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# Language learning and teaching – theory and practice

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## Theory and principles

**87-409 Beacco, Jean-Claude** (BAL, Rome). Méthodes et méthodologie: pour faire le point. [Methods and methodology – an assessment.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), **205** (1986), 45–50.

Recent trends are summarised: the most important of these are that authentic documents are in favour; the appearance of textbooks has improved; responsibility for structuring the course is often placed on the teacher, who may not always welcome it; exercises have changed to meet the needs of the communicative approach as well as the structural, but acquisition and use are not always clearly distinguished; creativity has assumed greater importance; more use is made of television; the cultural dimension occupies a central position; and study of

literary texts, never totally banished, is returning, but literature is always subordinate to language.

Though a movement towards synthesis has emerged, with both structural and communicative approaches being recognised as equally valid, in practice they are often mutually exclusive – not just because time given to the one is time taken from the other, but because they are the fruit of radically different concepts of language. Research capable of bringing about the integration of these two opposing viewpoints is urgently needed.

**87-410 Bloor, Thomas** (U. of Aston). What do language students know about grammar? *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **24**, 3 (1986), 157–60.

Although much attention continues to be paid to linguistic form, there has been a significant shift away from the teaching of grammar in recent years following the increase in communicative language teaching. This shift, the rejection of grammar by English teachers, and a decline in classics, have resulted in a general and regrettable decline in language awareness.

At Aston and London Universities, linguists and non-linguists who had chosen a foreign language option were given a questionnaire designed to

discover how familiar they were with traditional grammatical terms (e.g. adverb, passive verb) and grammatical concepts. Answers submitted varied in length, precision, truth and coherence, with linguists generally performing better than non-linguists. It emerged that familiarity with linguistic terminology was no guarantee of accurate observations about language, and that students appeared to be unable to grasp general grammatical principles. Students were conscious of their own lack of language awareness, and felt the need for remedial action.

**87-411 Delamere, Trish** (U. of Washington, Seattle). On the supervision and evaluation of instruction. *System* (Oxford), **14**, 3 (1986), 327–33.

The author lists the perceived distinctions between judgemental/subjective and objective/collaborative/non-judgemental methods of teacher assessment, maintaining that a review of the literature indicates a general preference for the latter approach. The choice of system in a specific context will depend on one's pedagogical position on such issues as the status of the evaluator and the evaluated (i.e. non-power vs. expert-rookie power roles) and whether or not specific teaching competences can be

identified. This choice should be made according to the needs of teachers, and may depend on factors like level of training, institutional affiliation (i.e. academic vs. corporate), age, status and the goals of the evaluation process itself. Assessors should be experts with excellent interpersonal skills and an ability to use informal observational procedures so as to isolate the essential characteristics of individual teachers.

**87-412 Giauque, Gerald S.** (U. Catholique de l'Ouest, Angers, France). Foreign language acquisition and the study of music. *Linguist* (London), **25**, 4 (1986), 195–7.

There are more parallels between the disciplines of music and foreign languages than may seem evident.

The foreign language classroom resembles an orchestra rehearsal. Students need to 'warm up' and

start using their instruments (voices) as soon as they arrive at the classroom. The key to a beautiful tone in singing is thinking of that tone, likewise to be proficient in a foreign language requires visualising ourselves using the language easily and proficiently, and being determined to do so. Just as an orchestra rehearses for performances, a learner studies to be able to perform. A music student's grades reflect his willingness and enthusiasm rather than his performance in a concert; likewise a foreign language student's mark should reflect his day-to-day efforts and willingness to communicate, rather than his efforts for a final exam. A music teacher puts much

emphasis on learning to deal with rhythm at an early stage; likewise a language teacher emphasises the phonetic system, the basic concept of sound-symbol correlation. Students should approach language laboratory drills like a music student studying scales and arpeggios, to acquire the fluid movement associated with artistic performance. The student in the lab should be constantly active, repeating each expression as often as he can in the space allowed, rather than just once. Foreign languages, like music, are studied so that they can be used (as instruments are to be played) but both disciplines also involve self-mastery.

**87-413 Schwartz, Bonnie D.** (U. of Southern California). The epistemological status of second language acquisition. *Second Language Research* (Utrecht), **2**, 2 (1986), 120-59.

In this paper the author argues for the necessity of recognising the epistemological basis of language (and hence of linguistic theory) for research in and theories of second language acquisition. In particular, she reviews the arguments for a generative approach to linguistic theory (e.g. Chomsky, 1965, 1975, 1981) and for why language as a system of knowledge must be distinct from other sorts of knowledge (Fodor, 1983), with the purpose of clarifying many misconceptions that seem to have arisen with respect to the work in generative grammar over the last 20 years. It is then argued that the null hypothesis for second language acquisition is, as concerns its mental representation of linguistic knowledge, that its epistemological status should be

assumed to be the same as that of L1 until proven otherwise. The author demonstrates how SLA theory (e.g. Krashen, 1981) can be elucidated by subsuming (parts of) L2 under linguistic theory with its firm epistemological basis, and how, in particular, one could empirically test Krashen's theory as well as any other theory of SLA that assumes L1 and L2 to be epistemologically equivalent. There is a need for researchers to consider the special epistemological status of linguistic knowledge before prescribing L2 pedagogy. This is a paper that takes a step back into the philosophical debate concerning the mental status of language in general in order for us to be able to take a step forward in second language research in particular.

## Psychology of language learning

**87-414 Apelt, Walter** (U. of Potsdam). Psychologische Probleme und Erkenntnisse zur Textauswahl für den fremdsprachigen Lehr- und Lernprozess. [Psychological problems and findings concerning text selection in the foreign language teaching and learning process.] *Glottodidactica* (Poznań, Poland), **18** (1986), 5-11.

Foreign language teaching texts are now often chosen solely to provide examples of a list of communicative functions, and may have little or no intrinsic interest: sometimes, indeed, culturally neutral texts are deliberately sought. This is wrong, for learners are motivated only when texts contain content corresponding to their needs, interests and abilities. This does not imply an acceptance of Anglo-American 'learner-centredness', for the start-

ing-point must always be social and pedagogic objectives, but even so more research into and consideration of the interests of each age-group is called for. Research in the Soviet Union indicates that non-motivating topics include: daily life ('*Mein Tag*'), repetition of other school subjects, over-specialised texts. Motivating topics include: *Landeskunde* (area studies), humour, history, sport, young people's problems.

**87-415 Clahsen, Harald** (U. of Düsseldorf) and **Muysken, Pieter** (U. of Amsterdam). The availability of universal grammar to adult and child learners – a study of the acquisition of German word order. *Second Language Research* (Utrecht), **2**, 2 (1986), 93–119.

