

# Language learning and teaching

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## THEORY AND PRINCIPLES

- 77-323 **Christ, Herbert.** Kriterien für Leistungskurse in den Neueren Sprachen. [Criteria for 'Leistungskurse' in modern languages.] *Praxis des Neusprachlichen Unterrichts* (Dortmund), 24, 1 (1977), 12-21.

The role of *Leistungskurse* ('achievement courses', a kind of intensive learning) in modern languages is examined in so far as the *Oberstufe* of the grammar-school is concerned. Since pupils have to attend more lessons and work harder in *Leistungskurse* than in basic courses, it is the *Leistungskurse* which develop the strongest group contacts and the closest relationships between pupils and teacher. It becomes possible to devise and practice new ways of learning, e.g. team work, work in groups of two, individual specialised work. It is important for the pupil to discover new methods of learning for himself (e.g. work with auxiliary material) and to reflect on his own progress. He should be able to understand the role of literature, the importance of grammar, *Landeskunde*, linguistic analysis, etc. Moreover, the pupil should discuss how he would put into practice what he has learned, e.g. in his profession, in his leisure-time, for his studies, for the learning of another foreign language. Above all, the pupil should be conscious that through learning another language he gains access to a new form of reality.

- 77-324 **Furlong, V. A. and Edwards, A. D.** Language in classroom interaction: theory and data. *Educational Research* (London), 19, 2 (1977), 122-8.

The phenomena considered in this paper, in a variety of constituted forms, are aspects of verbal interaction in classrooms. Whether researchers approach classroom talk from the perspective of systematic observation, ethnography or sociolinguistics it is their underlying theoretical assumptions which determine the 'facts' that they record and the interpretations they are able to offer. By asking how researchers arrive at their abstract description of events, these different approaches to classroom interaction are placed within a common framework, and their various strengths and weaknesses are highlighted.

- 77-325 **Long, Michael.** Encouraging language acquisition by adults in a formal instructional setting. *ELT Documents* (London), 3 (1976), 14-24.

Some practices are identified which cause communicative competence to remain the aim rather than the product of language instruction; suggestions are

offered for helping students to transfer knowledge of English acquired in the classroom to situations outside which involve them in language use. Krashen's 'monitor theory' (1976) helps to explain the 'regression' which often hinders this transfer: adults learning a second language develop two concurrent but independent systems for second language performance, one *acquired* (like first language acquisition) and the other *learned* (i.e. consciously developed, probably in a formal situation). Most second-language teaching is designed to develop the *learned* system: if students produce less accurate English in informal situations it is because they are utilising their more restricted *acquired* system. Krashen posits a model in which the adult's linguistic production is made possible by the acquired system, with the learned system acting only as a monitor.

The two principal tasks of teachers/planners/designers can therefore be seen as (1) the identification of those communicative purposes students have or will have for English, and (2) the creation of varied opportunities for learners to communicate inside the classroom, for purposes as similar as possible to those which they will have outside. It is doubtful whether some traditional language-teaching activities do assist adult students to learn English. One way in which interfering activities reduce opportunities for relevant *acquisition* to take place is the introduction of a highly specialised classroom discourse with a low transferability (e.g. teacher talk, restrictive questions). Teachers end by spinning a protective cocoon of familiar language round their charges. Adults need not only more realistic materials, but to be placed in problem-solving situations where they need to make communicative use of the target language. [Discussion of some experimental programmes.] [References.]

**PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING** See also abstracts 77-302, -325, -341, -343, -346/7, -352

**77-326 De Martino, Giovanni.** Il 'periodo critico' e l'apprendimento della L2. [The critical period and second-language learning.] *Studi italiani di linguistica teorica ed applicata* (Padua), 5, 1/2 (1976), 157-90.

Universal steps in the acquisition of language are discussed with special regard to the critical period in mother-tongue acquisition. Consideration is given to a possible critical period for second-language learning but it is not likely that such a critical period exists. Foreign language specialists should take into consideration different levels of knowledge of a given language, both as regards the mother tongue and a foreign language. Research demonstrates that we cannot speak of a critical period in foreign-language learning in the same terms as we speak of a critical period in the acquisition of the mother tongue.

- 77-327 **Girard, Denis.** Motivation: the responsibility of the teacher. *English Language Teaching Journal* (London), 31, 2 (1977), 97-102.

Of the four main factors in motivation – the sociolinguistic context, the learner's natural aptitude, the teaching method, and the teacher – the teacher is the most important. A questionnaire given to 1,000 secondary-school pupils in France provided a list of 20 different features of the ideal language teacher, which the pupils had to classify in order of importance and add any other qualities they found important. The unanimous first choice was 'he makes his course interesting', and the ranking of other qualities indicates how he might do so: pupils needed to feel that they were learning good authentic English, and that they understood what they were learning. Other qualities were 'showing the same interest in all pupils', 'making the pupils participate in all activities' and 'showing great patience'. The words 'confidence' and 'sympathy' reoccurred frequently. Perhaps the teacher's greatest need is to be convinced that motivating his pupils is, at all stages, his chief responsibility.

### CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

- 77-328 **Filipović, Rudolf.** The second phase of the Yugoslav Serbo-Croatian-English contrastive project. *Studia Romanica et Anglicae Zagrebiensia* (Zagreb), 39 (1975) [publ. 1977], 175-91.

The first phase of the project is briefly reviewed [see abstract 72-287]. After preparatory work on the corpus of American English to be used, the contrastive analysis and error analysis was begun and results were later published. On the basis of results in the first phase it was concluded that error analysis was vital to the practical application of CA, hence both needed to be conducted in parallel. In the second phase, the goals were (a) to decide how the final results of the CA would be written, and (b) the form which the teaching materials would take. [Discussion of the form of publications and reports; details of publications so far.] Work on the teaching materials was based on a five-step scheme consisting of two stages (habit-formation and cognitive) and five phases. [Publications described.] Some new studies with computer concordances were also carried out. A third phase is envisaged, in which the psycho- and sociolinguistic aspects of CA will be studied.

- 77-329 **Jackson, Howard.** Contrastive linguistics – what is it? *ITL* (Louvain), 32 (1976), 1-32.

[Brief historical survey of the development of contrastive linguistics (CL).] CL has two branches: theoretical and applied. A theory of CL attempts to deal with the notion of 'equivalence', the conditions for contrasting, the status of a

contrastive description, the form of a contrastive description, and the methodology of CL. The role of applied CL is then discussed, in relation to error analysis, textbook writing, in its predictive capacity, in its relation to language learning theory, and in translation. In deciding which model of grammar is most appropriate for a contrastive analysis, it is concluded that a theoretical basis is most likely to prove effective. [References.]

**77-330 Laroche-Bouvy, Danielle.** Une pédagogie de perfectionnement linguistique pour les enseignants: l'étude contrastive. [A teaching method of language improvement for teachers: contrastive studies.] *Studi italiani di linguistica teorica ed applicata* (Rome), 5, 1/2 (1976), 191-212.

In-service courses need a component of theoretical study to buttress the language practice which teachers undertake. An ideal topic for this purpose is contrastive analysis. This study serves as a contribution to such courses. Hypothetical constructions introduced by *If...* in French and Portuguese are compared [numerous examples]. Portuguese shows greater flexibility, a richer variety of grammatical options and expresses relationships more subjectively; French appears more objective and expresses fine distinctions by the use of non-verb markers (e.g. syntactical and lexical).

#### **ERROR ANALYSIS** *See also abstract 77-359*

**77-331 Zydattis, Wolfgang.** Learning problem expanded form – a performance analysis. *IRAL* (Heidelberg), 14, 4 (1976), 351-71.

An error analysis based on the written compositions of German-speaking learners, West Berlin grammar-school pupils aged 16+, is presented. Errors in the use of the English expanded form (continuous or progressive) *be+ing* were focused on: structural errors, overall occurrence of simple and expanded form, distribution according to narrative and discursive speech as well as to the spontaneity of the production, distribution in relation to individual students as well as to certain types of predicates, and difficulties arising with related events. [Analysis of results.]

It was concluded that the most sensitive learning points are the following: (i) the overgeneralisation of the use of the EF in the case of actual present to habitual and unrestrictive state utterances; (ii) the 'unawareness' of the semantic implications which the choice of the EF has with telic predicates; (iii) the inappropriate encoding of the incidence situation, and (iv) the complete absence of expanded perfect tense forms from the composition corpus (not to be equated with the absence of a learning problem). These points are frequently neglected by pedagogic grammars. [References.]

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### TESTING *See also abstract 77-352*

- 77-332 **White, Tom C.** Is language proficiency testing due for a facelift? *Lenguas Modernas* (Santiago, Chile), 2 (1975), 49-53 [part I] and 3 (1976), 15-19 [part II].

It is argued that 'objective' tests of language proficiency are based on a widely discredited theory of language, an outmoded approach to foreign-language teaching, and an unnecessarily narrow view of 'objectivity'. Suggestions are made for a test-battery composed of productive language tests as an alternative more in keeping with present-day theory and practice. Part I discusses the advantages and disadvantages of objective tests. [Discussion of some of the commonly used subtests.] It is concluded that such tests are of dubious value because they take no account of language in situations which require communicative activity. Their reliability is achieved at the expense of validity. A more realistic testing strategy would be to set up a situation requiring communication in the foreign language for each of the four skills and observe the performance of the candidate.

Part II discusses ways of assessing written performance: (i) cloze tests, (ii) dictation, and (iii) controlled-input writing tests. An experimental test is described which avoided the exclusive use of language as a stimulus, and maximised the visual element. The candidate's output was therefore a modified version of the input, instead of an exact reproduction. Co-ordination of various skills is involved. [Discussion of assessment.] For testing speaking skill, a structured interview is proposed. [References.]

