

# *Language learning and teaching*

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**THEORY AND PRINCIPLES** See also abstracts 80–142, –152, –154, –156

**80–129 Cook, V. J.** The English are only human. *English Language Teaching Journal* (London), **33**, 3 (1979), 163–8.

The gap between the ideal language of the classroom and the real use of language is wider than many teachers suspect. Some language skills are essential parts of the behaviour of any native speaker, but others, such as reading aloud, and specifically academic skills (e.g. note-taking and report writing), are possessed only by those with special training or talent. One way for these difficult targets to be brought within students' reach is for the teacher to show students what ordinary native speakers do in such circumstances, thus bringing the target within their reach. The same method can be applied to the teaching of everyday speech, using transcripts of real speech instead of normalised, well-formed sentences. An experiment is described which showed that many native speakers found comprehension questions difficult because of the strain on the memory.

**80–130 Gayle, Grace M. H.** A model of second-language teaching. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **35**, 3 (1979), 348–65.

The model of second-language teaching presented here attempts to fulfil two main functions: (1) a description of the categorical components of teaching style, by reference to which different teaching styles may be specified and compared; and (2) the identification of the sociological, educational, and personal factors which determine a particular teacher's individual teaching style, as well as an explanation of the interactions between these factors. A submodel offers an explanation of the relationships between all observable additive teaching behaviours relevant to second-language learning. This submodel has been used as the framework for the construction of a research instrument, the Language Teaching Record Scheme (LTRS) which allows the descriptive analysis of such observable teaching behaviours.

With reference to this model, an effort has been made: (1) to specify more clearly the relationships between the teacher and the behaviours that may be observed during activities as a result of the teacher's teaching style; and (2) to analyse, as the most obvious component of teaching style, the types of observable behaviours that occur and their inherent structure.

**80-131 Hendrickson, James M.** Error correction in foreign language teaching: recent theory, research and practice. *Modern Language Journal* (St Louis, Mo), **62**, 8 (1979), 387-98.

A brief review of attitudes to error correction shows a movement towards accepting errors in the interest of creating an encouraging atmosphere for communication. Instead of trying to prevent errors, we can learn from them. The literature on the subject shows that (1) no current standards exist on correction, (2) there are few linguistic criteria of grammatical and lexical correction in foreign language teaching, and (3) much of what has been published is speculative, and in need of validation.

Some implications drawn from the literature are offered; these include: (a) correction improves L2 proficiency; (b) correcting every error is counter-productive; (c) error taxonomies are being developed which classify errors in communicative terms; (d) direct correction has proved ineffective; (e) peer or self-correction may be as effective as teacher correction for some students.

**80-132 Seshadri, C. K. and Allen, J. P. B.** English as a foreign language and English as a second language: an IEA Achievement Test study. *Working Papers on Bilingualism* (Toronto), **17** (1979), 65-82.

The difference between 'foreign-language' learning and 'second-language' learning is not clear because writers do not agree what criteria should be used for making the distinction. Moreover, there is a striking lack of empirical evidence to justify the use of the two terms. The purpose of this study is (a) to review the various criteria which have been used to differentiate between foreign-language and second-language learning, and (b) to examine one of the criteria systematically. Language achievement had already been measured in ten countries where English is regarded as a foreign language. The authors used the same IEA tests to measure the achievement in English of a comparable sample of pre-university students in Baroda in India, where English is considered to be a second language. The comparison did not reveal any difference in English language achievement between the two groups of students, suggesting that the nature of the distinction between a foreign and a second language requires further investigation.

**80-133 Tinkel, Tony.** A proposal for the teaching of linguistics at the secondary-school level. *MALS Journal* (Birmingham), **4** (1979), 79-100.

There is a need and a place in the secondary-school curriculum for the teaching of linguistics, i.e. the systematic analysis of language made through the medium of the pupils' mother tongue. What is proposed is a comprehensive and systematic look at language for its own sake,

helping the pupils to draw conclusions about language from looking at the data, which they can control, i.e. it is a pupil-centred activity. Analysis of the mother tongue would be complementary to, but distinct from, practice in improving performance in the mother tongue.

A syllabus is outlined for papers in language description and language usage which might form part of an examination in English language at 16 and 18 plus.

**80-134 Utheß, Herbert and Utheß, Sabine.** Der Fremdsprachenerwerbungsprozeß als Einheit von Erfassen, Einprägen, Einüben und Anwenden. [The process of acquiring a foreign language as a unity of comprehension, memorising, drill and application.] *Fremdsprachenunterricht* (Berlin), 22, 8 (1978), 299-329.

