

Teaching particular languages

CHINESE

86–350 Hok-ming, Lee (Inst. of Language in Education, Hong Kong). The teaching of characters and words and its relation with reading and writing in the Chinese language subject at primary level. *Language Learning and Communication* (New York), **3**, 2 (1984), 93–127. [Article in Chinese with long abstract in English, pp. 123–7.]

Primary students in China are required to learn about 3,000 frequently used characters. They may be words or parts of words. Some characters have between three and five variant forms; the most troublesome for the learner are those shapes which look alike. The same character in different combinations may sound differently, and take on different meanings. The teacher should explain the principles of character- and word-formation, make the abstract concrete, use comparison wherever possible and pay attention to words without neglecting characters. [Suggestions for class activities are given.]

DUTCH

86–351 Oostdam, Ron. En bruikbaar instrumentarium voor het analyseren van argumentatie. [A useful tool for analysing arguments]. *Levende Talen* (The Hague), **403** (1985), 406–10.

In Dutch secondary schools it is common to teach students how to handle formal arguments, and a number of textbooks designed to do this are in circulation. The majority of these texts, whether practical or theoretical, use a model of how arguments work based on Toulmin's work [details].

The author prefers an alternative model, based on work by Van Eemeren and Grootendoorst, which has three main advantages over Toulmin's model: it provides a more complete and explicit analysis of an argument; it makes the hierarchical structure of specific arguments clearer, and it makes more obvious the nature of argument in general. Some analyses of simple arguments using both methods are discussed.

ENGLISH

86–352 Alexander, Richard J. Phraseological and pragmatic deficits in advanced learners of English: problems of vocabulary learning? *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **84**, 6 (1985), 613–21.

Difficulties in understanding idioms and in employing communicatively adequate conversational strategies are frequently encountered amongst tertiary-level students of English. This study argues that learners should be made aware of contrastively

varying phenomena in the area of metaphorical idioms and pragmatic fixed expressions. Such problems are situated within a framework which would emphasise the meshing of language and culture; the linguistic topics discussed can be demonstrated to have socio-cultural overtones. A final section attempts to draw conclusions from the discussion for the teaching process.

86–353 Cornell, Alan (Technische U., Braunschweig, FRG). Realistic goals in teaching and learning phrasal verbs. *IRAL* (Heidelberg), **23**, 4 (1985), 269–80.

This paper examines certain problems relating to the teaching and acquisition of phrasal verbs: quantity, polysemy, synonymy, syntactic constraints, and idiolectal variations in usage. The large number of these verbs can be reduced by considering only those which are fully idiomatic, i.e. those of which the meaning is not deducible from the verb component. If, for example, the verb *rush* is known, the non-idiomatic *rush away* is easily understood, and does not require to be included in a teaching or learning syllabus. Polysemy is a complex problem, however, since some phrasal verbs may have both an idiomatic and a non-idiomatic use, and there may also be several idiomatic uses. *Put up*, for example, varies in meaning according to context or collocation. The degree of synonymy between a phrasal verb and possible equivalents is highly questionable.

A list of phrasal verbs should be established, some intended for active command, others for passive recognition, according to criteria of idiomaticity, replaceability, collocational or grammatical constraints, and frequency and usefulness. An example of such a list is provided. Unless the learner has spent a considerable time in an English-speaking environment, it is unrealistic to expect a wide active command of phrasal verbs; it is unhelpful to confront students with an extensive list of these verbs.

86–354 Heath, David and Herbst, Thomas. Wer weiß schon, was im Wörterbuch steht? Plädoyer für mehr Wörterbucharbeit im Englischunterricht. [Who can tell me what the dictionary says? A plea for more dictionary work in English teaching.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **84**, 6 (1985), 580–95.

A survey of 160 university students of English revealed a remarkable lack of dictionary-using skills. This shows the need for teaching and practising the use of the dictionary at school to a much larger extent than seems to be common practice. The curricula for the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* at German *Gymnasien* do not on the whole put sufficient emphasis on the various dictionary-using skills. A constant practising of these skills in language classes seems essential; dictionary work in school should be combined with other language work, especially through exercises within the framework of the *Textaufgabe*.

86–355 Jeffries, Sophie. English grammar terminology as an obstacle to second language learning. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **69**, 4 (1985), 385–90.

The article considers (a) whether students are disadvantaged if they are required to have a working knowledge of traditional English grammar terminology when learning a second language at university level, and (b) the relationship between the students' ability to perform well on a test of grammar terminology and their results in the language course.