Children learning German as their first language grasp its verb-final character from the very beginning. Adults learning German as a second language tend to assume in the beginning that it has a subject-verb-object order, and modify this hypothesis only

gradually. It is argued that this difference is due to the fact that children have access to the 'move alpha' matrix when learning the language, allowing them to make more abstract hypotheses, while adults can only rely on general learning strategies.

**87-416 Cohen, Andrew D.** (Hebrew U. of Jerusalem). The use of verbal and imagery mnemonics in second-language vocabulary learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **9**, 1 (1987), 43–62.

This paper provides a critical look at the use of mnemonic associations in vocabulary learning. The paper begins with a definition of mnemonic devices – that is, techniques for converting material to be learned into a form that makes it easier to learn and remember – and focuses on verbal and imagery mnemonics, whereby a word, a phrase, or a sentence and visual imagery serve as mediator between what is known and what is to be learned. Particular

attention is given to the keyword approach, in which there is both an acoustic link between a native-language word and the second-language word, and an image of the keyword interacting with the native-language word or phrase. Contentions are discussed concerning both the learning of words through verbal and imagery mnemonics and their subsequent retrieval. Attention is also given to research issues in need of investigation.

**87-417 Figas, Janusz** (Adam Mickiewicz U., Poznań). Syntax und Semantik im Erwerb zweitsprachlicher Fertigkeiten. [Syntax and semantics in the acquisition of second language skills.] *Glottodidactica* (Poznań, Poland), **18** (1986), 37–47.

How language processing takes place in the second language acquisition process is a central concern of contemporary research. The general model of human activity proposed by Miller *et al.* (1973) 'test-operate-test-exit', may be used to derive a triadic structure specific to language activity – that of comparison–modification–feedback. It is claimed that there is no direct correspondence between this structure and linguistic categories such as syntax or semantics. An abstract model is presented which draws on ideas from cybernetics among others. It is characterised as being a manipulable static system. The feedback process is held to unite semantics with

syntax, whereby the semantic comparison phase and the syntactic modification phase come together in one and the same evaluative procedure. This demonstrates the mutual relation between perception and production. It results in a greater or lesser developed error recognition skill. The author concludes that the traditional division into semantics and syntax does not do justice to the synthetic and cognitive processes activated by the learner. In order to understand the transition from cognition to linear verbal production, more attention needs to be paid to the role played by systematicity, reproductivity and creativity (especially the latter).

**87-418 Housen, Alex and Baetens Beardsmore, Hugo** (Free U., Brussels). Curricular and extra-curricular factors in multilingual education. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **9**, 1 (1987), 83–102.

Analysis of multilingual acquisition processes in the European School of Brussels reveals how both curricular and extra-curricular factors combine to account for high levels of proficiency in three or four languages. The school operates in seven languages, and all pupils must learn at least three, though the combination is open to choice. Curricular design ties in with the prerequisites for success

as posited in Cummins' (1981, 1984) Interaction Hypothesis, Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis, and Swain's (1983) Output Hypothesis. These alone do not account for the high levels of achievement attested, because they do not include the extra-curricular factors which provide the essential supplementary conditions for active, productive use of a given language in meaningful two-way negotia-

tion among peers. Schumann's (1979) Acculturation Model allows one to tap this primordial extra-curricular factor, even though it was not designed for an educational context. Four soft techniques were used to test the hypotheses: participant observation, written questionnaires, informal interviews, and open-ended formal interviews based on

a 26-item questionnaire ( $N = 8$ ). Results indicate that only Schumann's model can bring to the fore whether self-initiated meaningful two-way negotiation is used as a supplement to formal instruction in a multilingual environment; they also show how social and psychological distance tie in with curricular structure to enhance the acquisition process.

**87-419 Kemper Susan** (U. of Kansas). Imitation of complex syntactic constructions by elderly adults. *Applied Psycholinguistics* (Cambridge), **7**, 3 (1986), 277-88.

Elderly adults (70 to 89 years) and young adults (30 to 49 years) were asked to imitate complex sentences involving embedded gerunds, *wh*-clauses, *that*-clauses, and relative clauses. The young adults were able to imitate accurately or correctly paraphrase the sentences regardless of the length, position, or type of embedded clause. The elderly adults could accurately imitate or paraphrase short construc-

tions. The elderly adults were unable to imitate or paraphrase correctly long constructions, especially those in which the embedded clause was sentence-initial. The pattern of results demonstrates an age-related decline in syntactic processing abilities due, perhaps, to the increased processing demands of the long or sentence-initial constructions.

**87-420 Meara, Paul and Ingle, Stephen** (Birkbeck Coll., U. of London). The formal representation of words in an L2 speaker's lexicon. *Second Language Research* (Utrecht), **2**, 2 (1986), 160-71.

This paper reports an analysis of errors made by English-speaking learners of French. Forty learners learned a set of French words, and were subsequently tested in their ability to produce a correct phonetic form for these words. Nearly two-thirds of the attempts were incorrect, but a detailed analysis of

these incorrect forms showed that not all parts of the target form were equally liable to error. Initial consonants are particularly stable, while subsequent parts of words are not reliably recalled. These results share some similarities with studies of slips of the tongue in English.

**87-421 Pavesi, Maria** (U. of Edinburgh). Markedness and intertask variability in relative clause formation. *Rassegna Italiana di Linguistica Applicata* (Rome), **18**, 3 (1986), 97-109.

In this study the relationship between markedness and intertask variability is analysed from the perspective of English relative clause formation by a group of Italian learners performing on two tasks, a written task in which subjects were asked to combine two sentences into a single one containing a relative clause, and an oral task (picture description task) in which subjects were asked to identify a series of numbered characters and needed to use different relative clause types for accurate descriptions. The first task demanded a greater degree of formality than the second, which emphasised speed of response and accuracy of description. The hypothesis formulated on the basis of a markedness hierarchy was fully supported. Both tasks indicated that interlanguage (IL) development goes from unmarked to marked, at least for what pertains to the area investigated. Thus no qualitative variability results from this targetlike performance analysis. Yet, the two tasks with their different formality levels yielded quantitatively different results, with the written,

more formal task exhibiting a greater number of marked features.

These results are only superficially in contrast with those obtained in other intertask variability studies, where different orders generally occur in different tasks. Those studies, in fact, typically investigated the realisation of unrelated features. The structures, moreover, were not bound in any markedness relationship. The features investigated here, on the contrary, are all realisations of the same structure – relativisation – and form a markedness hierarchy. Research in the field should be aware of the potentially fundamental difference between within-areas and between-areas variability, as well as of the constraining role of markedness in IL variation.

