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# Language learning and teaching – theory and practice

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## Language teaching

**97-1 Blei, Dagmar.** Mnemotechnische Verfahren und ihre Anwendung im Unterricht Deutsch als Fremdsprache. [Memorisation techniques and their application to teaching German as a foreign language.] *Zielsprache Deutsch* (Munich, Germany) **27**, 3 (1996), 118–29.

This paper argues that foreign language teachers and students should use traditional memorisation techniques. Some of these are advanced as to reasons for the current low usage rate. Representative examples of different types of memorisation techniques are analysed. These include ordering (alphabetically, numerically, etc. of material to be

learnt), concept association (e.g. ‘anchor-ship’, ‘tail-cat’), visual *aides-mémoire* and the incorporation of essential vocabulary into striking narratives. Finally a method for developing course-appropriate memorisation techniques is outlined and illustrated with sample instruction on letter-writing for business purposes.

**97-2 Blue, George** (Southampton U.) and **Grundy, Peter** (Hong Kong Poly. U.). Team evaluation of language teaching and language courses. *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **50**, 3 (1996), 244–53.

This paper describes a way in which an institution seeking to improve the quality of its courses can carry out a collective self-evaluation based on an internally designed checklist. This self-evaluation may, as in the case described, be used as part of the preparation for an external inspection or validation.

Alternatively, it may be built into the institution’s on-going programme of staff development. The authors hope that their suggestions will be relevant in a variety of teaching situations, and that similar self-evaluation checklists can be designed to meet local needs.

**97-3 Burden, Robert and Williams, Marion** (University of Exeter). Evaluation as an aid to innovation in foreign language teaching: the ‘SPARE’ wheel model. *Language Learning Journal* (Rugby), **13** (1996), 51–4.

The authors discuss the need for context-sensitive evaluation as a starting point for (and defining influence on) innovative language teaching projects. It is felt that evaluation should consider the background/culture in which a project is set, and facilitate communication amongst the key participants. The ethos behind such an interactive approach is felt to be succinctly expressed in the SPARE acronym (Setting/Plans/Action/Review/Evaluate), and the article outlines the specific workings of this philosophy in relation to the establishment of partial immersion French/English programmes at the Geneva International School. The background to the particular primary-level project under discussion is outlined, the main aim being to provide opportunities for the francophone stream in the

school to learn social studies through English, and the English stream to do the same via French-medium instruction. Consultation with school management and staff (primarily through workshops) apparently revealed that the original proposal to move towards a ‘one culture school’ required considerable modification in practice. For example, teachers themselves wished to have a greater degree of involvement in and responsibility for the project’s design and implementation; they also expressed underlying anxieties about job security and ‘hidden agendas’. The operation of the various phases of the SPARE model is described in the article, and a case made for cyclical evaluation of new educational schemes, with a corresponding need to define clearly and to modify short, medium and long term goals in the light of local realities.

**97-4 Couper, Heidi.** Teaching modern languages to visually impaired children. *Language Learning Journal* (Rugby), **13** (1996), 6–9.

50% of visually impaired children have additional physical handicaps and emotional or learning difficulties, but learn languages by current methodology, following the National Curriculum.



However, they often display a marked talent for language learning due to aural sensitivity, an excellent memory, enhanced concentration, enthusiasm and a lack of self-consciousness. Communicative methods appear particularly accessible, even though they often rely on visual stimuli. Effective teaching strategies are repetition exercises involving a physical response, pre-communicative practice involving actions, and communicative homework activities involving little or no writing. Learning to read and write is especially demanding: a small dictionary, for

example, transcribes into fifteen large volumes of Braille; guided role-play involving written responses and gap-fill listening comprehensions too are problematic. Developing keyboard skills, however, is very important. The article concludes that language learning is appropriate and desirable for visually impaired pupils, and emphasises the need for a communicative approach. These pupils need much support in terms of human resources and learning aids, and collaborative teaching is an ideal to work towards.

**97-5 Cumming, Alister** (Ontario Inst. for Studies in Ed., Toronto) and **So, Sufumi** (Carnegie Mellon U.). Tutoring second language text revision: does the approach to instruction or the language of communication make a difference? *Journal of Second Language Writing* (Norwood, NJ), **5**, 3 (1996), 197–226.

This study describes the dynamics of problem solving through spoken discourse in one-to-one tutoring of second language writing, aiming to determine if these processes might vary according to the instructional approach or the language of communication utilised. 20 adult students of English as a second language (ESL) were tutored in four sessions of text revision on four similar compositions they had written, alternating these sessions between provision of (a) conventional error correction versus 'procedural facilitation' and (b) use of the second language (English) or learner' mothers tongues (Cantonese, Japanese, and Mandarin), forming a 2 (Approach to tutoring) × 2 (Language of communication) factorial design. The discourse of tutoring seems to have been highly normative in this

context, sequenced into transactions of problem identification, negotiation, and resolution that did not vary appreciably across any of the conditions for tutoring. Tutors' and students' cooperative efforts to solve problems in the students' draft compositions focused primarily on local levels of the compositions (i.e., grammar, word choice, spelling, punctuation), guided mainly by the tutors' decision making, in all of the experimental conditions. This finding parallels what has been found in most previous studies of text revision. However, individual tutors tended to differ from one another in the extent to which they solicited students' input to the discourse, suggesting this is an important factor to be considered in future studies of the impact of tutoring on ESL students' writing.