Details are provided of the population, methodology, research design, and results of a test administered in 1982 at Ohio State University to students starting French, German and Spanish. The results confirmed that the students with some prior knowledge of terminology are most likely to perform according to the teacher's expectations.

Formal knowledge of grammar remains a primary objective of university second language teaching generally. This is perpetuated by textbook writers, despite the fact that theorists do not necessarily share the view that such emphasis is the most efficient way to develop linguistic proficiency. Teachers, who are ultimately responsible for what happens in the classroom, should be trained to emphasise the meaning of linguistic structures rather than their form. Textbooks which link form and meaning without introducing unfamiliar metalanguage should be preferred.

86–356 Milk, Robert D. (U. of Texas at San Antonio). The changing role of ESL in bilingual education. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **19**, 4 (1985), 657–72.

The role of ESL in bilingual education has frequently been misunderstood, sometimes because of nonpedagogical issues and sometimes as a result of our inadequate understanding of how second language development can best be achieved in bilingual classrooms. This article reviews recent research in two separate areas, bilingual education and ESL, in an attempt to arrive at some generalisations about what characterises effective bilingual and ESL instruction. The bilingual education research literature is finding support for an 'integrative approach' to second language development, with classroom applications focusing on grouping strategies that allow children to receive appropriate input in the second language. These findings complement current views on ESL teaching that stress proficiency in speaking and writing as outcome goals and that conceptualise instruction in terms of developing communicative competence. Given the essential interrelatedness of second language development and other curricular goals, the conventional conceptualisation of ESL as an isolated element within bilingual programmes is challenged. Implications for bilingual teacher preparation, where ESL and content-area instruction are often dealt with separately, are also examined.

86-357 Ortmeyer, Carolyn and Boyle, Joseph P. (Chinese U. of Hong Kong). The effect of accent differences on comprehension. *RELC Journal* (Singapore), **16**, 2 (1985), 48-53.

Several research studies support the position that the accent which is best understood in ESL/EFL situations is the accent of a good local speaker of English, rather than the accent of a standard native speaker. An experiment conducted in Hong Kong with native Chinese speakers arrived at a different conclusion, namely that the accent of native speakers (British and American) is comprehended better than that of local Chinese speakers of English. 250 subjects were divided into four equal-proficiency groups and given two tests, a listening comprehension test and a dictation. Each group heard the tests delivered by a different speaker – one American, one British, and two Chinese. On the dictation test especially, the score of the groups who heard the American and British speakers was significantly better than that of the groups which heard the Chinese speakers. Further, the difference was found to be more pronounced with low-proficiency subjects than with high-proficiency subjects.

86-358 Spack, Ruth (Tufts U. and Boston U.) Literature, reading, writing, and ESL: bridging the gaps. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **19**, 4 (1985), 703-25.

For a long time, literature, which once played a prominent role in language study, has been excluded from both ESL programmes and first-language composition programmes whose central aim is the achievement of linguistic proficiency. In recent years, however, many educators in both fields have again acknowledged the academic, intellectual, cultural, and linguistic benefits of the study of literature. An examination of research on the activities of reading, composing, and responding to literature reveals that these three areas of study, usually taught separately, can be viewed as similar processes. After discussing these findings, this article describes a literature and composition course which demonstrates how ESL students can profit from instruction which focuses on the interrelationship of reading and writing. The course also shows that ESL students have much to gain when literature is the reading content of their composition course and the subject matter for their compositions.

86-359 Tollefson, James W. (U. of Washington and Philippine Refugee Processing Center). Research on refugee resettlement: implications for instructional programmes. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **19**, 4 (1985), 753-64.

Since refugees from Southeast Asia first began arriving in the United States ten years ago, a great deal of research on their resettlement has accumulated. Much of this research has implications for instructional programmes in the processing centres of Southeast Asia and in the United States, but it may not be easily available to programme planners. This article summarises important research on resettlement reported since 1980 and outlines implications of that research for instructional programmes in ESL, pre-employment training, and cultural orientation.

86–360 Tomlinson, Brian (Bell Coll., Saffron Walden). Using poetry with mixed-ability language classes. *ELT Journal* (London), **40**, 1 (1986), 33–41.