### CURRICULUM PLANNING

- 77-333 **Glaap, Albert-Reiner.** Die neueren Sprachen in der Reform der Sekundarstufen I und II. [Modern languages and the reform of the 'Sekundarstufe' I and II.] *Neusprachliche Mitteilungen* (Berlin), 30, 1 (1977), 1-10.

As a result of reforms in secondary teaching, the traditional courses have been replaced by 'curricula'. They are intended to (1) direct learning towards social and political goals, (2) systematise situations relevant to learning and (3) justify the qualifications aimed at.

In the teaching of foreign languages the conception of a pragmatically orientated curriculum (with emphasis on practical aspects of learning) co-operates with that of an open curriculum (development of project-orientated units, originating from the pupil's experience). Although the guide-lines for pronunciation, vocabulary and interpretation of texts differ sometimes substantially among the *Länder*, there is a general tendency to lay stress on the importance of communicative competence. There are still no reliable norms and objective

criteria for assessing oral performance in particular. The so-called *Normenbücher* valid throughout the FRG should not only register the deviations of individual *Länder*: they should be examined in an effort to solve this problem.

The situation of the second and third foreign languages is particularly precarious. Fewer and fewer pupils decide in favour of another foreign language, the most important reason being the system of scoring for the *Abitur*. Also, there are not enough teaching hours provided. More attractive courses should be devised, e.g. learning a specialist language or intensive courses for everyday language. Teachers not trained with reform in mind and pupils learning only for their exams are evidence that the reform needs reforming.

### INFORMATION RESOURCES

**77-334 Cembalo, M.** L'information sur la technologie éducative. [Information on educational technology.] *Mélanges Pédagogiques* (Nancy), 1976, 37-47.

Problems concerning information about educational technology among teachers of foreign languages are discussed. The different definitions of educational technology as they appear explicitly in technological publications or implicitly among language teachers are investigated. The stress on the systems approach on the researcher's part and the stress put on the use of individual audio-visual aids by teachers demonstrate the difference in approach. In order to promote educational technology as a tool in language teaching it is necessary for teachers and researchers to develop and acquire a common language. This paper gives a brief outline of a possible link between researchers and teachers through a publication 'translating' educational technology information into language-teachers' terms. This publication would be free of access and would help teachers to find their way among the maze of papers, journals and publications dealing with educational technology.

### TEACHER TRAINING *See also abstract 77-330*

**77-335 Calbris, Geneviève.** Présentation inductive du système vocalique français à partir d'erreurs faites par des étrangers.] [An introduction to the French vocalic system based on errors made by non-native speakers.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), 128 (1977), 23-7.

A course for teachers of modern languages with no previous training in phonetics is described. The material used consists of a series of tapes exemplifying the types of errors made by non-native speakers of French of different nationalities and a set of questionnaires for the trainees to complete; it is intended to be used

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in small groups of 10–15 people with a group leader, preferably someone who has specialised in phonetics. The aim of the course is to sharpen the trainees' perception of the sounds of French and to make them aware how the system is constructed and operates, so that they in turn can help their own students. [A selection of tapescripts, relating to the French vowel system, is included, together with the accompanying questionnaires.]

**TEACHING METHODS** *See also abstracts 77–323, –351, –361*

**77–336 Allwright, Richard.** Language learning through communication practice. *ELT Documents* (London), **3** (1976), 2–14.

'Communication' has become accepted as an essential part of language teaching but it has not yet been given more than a token place. If it is the main aim, it should be the main element in the process of language teaching. [Relationship of communicative skills and linguistic skills; a minimal model of language teaching is outlined.] Many of the difficulties which arise in language teaching spring from attempts to systematise the learners' exposure to the language. If the teachers' 'management activities' are directed exclusively at involving the learners in solving communication problems in the target language, then the language learning will take care of itself, and the teacher can be fairly sure of not being guilty of unwarranted interference in the process.

Remedial English classes were provided by Essex University in the form of a three-week pre-registration course for a small heterogeneous group of foreign students. It was felt that they needed orientation (to the social and academic life of the university) as well as English, and that communication problems could be given an orientation content. [Problems of conventional remedial classes; planning of the new course.] The emphasis was on making orientation information available, but organising class activities so that students would have to work at getting the information. The four main approaches used were the 'information retrieval' and 'project' approaches, which were non-language centred, and the 'cloze' and 'paraphrase' approaches which required special attention to language. The teachers' avoidance of 'language teaching' had the effect of building the students' confidence in their ability to cope: this communicative security leaves the way clear for subsequent development of linguistic accuracy. [Notes; references.]

**77–337 Krstulović Aleksandra.** Kultura i civilizacija u nastavi stranih jezika. [Culture and civilization in foreign-language teaching.] *Strani jezici* (Zagreb), **5**, 1/2 (1976), 80–3.