**97-6 Dabène, Louise and Ingelmann, Christèle** (U. Stendhal-Grenoble III). Un multilinguisme en construction: l'éveil de la conscience métalinguistique. [Multilingualism in the making: the awakening of metalinguistic awareness.] *Aile* (Paris), **7** (1996), 123–38.

Language awareness classes are now being taught to some primary-school children in Grenoble; they are not based on any one language, but use examples from the first languages (L1s) of bilingual class members and from languages which the whole class has begun or will learn later. The methodology centres on the collaborative discussion and solving of problems, of which four (for ages 9–11) are described: the difference between time and tense in French, markers of the future in Italian, the

difference between 'English' and 'American' and the concept of accent, and word-order in Aztec. Summaries of the class discussion, with partial transcripts, show that pupils dealt with all four problems impressively, within their limited metalinguistic vocabulary and repertoire. Possible benefits include awareness of general linguistic notions and of the particular qualities of classmates' L1s, together with improved cognitive and co-operative skills.

**97-7 de Salins, Geneviève-Dominique** (U. of Paris III). Méthodologie, éclectisme ... et bricolage pédagogique. [Methodology, eclecticism ... and classroom D.I.Y.] *Le Français dans le Monde* (Paris), **280** (1996), 39–43.

A language teaching methodology worthy of the name has to combine concepts from all three of the

major disciplines which are essential to an effective approach to the teaching of a foreign language.

Over the years many French-as-a-foreign-language textbooks have been published which reflect diametrically opposed language teaching philosophies. True eclecticism which makes use of compatible elements from different approaches is acceptable; a 'mish-mash' of contradictory and

disparate items is not. Too many recent works reveal on inspection a total lack of any coherent methodology. The author calls for ongoing in-service training for teachers, to equip them both to evaluate textbooks and methods and to use them successfully.

**97-8 Dodwell, Eithne** (Bradford). Nahim and the new trainers: language learning in a bilingual reception class – who is learning what from whom? *Multicultural Teaching* (Stoke on Trent, Staffs.) **15**, 1 (1996), 18–22.

A teacher in a reception class where all but two children were of Pakistani Muslim origin set out to acquire a basic competence in 'the children's language', and discovered that this varied from Standard Urdu to broad Mirpuri Panjabi, but found nonetheless that her efforts gave her entry to the children's worlds. A video camera was used in class to develop strategies for supporting emergent bilingualism. A transcript of a section of tape reveals a spontaneous discussion of language structures and their meaning, with very young children using mostly their second language, drawing on skills and experiences developed in their first language, while the teacher tries to maintain two topics of

conversation: the text of a storybook and the relationship between English and Panjabi structures. The second topic is vital for introducing the more abstract skills of talk about words and ideas which children must develop if they are to succeed at school. The teacher's attempts to learn Panjabi enable her to use joint translation as a teaching tool, helping the children to see their bilingualism as a skill. The more able linguists in the class select themselves as interpreters, and this has practical benefits for the shyer and less able children. Teachers must however be aware that there can be community opposition to 'teaching' children a low status dialect at school.

**97-9 Dysthe, Olga** (Bergen U.). The multivoiced classroom: interactions of writing and classroom discourse. *Written Communication* (Thousand Oaks, CA), **13**, 3 (1996), 385–425.

This article presents description of and examples from qualitative case studies of three high school classrooms in Norway and the United States. The focus is on how classroom discourse and writing interact with each other and provide an important and unique instructional resource. The teachers in two of the classrooms consistently elicited, overtly valued, and helped develop student opinions and ideas. In this process, authentic questions and uptake were common, and a great diversity of voices was

heard. Bakhtin's and Rommetveit's dialogical framework is used as the basis of analysis, as is Lotman's theory about functional dualism of texts. The main argument is that the interaction of oral and written discourse increased dialogicality and multivoicedness and therefore provided more chances for students to learn than did talking or writing alone. In this way, it is claimed, the texts, both oral and written, were used to generate thoughts and opinions.

**97-10 Fabre, Claudine and Cappeau, Paul** (U. of Poitiers). Pour une dynamique de l'apprentissage: lecture/écriture/réécritures. [Towards a dynamic of learning: reading/writing/re-writing]. *Etudes de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **101** (1996), 46–59.

In this description of the authors' research in linguistics and their involvement in teacher training, three claims are discussed. Firstly, reading/writing activities show pupils several semiotic levels and how heterogeneous discourse works. While teaching sequences involve the reinvestment of knowledge and procedures already available to children, the use of writing occurs as complementary or alternative to other ways of expressing meaning. Secondly, the learning of reading/writing can be helped effectively

by the use of patterns in language and in discourse, and in particular of syntactic patterns. As this view is often seen as restrictive and pejorative, some tested examples are shown here of its usefulness in getting written production started and giving it freedom to develop. Lastly, the practice of re-writing allows one to take another look at the two preceding elements, since it integrates them, and centres on the activity of the writer (production/self-evaluation) and on the progress of his or her learning.



**97-11 Ferris, Dana and Tagg, Tracy** (California State U., Sacramento). Academic listening/speaking tasks for ESL students: problems, suggestions, and implications. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **30**, 2 (1996), 297–320.