Learners can enjoy poetry in a foreign language if they are encouraged and helped to respond to it globally and imaginatively. The aim is not to teach the learners to write or even appreciate poetry but to find a means of involving them in using their language skills in an active and creative way. Poetry can enrich the content of language lessons, can provide useful opportunities for gaining experience of the world, and can contribute to the development of the whole person. Learners are most motivated when their emotions are engaged, as they can be in responding to a poem. The teacher can make poems more accessible through pre-reading activities focused on content rather than language. All members of a mixed-ability group can achieve some kind of response, as poems are accessible on many different levels of meaning. Poems can stimulate learners to unusually creative use of language in follow-up activities. They offer opportunities even to elementary learners to start developing the ‘advanced’ skills of comprehension. The focus should not be on difficult bits of language but on responses to what has been understood. Pre-teaching difficult items of vocabulary and structure can kill a poem as an affective experience, whereas interesting pre-reading activities which focus on the topic and ‘feelings’ of the poem can help the learners to gain access to it without worrying about the words and structures they do not understand.

The poems selected should have universal appeal, surface simplicity, potential depth, affective potential, be written in contemporary language and be short. They should ideally lend themselves to visual, auditory or tactile illustration. [Practical suggestions for pre-reading activities, reading aids and post-reading activities, and sample lessons are given.]

86–361 Underhill, Adrian (International House, Hastings). Working with the monolingual learner’s dictionary. *ELT Documents* (London) **120** (1985), 103–14.

The monolingual learner’s dictionary is generally more useful in ELT than either the translating dictionary or the native speaker’s dictionary; it can provide specific information sought as well as promote incidental awareness. Students should be encouraged to use it regularly, e.g. in preliminary self-correction of dictations, in checking pronunciation and stress, in the comprehension phases of listening and reading, and at the planning stage of communicative activities. The teacher is thus partly freed from the role of information provider, whilst the students learn to recognise and formulate their own problems, and realise that what they find out for themselves is more likely to be assimilated than what they are told. [List of exercise types.]

FRENCH

86-362 Janitza, Jean (U. of Paris III). Le résumé de texte: une activité de production en langue étrangère assistée par ordinateur. [Computer-assisted summaries.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), **195** (1985), 40-4.

Language students are often called upon to produce a summary or to reconstruct a text. When they are supplied with a specially written model summary to reconstruct using the cloze-text method, they are no longer in the position of measuring themselves against the author of the original. Introduction of the computer endows the exercise with an element of variety and dynamism. Its flexibility permits adjustment in the frequency of the gaps to be filled and it can be programmed in advance to accept any of several possible correct responses instead of accepting one only.

86-363 McInnis, Charles E. and Porebski, Olgierd R. Attitudinal changes as a result of the French Animator Programme. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **42**, 1 (1985), 13-33.

This study is concerned with the Animator Programme and its effect on the attitude of anglophone pupils to the French language and French Canadians. The Animator Programme is unique in that it involves specially trained French animators who conduct a variety of informal activities outside the classroom. The study involved the administration of several attitude questionnaires to 569 students in grades 2 and 3, and 935 students in grades 4-6. The initial effect of the programme on attitude to the French language was positive. Furthermore, the programme maintained a high level of positive attitude over a three-year period. During the same period the attitude to French Canadians, relative to English Canadians, continuously improved.

86-364 Möhle, Dorothea. Die Bedeutung von Gebrauchsnormen für die Förderung der fremdsprachlichen Ausdruckfähigkeit fortgeschrittener Lerner des Französischen. [The importance of norms of use in promoting skills of foreign language expression in advanced learners of French.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **84**, 6 (1985), 622-35.

Even advanced students of a foreign language encounter difficulties when asked to express themselves freely on a given subject. This has less to do with deficiency in vocabulary or grammar than with the lack of familiarity with normal usage, i.e. fixed linguistic models which however, are not to be seen as 'idioms' in the strict sense of the term. The author uses a number of examples to demonstrate the role which such conventionalised syntagma play in French and the types of difficulties encountered by German learners as a result.

Psycholinguistic considerations serve as a basis for attempting to discover the reasons for these difficulties and demonstrate the necessity above all of developing a more active approach to receptivity if language inputs are to have a greater effect than has been the case thus far. The author concludes by showing which classroom techniques are necessary in order to attain this objective.

86-365 Romian, H  l  ne (INRP, Paris). D  crire ce qui se passe en classe de fran  ais: pour quoi faire? [Describing what happens in the French class: for what purpose?] *  tudes de Linguistique Appliqu  e* (Paris), **59**, 7/9 (1985), 65–76.