By taking into account (Marxist) psychological views on knowledge, skills and faculties, and considering the specific properties of language, a unifying theoretical framework is set up for successful foreign-language instruction, interrelating the functions and feasibilities of comprehension, memorising, drill and application, and examining their feasibility [details]. The application of the knowledge thus acquired is manifested in communicative linguistic actions. These should be close to life and based on specific texts and situations. For successful communication in a foreign language the learner is required to have a sound factual knowledge of a given topic and a willingness to act creatively and independently.

**80-135 Verrel-Benecke, Charlotte.** Plädoyer für die Entschulung des Fremdsprachenunterrichts. [A plea for the deschooling of language teaching.] *Zielsprache Deutsch* (Munich), 4 (1978), 11-18.

Language teaching in schools is still often characterised by rigid and authoritarian norms, such as a hierarchical relationship between teacher and pupils, the ritualisation of communication, and a behaviouristic conception of language and speech. Communication in a foreign language can only take place successfully if the teacher's monopoly on leadership and control is reduced, and language learning becomes an active, co-operative activity for the learner. Even in foreign-language courses for adults, there are many factors which can inhibit communication. Among these are the dominant position of the teacher, the shyness and passivity of the learners, and the ritualisation of communicative processes. Problems are caused by the learners' perception of the gap between their command of the language and that of the teacher, and by the tendency to see 'making progress' in terms of acquiring a knowledge of new rules and structures. Teacher dominance, the pressure to achieve standards, and competitive behaviour are discussed, and suggestions are made about how to deschool the learning situation

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and to promote communication, particularly at the beginning of a language course.

- 80-136 Zapp, Franz-Josef.** Les langues étrangères et leur fonction dans l'enseignement. [The place of modern languages in education.] *Études de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **31** (1978), 7-11.

Modern languages are taught experimentally in only a few primary schools in the Federal German Republic. All pupils in secondary schools must learn at least one foreign language, but, as a result of the greater importance now accorded to maths and science and the need to find space in the time-table for new subjects, modern languages are being allocated fewer class hours than 15 years ago. Fewer pupils are taking two or more languages; the first, and often the only, language studied is usually English. In some *Länder* English is compulsory and French occupies a poor second place – or in some cases takes third place, after Latin. Modern languages are supposedly taught with the practical aim of communication and this bias towards English is unjustified. A wider variety of languages should be taught, including, in border regions, minority languages like Dutch or Danish.

## PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING *See also abstract 80-159*

- 80-137 Ammon, Mary Sue and Slobin, Dan L.** A cross-linguistic study of the processing of causative sentences. *Cognition* (Lausanne), **7**, 1 (1979), 3-17.

The comprehension of sentences expressing instigative causation (e.g., *The horse makes the camel run*) was investigated in children between the ages of 2;0 and 4;4, speaking English, Italian, Serbo-Croatian and Turkish. Cross-linguistic differences in development reveal the roles of morphological (causative particle, case inflection) and syntactic devices (periphrasis, word order) in guiding children's processing of such constructions. It is suggested that local cues (inflectional suffixes, particles, specialised causative verb forms) contribute to the more rapid development of sentence processing strategies in Serbo-Croatian and Turkish. The word order systems of English and Italian, which require that the listener hold the entire sentence pattern in mind in order to determine underlying semantic relations, contribute to slower development on this task.

- 80-138 Bialystok, Ellen.** The role of conscious strategies in second-language proficiency. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto) **35**, 3 (1979), 372-94.

An attempt was made to identify and examine the effects on learning of some learning strategies. Three such strategies – practising, monitor-

ing, and inferencing – were defined, their extent of use by high-school students was measured, and their effects on achievement were assessed. The use of these strategies is related primarily to the attitude of the language learner and unrelated to his language learning aptitude.

**80–139 Corder, S. P.** ‘Simple codes’ and the source of the second-language learner’s initial heuristic hypothesis. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), 1, 2 (1978), 1–10.

We have to account for the fact that all pidgins, ‘reduced registers’ in a single language and the interlanguage of language learners all tend to show striking formal similarities, and secondly that in the case of the interlanguage of children learning a second language these show even more striking resemblances to each other, whatever their mother tongue, and to the intermediate grammars of the infant. All these phenomena can be explained if we abandon the notion of ‘simplified systems’ and substitute for it the notion of complication or ‘complicated system’, and then hypothesise that no approximative system developed in the learning of any language is ‘obliterated’ but remains available both for special communicative functions in the mother tongue and as an ‘initial’ hypothesis in the learning of second languages.

**80–140 d’Anglejan, Alison and others.** Solving problems in deductive reasoning: three experimental studies of adult second-language learners. *Working Papers on Bilingualism* (Toronto), 17 (1979), 1–23.