Survey research on academic skills that English as a second language (ESL) students need to function effectively at English-speaking universities has, for the most part, focused extensively on reading and writing skills. Complementary research on subject-matter instructors' perceptions of linguistic/academic problems of ESL students has similarly emphasised literacy tasks. The present study therefore investigates college/university professors' views on ESL students' difficulties with listening/speaking tasks. Content-area instructors at four different institutions and in a variety of academic disciplines responded to questions and provided

comments about their ESL students' aural/oral skills. Respondents felt that their ESL students have greater difficulty with class participation, asking and responding to questions, and general listening comprehension (as opposed to lecture comprehension). They also suggested strongly that ESL instructors strive for authenticity in their English for academic purposes activities, specifically that they give students opportunities to practise listening to real lectures by a variety of speakers, interact with native speakers, and cope with genre-specific vocabulary, reading materials, and writing tasks.

**97-12 Flowerdew, John and Miller, Lindsay** (City U. of Hong Kong). Lecturer perceptions, problems and strategies in second language lectures. *RELC Journal* (Singapore), **27**, 1 (1996), 23–46.

This paper reports the findings of an investigation into native-English-speaking lecturers lecturing to non-native-English-speaking students at a university in Hong Kong. The study is a follow-up to an earlier investigation by the authors on students' perceptions, problems and strategies in attending lectures in a second language. The data was collected

by means of pre- and post-course interviews, lecturer logs, field notes, observations of lectures, and students' written comments on their lectures. The findings of the investigation are compared with the previous research in the field to provide further insights to support learning and teaching in English.

**97-13 Gaber-Katz, Elaine** (Toronto, Ont.). The use of story in critical literary practice. *Gender and Education* (Abingdon, Oxon.), **8**, 1 (1996), 49–60.

Story-telling and story-writing as pedagogical practices hold a pre-eminent place within literacy practices. In Toronto, Canada's largest city, progressive community-based literacy programmes begin the educational process by assisting adult literacy students to learn to read and write by using the language experience method. The educational process is furthered when the programmes publish the autobiographical accounts that these learners have created. They publish these accounts as a way of generating relevant educational reading texts for

adult new readers, and, more significantly, as a form of cultural expression for people marginalised by poverty. The author, a feminist educator literacy practitioner, explores how critical literacy programmes purposefully seek out the voices of those who have been silenced and create the spaces for these voices to be heard. Focusing on the use of story, the author assesses the value of publishing these kinds of learners' stories and confronts some of its inherent limitations.

**97-14 García, Carmen** (U. of Virginia). Teaching speech act performance: declining an invitation. *Hispania* (Worcester, MA), **79**, 2 (1996), 227–79.

To communicate and respond appropriately in a foreign language requires an understanding both of the linguistic strategies of its speakers as expressions of their frames of participation and the underlying preferred politeness strategies. Using examples from a study of Spanish speakers, this paper examines how findings from sociolinguistic research into different cultural groups' rules of language interchange might

be used to develop both sociocultural and linguistic competence. The paper outlines how such competence may be developed by attention to frames of interaction and rules of politeness. Using the example of declining an invitation, the paper suggests how the use of appropriate participatory and politeness strategies in Spanish may be taught. To avoid cross-cultural miscommunication, students

must not only be made aware of different ways of communicating, but also provided with adequate communicative opportunities for implementing the appropriate stylistic strategies to convey intended meaning.

**97-15 Graf, Eckart.** Wesentliche Merkmale der suggestopädischen Übung. [Essential characteristics of the suggestopaedic practice exercise.] *Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (Berlin, Germany), **33**, 1 (1996), 27-33.

The author argues that, after the input and storage of foreign language (FL) material, exercises should centre around learners' creativity and communicative needs. A large amount of contextualised bilingual vocabulary, clearly laid out yet widely applicable, enables learners to focus on the content of the FL message. Communicative tasks and complementary FL material during instruction according to the learners' needs must follow. It is shown how exercises such as 'authentic conversation', role-play and small-group discussion can be used in a suggestopaedic context, and a list of characteristics of suggestopaedic exercises is extrapolated. It is claimed that, while suggestopaedic exercises are polyfunctional, focusing on content but also practising structure, learners regard them as

monofunctional, i.e. purely communicative. Intuitive-subconscious language acquisition is preferred to rule-oriented language learning. Exercises are largely controlled by learners' decisions, variable in content and form and creative, responding to current rather than habitual motivation. Communicative needs which are either current (e.g. statements about oneself) or potential (e.g. shop conversation, role-play) are starting points. The author suggests that the content of such exercises is interesting, interactive and activates achievement, and that, although objectively demanding, they are perceived by learners as relatively easy. The relevance for other teaching methods is pointed out.

**97-16 Jacob, Evelyn and others** (George Mason U.). Cooperative learning: context and opportunities for acquiring academic English. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **30**, 2 (1996), 253-80.

This article explores how the 'Learning Together' form of cooperative learning influenced opportunities for acquiring academic English by second language (L2) learners in a 6<sup>th</sup>-grade social studies classroom. The findings present a complex picture. Cooperative learning gave L2 learners a wide range of opportunities, both input and output, to acquire academic English, e.g. help with academic terms and concepts, exposure to and production of lexical and conceptual explorations, use of language for self-help. However, on the whole the opportunities occurred relatively infrequently; there were also missed opportunities, and negative input sometimes

occurred. Several local contextual features (e.g. students' definitions of the task, participant structures) shed light on the complex findings, and the authors emphasise the importance of taking context into account. They also suggest that teachers wishing to maximise the benefits of cooperative learning in support of second language acquisition (SLA) need a broad understanding of academic language, and should include SLA in their instructional goals, structure classroom tasks to support the desired opportunities for L2 learners, and monitor what is happening in the groups.