An error analysis showed that also at the level of non-targetlike performance markedness accounts for most production, thus constraining the scope of intertask variability. Yet this analysis of the total IL production revealed the existence of some un-

explained intertask variability, especially in the form of [-case] relativisation strategies.

This finding draws attention to the necessity of having access to both targetlike and non-targetlike

performance to gain a fuller understanding of IL, even though such a widening is likely to make our construct, at least momentarily, less stable.

**87-422 Trévisé, Anne and Porquier, Rémy** (U. of Paris X). Second language acquisition by adult immigrants: exemplified methodology. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **8**, 3 (1986), 265–75.

The description of second language acquisition by adult immigrants in a natural setting raises specific methodological questions. This paper attempts to clarify some of these problems using the European Project data (Perdue, 1982) in three different areas:

(1) the acquisition and use of the over-generalised marker <se> (*c'est* in target French); (2) the acquisition of reference to time; and (3) the acquisition of reference to space by adult Spanish speakers in France.

**87-423 Weltens, Bert** (U. of Nijmegen). The attrition of foreign-language skills: a literature review. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **8**, 1 (1987), 22–38.

The author examines three main questions in language attrition research: (1) Why is a language (either L1 or L2) subject to attrition? (2) How much/what is typically lost? And (3) what is the rate at which elements are lost and are there differential loss rates for certain parts of the language or for certain subskills? 'Natural' and 'pathological' attrition phenomena have been seen as either L2 or L1 loss in varied L2 or L1 environments, and in inter/intragenerational terms. Almost all research on L1 attrition takes a cross-generation perspective.

From a psycholinguistic viewpoint which considers the role of memory, it is claimed that, though linguistic elements that have been explored superficially are more prone to loss than deeply processed,

context-embedded items, 'depth of processing' is difficult to assess as a retrieval mechanism and is in any case complicated by learner differences. A discussion of the acquisition process, attrition periods and learner characteristics leads the author to explore research polarities such as those claiming that attrition rates either are/are not influenced by the specific target FL; most attrition studies focus on a three-month 'non-use' period – this may be inadequate. However, the general pattern seems to be of an initial and steep attrition, which then levels out. It is concluded that learner characteristics and attrition effects at different linguistic levels have received insufficient study.

## Research methods

**87-424 Deulofeu, José** (GRAL, U. of Provence) and **Noyau, Colette** (GRAL, U. of Paris VIII). L'étude de l'acquisition spontanée d'une langue étrangère: méthodes de recherche/méthodes en linguistique/apports. [Spontaneous foreign language acquisition.] *Langue Française* (Paris), **71** (1986), 3–16.

The study of the spontaneous social acquisition of language is crucial to understanding the process of language acquisition in general. The Europe Science Foundation (ESF) in Strasbourg has organised, jointly with the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in the Netherlands, a programme for the study of foreign language acquisition by monolingual adult immigrants whose level of education is low and who have received little or no language instruction in their new country. Data collected in five countries – France, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands and Sweden – will be co-ordinated and analysed in order to furnish explanations of such phenomena as the rate of language acquisition overall, the relative rates of acquisition of subsystems

within the target language, and the degree of success achieved in linguistic exchanges between natives and immigrants; factors to be taken into account include previous linguistic experience, motivation, and the quality and quantity of contacts of the immigrant with the host community.

The programme has already revealed both the inadequacy of existing descriptions of the spoken forms of the languages confronting the immigrants and the importance of extra-linguistic factors. [The article makes reference to other articles in the same journal arising from the ESF programme and also to recent research in areas related to the ESF field of enquiry.]

**87-425 Pica, Teresa** (U. of Pennsylvania). Second-language acquisition, social interaction, and the classroom. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **8**, 1 (1987), 3–21.

This article attempts to account for empirical findings regarding the relative absence in classroom discourse of interactional moves through which learners and their teachers seek clarification or check comprehension of each other's message meaning. Data are presented to illustrate how these interactional features, i.e. confirmation and comprehension checks and clarification requests, assist language comprehension and production, and current theoretical claims are reviewed to emphasise their proposed importance to the second-language acquisition process. Absence of these interactional features in the classroom, it is argued, is a reflection of the

unequal participant relationships which shape and are shaped by classroom activities. In support of this argument, examples of discourse from a variety of classroom activities are given. Finally, results are reported from research on two activities believed to promote more equalised relationships among classroom participants – a decision-making discussion, and an information-exchange task. Results on the latter are used as a basis for suggesting ways in which the classroom can serve as a social and linguistic environment more favourable to second-language acquisition.

**87-426 Pourquoi, Rémy** (U. of Paris X). Remarques sur les interlangues et leurs descriptions. [Varieties of interlanguage.] *Etudes de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **63** (1986), 101–7.

There has been a shift in emphasis in the study of interlanguage during the last 20 years. The initial focus was on interlanguages developed in a formal language learning and teaching situation; later research investigated interlanguages formed in situations of spontaneous language acquisition and

also took in the strategies adopted by both parties in paralinguistic communication. This has led to all types of interlanguage being seen in the context of communication and to the integration of interlanguage into the study of communication.

## Testing

**87-427 Bachman, Lyle and Savignon, Sandra J.** The evaluation of communicative language proficiency: a critique of the ACTFL Oral Interview. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **70**, 4 (1986), 380–90.

The authors believe that the Proficiency Guidelines could be elevated by enthusiasts into a classroom panacea, and call instead for the development of 'common metric tests' that could measure a wide range of linguistic abilities across different languages and in diverse contexts. Using the hybrid concept of Communicative Language Proficiency (CLP), they outline problems in such areas as the notion of direct tests and the interpretation of criterion referencing, particularly as 'zero' or 'complete' proficiency ratings elude definition and ability domains are difficult to categorise. Various drawbacks in the ACTFL oral scales are discussed, most notably the idea of the 'educated native speaker' norm and

the possible interference of Test Method Factors on the spoken discourse actually elicited. Scale definitions [examples] basically seem to be context dependent and aimed *de facto* at LSP situations. The supposed empirical bases of the Guidelines are questioned as is their seeming discrete point bias. It is finally asserted that highly specific language-use CLP definitions cannot provide common metric testing methods, and the authors propose a more generalised, global scheme. It is also felt that the Guidelines should be reviewed to take account of such factors as grammatical, discourse and sociolinguistic competence.

**87-428 Joyce, E.** (British Council Teaching Centre, Greece). Teaching towards the text and the multiple choice question type test. *System* (Oxford), **15**, 1 (1987), 89–95.