Communication must involve more than linguistic exercises; information about the culture and civilisation of the target country is essential from the first lesson.

Opinions differ as to whether such teaching should aim primarily to supply information or to increase the learner's general understanding. In any case it should never become an end in itself or overload the student with facts. Three areas of instruction are identified: (1) information regarding the background situations used in teaching; (2) the application of the language to specific everyday situations; (3) methods and media for acquiring information to aid communication. These inter-disciplinary objectives can be achieved in large measure through project work, radio and television, but there is an urgent need for textbooks with material appropriate for today's 13- and 14-year-olds. The situation is somewhat better in the later stages of schooling, but nothing is done systematically. It is essential that the contemporary culture and civilisation of the target country should become a subject in teacher-training colleges, universities and schools.

**77-338 La Forge, Paul G.** Community language learning: an experiment in Japan. *English Teaching Forum* (Washington, DC), **15**, 1 (1977), 8-19.

Curran's (1972) approach to 'community language learning' differs from the traditional class approach in several ways: it is student-centred, and learning takes place in supportive group experience and reflection, in which students help each other and exchange information. Responsibility for learning lies with the student; the teacher interferes as little as possible. Curran proposes five stages of development in language learning: embryonic (complete dependency on the teacher); self-assertive (independent use of simple phrases); separate existence; role-reversal (the learner helps the teacher to communicate knowledge); and the independent adult stage, when the learner can counsel other learners. Experiments in Japanese secondary schools are described which show how these stages were manifested in class. The Japanese culture provided a useful hierarchy system by which the young learn from older people, so this form of community language learning seems particularly well suited to Japan. The reflection period proved particularly useful in resolving anxieties, and aided personal growth and development.

**77-339 Shapiro, Frances Joyce.** Teaching behaviours in second or foreign language classrooms: a critical review of descriptive research in the field of language teaching. *Lenguaje y Ciencias* (Trujillo, Peru), **16**, 3 (1976), 136-58.

After reviewing the purposes of descriptive research on teaching in general, the author discusses the value of using a system of analysis and a technical language to describe classroom interaction. The need for such descriptive research in



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language classrooms is then outlined in detail; a critical review of the few systems of analysis designed for the language classroom and of the research studies done in this field is then presented. More objective research that is experimental as well as descriptive in nature is needed. These studies should provide the empirical evidence that is needed to prescribe specific teacher behaviours which will have a desired effect on students.

### BILINGUAL TEACHING

**77-340 Swain, Merrill and Barik, Henri C.** A large scale programme in French immersion: the Ottawa study through grade three. *ITL* (Louvain), **33** (1976), 1-25.

The school performance of pupils in grades 1-3 of the French immersion programme in operation in Ottawa public schools is evaluated in comparison with that of pupils in the regular English programme. By the end of grade 1 immersion programme pupils taught reading in French lag behind their peers in the regular programme in English language skills involving English reading, but they show some ability to transfer reading skills from French to English. By the end of grade 2, following the introduction of English Language Arts into the curriculum for 60 minutes a day, immersion pupils still lag behind their regular programme peers in most English language skills considered, although their level of performance is consistent with their grade level. By the end of grade 3, immersion pupils match regular programme pupils in all English language skills tested except spelling. At each grade level pupils in the two programmes perform equivalently in mathematical skills and reveal similar IQ measures. Immersion pupils are more proficient in French than pupils of corresponding or higher grade levels receiving daily instruction in French as a second language, and do adequately in comparison with native French-speaking pupils.

**77-341 Trites, R. L.** Children with learning difficulties in primary French immersion. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **33**, 2 (1976), 193-207.

An intensive individual study was made of a select group of children from French immersion classes who had been referred to a neuropsychology laboratory for a diagnostic assessment. Most of these children had been found to have important deficiencies in school progress, despite average intelligence. Preliminary results from the first year of investigation showed that the French immersion difficulty group could be significantly discriminated from other control groups of children who also had difficulty in school. Whereas the immersion

group obtained higher scores in most of the intelligence, motor and sensory tests, they performed notably poorly on a complex psychomotor problem-solving task [details]. This is compatible with the interpretation of a mid specific maturational lag. Follow-up testing showed that the children accelerated in academic skills after they had been switched to an English-language programme. [References.]

**CLASS METHODS** *See abstracts 77-343, -348/50, -354, -363*

**PRONUNCIATION** *See also abstract 77-335, -359*

**77-342 Dickerson, Wayne B.** Reflecting linguistic insight in pedagogical materials: the case of English phonology. *ITL* (Louvain), **33** (1976), 27-43.

This paper explores the analysis and teaching of English phonology. Pronunciation texts were once in step with the best linguistic scholarship. But the generative phonologists of the late '60s and early '70s differ radically from the descriptive linguists of the '40s and early '50s in their conception of what a phonological system is. It is argued that, for the sake of the learner, the content and goals of pronunciation materials must be reprinted in order to keep pace with the insights of recent phonological work.