**97-18 Jacobs, George M.** (SEAMEO Regional Lang. Centre, Singapore) and **Ratmanida** (Inst. of Teacher Training and Ed., Padang, Indonesia). The appropriacy of group activities: views from some Southeast Asian second language educators. *RELC Journal* (Singapore), **27**, 1 (1996), 103-20.

Group activities developed in Western countries have been advocated for use in foreign and second language (L2) learning internationally. This article reports the views of 31 L2 educators from six Southeast Asian countries (Brunei Darussalam,

Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand) on the appropriateness of group activities in their own educational contexts. Background is provided on the six countries and relevant previous scholarship is reviewed. Data were collected via



questionnaires and interviews. Results showed that these Southeast Asian educators feel group activities are appropriate to their contexts and that they are already making use of groups in their teaching. Key problems cited in using groups were low motivation, significant variation in proficiency levels, and large classes, and these are discussed. It is

suggested that the literatures on cooperative learning and task-based language teaching may provide insights into methods of increasing the effectiveness of group activities, while at the same time educators will want to use their own local knowledge to adapt group methods to fit their particular contexts.

**97-18 Karavas-Doukas, Evdokia** (U. of Warwick). Using attitude scales to investigate teachers' attitudes to the communicative approach. *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **50**, 3 (1996), 87-98.

Despite the widespread adoption of the communicative approach by textbooks and curricula around the world, research suggests that communicative language teaching principles in classrooms are rare, with most teachers professing commitment to the communicative approach but following more structural approaches in their classrooms. The literature on curriculum innovation and implementation suggests that one of the causes of the discrepancy between prescribed theory and classroom practice may be teacher attitudes. In an

effort to understand teachers' attitudes towards the communicative approach within the context of an English as a foreign language innovation in Greek public secondary schools, a Likert-type attitude scale was developed. This article focuses on the development and use of the attitude scale on a sample of fourteen Greek English language teachers whose classroom practices had also been observed. The advantages and disadvantages of using attitude scales to investigate teachers' attitudes are then discussed.

**97-19 Kenning, Marie-Madeleine** (U. of East Anglia). Creating an infrastructure for autonomous learning: the resource catalogue. *System* (Oxford), **24**, 2 (1996), 223-31.

The recognition that greater autonomy in language learning requires the ability as well as the opportunity to make meaningful choices has focused attention on the need to combine the development of self-access facilities with pedagogical changes and learner support. There is now a wide literature not only on open and resource-based learning, but also on skills development and strategy training. This paper argues that provision enhancements, whether

involving space, equipment, materials or methodology, must be accompanied by improvements in the accessibility of information and that this entails using a database system to catalogue resources. It presents the case for upgrading and computerising resource catalogues, provides an overview of the process and describes how it was implemented at the University of East Anglia. It reports the problems encountered and ends with a brief discussion of outcomes.

**97-20 Kieweg, Werner** (U. of Munich). Alternative konzepte zur vermittlung der grammatik. [Alternative concepts for the teaching of grammar.] *Der Fremdsprachliche Unterricht Englisch* (Stuttgart, Germany), **4** (1996), 4-12.

Traditionally the teaching of English as a foreign language runs on a three-tiered structure model: language contact, language cognition and language use. The long-term storage of linguistic knowledge and its subsequent recall seems to depend to an extent on the quality of the initial contact. This paper suggests some alternative (non-metalinguistic) methods for the presentation and practice of certain grammatical phenomena, dealing also with aids for cognition of these where applicable. Where there is

a high incidence of parallelism between the foreign language and the mother language, however, or between the relevant structures in both languages, the need for a separate cognitive level is obviated. Various methods of teaching the present perfect are discussed: permanent charts in the classroom, grammar pictures, memory games, role plays, songs, statistics and CD-ROMs, all with the aim of helping students notice the grammatical regularities of the target language.

**97-21 Koike, Dale A.** (U. of Texas, Austin) **and Biron, Christina Makara** (U. of Massachusetts, Dartmouth). Genre as a basis for the advanced Spanish Conversation class. *Hispania* (Worcester, MA), **79**, 2 (1996), 290–6.

The approach suggested in this article for developing oral proficiency in the advanced conversation course proposes as an organising principle the use of Swales's concept of genre as a class of communicative events that share a communicative purpose. The genre framework allows students to practise language skills required at levels beyond Intermediate, as well as to develop critical and analytical thinking in examining different discourse

genres, and language functions used to realise them. Concrete examples show how genre functions in the classroom. Students hear and see examples of public genres such as the news report, talk show, interview, and public debate by native speakers. After discussing the discourse elements and strategies in the samples, learners formulate their own discourse. It is claimed that the focus on genre can improve proficiency performance and articulation.

**97-22 Koshi, Annie K.** (City Coll., New York City U.). Holistic grammar through Socratic questioning. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **29**, 3 (1996), 403–14.