In basic terms, the author presents ten classroom techniques which could help students to reconcile

the communicative teaching of reading with the demands imposed by the traditional multiple-choice

exercises still commonly included in public examinations. Meaningful reading-as-process strategies can be developed to cope with multiple-choice questioning, so that students can infer the relationship between the alternatives in each question and the text itself (thus harnessing the potentially negative backwash of multi-choice tasks).

The techniques presented include: allowing the learners to answer questions without seeing the text (to exploit their knowledge of the world), to reduce each multiple-choice question to a single *wh-* form and to try writing their own multiple-choice questions.

**87-429 Schulz, Renate A.** From achievement through proficiency through classroom instruction: some caveats. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **70**, 4 (1986), 373-9.

The author warns against what she sees as an extremist trend which would elevate the ACTFL Provisional Proficiency Guidelines to the status of a 'blueprint' for curriculum design, with the resulting (and hasty) imposition of oral proficiency as the central skill in language programmes. She questions the wisdom of giving oral proficiency such a role, particularly since there is no consensus on the exact nature of language proficiency, and because oral abilities are the most time-consuming to develop and also the easiest to 'lose'. Moreover, it is felt that L2 oral fluency may not be in any case a sound pedagogic goal for US university or high school

students, who might never need to interact in the foreign culture or to perform any linguistic functions apart from an occasional use of comprehension skills. Teaching situations and learner constraints also complicate the issue.

The establishment of an Acquisition methodology in formal instruction would be beneficial: the position of the author is contrasted point by point with commonly held beliefs on language learning. She concludes by calling for a broader-based FL classroom which teaches for and measures multi-skill development, and cultural/linguistic awareness.

**87-430 Shoham, Miriam and others** (Ben Gurion U. of the Negev, Israel). Reading comprehension tests: general or subject-specific? *System* (Oxford), **15**, 1 (1987), 81-8.

Tests of reading comprehension have traditionally been based on tests which are considered to be comprehensible to the educated layman, thus not requiring specialist knowledge. However, recent developments in language testing are moving towards subject-specific tests. Such ESP (English for Specific Purposes) tests are based on the belief that it is more valid to test the reading comprehension of an engineering student on an engineering topic rather than on a social science topic and vice versa. Empirical evidence in favour of either the general or the specific approach is lacking. This paper is a report of a study designed to investigate the

relevance of student background discipline on tests of reading comprehension in EFL (English as a Foreign Language). One hundred and eighty-five students from three faculties: Science and Technology, Biology, and Humanities and Social Science, were tested on three texts related to their respective fields of study. It was found that content area passages do affect student performance on reading comprehension tests, but not as greatly as had been expected. It was also found that the order of presentation of a reading passage in a multiple-text test does not affect student performance.

**87-431 Takashima, Hideyuki** (Kagoshima U., Japan). Acculturation and second language learning: use of comics to measure the degree of acculturation. *IRAL* (Heidelberg, FRG), **25**, 1 (1987), 25-40.

A study investigated whether tests based on comics or cartoons can be used as effectively and reliably as other tests such as the cloze to measure the degree of acculturation or relative proximity of a student to a target language. It was hypothesised that scores on comics would not correlate well with cloze test scores if the comics were extreme in either linguistic or cultural directions. The test format consisted of

a cloze test and interpretations of four out of six cartoons.

Results showed that there was a good correlation between the cloze test and the cartoons. Students who scored higher on the cartoons could be considered more acculturated; though they may not be fluent, they are approaching the target in one way.

**87–432 Young, Dolly J.** (U. of Florida, Gainesville). The relationship between anxiety and foreign language oral proficiency ratings. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **19**, 5 (1986), 439–45.

The American Council on the teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) has developed an oral proficiency test, the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), which may become the official test of oral performance for prospective foreign language teachers in Texas. Professionals in foreign language education are raising concerns about the effect of anxiety on Oral Proficiency Interview ratings. The purpose of this study was to provide an assessment of how anxiety may influence scores on the OPI.

An examination of the relationship between anxiety and oral performance must take foreign language ability into account. In this study, subjects' foreign language proficiency was assessed through a Self-Appraisal of Language Proficiency questionnaire and a dictation test. Subjects' anxiety was assessed on the basis of four independent anxiety measures: the State Anxiety Inventory, the Cognitive Interference Questionnaire, a Self-Report of Anxiety, and a Foreign Language Anxiety Scale of Reactions.

A total of 60 subjects took the OPI at various American universities. These subjects were either majors in French, German, or Spanish or prospective French, German, or Spanish teachers at one of these three institutions. The Self-Appraisal of Speaking Proficiency and the State Anxiety Inventory were administered before the OPI, and the other anxiety instruments were given immediately after it.

Results showed significant negative correlations between anxiety and the OPI, but once the effects of ability were accounted for, the correlations were no longer significant. In other words, once the effect of an individual's language proficiency was accounted for, oral performance no longer decreased as anxiety increased.

An important qualification that must be noted is that subjects were aware that the OPI in this study represented an unofficial administration of the test. Therefore, this study does not provide data on anxiety levels for official test situations.

## Curriculum planning

**87–433 Baranick, William A.** (Oakview Elementary Sch., Kensington, Md) and **Markham, Paul L.** (U. of Maryland). Attitudes of elementary school principals toward foreign language instruction. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **19**, 6 (1986), 481–9.

The goal of this study was to examine the attitudes of elementary school principals toward foreign language programmes at the elementary school level. The investigation focused on three topics: (1) examining the attitude of elementary principals concerning the addition of a foreign language programme to the present curriculum, (2) studying differences in principals' attitudes toward foreign language programmes based on school factors such as the socio-economic status of the community, student achievement level, school locale, and the education level of the parents, and (3) comparing principals' attitudes about a foreign language programme with their background and training in foreign languages.

The results revealed that more than half of the principals believed that the elementary curriculum should contain a foreign language programme; however, many principals indicated that implementing a foreign language programme was not high on their priority list. The majority of the respondents maintained that foreign language instruction should be required at some time during a student's school experience. The data also suggested that whenever parents, teachers, students, and other administrators increase their interest in foreign languages, the attitude of principals becomes more positive.



## Teacher training

**87-434 Dabène, Michel** (U. of Grenoble III). Ralentir...Travaux! Sur quelques évidences en didactiques du français langue étrangère. [Observations on the teaching of French as a foreign language.] *Etudes de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **64** (1986), 31-8.