**77-343 Schiffler, Ludger.** Lernpsychologische Überlegungen zur Korrekturphonetik im Fremdsprachen-Anfangsunterricht. [Phonetics of correction in the teaching of foreign languages for beginners. Remarks on the psychology of learning.] *Der fremdsprachliche Unterricht* (Stuttgart), **41**, 1 (1977), 20-7.

After a short survey of works on the teaching of phonetics, the psychological factors involved in the learning of foreign languages are examined. As sociolinguistics has shown, language is an important element of the individual's personality. In learning a new language, the pupil's *Moi profond* is challenged. His reaction is one of insecurity and inhibition. It is important for the teacher to show psychological tact and to create an atmosphere of understanding in which the pupil is able to identify with him. The way of correcting phonetical mistakes should be geared to the needs of the individual pupil. The whole of the linguistic message (rhythm, intonation, speed, etc.) must be treated as a unity. The co-operation of native speakers is paramount. Tapes should also be used. A series of measures for correcting phonetic mistakes is discussed, with examples drawn from French. They include talking in chorus, exercises in discrimination, visual and tactile aids.

**LANGUAGE FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES** *See also abstract*  
77-348

- 77-344 Porter, Donald.** Scientific English: an oversight in stylistics? *Studia Anglica Posnaniensa* (Poznan, Poland), 8 (1976), 77-87.

Many courses and teachers purport to teach the English relevant for students of scientific subjects but there is very little evidence that this is based on any linguistic analysis of language. Attempts which have been made to characterise the 'Language of Science' have been surprisingly careless [discussion of work done by Bloomfield (1938), Savory (1953), Barber (1962), Huddleston & others (1968)]. The author therefore made a study of the characteristics of Scientific English as revealed in the syntactic devices of sentence connection (which Bloomfield claimed were characteristic of SE). Thirty-six different aspects of sentence connection were considered from various points of view, as manifested in 10 texts of 100 sentences each, two texts being taken from each of five subject areas - physics, chemistry, botany, zoology and mathematics. [Discussion of the notion of a 'style'.]

Sentence-connecting features were found to occur with extremely low frequency and no significant regularity. Hence no evidence was found of a characteristic style which could be labelled 'Scientific English'. There was a strong indication, however, that the different subject areas were distinguishable at this level of analysis: when put in rank-order for each of the features considered, ordering by frequency of occurrence, they tended always to rank in the same way. [References.]

**READING**

- 77-345 Gray, John.** Teacher competence in reading tuition. *Educational Research* (London), 19, 2 (1977), 113-21.

In recent years the importance of the teacher in the reading process has been repeatedly asserted. This article examines some of the general implications of the relevant research and re-analyses the only available British evidence on reading and primary education in Morris's *Standards and progress in reading*.

The results of this re-analysis suggest (1) that there is a high measure of agreement about the dimensions of teacher 'competence' in reading tuition; (2) that 'competent' teachers appear to be unequally distributed in terms of the reading attainments and socioeconomic backgrounds of the children they teach; and (3) that the definition of 'competence' presented by Morris is unrelated to children's reading progress.

- 77-346 Jorgenson, Gerald W.** Relationship of classroom behaviour to the accuracy of the match between material difficulty and student ability. *Journal of Educational Psychology* (Washington, DC), **69**, 1 (1977), 24-32.

This study examined the level of difficulty of material used for reading instruction with 71 second- to sixth-grade students and the relationship between the material difficulty-student ability level difference scores and classroom adjustment. Readability formulas determined material difficulty; individual reading tests determined ability levels; the Devereux Elementary School Behaviour Rating Scale assessed classroom behaviour. Students tended not to receive instruction in material at a level of difficulty equal to their tested ability. Material difficulty-ability level difference scores were significantly related to classroom adjustment: behaviour improved as the material became easier for students. Less accurately matched material therefore tended to be related to improved behaviour. Unexpected relationships thus exist between classroom behaviour and level of difficulty of instructional material.

- 77-347 Jorm, Anthony F.** Effect of word imagery on reading performance as a function of reader ability. *Journal of Educational Psychology* (Washington, DC), **69**, 1 (1977), 46-54.

In three experiments on the effects of word imagery, length and frequency on reading difficulty, high-frequency words were found to be easier to read for both good and poor readers. High-imagery words were easier to read for poor readers only. Word length had little effect on reading difficulty for either good or poor readers. The differential effect of word imagery on reading difficulty for good and poor readers was interpreted in terms of the types of reading strategy used - phonics for good readers and whole word reading for poor readers. When children are forced to learn to read words by a whole word method, word imagery predicts ease of learning for both good and poor readers.

- 77-348 Mackay, Ronald and Mountford, Alan.** Pedagogic alternatives to 'explication de texte' as a procedure for teaching reading comprehension with special reference to English for Science and Technology. *IUT Bulletin Pédagogique* (Paris), **26** (1976), 7-21.