This article discusses a consciousness-raising approach that uses Socratic questioning to instil grammar awareness in advanced, academically bound second language learners. A short review of the recent controversy of 'natural' vs. 'formal' (conscious vs. unconscious) teaching/learning of language forms is followed by a discussion of the theoretical framework of the approach suggested by the author. The pedagogical concepts on which the approach is based are next explained, and the approach is then examined in detail. Language is presented holistically, i.e. as whole-pieces, in the

form of reading materials, not in isolated sentences. Paying selective attention to specific structural features in the reading material, students answer higher-order, critical thinking (Socratic) questions, in order to help them discover relevant grammatical rules inductively. It is suggested that the approach will help learners see the study of grammar as a means to receive and share information, i.e. the purpose of academic learning; and that the outcome, heightened grammar awareness, will help them to extend their grammar learning beyond the classroom.

**97-23 Lee, Philip** (U. of New South Wales). A review of MacZi - computer-assisted language learning for modern Chinese. *Babel* (Victoria, Australia), **31**, 1 (1996), 18–25, 34, 35, 38.

This article examines and attempts to evaluate a software program designed to provide practice for learners of Modern Standard Chinese (MSC). The MacZi package aims to teach students a vocabulary of 600 characters, focusing on tone-sound discrimination, the orthographic script (*pinyin*), character recognition and the stroke order of characters. Four screen formats are described in

detail here and a student survey group is selected to provide feedback on the effectiveness of each of the work screens. The questionnaire survey of reactions to the program provides both positive evaluations and some criticisms which will help to adapt the software. Finally, some practical considerations relating to the integration of the program into existing teaching contexts are discussed.

**97-24 Lindstromberg, Seth** (Hilderstone Coll., Kent). Prepositions: meaning and method. *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **50**, 3 (1996), 225–36.

This article outlines a new approach to teaching prepositions and directional adverbs based on work by Brugman and Lakoff. The approach runs counter to the theories of word meaning which underlie virtually every aspect of the treatment of prepositions in English language teaching generally. In particular, it is almost diametrically opposed to

that described in influential examples of the corpus-based, lexical phrase approach. The article aims to familiarise readers with the gist of prototype semantics as applied to prepositions, and to suggest pedagogical (including lexicographic) applications and benefits. The argument is developed primarily with reference to the word 'on'.

**97-25 McWilliam, Norah** (Bradford and Ilkley Coll.). Word-Weaving: exploring meaning in the multilingual classroom. *Multicultural Teaching* (Stoke on Trent, Staffs.), **15**, 1 (1996), 12–17.

The motivation of pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) to engage with lexical meanings to enhance their curriculum learning depends on the knowledge about language which teachers apply consciously and analytically in the classroom. EAL pupils clearly need ‘function’ words and grammatical competence, but research shows that the focus needs to be on ‘content’ words, as they form lexical units. Lexical units have impact, they acquire images in the personal lexicon and are culturally involving in ways distinct from syntax and phonology. If lexemes become ‘fixated’, our operation of them is limited to lower levels, so what is needed is a collection of teaching strategies to increase consciousness of word meaning and develop semantic agility. As they try to follow the whole

curriculum at the standard rate, EAL pupils lack time for separate training in conscious linguistic strategies, so the Word-Weaving project aimed to build into regular curriculum topics ways of focusing on lexical units. This began at the lesson-planning stage with a ‘rich scripting’ framework agreed between English teacher and subject teacher. The lesson might include ‘spotlight’ time for target lexical units, and the children subsequently took home a workcard to extend their semantic investigation across their home languages. The information they brought back was transferred to strips of paper and physically woven into a word-weaving loom. This is a new and small-scale project, but initial responses from participating pupils indicate a high level of interest in oral word-meaning exploration.

**97-26 Musumeci, Diane** (U. of Illinois). Teacher-learner negotiation in content-based instruction: communication at cross purposes? *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **17**, 3 (1996), 286–325.

This research looks at teacher–student exchanges in three content-based language classrooms. The data reveal persistent archetypal patterns of classroom interaction; teachers speak most of the time and they initiate the majority of the exchanges by asking display questions, whereas student-initiated requests are referential. In addition, teachers modify their own speech in response to students’ signals of non-understanding regardless of activity type (whole class, small group, one-to-one), but students prefer to verbally request help only in small group or one-to-one interactions with the teacher. Moreover, although teachers repeatedly modify their speech in response to students’ requests (verbal or non-verbal), they rarely request modifications of the students’ speech. Sustained negotiation – in which teachers and students verbally resolve incomplete or inaccurate messages – occurs rarely or not at all in these classrooms. The research differs from earlier

work on second language (L2) teacher talk and negotiation in that it attempts to shed light on why these patterns of interaction persist. The discussion of the data includes the participating teachers’ explanations of their own behaviours. Students’ reactions to negotiation in content-based instruction are gleaned from end-of-semester evaluations of both the teacher and the course. Overall lack of linguistic negotiation is attributed to teachers’ and learners’ expectations for appropriate classroom behaviours, teachers’ sensitivity to affective variables in second language learning, power relationships, and time management considerations. While the present research supports previous experimental studies in which learners’ clarification requests result in teacher-modified input, it also challenges the feasibility of promoting more negotiation in content-based instruction.

**97-27 Paltridge, Brian** (U. of Melbourne). Genre, text type, and the language learning classroom. *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **50**, 3 (1996), 237–43.

Recent years have seen increased emphasis being placed on the notion of genre in the language learning classroom. Less attention, however, has been given to the notion of ‘text type’. This article argues that the distinction between ‘genre’ and ‘text type’ is an important and useful one. To illustrate this distinction, an analysis is presented of a number

of texts from two genre-based coursebooks, one which focuses on adult second language literacy development, and another which focuses on writing in an academic context. The article also suggests ways in which the relationship between genres and text types may be exploited in the language learning classroom.