Three experimental studies were carried out to examine the ability of groups of learners of English as a second language to solve problems of deductive reasoning (three-term linear syllogisms) in their native and second languages. In the first study involving Canadian francophones studying English, subjects solved problems more effectively in their native than in their second language. Their skill in carrying out the experimental task in English was not a function of their competence in that language. In a second study with Canadian francophone subjects the methodology was refined and multivariate statistical techniques were used to analyse the data. The findings confirmed the general pattern of results in study one and made it possible to locate an information processing difficulty in the second language at the second stage of the problems. Study three was carried out with Arabic-speaking learners of ESL. Once again a similar pattern of results was found.

Data from three studies suggest that second-language proficiency scores may not be a very sound predictor of an individual’s ability to be educated or to perform certain other tasks in a second language.

**80-141 Durkin, Kevin.** Young children's success on a picture identification task of 'with' and its antonyms. *Papers in Linguistics* (Champaign, Ill), 11, 3/4 (1978), 355-71.

A research note which deals with questions of whether young children are able to comprehend *with* and its antonyms in a simple picture task.

The test described aimed (i) to investigate whether young children (3-year-olds) can comprehend local (spatial) uses of *with*; (ii) to compare comprehension of *with* with comprehension of its negative counterparts, *without*, *not with*, and *with no*; and (iii) to consider possible variations in the comprehension of these negative forms.

Results show clearly that young English-speaking children's comprehension of *with*, *without*, etc. (in local usage), is sufficiently advanced to allow them a high degree of success in a task which contains potentially distracting perceptual information. It seems reasonable to conclude that *with* and its antonyms are not among those prepositions that resist full comprehension for some years. [Appendix gives test card sets.]

**80-142 Frauenfelder, Uli and Porquier, Rémy.** Les voies d'apprentissage en langue étrangère. (Learning pathways in a foreign language.) *Working Papers on Bilingualism* (Toronto), 17 (1979), 37-64.

A general model for second-language learning is proposed, which aims to describe different components (input, intake, integration, output) of the learning process in terms of the information (explicit/implicit, linguistic/sociolinguistic) to which the learner is exposed. It serves to identify the stages or 'learning pathways', which the learner follows to develop knowledge in the target language. These pathways vary according to individual factors and the learning setting. In the classroom, the type of input provided and the output required by the teaching method and teacher's strategies together with the learner's strategies determine the pathways taken. Thus the model should be useful in examining the pathways proposed or imposed by different teaching approaches, in identifying new ones not currently exploited and in suggesting new directions for research on the learner.

**80-143 Omanson, Richard C. and others.** Goals, inferential comprehension and recall of stories by children. *Discourse Processes* (Norwood, NJ), 1, 4 (1978), 337-54.

Inferential comprehension and recall of stories by children, five and eight years of age, were studied where the story protagonist's motivation and other referential information crucial to understanding the story were varied. The inclusion of negative or positive protagonist's goals versus a 'neutral' goal led to qualitatively different and better inferential comprehension as measured by probe questions. However, these

manipulations did not affect the children's recall of the stories. In addition, when the children in the two age groups were matched for retrieval of propositions crucial to the inferences, the older children made more inferences. These data suggest that inferential comprehension may be independent of surface recall of text and that inference probes are better measures of comprehension than free recall measures.

**80-144 Sascha, W. Felix.** *Natürlicher Zweitsprachenerwerb: Ein Überblick.* [Naturalistic L2 acquisition: a survey.] *Studium Linguistik* (Kronberg/Ts.), 4 (1977), 25-40.

The scope of existing research into the subject of untutored L2 acquisition is indicated by a short description of relevant project groups (UCLA, Kiel), the 'experimental studies' initiated by Dulay and Burt, and the Heidelberg project on '*Pidgin-Deutsch*'.

The observation of children in L2 German/L1 English and L2 English/L1 German situations reveals developmental stages as exemplified by the acquisition of negation. L2 acquisition is not imitative but creative. Its features and strategies are: (a) 'decomposition of target structures', i.e. the selection of target features and their deviant usage [e.g. *nein spielen Katze* 'no play baseball']; (b) L2 acquisition has a stringent sequential order [e.g. *nein* before *kein*, *niemand*, *nichts*]; (c) the order of sequence and the structure of a stage seems to be determined by the structural features of the target language [e.g. the grammatical use of *don't/didn't* is only possible when verb/auxiliary are distinguished]. These findings may also prove useful for tutored learning.

**80-145 Solmecke, Gert und Boosch, Alwin.** *Entwicklung eines Eindrucksdifferentials zur Erfassung von Einstellungen gegenüber Sprachen.* [The development of a semantic differential to determine attitudes towards languages.] *Linguistische Berichte* (Wiesbaden), 60 (1979), 46-64.