*Explication de texte* is a method of literary criticism and instruction in which a detailed reading and analysis of a text is followed by a synthesising exposition of these in relation to the whole work. The method is widespread at the advanced level of EFL/ESL instruction and is associated with the notion of intensive reading comprehension for special purposes. The shortcomings of the

method are summarised under three headings: psychological, linguistic and pedagogic [discussion].

An alternative approach is suggested. In teaching reading comprehension, what is really taught is strategies to enable the transfer of skills already possessed by the students to material in a foreign or second language; the reader develops the ability to make predictions as to meaning on the basis of syntactic, semantic and rhetorical clues picked up during the reading process. These clues have to do with features of textual cohesion, and are considered under the headings: equivalence, connection and thematisation. [Techniques for teaching this knowledge to the learner and practising it in class are suggested.] [References.]

**COMMUNICATION** See also abstracts 77-290, -324/5, -336, -358

**77-349 Monod, Madeleine J.** Transfert conscient et communication. [Conscious transfer and communication.] *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **33**, 3 (1977), 359-72.

Suggestions are made for helping the pupil to progress towards communicating in the target language. An analysis is made of comprehension among pupils who show varying learning rates and diverse mental strategies for processing unfamiliar strings of sound. Ways of retaining the requisite repetition while avoiding boredom and mere automatism are suggested. [Diagrammatic presentations of meaning relationships.] The concept of sub-stages in the acquisition process is discussed; the importance of real-life situations for initial presentation and practice is stressed. Continuous encouragement towards spontaneity is needed.

**77-350 Roussel, F.** Towards a reduction of transfer failures in second-language oral skills. *Mélanges Pédagogiques* (Nancy), 1976, 21-35.

Performing effectively in a real-life situation requires a threefold transfer on the part of the foreign-language learner: transfer of linguistic competence, of heuristic, problem-solving strategies, and of interactive techniques. Oral skills raise more problems because of the complexity of variables involved and time constraints. The functional approach (aiming at communicative competence) cannot by itself ensure transfer. The integration of two approaches, sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic, is recommended. This would involve: (1) correcting current misconceptions of oral skills, which are inhibiting to learners, (2) developing a process of inductive reasoning in the learner to help him adapt to different situations, and (3) reducing psychic inertia in the processes of

decoding and encoding, through sub-skill training. [Ways of attaining these objectives are suggested, particularly (3).] [References.]

### WRITING *See also abstract 77-360*

- 77-351 Cembalo, M. and others.** *L'apprentissage des langues au niveau débutant: le problème des supports écrits.* [Teaching languages to beginners: the problem of written back-up.] *Mélanges Pédagogiques* (Nancy), 1976, 49-69.

In a beginners' course for adults set up at the CRAPEL, the aim was to enable the learners to write and read the language they were learning to understand and speak, right from the beginning of the course. It was also decided that a system of transcription should be used which was suited to the purposes to which writing was to be put in the course and which would also prepare the learner for an eventual change in objectives towards the study of written English. The system adopted is a modified version of i.t.a.: no prior knowledge of spelling is required, as the learner has to write what he hears; there is no adverse effect on oral comprehension or expression; it also has the advantage over a phonetic system that it is much closer to the traditional system in its characters and conventions of notation. An experiment carried out in 1975-6 showed that the procedure facilitates learning and motivation.

### COMPREHENSION

- 77-352 McDonough, S. H.** Listening comprehension: the effect of test questions on delayed recognition of content and expressions. *Audio-Visual Language Journal* (Birmingham), 14, 3 (1976/7), 147-53.

Listening comprehension materials usually serve two main purposes, (a) increasing students' efficiency at message extraction, and (b) leading to assimilation of expressions they have been exposed to. These two purposes give rise to different forms of exercise (and presumably of mental activity). Success in listening comprehension is a function of a number of variables: (i) 'running memory span'; (ii) the influence of previous knowledge or interest in the content; (iii) the type of information the questions elicit; (iv) the form of the questions; (v) the timing of the questions.

An experiment involving the variables (iii) and (v) is described. It was designed to investigate the hypothesis that questions may have different effects on delayed recognition of aural material, according to whether they are given on paper during or after the passage, and whether they test content or expressions. [Method; tables of results.] Results showed that (1) delayed

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recognition of expressions is less efficient than that of content; (2) delayed recognition is less efficient when the first set of questions is given during the passage; and (3) there is no interaction between the treatments (type of information) and the conditions (order of presentation). The implication for the design of listening comprehension exercises is that listening comprehension is an inefficient way of familiarising subjects with expressions. The delayed probe technique may be useful in revealing some of the processes involved in learning from listening to passages. [References.]