**97-28 Pennington, Martha C. and others** (City U. of Hong Kong). Explaining Hong Kong students' response to process writing: an exploration of causes and outcomes. *Journal of Second Language Writing* (Norwood, NJ), **5**, 3 (1996), 227-52.

This study evaluated student reactions to the attempt on the part of their English teacher, a native Cantonese speaker, to apply the innovation of process writing in three multiple-lesson units. Answers to a questionnaire revealed a variable reaction across the eight classes of Cantonese-speaking secondary-school students. For two groups in academically achieving all-girl classes, the experience was judged positive; for two in lower achieving mixed-gender classes as negative; and for the other four as mixed. The teacher with the most positive attitude towards process writing taught the students who evaluated the experience as most positive; and there is evidence that in these two

classes the teacher more fully adopted the approach, integrating elements of process writing into an overall teaching routine. The teacher of the classes who evaluated process writing as most negative was judged most conflicted about it; and it was not well-integrated into the classes, where the focus was on traditional language exercises and grammatical accuracy. The results are taken to illustrate the complex pattern of cause-and-effect relationships existing between teachers' and students' attitudes and behaviours in the context of an innovation, and to further demonstrate how an innovation can be reinterpreted when implemented in a new culture.

**97-29 Plazaola Giger, Itziar** (Geneva U.). À propos des méthodes communicatives: la transposition didactique en FLS. [On communicative methods: didactic transposition in French as a Foreign Language.] *Bulletin Suisse de Linguistique Appliquée* (Neuchâtel, Switzerland), **64** (1996), 145-65.

The author assessed three French coursebooks used in German-speaking Switzerland with regard to their use or misuse of the linguistic concept of 'speech act' as originated by Austin and developed in the Threshold Level. All three books present lists of speech acts or functions (under varying names) with their exponents: whilst some of these are true speech acts, such as promising and giving orders, others are something quite different, e.g. constructions with the verb 'say' ('saying what makes us depressed'), or mental operations (counting, recognising a noise).

The author claims that there is rarely any indication of the relationships between a series of acts, or between acts and situations, and that much of the material is thinly disguised grammatical structures. Six teachers, two using each book, were interviewed: some said they ignored this part of the book, the others that they used it to drill structures. It is suggested that neither book writers nor teachers seemed aware of the subtleties of speech act theory, and that the same was also true of other 'communicative' concepts.

**97-30 Raddatz, Volker** (Humboldt U., Berlin). Fremdsprachenunterricht zwischen Landeskunde und Interkulturalität. [Foreign language teaching between cultural studies and interculturality.] *Fremdsprachenunterricht* (Berlin, Germany), **40/49**, 4 (1996), 242-52.

Interculturality is currently in vogue, but what is the functional distinction between studying culture and intercultural learning? Cultural studies has itself undergone a process of evolution, from viewing the foreign culture as an encyclopaedia a century ago, to current notions of cultural and communicative competence. Today's teaching of cultural studies still tends to be unquestioning and over-homogenised, keeping to the traditional focus on national achievements and neglecting popular culture. A transition from 'formal culture' to 'deep culture' would be desirable. With the advent of the single

European market, national stereotypes are being challenged, so that, for example, a British business executive may have more in common with his or German counterpart than with an unskilled British worker. To existing concepts of sensitivity to, and empathy with, the foreign culture must now be added a learner goal of 'competence for linguistic action', thus bridging the traditional gulf between theory and practice. This would allow for greater learner autonomy, with self-reference and acculturation advancing hand in hand. It is suggested that intercultural comparisons, once somewhat



discredited but now underpinned by the theories of contrastive linguistics, can play a renewed role in foreign language teaching; and that a robust, interdisciplinary approach to teaching interculturality

is needed to counterbalance the 'hidden curriculum' of the media and other influences from outside school.

**97-31 Schultz, Jean-Marie** (U. of California, Berkeley). The uses of poetry in the foreign language curriculum. *The French Review* (Baltimore), **69**, 6 (1996), 920-32.

This article consists of a two-part study of the uses of poetry as a means for furthering the language acquisition process. In the first part, the author discusses the theoretical basis for poetry's positive impact on the study of language, focusing particularly on the genre's benefits for grammar and vocabulary acquisition, for reading skills development, and for the development of high-order cognitive skills. In the second part of the

article, the author discusses the practical aspects of incorporating poetry into the language classroom. The author outlines a multifaceted approach designed to overcome students' initial hesitation in dealing with poetry and to integrate all language skills in the course of the poetry unit. Students practise both writing and speaking skills, often in small group formats. They also learn how to analyse poetry and to write an *explication de texte*.

**97-32 Schulz, Renate A.** (U. of Arizona). Focus on form in the foreign language classroom: students' and teachers' views on error correction and the role of grammar. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **29**, 3 (1996), 343-64.