Three pedagogic styles may be distinguished in the teaching of French (mother tongue): (i) inculcation of the dominant norm; (ii) free expression and co-operation; (iii) functional activities of oral and written communication (liberating) and progressive awakening to the facts of language (structuring). Most effective seems to be style (iii), which combines elements of the new (*Plan de R  novation*) and old pedagogies, and is paradoxically both non-directive (on the level of ‘*parole*’) and directive (on the level of ‘*langue*’). No simple labels, however, can do justice to the complexity of classroom events.

The author advocates action research with participant observation of lessons, and suggests some research questions. Particular attention should be given to problems of linking the speaking and writing skills, especially for users of non-standard French.

86-366 Shapson, Stan (Simon Fraser U.) Post-secondary bilingual education: identifying and adapting to the shift in second-language demands. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **41**, 5 (1985), 827–34.

The success of immersion programmes across Canada during the past 20 years can be deduced from (1) research into students’ performance in French and English, their cognitive development and mastery of other subjects; (2) participants’ own satisfaction with immersion programmes, and (3) growing enrolments and a commitment to continuing in immersion throughout schooling. The majority of Canadian children, however, learn French through the traditional (or core) FSL approach. On leaving school, many of them now desire to become functionally bilingual. Hence universities should prepare programmes to cater for these students as well as for graduates of school immersion. They should shift their emphasis away from formal academic goals towards more functional ones, such as learning a language for work, travel and communication with native speakers. The question is whether aspects of the already successful immersion model can be extended to and developed in the universities, and whether school FSL students can learn languages via their subject matter at university when their course material is rather complex and specialised. Some promising ideas are an optional exchange semester or year at a French-Canadian university, and summer language programmes.

86-367   bleis, Inge. Compr  hension   crite et enseignement du fran  ais. [Reading comprehension and the teaching of French.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **84**, 5 (1985), 512–29.

Reading comprehension should have a major place in French (FL) lessons, as an end in itself rather than just a lead-in to other activities. This entails combatting several misconceptions, i.e. that reading for its own sake is a waste of time, that reading without FL production is unthinkable, and that reading involves understanding every word. A procedure is outlined for developing reading strategies such as prediction,

skimming/scanning and guessing, with the aim of gradually making readers independent of teacher, grammar-book and dictionary. Learners are first given a gapped text in the L1 (German), shown that they can understand it, and then fill in the gaps. Early French texts may have gaps replacing unknown words (to prevent 'mental blocks'), or there may be pictures and tables, or a German text on a similar topic, to aid comprehension. A typology of suitable exercises is suggested.

86-368 Verdoodt, A. (Catholic U. of Louvain). L'enseignement en langue maternelle aux enfants des travailleurs migrants. [Mother tongue teaching for the children of migrant workers.] *Revue de Phonétique Appliquée* (Mons, Belgium), **58** (1981) [publ. 1985], 188-98.

Support for children's mother tongue will help them to keep their languages separate. They will achieve a good command of both, using each in its own sphere (mother tongue for home and family, French for work and officialdom) and avoid the dangers of confusion, using pidgin, mixing languages, or becoming functionally illiterate in either or both. The mother-tongue dialect spoken by the children, which may be a non-standard variety, should be respected. Ideally, they should receive the early stages of their education in their mother tongue, making the transition to education in the language of the host country in secondary school.

From a comparison of two bilingual education programmes in the USA, it is concluded that these can succeed where the local community (both immigrant and host community) is fully involved from the start. Belgium should introduce such programmes. Changes in attitudes and in the law will be required.

86-369 Wesche, Marjorie Bingham (University of Ottawa). Immersion and the universities. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **41**, 5 (1985), 931-40.

Anglophone students who have passed through elementary and/or secondary French immersion courses are now entering Canadian universities and seeking courses which reflect their varied interests while offering more advanced and more 'real life' opportunities to improve their French language skills. Universities have responded by offering advanced French language courses for non-majors, regular credit courses in different disciplines through the medium of French, academic exchanges with French-language universities, and special week-end, extracurricular and summer programmes. [The demand for teacher-training for French immersion is dealt with elsewhere.]

Since 1981, the University of Ottawa, Canada's largest bilingual university, has offered immersion-type courses at university level (subject-matter language teaching) in psychology. Students with high intermediate proficiency in their second language (English or French) can enrol in separate sheltered class sections which cover the same ground as the first language sections, sharing the same coursebook (in French translation) and taking a common final exam. Some linguistic adjustment to second language speakers was made by professors. However, not all inputs were modified linguistically. Students were exposed to their second language in a non-threatening

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context requiring them to concentrate on meaning rather than form. Test results showed that they performed as well or better in their regular subject matter as the native language comparison groups while significantly improving their second language proficiency and their self-confidence.

