
Teaching particular languages

English

87-71 Balboni, Paolo E. La lingua dei radiotelegrafisti di bordo: un caso speciale di microlingua. [The language of ships' wireless operators: a special case of microlanguage.] *Rassegna Italiana di Linguistica Applicata* (Rome), **18**, 1 (1986), 33-54.

Both from the theoretical and teaching points of view, the official language for communication between ships and port authorities is very complex, including the microlanguages of: sea transport and navigation; telecommunication; electrotechnics and electronics; aviation; law; commerce; military affairs. Each is examined in turn and the Q code is explained, by which operators are trained to send condensed messages, internationally interpretable regardless of language.

Wireless operators in Italy undergo three years' training, at the end of which they have to pass a written examination in Italian and an oral one in English. Suggestions are made for the teaching of both, moving from a framework of general language in the first year down to ESP in the third and with appropriate tests at the end, based on the analysis of the microlanguages mentioned.

87-72 Edge, Julian (Birmingham U.). Towards a reading strategy for EFL teacher trainees. *MALS Journal* (Birmingham), **10** (1985), 41-67.

The author examines the Situation-Problem-Response Evaluation structure which purportedly exists in typical published articles on classroom TEFL techniques: reference is made to a specific case study depicting the exposition/exploitation of this rhetorical layering for and by non-native teachers of English. Detailed analysis of a particular methodological article is undertaken with regard to 'interactive' and 'autonomous' discourse planes (i.e. continuous 'negotiation' between the writer and the reader as opposed to the mere presentation of a narrative record).

Non-native teachers experience culture-based

text-processing difficulties in handling such articles, especially in detecting the generalisable advice implicit in the description of local situations. This kind of interference is also evident when the operative rhetorical routines (e.g. defensive justification or negative criticism of received pedagogical wisdom) are at odds with reader expectations.

The direct link between surface linguistic signals and large scale S/P/R/E semantic patterning can be explicitly taught, in order to develop assertive reading strategies that involve skipping large stretches of text and eschewing a word-by-word 'bottom-up' approach to comprehension.

87-73 Eisenstein, Miriam (New York University) **and Bodman, Jean.** 'I very appreciate': expressions of gratitude by native and non-native speakers of American English. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **7**, 2 (1986), 167-85.

Since the expression of gratitude occurs frequently among native speakers of (American) English and has high social value, non-native speakers of English need to be able to express this function adequately. Data were first collected from native speakers in order to determine how they expressed gratitude, then from non-native speakers from a variety of backgrounds to see how they expressed gratitude in the same situations, and whether they could approximate English-speaking norms.

Results showed that the Russian students performed best; Japanese, Spanish, Korean and Chinese students had more difficulty in expressing themselves in a native-like manner. Participants only did well enough to 'get by' 30-67 per cent of the time. Even learners who exhibited high proficiency in English according to traditional measures performed sur-

prisingly poorly. Some problems were pragmalinguistic, exhibiting divergence from native use on lexical and syntactic levels. Learners were often unable to approximate native idioms and routines. Sociopragmatic limitations were more severe, because the sociocultural incongruities revealed created potential for more serious misunderstandings. Many of the students had lived in the United States for a few years yet had not acquired the ability to express gratitude appropriately, so how could the teacher facilitate the acquisition of various functions for the learners? One option is to present linguistic rules of use directly in the classroom, or via supervised practice activities, such as simulations. Another is to provide greater opportunities outside the classroom to hear native speakers in real interactions.

87-74 Grabe, William and Kaplan, Robert B. (U. of Southern California). Science, technology, language and information: implications for language and language-in-education planning. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* (Amsterdam), **59** (1986), 47-71.

This article concerns the system of information technology which will have to be created in China if it is to join the 'developed' nations. Present difficulties include no standard classification system, non-alphabetic orthography, restricted access to library stock, poor inter-library communication, lack of journals and computer databases. Language problems within Chinese (standardisation, alpha-

betisation, etc.) will have to be solved, but the biggest language needs relate to English, in which about 85 percent of worldwide networked information is stored. A substantial portion of the GNP should be spent on a programme including direct training in English of science information managers and the establishment of a large group of well-trained indigenous English-language teachers.

87-75 Irujo, Suzanne. A piece of cake: learning and teaching idioms. *ELT Journal* (London), **40**, 3 (1986), 236-42.

Learning idioms has always been very difficult for second-language learners. This article discusses some of the reasons why idioms are difficult to learn, including the fact that most materials for teaching idioms are inadequate. To help teachers prepare

materials and activities for teaching them, criteria are suggested for deciding which idioms to teach, and ten activities are described which will help students understand and produce idiomatic English.