While the professional literature abounds with treatises for and against the values of explicit grammar instruction and error correction in foreign or second language classrooms, few researchers have investigated student and teacher beliefs regarding the benefit of these pedagogical procedures. This paper reports on an exploratory study, conducted at the University of Arizona, which examines and compares foreign language student and teacher beliefs regarding the benefit of a focus on form in language learning. A total of 824 students and 92 teachers of the commonly taught as well as the less

commonly taught languages were included in the study. Results reveal that the students surveyed are relatively favourably disposed towards a focus on form, regardless of language. However, some surprising discrepancies surfaced in teacher beliefs and in a comparison of student and teacher beliefs. The author recommends that, in order to establish pedagogical credibility and increase their students' commitment to and involvement in learning, teachers make an effort to explore students' beliefs about language learning and to establish a fit between their own and their students' expectations.

**97-33 Sengupta, Sima** (U. of Hong Kong). Creating a hypertext database to help Hong Kong English language teachers teach writing. *System* (Oxford), **24**, 2 (1996), 187-98.

This paper describes how a hypertext database *Focus on Writing* was created to assist English language teachers of Hong Kong secondary schools in the teaching of continuous writing. *Focus on Writing* is subsumed under the *TeleNex Teaching Resources* database, which is part of the *TeleNex* network. This network aims to provide continuous professional support to English language teachers in their own workplace through the computer. The *Focus on Writing* database is still in the process of development and constant revision of the hypertext format is

taking place based on the feedback from users. This paper delineates the theoretical and practical rationale behind the evolving design of the *Focus on Writing* database, outlining the ways in which a hypertext format differs from the print medium. The emerging issues of this technology are discussed with reference to the advantages this kind of technology offers in providing English language teachers of Hong Kong with a coherent model of second language writing pedagogy.

**97-34 Seok Moi, Ng** (Brunei Darussalam U.). Innovation, survival and processes of change in the bilingual classroom in Brunei Darussalam. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* (Clevedon, Avon), **17**, 2/4 (1996), 149-62.

While scientific methods of research can suggest ideas for improving the effectiveness of the bilingual classroom, field trials force academics to realise the complexity of variables in the applied context, which differs markedly from the experimental situation. Bilingual education is not only affected by differences between individual children and teachers but also by the beliefs and practices of the educational system and of the socio-cultural environment of the country. This paper describes a Bruneian project aimed at improving the English language learning of children in a bilingual

education system. It is a project which attempts to come to grips with the complex and difficult nature of implementation of research ideas. The paper discusses the implementation problems and surveys recent initiatives undertaken to encourage cooperation among different sectors of the educational community for sustaining and improving on change. This study suggests to language planners that it is important not only to work on what needs to change, but also on how that change is to be achieved and sustained in a particular context.

**97-35 Sheen, Ronald.** The advantage of exploiting contrastive analysis in teaching and learning a foreign language. *IRAL* (Heidelberg, Germany), **34**, 3 (1996), 183-97.

This article reports on a study which compared the results of the adult learning of English as a foreign language using an inductive approach as opposed to a deductive one based on explicit contrastive analysis (CA) input. The research is seen as responding to the need to re-evaluate the effectiveness of CA input in language teaching. The author outlines the historical background to the rejection of CA input in teaching and learning materials in North America in the seventies; and claims that the selective citing

of Dulay, Burt and Krashen's error analysis studies in the eighties which further emphasised CA's low status was not supported by comparative studies particularly in Europe. He cites current renewed interest in negative transfer, now termed cross-linguistic influence. The findings of the study reported here are cited in support of the hypothesis that a deductive approach exploiting CA input will be more effective in minimising error rates than an inductive one which does not take it into account.

**97-36 Swain, Merrill** (Ontario Inst. for Studies in Ed., Toronto). Discovering successful second language teaching strategies and practices: from programme evaluation to classroom experimentation. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* (Clevedon, Avon), **17**, 2/4 (1996), 89-104.

This paper analyses the immersion system of education that has now been practised in Canada for over 25 years. It first describes the immersion system, examining findings from evaluation and research, and then provides a retrospective account of how immersion education in Canada has

progressed from its original format to its present status. This development is analysed in terms of a cycle which has been guided by the interplay between theoretical understanding of classroom second language acquisition and actual classroom practice.

**97-37 Swain, Merrill** (Ontario Inst. for Studies in Ed., Toronto). Integrating language and content in immersion classrooms: research perspectives. *The Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto, Ont.), **52**, 4 (1996), 529-48.

Observations in immersion classrooms suggest that there is considerable content teaching that occurs where little or no attention is paid to students' target language use. Similarly, much language teaching in immersion is done in the absence of meaningful context. This article focuses on research that addresses ways of integrating content and language

teaching, with specific reference to studies conducted in French immersion classrooms. A review of several relevant classroom-based studies suggests that teachers should plan and structure activities where a focus on form is incorporated into content teaching through both teacher-led instruction and collaborative tasks with peers.



**97-38 Taylor, David S.** (U. of Leeds). Demystifying word stress. *English Today* (Cambridge), **12**, 4 (1996), 46-52.

English word stress often appears to teachers and learners of the language to be too complex to master. This article aims to make the rules of word stress more accessible. Firstly, the issue of primary and secondary stress is simplified so that words in their citation or dictionary form are shown as having two possible stressed syllables. A table showing examples of both single and multiple stressed words is given. Secondly, it is demonstrated with a further table of examples that it is possible to predict syllable stress

from word endings and also from spelling, although rules for the latter are too complex to be of use to the learner. Finally, it is pointed out that there is a strong relationship between vowels and stress patterns and that teaching concepts such as weak vowels would help learners to produce words correctly. It is claimed that, by focusing on these simplified aspects of word stress, learners' mastery of this difficult area can be improved.