**TEXT BOOKS** *See abstracts 77–353, –358*

**AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS** *See abstracts 77–334, –355*

### VISUAL AIDS

**77–353** **Aniščenko, A. P.** К вопросу о лингводидактических возможностях иллюстраций [On the linguo-didactic possibilities of illustrations.] *Русский язык в национальной школе* (Moscow), 1 (1977), 19–24.

The important problem of selecting illustrations for Russian language textbooks intended for pupils whose first language is not Russian, is made particularly difficult by the fact that there are no firm criteria for selection. Two illustrations (not included) intended to develop the oral and written competence in Russian of seventh and eighth class pupils in Kazakstan are analysed. Experiments were carried out unannounced: pupils were presented with a picture and given 45 minutes in which to describe and react to it (in written form). The first illustration was intended for use when studying agreement, the second as part of the study of compound and complex sentences. The pupils' work was analysed in terms of the type of writing (narration, description, etc.), the number of 'microthemes', the number of words and sentences, the frequency of occurrence of the point studied, and collocation. [Tables of results; discussion.] It is concluded that the type of illustration determines the nature of the resultant work, and that illustrations should be tested before being included in textbooks.

- 77-354 Maley, Alan and Duff, Alan.** The use of pictures in language teaching. *IUT Bulletin Pédagogique* (Paris), **25** (1976), 32-51.

The pupil's response to pictures depends on whether he can find his own interest in the material, or is limited to the role of a commentator. In choosing pictures, the following should be borne in mind: (1) pictures should suggest ideas, not limit them; (2) pictures with an element of ambiguity are capable of being explained in more than one way; (3) look for pictures with a past and a future; (4) avoid pictures with too much writing or too much detail; (5) pictures involving two or three people offer possibilities for dialogues and (6) look for interesting portraits. [Ways of preparing pictures for teaching are suggested, and their uses in various degrees of controlled and uncontrolled language practice are outlined with examples.] [References.]

### INDIVIDUALISED INSTRUCTION *See abstract 77-355*

### LANGUAGE LABORATORIES

- 77-355 Riley, P. and Zoppis, C.** The sound and video library: an interim report on an experiment. *Mélanges Pédagogiques* (Nancy), 1976, 125-43.

A team from the CRAPEL designed and implemented a project for a sound and video library in 1973 in answer to policy changes requiring more students to study a modern language, in this case English. The principle of autonomous learning was applied for advanced and fairly advanced students, hence the need to have an abundant and varied supply of authentic materials in stock, a practical filing system and convenient opening times. [Description of layout and hardware; the procedure for using the sound library; the use of materials (for listening comprehension, oral expression, viewing comprehension); plans for future developments; preliminary statistics on usage and attendance.] [References.]

### ADULTS *See also abstracts 77-325, -336*

- 77-356 Coste, Daniel.** Un niveau seuil parmi d'autres. [One of several threshold levels.] *Revue de Phonétique Appliquée* (Mons, Belgium), **41** (1977), 25-30.

*Un niveau-seuil* (Council of Europe, 1976) proposes a middle course between the concept of a prerequisite stage for all beginners before they start their specialist course and the idea of an important moment common to a number



of otherwise disparate beginners' courses. It works as a reference tool, offering parameters, criteria and categories against which pragmatic decisions can be judged. Thus it neither caters for any institution's immediate needs nor provides a ready-made assembly line for manufacturing French courses. It emphasises speech acts, attempts a typology of users and of interactive domains and gives much space to a semantic view of grammar.

- 77-357 Rivenc, Paul.** Système d'unités capitalisables et niveau seuil: examen critique et orientations. (Pour définir les positions de l'Association SGAV.) [System of unit-credits and threshold-level: review and possible developments. (To define the attitudes of the SGAV Association).] *Revue de Phonétique Appliquée* (Mons, Belgium), **41** (1977), 67-9.

The threshold-level programme in European languages launched by the Council of Europe has the following virtues: a co-ordinated inquiry with a single aim for several languages: the basis for a unit-credit scheme of qualifications; concentration on purposive speech in clearly defined situations; and offering a choice of registers to learners. The programme has not yet faced the problems of intonation, phonology and cultural diversity. [Suggested developments; comparison with *Espagnol fondamental*.] Teaching materials are being created.

**IMMIGRANTS** See abstract 77-318

**ENGLISH** See also abstracts 77-325, -327, -331/2, -336, -338, -342, -344, -348, -351, -354/5

- 77-358 Richards, Jack C.** Answers to 'yes/no' questions. *English Language Teaching Journal* (London), **31**, 2 (1977), 136-41.