87-76 Krasnik, Harry. Intercultural competence in ESL for adults. *JALT Journal* (Takamatsu-shi, Japan), **7**, 1 (1985), 15-41.

The use of English by non-native speakers in multicultural settings (English as an International Language - EIL) requires 'intercultural communicative competence' to combat misunderstandings arising from intergroup differences in how language is used in communication, rather than from lack of fluency in English. Teachers need training in appreciating what culture entails, and can begin by studying their own. This should help them to realise that a considerable cultural 'load' is involved in teaching ESL. From the learner's point of view acquiring another language entails acquiring another culture, and this can pose a threat to his/her own cultural identity. Another aspect of this is the interactional nature of intercultural competence: in everyday life, language is nearly always used for an interactional purpose. In contrast, the language of many ESL textbooks lacks purposefulness. Simulating interaction in the classroom is inadequate. Linguistic and communicative competence are important, but interactional competence (negotiating, persuading, reassuring, etc.) is also essential, and frequently overlooked. The rules of interaction are culturally variable, and the user of EIL frequently lacks a shared cultural background with his interlocutors.

The possibility of integrating language learning and content learning is currently being demonstrated in North America; this has implications for the intercultural perspective under discussion. The content in most ESL textbooks serves only as a vehicle for the language: what non-university ESL students need is training in intercultural communication. This could include (1) gestures, posture, proxemics (use of space), silence, rhetoric, and verbal communication style. (2) Learners planning to use English in particular cultural/national settings should study the general features of the target culture in a systematic way. (3) Basic concepts and strategies of impression management ('making a good impression') are related directly to the cultural values of one's audience. (4) Principles of mediation and negotiation in the cross-cultural perspective. Most of this material is relevant even if learners do not contemplate having face-to-face interaction with English speakers, but are dealing with them through writing.

An appropriate methodology for teaching interaction is the case-study method, also role playing. The workshop or training approaches offer 'hands-on' experience in practising the skills involved.

87-77 Krasnik, Harry (U. of Guam). Images of ELT. *ELT Journal* (London), **40**, 3 (1986), 191-5.

Popular images of English-language teaching seem to exist in society. Since they are part of the 'stock of knowledge' shared by members of a society, they may find their way into the classroom and subtly influence the attitudes and behaviour of the ELT instructor. Three such images are described in this article. One is the image of ELT as a branch of special education, with the implication of limited capacity for education (namely, the student cannot communicate, speaks strangely, haltingly). Native speakers often treat foreign students as if they are intellectually deficient. A weaker form of this image is the view that ELT students are non-students even if they are better educated than the teacher. The course content is not treated as real learning, but as practice for real learning. Teachers who insist on grammatical correctness are demanding that the linguistic code must be mastered before subject-matter learning can occur, though North American

experience proves this view to be mistaken. Another image of ELT concerns the socialisation of immigrants; this also involves the notion that ELT students are in need of assistance, e.g. communicative competence may be seen in terms of avoiding giving offence to native speakers of English. The teacher is called on to play the role of helper – nurses are often hired as ELT instructors.

One mitigating factor is that many ELT teachers are not native speakers of English and are therefore unlikely to harbour such images of the learner. The significance of the existence of the images lies in the fact that teacher expectations are believed to influence both the teacher's behaviour and the student's behaviour. It is recommended that teacher training should incorporate a social science perspective, which would enable the trainee to heighten his or her awareness of the role of prejudiced beliefs as they may affect ELT.

87-78 Lowenberg, Peter H. (Georgetown U.). Non-native varieties of English: nativization, norms and implications. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **8**, 1 (1986), 1-18.

Institutionalised 'non-native' varieties of English have developed in countries such as Nigeria and India, where English is widely used as a second, often official language in a broad range of intra-national domains. These varieties are characterised by 'nativisation': systematic changes in their formal features at all linguistic levels, which result from the use of English in new sociocultural settings, in contact with other languages, and in the absence of native speakers of English. This paper demonstrates how non-native varieties are distinct from inter-languages or approximative systems of 'established' varieties of English (e.g. British or American).

Crucial differences are illustrated in strategies common to both nativisation and second-language acquisition – generalisation of rules in the established varieties of English and transfer of linguistic features from other languages – in terms of linguistic contexts in which they apply and motivations underlying their application. A survey of positive attitudes toward non-native varieties among their users indicates that certain nativised features are becoming new norms for English usage in many countries. These strategies of and attitudes towards nativisation have implications for the teaching of English as a second language and for linguistic theory.