It is common in French universities for future teachers of French as mother tongue (FLM) and of French as a foreign language (FLE) to follow the same course, regardless of the totally different situation confronting the FLE teachers (most of them not native speakers) when they return home to teach a language which is the mother tongue of neither teacher nor taught. Furthermore, such research as has been carried out in FLE, as distinct from FLM, has concerned migrants or students

resident in France and may not necessarily be relevant or appropriate to learners elsewhere. There is consequently a divorce between theory and practice, between research findings and production of materials.

The training of FLE teachers should focus primarily on their professional and language needs and should take into account the relationship between the three variables: teacher's language/ language taught/learners' language.

## Teaching methods

**87-435 Allwright, Dick.** Seven ways of making classroom language learning difficult. *Prospect* (Adelaide, Australia), **2**, 1 (1986), 50-66.

Classroom language learning is particularly difficult because of the strong relationship between knowing a language and having a good sense of identity. The teacher should try to avoid all the unnecessary difficulties, but the learners themselves must play an important role in the process. The seven ways of making language learning difficult are discussed. (1) Frustrating learners – the teacher's choice of teaching method prevents them from learning in the way they feel would be most effective. Self-access learning facilities offer an answer here, together with making learners more aware of their own learning preferences. The content of instruction must also be perceived to be relevant. (2) Confusing learners – one of the teacher's main responsibilities is to put order in place of the chaos which random exposure to the language in real life would represent, but in practice his or her efforts may only result in more confusion. Satisfactory explanations for many aspects of language are simply not available. Better preparation helps, also finding fruitful activities first, then finding ways of engaging learners on

them. (3) Spoonfeeding learners – teaching procedures are so teacher-centred that learners risk never developing their own learning capacities properly, or their ability to manage their learning. (4) Time wasting – better teacher preparation is helpful. Time wasting may well be the greatest enemy. (5) Demoralising learners – competition should be replaced by collaboration. Small-group work is less embarrassing for the shy learner; learners can set their own goals, thus making comparison with others irrelevant. (6) Anxiety-breeding – this is related to the unintentional demoralisation of learners. Mutual trust must be established between teachers and learners. (7) Dependence-breeding, both linguistic and pedagogic – learners need training to be independent and to manage their own learning in a supportive environment, with the teacher in the role of expert or consultant.

It should be more productive to consider such issues as these than the questions which traditionally concern language-teaching methodologists.

**87-436 Barnett, Marva A.** Syntactic and lexical/semantic skill in foreign language reading: importance and interaction. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **70**, 4 (1986), 343-9.

124 English-speaking students of French at the University of Virginia took part in an experiment which involved (1) a multiple-choice rational

deletion cloze exercise, (2) the original passage with additional text and (3) student recalls of the readings. Results showed that recall increases according to

level of vocabulary proficiency and level of syntactic proficiency and is related differentially to vocabulary and syntactic proficiency at medium and high levels of each but not at lower levels. As expected, both syntactic and vocabulary proficiency affect reading

comprehension; but, contrary to some theorists' suggestions, unduly stressing vocabulary-building or inferencing skills may very well not help those students who lack adequate syntactic knowledge.

**87-437 Bedford, David A.** (Southern Illinois U. at Carbondale). A survey of university student attitudes toward the language lab. *NALLD Journal* (Athens, Ohio), **19**, 2 (1985), 29-38.

This article reports the results of a survey of student attitudes towards the language laboratory at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. The report notes that an initial positive attitude towards the laboratory in the first semester becomes more negative during the second. Several hypotheses are put forward to account for this: (1) Students become negative towards using the laboratory when they do not perceive the materials as helping them to attain the objectives of their language courses. (2) Students become negative toward using the language laboratory when they do not perceive the

materials as helping them attain their personal goal of speaking the language. (3) Students lose interest if the laboratory materials are boring. (4) (a) Factors that reduce the full usefulness of the laboratory (schedule conflicts, noise interference, equipment malfunction, etc.) may be overcome in part by good materials (i.e., helpful, relevant, and not boring). (b) Such factors always harm motivation and cannot be overcome if they go beyond a certain threshold of tolerance. New materials are needed to maintain the initial favourable attitude towards the laboratory.

**87-438 Beheydt, Ludo** (Catholic U. of Leuven). The semantisation of vocabulary in foreign language teaching. *System* (Oxford), **15**, 1 (1987), 55-67.

Learning vocabulary is not mere memorisation, but a continuing process of becoming familiar with verbal forms in their polysemous diversity within varying contexts. The study of semantisation is rooted in both linguistics and psychology, and the Saussurean view of words as comprising verbal forms, concepts and referents is outlined. Trier's semantic field theory, componential analysis (Channell), and prototype semantics (Rosch) together imply that a learner can only semantise a word when he/she is aware of its morphological, syntactic, and collocational profile as well as its multi-faceted meaning potential. Quite simply, it is absurd to learn words out of context.

Prime examples of learning psychology research are summarised (e.g. Ebbinghaus), though the author implies that vocabulary learning has been studied without reference to the language learning process as a whole. The importance of repetition and distributive learning is explored and a semantisation strategy is proposed, whereby learners are presented with 'pregnant semantic contexts' in which the prototypical concepts surrounding new lexical items are evoked so as to embed them in a meaningful semantic network.

**87-439 Bensoussan, Marsha** (U. of Haifa). Beyond vocabulary: pragmatic factors in reading comprehension – culture, convention, coherence and cohesion. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **19**, 5 (1986), 399-407.

As important as vocabulary is in reading a foreign language, other factors also appear to be involved. Some of these additional factors are the reader's familiarity with conventions of written texts in the native and foreign languages, awareness of cultural differences between both languages, and knowledge of the macro- and micro-level structures of a text.

This paper examines evidence from different studies indicating problem areas in reading comprehension. Student's mistranslations from English to

Hebrew were examined to diagnose difficulties in reading comprehension. Mistranslations and misinterpretations of illocutionary force, logical connectors, and modifiers indicated that many students were either unable to draw on a culturally appropriate memory schema to understand the texts or had preconceived notions about word meanings that dominated their interpretations and prevented them from correctly using contextual clues.

**87-440 Boutin, Marie-Christine and Brinand, Suzanne** (Lycée de Sèvres). De la compréhension écrite à l'expression écrite. [From written comprehension to written expression.] *Langues Modernes* (Paris), **80**, 6 (1986), 19–28.

Hitherto priority has been accorded to written comprehension. There is need for a systematic approach to written expression so that students can acquire step by step the necessary writing skills. Students should be exposed to a variety of types of writing; narrow focus on immediate use is restricting. They should be led to discover for themselves the characteristic language and most commonly occurring structures, and the underlying rules governing each type of writing. They need to

be actively involved and a variety of graded exercises is essential.