The article reports the findings of an investigation into the attitudes of school children and students in higher education towards the study of English, French and Latin. The concept of the semantic differential is discussed, and its empirical validity as a means of measuring attitudes is established. Results are presented of tests to measure attitudes in four areas: whether each language was liked, whether it was found to be aesthetically appealing, how easy it was thought to be to learn, and how useful it was felt likely to be. Responses are analysed, and a set of basic oppositional pairs of adjectives extracted, e.g. *easy to learn/hard to learn*, *musical/unmusical*.

Clear and consistent patterns can be found within each individual group of learners. An affective and a cognitive element are distinguished, the former being the more important in influencing attitudes. The four types of response studied can be sharply distinguished, and can vary independently of each other. English is found to have been consistently

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regarded as useful, irrespective of whether it was liked, while Latin gained the most negative responses in all four areas. [Numerous tables and diagrams.]

**80-146 Wesche, M. B.** Learning behaviours of successful adult students on intensive language training. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), 35, 3 (1979), 415-30.

This study sought to identify and define 'learning behaviours' characteristic of highly successful adult students in an intensive language training programme. Data was collected via observation of the behaviour of students in the classroom, in-depth interviews, pre-training questionnaires and objective predictive and achievement measures. The students were English-speaking Canadian civil servants learning French in a six-hour daily, audio-visual, beginning-level training programme. The paper describes the learning behaviours observed, their frequency of occurrence during selected classroom activities, and their relationship to achievement in listening and speaking skills. The statistical analyses are supplemented by information from interviews with the eleven highest and seven lowest achievers. The behaviours described by the high achievers as important to their own learning success are reported and contrasted with those reported by the low achievers.

The results suggests that the most successful learners, while differing in their particular learning techniques and L2 practice activities, are those who use their exposure time in the L2 actively, and who seek to extend this out of the classroom; who actively rehearse new material; who exploit its rich associational possibilities both through conscious association-making and meaningful practice in the L2; and who seek knowledge about the target language. They are characterised by a high level of personal initiative and sustained effort in the language learning process, which appears to be related to a long-term commitment to mastery of the L2. [Findings are interpreted in terms of an information processing model.]

## CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

**80-147 Haider, Hubert.** Syntax in contrast. *Wiener Linguistische Gazette* (Vienna), 17 (1978), 45-64.

Some of the implications of the Extended Standard Theory for contrastive analyses are explored. By means of an analysis of passive constructions in German, three areas are outlined where problems need to be resolved: (1) differences in derivation (base-generated v. derived); (2) interaction between syntax and lexical properties; and (3) the parametrical forms of constraints on rule application.

Contrastive analysis is interpreted as a theory by means of which the



realisations of grammatical relationships specific to individual languages are investigated and related to a universal grammar.

**80-148 Vizmuller, Jana.** A contrastive analysis of verbal aspect in past tenses in English and in Italian. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), 35, 4 (1979), 608-16.

The use of the perfective and imperfective verbal aspect is a likely source of errors for the anglophone student in an introductory Italian course. Textbooks seem to avoid a structural explanation of this problem, since it is generally thought that the choice of aspect depends on semantic rather than syntactic criteria. However, there are a number of predictable syntactic, as well as semantic, contexts that govern the choice of the perfective or imperfective aspect. Five of these constraints are investigated in conjunction with a contrastive analysis of English and Italian verbs which admit formal distinction in the use of verbal aspect.

## ERROR ANALYSIS

**80-149 Nöth, Winfried.** Errors as a discovery procedure in linguistics. *IRAL* (Heidelberg), 17, 1 (1979), 61-76.

The article is concerned with the interest language errors have for linguistics in general. Some hypotheses are discussed about the causes of error and the results which psycholinguistic research in this area has discovered. Regularities in language errors prove the psychological reality of units of linguistic description on several levels, from phoneme right up to text. Error analysis therefore presents a discovery procedure for the description and analysis of the structures of the language system.

**TESTING** *See also abstracts* 80-132, -140

**80-150 Bialystok, Ellen and Howard, Joan.** Inferencing as an aspect of cloze test performance. *Working Papers on Bilingualism* (Toronto), 17 (1979), 24-36.

The study investigates the role of inferencing in cloze test performance, and the factors which facilitate that inferencing. Four groups of high-school students learning French as a second language completed sets of cloze passages under four treatment conditions. Three conditions provided a potential cue to inferencing, while the fourth was a control condition with no additional aids.

The results indicated significant differences in performance attributable to the four classes, the position of the story in the set of passages, and the inferencing treatment condition. A more detailed analysis examined the relationship between experimental condition, type of error committed and the form class of the original word required by the

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text. Differences in these patterns were apparent, although non-significant. It was found that certain inferencing cues can have a facilitating effect on students' cloze performance although the pattern of facilitation is different from that found on other criterion tasks. Furthermore, it is possible to encourage students' inferencing behaviour through classroom training, thereby improving cloze performance.