GERMAN

86–370 Gassner-Roberts, Sigrid and Brislan, Patrick (U. of Adelaide, Australia). A controlled, comparative and evaluative study of a suggestopedic German course for first year university students. *Journal of the Society for Accelerative Learning and Teaching* (Des Moines, Iowa), **9**, 2 (1984), 211–33.

The progress of three groups of university students enrolled in a first-year German course was evaluated after one completed academic year. The achievements of two control groups, a day and an evening class taught by conventional methods, were compared with those of an experimental group taught using suggestopedic methods in order that substantial comparisons could be made. Additionally, for the experimental group in Term III, a variety of music examples representing different styles and genres was introduced to determine the acceptance and effect of works other than those of the Baroque era not yet evaluated in available research. A spatial re-arrangement of the classroom accompanied this change.

Proficiency in the German language was measured by a number of tests: mid-year written, end-of-year written and oral; and an objective test. The experimental (suggestopedic) group was tested more frequently according to suggestopedic principles. Further responses from all groups were sought by means of a general questionnaire, and the experimental group completed a music questionnaire. An analysis of the considerable amount of data collected from the substance of this report was made, which confirms the superiority of suggestopedic methods over conventional teaching and learning.

86–371 Müller, Susanne. Zur didaktischen Funktion von Dialogmustern im Fremdsprachenunterricht bei Fortgeschrittenen. [The didactic function of specimen dialogues in foreign language teaching at advanced level.] *Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (Leipzig, GDR), **5** (1985), 293–9.

Specimen dialogues for advanced learners of German are often artificially constructed to present cultural information which would be better given in other forms. Instead, they should illustrate the distinctive features of spoken language, especially those not usually practised in the classroom: (a) language use for the practical organisation of everyday life (as opposed to discussion and chatting); (b) use of various registers/styles/dialects (as opposed to 'literary language' only). The dialogues may be composed of both authentic and constructed passages, and should be preceded by a description of relevant social and situational parameters. Informal and formal dialogues in similar situations should be presented side by side, and accompanied by

a chart relating utterances to illocutions for both varieties [example]. Learners should be told about the range of appropriacy of particular forms, and about the specific features of informal spoken German. [List of headings with examples.]

86–372 Szalai, Ute. Textmerkmale und ihr Einfluss auf die Übungsgestaltung im Fremdsprachenlehr-und-lernprozess, dargestellt am Beispiel der monologischen Sprachübung. [Text features and their influence on the form of exercise, exemplified from monologue language practice.] *Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (Leipzig, GDR), 4 (1985), 237–41.

Monologue tasks can be divided into six types, depending on whether they are prepared or unprepared, and whether the function is informational, logical or interpersonal. Each type makes different demands on the speaker, not only linguistic but also cognitive (memory and planning), and requires different kinds of preparatory exercises [examples]. One important consideration is how far stereotyped patterns and ready-made ‘partial texts’ can be used; in general this is most feasible for interpersonal language, but exercises in this area must take account of social variables and their linguistic correlates.

86–373 Wilms, Heinz (Hochschule Hildesheim). Deutsch als Zweitsprache – Grenzen des Sprachunterrichts. [German as a second language – the limits to language teaching.] *Deutsch Lernen* (Mainz, FRG), 4 (1984), 10–25.

The author comments on the shift of perspective in second language teaching as applied to immigrants in the Federal Republic of Germany. The foreign language orientation of the '70s is giving way to a position which owes much to American bilingual research. The traditional way of teaching German like a foreign language to immigrant pupils has been shown to be inadequate. The author attempts to situate language teaching developments within the theoretical discussion of hypotheses about language acquisition. German teaching to foreign pupils requires a flexible approach and cannot at present benefit much from such research. To bridge the gap between teaching and free learning of German outside the classroom four points are stressed: (1) the need for meaningful communicative interaction in the classroom, (2) the encouragement of communicative grammar, (3) more message- and less medium-orientation, and (4) increased use of texts used for mother-tongue instruction to German pupils instead of graded texts. Language work based on such texts is a central task of German teaching to non-native German speakers. At the same time language teaching should not be treated in isolation from other subjects or from social and educational problems facing the children of immigrants. As long as financial resources for teachers of German as a second language are held back, little can be achieved.