The writing of diary entries illustrates how students progress by stages towards reproducing entries similar to those presented to them and eventually to original composition. The occasional use of this kind of exercise is recommended with different types of writing during the last three years of secondary school.

**87-441 Bridgen, Rita** (Organiser for Adult and Community Ed., Thame, Oxon.). The development of a family language programme. *Adult Education* (London), **59**, 3 (1986), 253–6.

A new scheme is described for teaching foreign languages to classes in which children, parents, grandparents and neighbours all share the same learning experience. Up to the time of writing, only French, German and Spanish have been included, with Italian to be introduced in 1986/7. The students' competence may vary from complete beginners to university graduates in the language. All teaching is oral; pupil participation and involvement is maximised; learning must be fun, and all

should derive a strong sense of achievement. Staff have to produce their own materials as suitable materials have not yet been commercially produced.

As a contrast with classes not organised on this basis, there is no drop-out and the enthusiasm generated is surprisingly high. Participating children and parents see each other in a new light and genuine respect is encouraged by participation in a shared task.

**87-442 Brulhart, Marilyn.** Foreigner talk in the ESL classroom: interactional adjustments to adult students at two language proficiency levels. *TESL Canada Journal* (Montreal), **1**, 1 (1986), 29–42.

While native speakers plainly adjust their speech to accommodate non-native speakers on syntactic and prosodic levels, they are also making adjustments on the level of discourse. It has been argued that these interactional adjustments are the crucial ones to the promotion of language learning. The present study compared the proportion of nine interactional features used in the speech of four ESL teachers as they taught beginners and advanced level adult classes. As predicted, display questions and self-

repetitions were used much less often with advanced students. The lack of other differences in interactional adjustments may be an artifact of the lesson content or teacher style. High variability in teacher behaviour was discovered. The marked reduction in use of display questions at the advanced level provided encouraging evidence that the ESL classroom is, in fact, preparing students for the real, communicative world. Implications for teacher training are pointed out.

**87-443 Cordurier, Béate** (U. of Grenoble). Apprendre à écrire, apprendre par l'écrit? [Learning to write or learning through writing?] *Langues Modernes* (Paris), **80**, 6 (1986), 9–17.

The priority generally accorded to the spoken language and the emphasis laid on immediate communication have led to the downgrading of the written language. But an approach suited to the adult migrant learner is not necessarily appropriate in the classroom where pupils are being prepared for

future rather than actual present communication. In these circumstances writing can be an excellent way of learning a language – though different from the oral approach – in that it provides the students with a systematic and structured body of knowledge, and also affords them opportunities for changing and

modifying linguistic forms and studying experimentally the relation between form and content. A place can be found for activities such as message

taking, summarising and notetaking in what at first sight appears to be essentially oral work.

**87-444 Danesi, Marcel** (U. of Toronto). The role of metaphor in second language pedagogy. *Rassegna Italiana di Linguistica Applicata* (Rome), **18**, 3 (1986), 1-10.

Research suggests that metaphor, far from being a mere rhetorical ornament or subject of aesthetic scrutiny, is intrinsic to most forms of cognition and provides vital clues to the relationship that exists between language and thought. Quite simply, effective L2 communication necessarily involves the ability to metaphorise. In brain structure terms, metaphors draw on and integrate the right and left hemispheres; they also combine analytical and visual cognitive modes.

After defining metaphor as any form of figurative,

non-literal language that can be used in a pedagogical setting, the author summarises the findings of metaphor research (e.g. that people will even try to interpret grammatically well formed but meaningless 'anomalous' strings). Metaphors should be integrated with other instructional strategies to reinforce learning, as well as being presented as relevant target language data. Some practical implications of this distinction between the 'heuristic' and 'content' use of metaphors are briefly explored in classroom terms.

**87-445 Graman, Tomas L.** (U. of Utah). Teaching and the routes to learning a second language. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **19**, 5 (1986), 381-9.

Research in second language acquisition supports the notion that learners must have access to meaningful language. In addition, Piagetian research in intellectual development indicates that learning is an active process of 'constructing' knowledge and that there are three basic routes to knowledge: (1) the 'perception' of data, (2) 'action' with the data, and finally (3) a 'conceptual' route consisting of formulas or generalisations about the data. Many language teachers rely mainly on the third route; that is, they teach 'correct' forms or generalisations about language and neglect to foster the use and interconnection of the other two routes.

In this essay, data are presented from observations of two different ESL classes. In one of the classes, the teacher uses a 'prescriptive' approach and demands linguistic accuracy from the students at all times. By

contrast, in the other class observed, the teacher's role is to motivate the need in the students to constantly use the language in order to share ideas about topics of immediate concern or vital interest. In this setting, students are expected to take risks, err and 'construct' language. Much of this 'building of language' takes place when students resolve linguistic conflicts which occur in their attempts to understand and make themselves understood. The two classes are examined in the light of Piagetian research concerning the routes to knowledge and the author concludes by supporting the methods used in the latter class because they adequately interassociate the three routes to knowledge and help the students move beyond their current levels of linguistic development.

**87-446 Harley, Birgit and others** (Ontario Inst. for Studies in Education). The effects of early bilingual schooling on first language skills. *Applied Psycholinguistics* (Oxford), **7**, 4 (1986), 295-322.

In this study, the development of first language (L1) skills among native English-speaking students enrolled in early French immersion programmes in Canadian schools is explored. It is hypothesised that the early bilingual schooling received by those majority children will serve to enhance their performance on various kinds of L1 tasks. Some preliminary evidence consistent with this hypothesis is found in a longitudinal comparison of English language test scores obtained over a six-year period by 22 immersion students and 22 regular English

programme students. Analysis of specific test items where the immersion students clearly outperform their regular programme counterparts leads to the development of more specific hypotheses, which are tested via new measures on a larger sample of students in grade 6.

The findings of both the longitudinal and cross-sectional studies of immersion students' L1 skills lend support to the main hypothesis of the research: that early bilingual schooling will serve to enhance certain L1 skills among the majority of children.

The enhancement found (e.g. in grammatical usage, knowledge and use of reference materials, and discourse interpretation skills) may have as much to do with the nature of the learning activities that take place in an immersion classroom as with the bilingualism of the students *per se*. Further longitudinal studies of bilingual development in other

majority contexts are needed to provide more enlightenment on the chain of cause and effect. The subsidiary hypothesis investigated – that L1 enhancement may be dependent on a specific level of L2 competence having been reached – receives some very tentative support from the longitudinal study.