87-79 Lu Liang De. A foreign language must be taught through the mother tongue. *World of English* (China), **6** (1985), 94-9.

It is impossible to ignore the mother tongue when teaching and learning a foreign language. The direct method, as taught by native English speakers, is less effective with Chinese students than traditional methods taught by Chinese teachers. In the author's opinion the Chinese expression should be given first by the teachers, followed by translations into English by the students, then correction by the teacher, who finally presents the correct version, which the students must learn by heart. Because Chinese students

have little opportunity to practise their English, the main danger is forgetting what they have learned, hence there is a strong emphasis on learning material by heart. Songs are a pleasant and effective way to remember language items, including idioms. The best method is for Chinese teachers to teach the basic principles of the language and for English-speaking teachers to help with actual speaking practice.

87–80 Paribakht, Tahereh (U. of Ottawa). On the pedagogical relevance of strategic competence. *TESL Canada Journal* (Montreal), **3**, 2 (1985), 53–66.

This paper is a report on a study concerned with the identification of target-language linguistic material essential for the learners' use of communication strategies (CS) in survival situations.

Subjects were 40 adult ESL students and 20 native speakers of English. A concept-identification task was used to elicit these speakers' CS. Given that the taxonomy of CS developed in the study was based on the type of knowledge utilised by the speakers, it was possible to identify the semantic, as well as the

typical syntactic patterns, required for their implementation. These linguistic manifestations of CS can serve as a basis for developing L2 teaching materials with the aim of preparing L2 learners to function successfully in problematic communication situations. An appropriate sequence for the presentation of such material is proposed, based on the frequency of their application in the negotiation of meaning by the speakers in this study.

87–81 Selinker, Larry and Tomlin, Russell S. An empirical look at the integration and separation of skills in ELT. *ELT Journal* (London), **40**, 3 (1986), 227–35.

By considering a particular problem area in ELT research – the integration/separation of 'the four skills' – it is argued that an increased concern for empirical methodology will necessarily bring ELT theory into closer conjunction with teaching practice. In this article, five case studies are reported which all aim to show that an empirically grounded and insightful ELT theory is indeed possible. In so doing, several hypotheses are uncovered which control pedagogical decision-making, but which do not appear to be explicitly stated, and for which substantial evidence is lacking. One unfortunate result is that other potentially useful strategies for teaching remain ignored. Increasing the rigour of observations of skill integration/separation opens

the way for more systematic exploration of the principles which underlie the material presented in these case studies.

In these studies, important decisions affecting students' time and learning are not grounded in fact or in principles that pedagogical decision makers consciously consider. Nor apparently is the raising of such questions even contemplated. The three types of non-empirical rationale for current decision-making in the area of skill integration/separation are noted. The best pedagogical decisions for students can be made only by taking into serious account systematic observations of student performance in specific learning situations in which differing integration/separation schemes are used.

87–82 Sprengel, Konrad. Classroom English, or: the need for communicative confidence. *Bielefelder Beiträge zur Sprachlehrforschung* (Bielefeld, FRG), **13**, 1 (1984) [publ. 1986], 52–82.

It is officially assumed that the language of instruction in English classes in German schools can, should and will be exclusively English, but the reality in all kinds of school is very different. Teachers often, and pupils nearly always, use German for real communicative acts, such as starting the lesson, setting homework, joking, complaining [sample transcript]; there is a hidden assumption that information given in English will be either known or meaningless. Teachers must try to change this by striving for authentic English language and authentic interactional behaviour.

A major part of the problem is that teachers' own command of classroom English is usually shaky; this is not dealt with at any stage of pre-service or in-service training. There is, however, a taboo against admitting this weakness, which has reduced the acceptance of various classroom phrasebooks produced over the years. The article includes new material of this type, in the form of tests for readers with German L1, covering both school and university language.



French

87–83 Ecklund, Constance L. Parody and phonetics: video in the conversation class. *Studies in Language Learning* (Illinois), **5**, 1 (1985), 67–76.

Teaching conversation will always pose a challenge to the instructor of a foreign language. Even by the third year of language study – the typical time for this particular skill's development – students have neither the fluency nor the confidence necessary to speak easily; and since many are ill at ease in conversing in their native tongue, getting them into any verbal exchange is difficult. In a one-year college French course, the use of video has brought marked improvement both in the willingness to speak and

in the quality of the utterance. Students' televised parodies of the basic text bring the first term to a close with a demonstration of newly learned vocabulary and gestures; while video-tape correction places the emphasis on intensive pronunciation remediation in the second term. Both techniques are adaptable to any level of language learning, and have the advantage of creating a readily accepted sense of responsibility for progress within the student.