### SYLLABUS DESIGN *See also abstracts 80–133, –168*

**80–151 Cook, V. J.** Some ways of organising language. *Audio-Visual Language Journal* (Birmingham), **16**, 2 (1978), 89–94.

Methods of organising language are usually variations of four main types: (1) grammatical; (2) situational; (3) topical and (4) functional/notional. A common failing is that they are seldom based on reliable descriptions of the language used by native speakers. The four types complement each other, but all fail to take account of the communicative situation itself. It is still not clear what the structure of the communicative situation is, though work on the structure of conversational exchanges is promising. A system of analysis such as that suggested by Sinclair and Coulthard for classroom discourse might be adapted to the situations in which the foreign student wishes to participate. It will also be necessary to take heed of the sequences that learners go through in acquiring a second language. [Discussion of teaching materials devised by the author, based on a communicative topical approach, *English Topics*.]

**80–152 Widdowson, H. G.** The communicative approach and its application. *Indian Journal of Applied Linguistics* (New Delhi), **3**, 1 (1977), 28–39.

An approach to the teaching of language which aims at developing communicative competence involves more than the specification of the notions and functions which the learner will eventually have to express in the language concerned. It involves, crucially, the devising of a methodology which will represent how such notions and functions are synthesised in on-going discourse and so develop in the learner an ability to deal with language in use as a dynamic process of meaning realisation. A demonstration is given of how part of such a methodology might work.

## TEACHER TRAINING

**80-153 Bosquet, Maryse and Mackay, Ronald.** An experimental paradigm for the continuing professional development of second-language teachers. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), 35, 3 (1979), 454-66.

The purpose of this article is to stimulate thinking about the continuing professional development of second-language teachers. A 'case-study' approach is taken in which the rationale for a particular in-service seminar provided for the ESL teachers in a specific Quebec school board, the planning and teaching of it, the participants, the instructors and the evaluation are discussed. The purpose of such detailed discussion of the seminar is to indicate how the particular view of teacher training upon which the seminar is based influenced the content and the manner in which the seminar was conducted.

**80-154 Westgate, David.** Professional attitudes of language teachers. *Audio-Visual Language Journal* (Birmingham), 17, 1 (1979), 13-17.

A study is discussed which aims eventually to compare the professional perspectives of graduates training to be language teachers with those of their future colleagues already at work in the schools. This study is centred in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and has involved 100 language teachers in 21 secondary schools of various kinds on Tyneside and in Northumberland. The students are those undergoing one-year initial training in four universities including Newcastle. The present report concentrates solely on the teachers, analysing their responses to a questionnaire (given in the appendix) which sought their views on the place of their subject in the secondary curriculum, as well as on aims and objectives, teaching methods and ability grouping. Of particular interest are: the intensity of some of the responses (e.g. on mixed ability classes); the orientation of other responses (e.g. in favour of an early optional status for modern languages); the different degrees of progressive or traditionalist thinking attributable to sub-groups within the sample, defined by length of experience (some kinship emerges between the least and the most experienced teachers, both sub-groups being characterised by a less liberal outlook than that of the middle one with four to ten years experience).

### TEACHING METHODS *See also abstracts* 80-131, -134/5

**80-155 Gremmo, M.-J. and others.** Taking the initiative: some pedagogical applications of discourse analysis. *Mélanges Pédagogiques* (Nancy), 1978, 53-78.

Some of the pedagogical implications of the authors' work on the analysis of face-to-face interaction are considered. [Definition of the

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terms 'interaction', 'alternation', etc.] The model is applied to an extract from a transcription of a language class; this demonstrates that the presence and participation of the teacher distorts the interaction, by preventing the learner from practising an essential aspect of interactive behaviour, i.e. taking the initiative. In addition, there are no learner–learner exchanges, only teacher–learner exchanges. Even textbook materials such as dialogues are invariably distorted from the interactional point of view. Some approaches are suggested which have been found helpful in remedying this situation: these include the use of tags, gestures or exclamations, the use of authentic materials, and changing the role of the teacher in the direction of autonomous learning.

**80–156 Mitrofanowa, O. D.** Prinzipien der Methodik des Fremdsprachenunterrichts. [Principles of the methodology of modern-language teaching.] *Fremdsprachenunterricht* (Berlin), **21**, 11 (1977), 517–25.

