis are discussed, and the author's own system is presented with the dimensions of subject area, situation, text-type, dominant function, semantic organisation, coherence devices, communicative procedures, syntax, lexis, word formation and non-linguistic elements (e.g. diagrams).

Italian

93–232 **Nuessel, Frank** (U. of Louisville) **and Cicogna, Caterina** (Office of the Consulate General of Italy, Toronto). Postage stamps as pedagogical instruments in the Italian curriculum. *Italica* (New Brunswick, NJ), **69,** 2 (1992), 210–27.

After a summary of four main functions of the postage stamp (including its pedagogical value), the semiotics of postage stamps is discussed. It is argued that the postage stamp can be considered a mixed-media text in the semiotic sense: a multiple message is conveyed by the use of numbers, language and graphics, and it reveals much about its culture of origin. The use of visuals in the classroom is then considered, citing research which confirms visuals as an important aid to retaining concepts in the memory. After the presentation of preparatory steps for the introduction of the use of postage stamps in the Italian curriculum, a number of pedagogical activities related to postage stamps are described, in the skills areas of speaking, listening, writing and reading, and also in cultural comprehension.

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