87–84 Kleineidam, Hartmut. Die Determinanten oder Begleiter: Plädoyer für eine Wortklasse in der französischen Grammatik. [Determiners: a plea for a single word class in French grammar.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **85**, 3 (1986), 302–29.

'Determiners' are a category not used in traditional grammars. In an increasing number of the more recent French grammars for schools in France and the Federal Republic of Germany, 'determiner' is employed as a generic term for a group of elements traditionally dealt with in separate chapters of the grammar books. The present article makes a case for uniform grammatical classification and terminology, and cites arguments drawn from distributional sentence syntax, textual linguistics and pragmatics

as well as semantics and logic to support this view. At the same time, however, it also pinpoints the problems inherent in this new classification of grammar and the resulting limitations on its adaptation for didactic purposes. A comparative analysis of selected reference grammars for French serves to elucidate the types of limitations involved, and includes a discussion of the possibilities for resolving the problems from a linguistic and didactic standpoint.

87–85 Pegolo, Catherine (Brisbane Migrant Education Centre, Queensland, Australia). The role of rhythm and intonation in the silent reading of French as a foreign language. *Reading in a Foreign Language* (Birmingham), **3**, 1 (1985), 313–27.

Three experiments were conducted to investigate the effects on silent reading comprehension (in French as a foreign language) of two methods. The experimental method consisted of reading training based on a listen/read approach using perceptually enhanced intonation and rhythm. The control method used normal intonation and rhythm. A

statistical analysis of the results of silent-reading comprehension tests administered upon completion of the experiments consistently indicated the superiority of the experimental method. An overview is also provided, in which evidence from a variety of disciplines is presented as a theoretical basis for the experimental method.

87–86 Wambach, Michel. L'enseignement d'une langue (non-maternelle ou maternelle) aux apprenants en difficulté et aux enfants issus de milieux socialement défavorisés. [The teaching of a non-mother tongue or mother tongue to disadvantaged learners and children from socially deprived areas.] *International Review of Education* (Dordrecht), **32**, 2 (1986), 175–90.

Official statistics reveal a high percentage of school failure at primary-school level in Belgium, notably among children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, be they francophone or foreign. Furthermore, the percentage of adult illiteracy is rising.

These situations share a common root: the methodology of the mother tongue at school and the approach to the written language in particular. After defining the psychological objective of a language course the present study proposes a

methodology, a synthesis of up-to-date psychopedagogical, linguistic and (neuro) biological trends. The data from this research make it possible to verify the working hypotheses which have been elaborated and revised over the last 20 years. With in the recommended methodology the *libération de la parole* ('liberation of speech') occupies an important place. This initial stage increases and reinforces the creative dispositions in the child and prepares for real language activities. These help the child to

communicate, and enable a functional learning of the language. The methodology of reading takes into account research conducted on the operation of the memory and the selective activity of the brain. A first evaluation of the methodology has verified the working hypotheses. Moreover, the pupils in the experimental classes obtained markedly higher grades in tests such as reading comprehension, elaborating texts and in those tests calling for imagination and creativity.

German

87-87 Coombs, Virginia M. Syntax and communicative strategies in intermediate German composition. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **70**, 2 (1986), 114-24.

Written German texts make extensive use of non-subject-initial word order to establish text coherence: old information is generally carried by the leftmost element, new information by later elements, which often include the subject. This article shows how two fourth-semester American students of German fail to follow this pattern and thus write less coherently. Both students largely avoid sentence-level syntactic errors, but one over-uses subject-initial word order, whilst the other varies

his word order but in an unmotivated way, and uses 'unjustified elements' (Kramersch) as would-be logical connectors in initial position. These typical examples suggest that writers' skill in using structures to communicate effectively develops independently of their knowledge and control of grammar rules. Methods of teaching writing should be modified to emphasise communicative effect, logical relationships and information structure.

87-88 Gerighausen, Josef (Goethe-Inst., Munich, FRG). Lehrmittel der 80er Jahre. [Teaching materials of the 'eighties.] *Bulletin CILA* (Neuchâtel), **43** (1986), 7-36.