Most methodologists of modern-language teaching recognise the consciously practical method as the most important one. Practical considerations demand a study of language use and not merely of the language itself, and they are determined by concrete teaching aims. The language material should be dealt with according to the functional principles of how important and frequent words and constructions are in direct communication. This has the disadvantage, however, of splitting the abstract system of the language. Another principle is the situational-thematic one which seeks to discover which situations and topics are most important in communication acts. This will depend, of course, on the aims of the teaching. Syntax and morphology are used in parallel. Easy open sentence patterns are used. The traditional 'linear' division of language material into phonetics, vocabulary and grammar is not used, since what is taught is what is important to communication. Frames in which different lexical items can be substituted are used as learning units. More effort must be spent with inflectional languages such as Russian. Language learning goes from an elementary to a more advanced stage and each stage has its own aims, material and methods. For effective modern-language teaching methodology, it is necessary to describe the differences and similarities between the target language and the language of the learners. On the basis of new sciences such as psycholinguistics, new theoretical standpoints, and observation of practice, modern-language teaching methodology can be improved greatly.

## CLASS METHODS: PRONUNCIATION

- 80-157 Barry, William J.** Over-correction in pronunciation learning, or: How easy is it to explain mistakes? *Linguistische Berichte* (Brunswick), 57 (1978), 74-9.

The aim is to underline once again the inappropriateness of phonemic theory to pronunciation problems. Whatever similarity the results of a comparison of phonological systems may have with observed learner errors stems from the common behavioural structure underlying phonemic analysis and articulatory performance, and not from any possible explanatory adequacy of phonological theory. It is also demonstrated that errors observed in learners' articulatory behaviour are the product of a number of different factors pertaining to the learners' ability to process information concerning the target sound. Central to the discussion is the sound-letter unit, not because this is considered to be of prime importance, but merely because it illustrates in a plausible manner that the psychological processes involved in the acquisition of L2-sounds do not necessarily run parallel to any one meta-level of language description.

VOCABULARY TEACHING *See abstract 80-109*LANGUAGE FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES *See abstract 80-111*READING *See also abstracts 80-164/5*

- 80-158 Downing, John and others.** A cross-national survey of cultural expectations and sex-role standards in reading. *Journal of Research in Reading* (Leeds), 2, 1 (1979), 8-23.

Cultural expectations and sex-role standards about reading in Canada, Denmark, England, Finland, Israel, Japan and the U.S.A. were investigated. A picture test showing various activities and objects including reading and books was administered in each country to six sub-samples that approximated to the levels: students in grades I, IV, VIII and XII, college students, and adults. Subjects had to ascribe the activity or object as being appropriate for either a boy or a girl. The results were consistent with the hypothesis that cultural expectations and sex-role standards about reading are congruent within one country but that they differ between countries. In particular, boys in Canada and the U.S.A. rapidly learn to perceive reading as a feminine activity, whereas Danish and Japanese males at all ages consistently view reading as acceptable masculine behaviour.

**80–159 Jung, Udo O. H.** Über Fremdsprachenlegasthenie. [On dyslexia and foreign-language teaching.] *Praxis des neu sprachlichen Unterrichts* (Dortmund), 25, 4 (1978), 339–47.

It has been estimated that at least 10 and possibly as many as 20 per cent of schoolchildren suffer from dyslexia. These children, who may be of average or above average intelligence, find enormous difficulty in learning to read and spell correctly, and although there has been considerable research into this condition recently, it is still little understood.

It is to be expected that dyslexic children will encounter additional difficulties when embarking on the study of a foreign language, having failed to master the written form of their own language. Comparative dictation tests on groups of dyslexic and non-dyslexic children have shown that many of the kinds of mistakes made by each group are similar, for example, attempts at phonetic spelling of unfamiliar words, *fergotten* instead of *forgotten*, resorting to the nearest German equivalent, *laud* instead of *loud*, *hat* instead of *had*. However, the type of mistake which consisted of letters being reversed or jumbled up occurred almost exclusively in the work of the dyslexic children, for example, *adn* instead of *and*, *fro* instead of *for*. Mistakes did not occur consistently but alternated with correct spellings, and when the same dictation was repeated the two versions did not match. Although similar errors do occur in the work of normal children, they do so to a much lesser extent and tend to disappear as the child becomes more proficient in the language. Whereas the normal child learns to recognise linguistic units such as syllables or morphemes, the dyslexic child fails to do this. Comparative studies of the linguistic behaviour of dyslexic and normal children could lead to beneficial results for the understanding both of dyslexia and of the mechanics of foreign-language learning.

**80–160 Valtin, Renate.** Dyslexia: deficit in reading or deficit in research? (Critical comments on the methodological and theoretical aspects of research on 'Legasthenie'. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), 14, 2 (1978/9), 201–21.