**97-39 Truscott, John** (National Tsing Hua U.). The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes. *Language Learning* (Cambridge, MA), **46**, 2 (1996), 327-69.

The paper is a review article which argues that grammar correction in second language writing classes should be abandoned, for the following reasons: (a) Substantial research shows it to be ineffective and none shows it to be helpful in any

interesting sense; (b) for both theoretical and practical reasons, one can expect it to be ineffective; and (c) it has harmful effects. The author also considers and rejects a number of arguments previously offered in favour of grammar correction.

**97-40 Vandrick, Stephanie** (U. of San Francisco). Issues in using multicultural literature in college ESL writing classes. *Journal of Second Language Writing* (Norwood, NJ), **5**, 3 (1996), 253-69.

Multicultural literature, and multicultural textbooks, are increasingly used in college English as a second language (ESL) writing classes. The author considers this an appropriate and welcome development, but it is essential that such literature and texts be chosen and taught carefully and thoughtfully. ESL professionals need to define multiculturalism, and multicultural literature, as those terms apply in ESL education and particularly in the context of the writing class, and understand and prepare for the fact

that some students as well as fellow academics find such concepts controversial. This article discusses the following related issues in the ESL context: the 'canon wars', the purposes and benefits of teaching multicultural literature, possible pitfalls in emphasising such literature with ESL students, the selection of textbooks with appropriate reading selections and editorial apparatus, and possible problems arising during such teaching.

**97-41 Walz, Joel** (U. of Georgia). The classroom dynamics of information gap activities. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **29**, 3 (1996), 481-94.

British pedagogues developed the concept of the information gap and activities that reproduce it in language classes. The gap refers to the fact that all people possess information unknown to others and that, when a need arises to overcome the gap, communication takes place. Activities that exploit this theory are known as jigsaw or information gap activities (IGAs). The author summarises theories behind peer interaction in language learning and

describes the construction of IGAs from authentic documents. He uses a time-based approach to study four elementary French classes to determine the most effective strategies for using IGAs in small-group work. It is suggested that, by controlling the information deleted and pinpointing what is to be found, teachers can create efficient, high-language-use activities that teach not only linguistic skills but also essential cultural information.

**97-42 Williamson, John** (Newcastle U.) **and Woodall, Clare** (Queen Elizabeth High School, Hexham). A vision for English: rethinking the revised National Curriculum in the light of contemporary critical theory. *English in Education* (Sheffield), **30**, 3 (1996), 4-13.

This article seeks to formulate a coherent view of English which is based on an analysis of pupils' experience of language in its social and cultural setting. It is argued that the revised National Curriculum for England and Wales, although influenced by conservative ideologies, has no fundamental rationale underpinning its prescriptions. The authors make the case that a concept of critical literacy, which would be applicable to all texts, should constitute the foundation of the subject.

**97-43 Wode, Henning and others** (U. of Kiel). Die Erprobung von deutsch-englisch bilinguaem Unterricht in Schleswig-Holstein: ein erster Zwischenbericht. [An experimental German-English bilingual education programme in Schleswig-Holstein: a first interim report.] *Zeitschrift für Fremdsprachenforschung* (Bochum, Germany), **7**, 1 (1996), 15-42.

This is an interim report on ongoing research on an experimental bilingual education programme launched in 1991 in Northern Germany which provides partial immersion for English. The programme is being evaluated in order to enhance understanding of why this kind of foreign language (FL) instruction produces superior results, which aspects of the students' FL competence will benefit and which not, and how these insights can be used to improve FL teaching within the German education system. The paper first outlines how the experimental programme originated and describes its major design features, then goes on to discuss the main preliminary findings. The evaluations to date have primarily focused on the linguistic outcomes with 11-12 year old students receiving a very low dose of immersion: in addition to their four 45-minute weekly sessions of English-as-a-subject, they have been taught only one subject (History) through English, for three weekly 45-minute sessions. However, after seven months these students are already noticeably ahead of the control students, and are using linguistic elements not used by the non-immersion students and not introduced by the textbook. In addition, students, parents and teachers have all demonstrated a positive attitude towards the immersion programme.

**97-44 Woodward, Tessa** (Hilderstone Coll., Kent). Professional language – is it useful or is it a restriction close to censorship? *The Teacher Trainer* (Canterbury, Kent), **10**, 3 (1996), 11-12.

Whilst many language teachers endeavour to help their students to express themselves in clear, interesting language, it appears that when it comes to judging the status of professional publications, preparing texts for acceptance at higher degree level, or writing documents for national academic panels, a much more peculiar and arcane type of prose is favoured. The question is raised of whether a kind of censorship (where the real, the direct, the meaningful are toned down, re-phrased or deleted) is in force within the profession.

## Language learning

**97-45 Allai, Linda and others** (U. of Geneva). Compétences orthographiques et tâches d'écriture. [Spelling competencies and writing tasks.] *Bulletin Suisse de Linguistique Appliquée* (Neuchâtel, Switzerland), **64** (1996), 113-27.

This article presents an analysis of the variations in student spelling performance across three types of writing task: exercises, dictations, and compositions. Data were collected at the beginning and end of the year in second- and sixth-grade primary school classrooms. Within-subjects co-variance analysis was used to test the effects of 'Task', 'Moment' and 'Task x Moment' interaction. The results show that