German courses first published in the 'fifties, 'sixties and early 'seventies are compared with *Sprachkurs Deutsch* (1978 ff.) and *Deutsch Aktiv* (1979 ff.): pages from units on the 'restaurant' topic of each course are reproduced to illustrate the differences. Further development is seen in *Themen* (1983 ff.) and *Deutsch Konkret* (1984), from which syllabus extracts and other material are quoted.

The key concepts in the new courses are as follows: (a) (i) topics, (ii) texts, (iii) tasks; (b) (i) relevant, (ii) authentic, (iii) functional. Each adjective in (b) relates mainly but not exclusively to the same-numbered noun in (a). The author explains the connections between these concepts and their relation to current linguistic theory and to beliefs about learning objectives.

87-89 Harroff, Susan (Indiana U./Purdue U.). Die Sprachmaschine: a microworld for language experimentation. *CALICO Journal* (Provo, Utah), **3**, 4 (1986), 32-4 and 48.

Die Sprachmaschine – the language machine – provides a language microworld in which students experiment with word combinations with the intent of forming German sentences. Students choose basic German words from 'word bins' and submit them in sentence order to the sentence builder, which explains the process it follows in generating a completed sentence and informs the student if the word list contains incorrect word order or semantic errors. The sentence builder handles sentence patterns composed of subject or time word in first position, verb in second position,

an accusative object (if required by the verb), and a prepositional phrase which completes the verb in last position. It recognises 65 nouns, 18 verbs, 2 time words, and the 9 prepositions whose objects derive case from the verb which the prepositional phrase completes. Students may ask questions about generated sentences and about characteristics of the words stored in the program. All interaction between student and machine is in German, and students are encouraged to use full sentence requests and responses to the language machine.

87–90 Sözer, Emel (U. of Istanbul). Textlinguistik und Fremdsprachenunterricht. [Text linguistics and foreign language teaching.] *Finlance* (Jyväskylä, Finland), **4** (1985), 69–85.

Text producers and text recipients have three major expectations of text. Text is a completed linguistic whole, text refers to objects which the text producer intends to transmit, and text is cohesive. There are several aspects to the last expectation: we expect formal connectedness, meaningful cohesion, object-related contingency and model-related coherence. Foreign-language learning can be viewed as learning how to produce and comprehend texts in a foreign language. Firstly, the kinds of exercises which can be used in FL teaching and which tie in with the various text expectations are discussed. Then, in particular, the problems involved in learning German as a foreign language for speakers of Turkish, Hungarian and Finnish are addressed. Two German texts are presented and analysed with

regard to the problems of syntactic connectedness they pose for such learners. Problems of co-referentiality, article and pronoun usage are focused on, since the non-Indo-European languages mentioned do not distinguish for either natural or grammatical gender in the third-person form. The difficulties posed by transfer from Turkish to German are discussed in connection with a Turkish short story in which the interest and tension of the story depend on the fact that gender distinctions are not made. Translation is a valid exercise to enable learners to become aware of syntactic connectedness. Translation from L1 to L2 and vice versa is a way of both learning the FL and becoming sensitised to one's own mother tongue.

Italian

87–91 Messori, Noemi. La traduzione e l'approccio funzionale: dalla analisi stilistica alla comunicazione. [Translation and the functional approach: from stylistic analysis to communication.] *Civiltà Italiana* (Florence), **8**, 3 (1983) / 1/2 (1984), [publ. 1986], 33–40.

Translation is proposed as a language-teaching tool within the notional–functional approach, notwithstanding its discredited use in mechanistic–structural pedagogy. The latter was based on word-by-word translation, but what is proposed is the presentation of semantic concepts (functions) and the students have to translate them using the variety of permitted formulas in the target language. The concepts are presented in dialogue form (as in the BBC course

Buongiorno Italia) accompanied by instructions to say something within a communicative framework, free of the requirement that exists in traditional translation to render lexical and grammatical equivalents. Examples of such exercises are given and literary passages chosen from Calvino show how the principle can be extended to teaching advanced translation of opaque idioms.

Spanish

87–92 Faltis, Christian Jan (U. of Alabama). Sway students in the foreign language classroom. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **19**, 3 (1986), 195–202.

A 'sway student' in the foreign-language classroom is a student who is not only capable of displaying linguistic knowledge, but also knows when and how to interact appropriately with the teacher. This study examines how six sway students affected the organisation of interaction and language development in a traditional high school Spanish class. The data indicate that the teacher selectively organised

interaction around sway students at key points in the development of a lesson as well as when non-sway students made errors. The overall effect of sway students was that they allowed the teacher to progress effectively through the lesson, with the result of increased amounts of comprehensible input for the entire class.