Frequently overlooked faults in the research methodology used to investigate dyslexia are discussed. A critical review considers (1) problems with selection of samples – especially (a) distortions due to use of matched pairs of subjects in selecting groups for comparison; (b) distortions resulting from selection of subjects on the basis of a total IQ, since individuals differ in their pattern of abilities on verbal/performance IQ measures; (c) distortions arising from the varying criteria for dyslexia which alter the composition of the subject population used by various researchers; (2) failure to base research on an explicit theoretical model of the reading process – a shortcoming which has led to an emphasis on psycho-physical functions having no demonstrable causal

relationship to reading/spelling difficulties; and (3) inadequacies in the concept of dyslexia.

Two approaches to the assessment of reading disabilities are presented: the process-oriented and the subskill approach. Recommendations for future research include: (1) Since group comparisons do not uncover evidence about the different types of reading and spelling failures, a combination of descriptive and experimental approaches seems to be appropriate; (2) the research should be based on an explicit theoretical model of the reading process, with identification of individual subskills and their interactive connections; (3) the problem of test validity and the significance of the data should be more closely examined; and (4) small studies with limited evidence should be replaced by interdisciplinary projects.

**80-161 Wildman, Daniel M. and King, Martin.** Semantic, syntactic and spatial anticipation in reading. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **14**, 2 (1978/9), 128-64.

Alternative strategies are proposed which a reader might use to anticipate semantic, syntactic and spatial features of upcoming text; and the way in which such anticipation could enhance the reading process is explained. Studies on semantic and syntactic ambiguity, eye movements, oral reading errors, and other related areas are reviewed for their implications concerning anticipatory behavior. The studies reveal that readers are sensitive to, and use, semantic and syntactic context to predict the classes of upcoming words; but that readers do not usually use semantic and syntactic context to predict the precise identity of successive words. It is concluded that readers can use syntactic and peripheral visual cues in anticipating successive fixation locations in order to maximise information gain. Current theories of reading are evaluated with respect to their incorporation of anticipatory behaviour. The class of interactive models which conceive simultaneous bottom-up and top-down processing are most consistent with the evidence available on anticipation. The Selective Analysis model, one interactive variant, appears most promising as an appropriate explanation of the reading process.

**80-162 Williams, David.** Reading as interpretation: an ESL perspective. *RELC Journal* (Singapore), **9**, 2 (1978), 78-96.

Research on interpretation in reading English as a first language has offered considerable insight into skills that should be acquired by the non-native as well as the native speaker. It has yielded information regarding the influence of certain characteristics on the reader's responses. Reading improvement methods for first-language teaching have been usefully adapted to suit the requirements of second-language teaching. However, the methods used in teaching readers of English as a second language need to be more closely related to factors residing

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in the second-language situation. It is not enough to state that there are differences in reading ability among second-language learners. The precise nature of these differences must be identified, bearing in mind the linguistic and environmental background of the learners. Special reference has to be made to the problems of the non-native speaker, if there are to be any meaningful developments in second-language reading instruction.

**COMMUNICATION** See abstracts 80–119, –129, –135, –151, –155

**COMPREHENSION** See also abstracts 80–137, –143

**80–163 Majhanovich, Suzanne and Robinson, M. Lynda.** Training the ear: listening exercises for the classroom. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), 35, 4 (1979), 661–72.

Two types of listening are discussed: listening for specific information, and listening for global comprehension. The authors describe this skill as an active cognitive process and outline some aspects of listening. Once students are familiar with the sound system and intonation, and have acquired a basic vocabulary, they can refine their listening skill to develop listening retention. Students need to develop confidence to listen for the general message, and should try to avoid listening for single words unless specific information is required. [Many examples of drills and questionnaires, as well as some practical suggestions for teachers to aid their students in developing listening comprehension.]

**80–164 Yakhno, P. S.** Слуховая память в механизме понимания текста. [Auditory memory in text comprehension.] *Иностранные языки в школе* (Moscow), 6 (1978), 25–34.

Development of the capacity of learner's operative memory for the language is vital to improve comprehension. Three types of problem exercises, involving the use of orally presented alternative sentences based on a previously studied reading passage (to be answered "Right" or "Wrong") were used in experiments on 16-year-old learners of English in the ninth class.

Type B was intended to develop subject comprehension; the alternative sentences contained different content-words from the reading passage and so involved collation of subject matter. In Type C the alternative sentences were more abstract (involved implication). Experiments to show that type C improved comprehension were inconclusive but suggested the importance of auditory memory development. Type A concentrated on activating the reverberating sound-form of the words in the passage; the alternative sentences were based on words and



phrases from the passage. Training with Type A improved comprehension of spoken texts by a significant increase in the capacity of the auditory memory.

It is suggested that there are several levels of adequacy of mastery of foreign lexical items, corresponding to different types of memory [table], but the sound-form (auditory memory) is of fundamental importance. This is seen in terms of data from research by Luria, Zhinkin, Sokolov and others (sounds reverberate in the auditory memory until transformed into 'non-linguistic code'; 'bursts' of semantic indeterminacy and its resolution).