**87-447 Havola, Liisa and Takala, Sauli** (U. of Jyväskylä, Finland). Review of some recent Soviet research on vocabulary learning and teaching. *Papers in Linguistics* (Champaign, Ill), **19**, 4 (1986), 495–510.

This article presents a review of some recent Soviet research on vocabulary learning and teaching. It has been demonstrated in a number of experiments with young and older students, and using both first

and second/foreign languages, that even young children can learn linguistic word analysis skills and can benefit from such teaching.

**87-448 Heffernan, Peter.** Questioning communicatively in the second language classroom. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **43**, 1 (1986), 108–16.

The overwhelming majority of classroom talk centres round questions, answers and reactions to answers, thus showing that classrooms are highly interactive. Research shows, however, that questions asked in school classes do not generally serve the same purposes as questions asked in normal discourse, teachers ask almost all the questions, students are rarely given enough time to formulate their answers, and the majority of questions asked in school classes do not promote thinking, only factual recall and regurgitation.

Some differences between classroom questioning and questioning in normal discourse are discussed: greetings, refusing, conversation openers, bidding farewell, getting/eliciting, realising a need, offering

someone something, suggesting a course of action, offering advice, changing someone's behaviour, expressing agreement/disagreement, giving encouragement/discouragement, persuading, soliciting clarification. More genuine questioning functions need to be brought into second-language classroom talk; this will require some advance planning on the part of teachers, who will need to teach more of the vocabulary of questions, broaden their margin of tolerance of errors, give up more control of in-class speaking time, and try to create classroom conditions under which students will seize the opportunity to ask more questions themselves.

**87-449 Heid, Ulrich.** Wortschatzlernen mit dem Computer. Was taugen die kommerzialisierten Vokabeltrainingsprogramme? [Learning vocabulary by computer – how good are the commercial programmes?] *Sprache und Literatur* (Munich, FRG), **58** (1986), 68–84.

Nine programmes are considered, all dated 1984–5, some German only (synonyms, etc.), some translating from and into other languages. As regards choice of material, the main criticism is that nouns are over-represented, and little information is given on constructions and collocations. In their presentation of material, the programmes are generally good, with scope for learner choice and user-

friendly programme structure which minimises technical difficulties. The most serious weaknesses are in treatment of learner responses: correct answers other than the one or two stored in the programme are treated as wrong, and even minor variations in punctuation may be disastrous. The step forwards in technology seems to have been neutralised by one and a half steps backwards in linguistic description.

**87-450 Last, R. W.** (U. of Dundee). The potential of artificial intelligence-related CALL at the sentence level. *Literary and Linguistic Computing* (Oxford), **1**, 4 (1986), 197–201.

First, the present state of the art of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is considered and its

limited potential within its present constraints explained. Second, the potential of AI-like applica-



tions for CALL is explored, using as an example a program developed by the author to 'teach' the computer semantic and syntactic information about German, in order to develop a suite of CALL exercises which interact with the learner in a

number of different ways. At the same time, a knowledge base of this information is developed, and this can serve a wide variety of different objectives.

**87-451 Lessard, Gregory.** The presentation of vocabulary in computer-aided instruction. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **43**, 1 (1986), 94-107.

The presentation of vocabulary to second-language learners using computer-aided instruction requires that a selection be made among the many lexical items of the target language. Two potential criteria for such a selection – frequency and subject area – are analysed and found to be useful but insufficient by themselves. A third approach is then examined in detail: the presentation of target language lexical

items not as individual entities but rather as nodes in a variety of lexical relations, on the formal, semantic, morpho-semantic, pragmatic and interlinguistic levels. The approach (which is seen as one component among many which might be used in the presentation of vocabulary in CAI) is illustrated using examples drawn from courseware produced at Queen's University at Kingston.

**87-452 Lönnfors, Pearl** (U. of Helsinki). Using a video camera in the classroom. *Language Centre News* (Jyväskylä, Finland), **1** (1987), 18-24.

Advantages and disadvantages of videotaped activities are listed. Video activities should have a clear purpose and be thoroughly planned: the teacher should have a positive attitude towards them. Once the teacher has decided that it would be worthwhile

to use a video activity with a group, he/she must create a meaningful task, prepare the students for the activity, clarify what the purpose of the activity is and explain how it will be evaluated [example of activities].

**87-453 Mariet, François** (U. of Paris-Dauphine). Un malaise dans l'enseignement de la civilisation. [The malaise in the teaching of 'culture'.] *Etudes de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **64** (1986), 64-74.

The teaching of the culture of the language being studied is vitiated by the dated stereotypes which are all too often purveyed to the learner. Modern societies are undergoing constant change. Teachers whose background and training are literary and/or linguistic are ill-equipped to handle topics such as demography, economics, or politics. The culture of

the target language is best approached through the study of contemporary consumer society. If this study includes the role of advertising and media it will provide both an understanding of how the target culture operates and an insight into how societies function in general.

**87-454 Murray, Heather** (U. of Berne) and **Angelil, Patricia** (Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale Lausanne). Motivation to listen and listening confidence. *Bulletin CILA* (Neuchâtel), **44** (1986), 76-86.

Innovations in listening comprehension methodology were based on research findings about how and why listeners listen. The best listening tasks and pre-listening activities are those which provide support, motivation, and confirmation of success, thus boosting student confidence. The term 'task listening' is used for activities in which listening for a specific purpose predominates. Completion of a task indicates listening success: the student must understand enough to take the action required to complete the task. Typical tasks require the listener to fill in a form or diagram, or tick off items on a checklist. A

well-prepared task provides the listener with motivation to listen, and having a reason for listening helps the students to understand by focusing their attention on significant message-carrying elements in the text, as in real life. Pre-listening activities play an important role by providing background information, encouraging prediction, and making students more emotionally receptive to the text, and also by making them aware of their ability to focus on certain sounds and filter out background noise. Controversy exists about whether authentic or scripted texts are most effective in teaching listening

comprehension. It is important to motivate rather than frustrate the listener, but also to prepare him/her for real-life encounters, and it is difficult to strike a balance between these two aims, and between authenticity and interest potential. The more a tape is tailored to match student interests, the less

authentic it tends to be. Strictly authentic recordings are difficult to use because interpretation of their message requires extensive background information about the knowledge the original speaker and listener(s) had of one another.

**87-455 Ng, K. L. Evelyn and Olivier, William P.** (Ontario Inst. for Studies in Education, Toronto). Computer-assisted language learning: an investigation on some design and implementation issues. *System* (Oxford), **15**, 1 (1987), 1-17.

The purpose of this investigation was to examine projects in computer-assisted language learning (CALL) to seek answers to fundamental design and implementation questions. Three research questions were isolated: (1) what aspects of language and language learning can computer technology best address, (2) what roles can computers play in language and language learning, and (3) what are examples of conditions favourable to the integration of computer use into the language classroom environment? Two kinds of data were acquired. The first type of information was obtained from articles reporting on CALL projects. The second was collected by sending a questionnaire to key personnel in the major CALL projects in Canada, the USA and Britain. The data obtained were

categorised, described, and discussed according to issues pertinent to the research questions. Findings of the study led to the formation of a number of provisional hypotheses.

Based on the findings, four recommendations were made: (1) CALL materials should be designed on a theoretical (linguistic) basis; (2) deeper and more meaningful practice should be developed via drills and exercises; (3) research should continue to explore diverse strategies and roles for the computer (such as its role as a facilitator allied with the videodisc, and generative tutoring systems and the tutee approach), and (4) CALL materials should be designed for integration into the classroom and the curriculum.

**87-456 O'Grady, Catherine.** Use of the learner's first language in adult migrant education. *Prospect* (Adelaide, Australia), **2**, 2 (1987), 171-81.

The article discusses a research project on the provision of L1 assistance in New South Wales, designed to investigate the issues and arrive at policy guidelines. Learners and teachers were interviewed and methodologies evaluated. A multicultural viewpoint recognises the value of the mother tongue as a facilitator in the development of a further language, but all teaching methods do not yet reflect this change in attitudes.

Interviews with 74 learners, most of whom had experience of both monolingual and bilingual classrooms revealed that in the initial stages the majority of learners expressed the need for bilingual

assistance. Fear, anxiety, inadequacy and boredom were commonly felt, but where the mother tongue could be used the learners were more relaxed and secure, because the use of the mother tongue restored their adult status and self-esteem. The 202 teachers surveyed were mainly (82%) in favour of the use of the L1 in the classroom, particularly for beginners, and for interviewing and referral. Teachers' reservations centred on learners possibly becoming dependent on their bilingual teacher, interference from the mother tongue, and reduced exposure to English, but these reservations are outweighed by the advantages of bilingual teaching.

**87-457 Palmberg, Rolf** (Åbo Akademi, Vasa, Finland). On lexical inferencing and the young foreign-language learner. *System* (Oxford), **15**, 1 (1987), 69-76.

A study was carried out to investigate the extent to which young Swedish-speaking pupils in Finland could understand an English reading text (two passages from *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*). Pupils' vocabulary knowledge was first checked, then they read the passages for meaning, working in pairs and thinking aloud. It was concluded that pupils could make extensive use of different knowledge sources despite their elementary-level knowledge of English.

Their relative success in assigning meanings to unfamiliar words depended mostly on their ability to use inferencing strategies, their own individual reading strategies and their ability to activate relevant knowledge sources, the two most important of these being their mother tongue and their general knowledge of the topic in question.

While inferencing skills alone cannot solve all the problems involved in successful reading compre-

hension, it is undoubtedly worthwhile to develop the ability to use a variety of guessing strategies by explicitly teaching pupils how to exploit all possible information sources: punctuation and illustrations as well as comparisons, definitions and explanations. They should be taught to realise that words may have several meanings, that their morphology may be misleading and that the meaning of a phrase may not equal the sum of the meanings of its parts. Young learners should be exposed to a wide range

of texts which exploit formal similarities between mother-tongue and foreign-language words. The subject matter should relate to the background knowledge of the learners and go just beyond their linguistic capabilities. By teaching pupils to think aloud while reading, the teacher can learn how different tasks are tackled and will, in due course, be able to remedy the strategies of unsuccessful language learners.

**87-458 Raschio, Richard A.** (Coll. of St Thomas, St Paul, Mn). Communicative uses of the computer: ideas and directions. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **19**, 6 (1986), 507-14.

While much concern has been expressed about the lack of a communicative focus in current computer software, few have responded with new conceptualisations of the computer's role in fostering communication. This paper presents a review of concepts which form a basis for a communicative approach to foreign language software design. Examples of communicative program formats are described that can be derived from or integrated with extended

class activities. The role of the Local Area Networks (LAN) is examined for their contribution to the goals of individualised attention, personalised content and lesson pace, and curriculum articulation. Next, teachers' roles and obstacles to the implementation of this new focus are examined. Suggestions are offered for the gradual acquisition and integration of new technologies and software based on communicative concepts.

**87-459 Singleton, David and Little, David** (Trinity Coll. Dublin). Grammatical instruction in the second language class: beware the pendulum. *TEANGA: Journal of the Irish Association for Applied Linguistics* (Dublin), **6** (1986), 60-74.

Whereas the old audiolingual orthodoxy banned explicit grammar teaching from the classroom, many newer language courses and methodology texts stemming from the communicative movement approve the overt teaching of grammatical form. While this approval is often qualified, some teachers may have gained the impression that grammar is 'in' again and it may be valuable to be reminded of the limitations of grammar instruction. Three recent studies carried out in Ireland provide evidence

that learners feel that grammar instruction is one of the least pleasant aspects of learning a language; it is both boring and difficult, and it has little effectiveness in encouraging a secure command of the target language. It is suggested that meaningful use of the target language is a more effective way of acquiring control of the language, and that grammar instruction must be given imaginatively, sensitively and proportionately.

**87-460 Wajnryb, Ruth** (U. of New South Wales, Australia). Story-telling and language learning. *Babel* (Victoria, Australia), **21**, 2 (1986), 17-24.

The technique of story-telling in language learning, as pioneered by Rinvolutri, is extremely versatile and can be adapted to any level. Reasons for telling stories in the classroom are (1) the purpose of telling a story is always genuinely communicative, (2) it is linguistically honest (oral language meant to be heard), (3) it is real, and comes naturally to most people, (4) it is sensual – understanding comes through paralinguistic means (facial expression, gesture, management) as much as from the heard words, (5) it appeals to the affective domain ('whole person materials'), and is human-specific rather than culture-specific, (6) it caters for the individual while

forging a community in the classroom, (7) it provides listening experience with reduced anxiety, and (8) it is pedagogically sound.

Story-telling should be a regular event. Learners should be as physically comfortable as possible, and have time to 'digest' the story. Any post-listening task set by the teacher should be unthreatening and, ideally, non-verbal. The teacher works from a skeleton outline rather than a full text, thus 'telling' rather than reading. Some lexical preteaching will probably be necessary, also use of realia, visual aids, etc. The telling should be adapted for the listeners, paraphrasing as necessary. [Sample lesson plan.]