Teaching of comprehension should therefore begin with auditory memory training, using exercises of types A, B and C in that order. The role of A is fundamental to listening and reading comprehension.

### AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS *See also abstract 80-168*

**80-165 McAlpin, Janet.** The overhead projector in the advanced reading class. *English Language Teaching Journal* (London), 33, 3 (1979), 214-18.

The advantages of using the overhead projector can be exploited profitably with projected texts, thus transferring some of the efficiency and dynamism of the oral classroom to the traditionally more passive reading class. The advantages enumerated are (1) control of focus, (2) control of exposure, (3) addition and removal of detail, (4) advance preparation, and (5) variety of exploitation. [Suggestions given are based on the exploitation of projected materials photocopied from a conventional reading unit.]

**80-166 Hares, R. J.** Sound effects as an aid to the teaching of English as a foreign language. *Audio-Visual Language Journal* (Birmingham), 16, 2 (1978), 95-9.

Sound effects have the advantage of at least partially eliminating culture- and class-loading from the lesson. They are highly adaptable to different levels and purposes. Their effectiveness is due to avoidance of perceptual difficulties (such as with cluttered pictures). They can channel attention to exact analysis of the stimulus or can permit imaginative interpretation [examples]. They present a challenge which stimulates students, and help to vitalise learning materials.

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**ENGLISH** See also abstracts 80–109, –115, –118, –129, –132, –136, –140, –144/5, –151, –153, –159, –162, –164/6

**80–167 Moulden, H.** Extending self-directed learning of English in an engineering college. *Mélanges Pédagogiques* (Nancy), 1978, 81–102.

The School of Mining at Nancy offers students and staff the opportunity for self-directed learning of English, though most of the English teaching is still done in group classes where the pupil decides his aims and methods. The article describes an experiment designed to study the effectiveness and possibilities of a semi-autonomous learning method for English. Two of the three-and-a-half hours of the group class are withdrawn and the learner is asked to replace them with two hours of independent study. He chooses his own goals, methods and materials, using information given to him [examples]. Evaluation of work done as well as advance planning is made in individual sessions with the student. A weekly group class is used mainly for oral expression activities.

**FRENCH** See also abstracts 80–145/6, –150

**80–168 Baltzer, François and others.** A propos de matériel complémentaire aux méthodes audio-visuelles – approche de textes authentiques. [Complementary materials for audio-visual courses and the use of real-life items.] *BULAG* (Besançon), 6 (1978), 4–25.

Audio-visual courses accord first place to the spoken language but access to the written language and in particular reading comprehension are important for many students. Real-life texts, such as newspaper articles on current affairs, add variety to lessons and stimulate student interest, extending the narrow and limited world of the course book. There is the additional advantage that students will already be familiar with the topics being discussed. Or texts can be chosen which relate to the students' own specialisation.

[An extract from the audio-visual course *De vive voix* illustrates practice in handling reported speech and the transition from speech to writing; and a newspaper article is analysed to demonstrate the teaching of comprehension and vocabulary.]

**GERMAN** See abstracts 80–111, –144

**ITALIAN** See abstract 80–148

## RUSSIAN

- 80-169 Keil, Rolf-Dietrich.** Die Klassifizierung der russischen Verben – ein altes Problem und ein neuer Lösungsvorschlag. [The classification of Russian verbs – an old problem and a proposed new solution.] *IRAL* (Heidelberg), 17, 1 (1979), 1-59.

After a short survey of the classifications of Russian verbs prevailing in present-day publications in the fields of linguistics and language teaching, a classification useful for language teaching is developed on linguistic principles. Three classes are established on the basis of the 'segmentation formula' of Russian verb structures, the paradigm of non-periphrastic forms and the set of empirically found endings. The former second or *i*-conjugation is fully preserved, but the former first or *e*-conjugation is split into two classes. The criteria for all three classes are the set of present tense endings and the position and extent of consonant alternations. The application of this tripartite classification is demonstrated on the material of approximately 1,400 verbs from the latest Basic Russian vocabulary of 4,000 words used most frequently in teaching Russian as a foreign language.

## AFRICAN LANGUAGES

- 80-170 Dwyer, David.** The African language program at Michigan State University. *System* (Linköping, Sweden), 7, 1 (1979), 7-27.

A description is given of the African language programme at MSU, which consists of regular offerings of Hausa and Swahili, with classroom teaching, supplemented by a five-level system of instruction in other African languages, for which demand is lower, in the form of a faculty-supervised, individualised language-learning component. [Discussion of the administration of the programme, the learning approach, division of responsibilities, etc., together with a summary of objectives for first- and second-year students.]