Despite extensive use of questions in language teaching, their role in normal conversation appears to have been little studied. Teachers and textbooks often demand that a *yes/no* question be answered with *yes* or *no* and repetition of the verb or auxiliary used in the question: *Is John smiling? Yes he is*. A survey was made to find out if this is typical of normal conversation. A corpus of written and spoken English was analysed [tables]. Results showed that the most usual way of replying to a *yes/no* question was a reply in which the question was not answered directly with *yes* or *no*, but the answer made it clear whether the question had been answered positively, negatively, or in some other way (examples include *of course*, *perhaps*, *not really*). Together with replies containing *yes* or *no* with additional information but without verb repetition, these

make up between 70 and 80 per cent of both the written and spoken corpus. Analysis of six widely used course books, however, showed that the most frequent type of answer practised is *yes* or *no* plus verb/auxiliary. This type of answer is unnecessarily complex grammatically for the student and does not lead him towards normal usage.

**77-359 Soudek, Lev I.** Error analysis and the system of English consonants. *English Language Teaching Journal* (London), **31**, 2 (1977), 125-30.

Statistical data obtained from various analyses of the frequency of phonological errors made by Czech and Slovak learners of English are used to devise a hierarchy of major consonantal interference phenomena between source Czech and target English. [Examples of each of the seven types.]

**77-360 James, Carl.** Judgements of error gravities. *English Language Teaching Journal* (London), **31**, 2 (1977), 116-24.

The marking of written work in EFL is discussed. Marking involves (a) locating errors, and (b) deciding on their gravities. About 50 errors committed by foreign learners of English were collected; they fell into 10 categories, probably the 10 most recurrent types. The 50 items were presented to two groups of EFL teachers, one of native speakers and one of nationals, who were asked to identify the errors, write a correction, and indicate on a five-point scale how serious they considered the mistake. Results showed that non-native judges tend to mark more severely than native speakers. Individual assessors tend to be consistent in their judgement, though the two groups have different ranges, means, and distributions of marks [details]. Under item analysis, there is agreement on 20 out of the 50 items. The non-natives most resent errors of case and lexis, whereas natives most resent errors in tense and concord. The error types considered most serious overall were, in descending order: transformations, tense, concord, case, negation, articles, order. Lexical errors were rated the least serious.

**FRENCH** See also abstracts 77-335, -340/1, -343, -349

**77-361 Bastuji, Jacqueline.** Pourquoi des exercices de grammaire? [Why grammar exercises?] *Langue Française* (Paris), **33** (1977), 6-21.

The teaching of French grammar in French schools at the present time is studied: its purpose and function, how it is taught and how it is related to other aspects of the teaching of French. The attempt is made to assess just how useful grammar exercises really are. Different types of exercises are described and

classified, and the influence of modern linguistic thought on the teaching of grammar is analysed. Options open to the teacher are examined. Some of these involve more than purely linguistic choices and have social, cultural, and even political implications. Certain basic principles to guide the teaching of grammar are suggested and pitfalls to be avoided are indicated. Grammar exercises should be integrated into other French language work and grammar for grammar's sake should be rejected.

**77-362 Mear-Crine, A. M.** L'enseignement du français au Québec. [Teaching French in Quebec.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), 127 (1977), 17-24.

The role of standard French and of dialect in Quebec is described. Both are widely used; while the Quebec dialects enjoy more prestige than formerly, command of the standard language remains a *sine qua non* of social mobility in the province, as in most modern linguistic communities. Considerable reference is made to American research in bi-dialectism and the teaching of the standard language. Three possible approaches for schools to adopt are discussed: (1) suppression of non-standard dialects; (2) promotion of non-standard dialects; (3) teaching children to express themselves in standard French while permitting the use of dialect. This last approach – the middle way – is preferred. Problem areas remain, in the methods to be used and the recruitment and training of teachers. [References.]

**GERMAN** See abstracts 77-317/18

**RUSSIAN** See also abstract 77-353

**77-363 Launer, Michael.** Teaching sentence subordination in Russian. *Russian Language Journal* (Michigan), 30, 106 (1976), 61-9.

Elementary Russian textbooks suffer from a lack of specific syntactic information. However, syntax can be presented successfully in the classroom, and drilled as easily as morphology. As an example, a presentation of sentence subordination is given; accusative case slot embedding is introduced by showing the similarity between the sentences: (1) *я знаю его имя*; (2) *я знаю, куда он идет*; (3) *я знаю, что он понимает по-русски*; (4) *я не знаю, живет ли он здесь*. Later, non-accusative case slot embedding can be considered, where *то* is used as a case slot marker: (5) *я удивился вашему поведению*; (6) *я удивился тому, что вы так хорошо вели себя*.

At this point the simplest accusative slot structures can be reconsidered as examples of deletion of the case marker *то*. How detailed the presentation of

the rules for the deletion of *то* is to be, will depend on the teacher's judgement of his class. The following rules may be introduced: (a) *то* is normally deleted in direct object case slots; (b) *то* may be deleted in other case slots providing a declarative sentence is embedded; (c) *то* is not deleted when it fills a nominative slot; and (d) treatment varies when *то* is governed by a preposition. Having introduced forms like *когда/тогда, сколько/только* the teacher can point out the analogy: demonstrative T-words function as place holders for K-questions embedded in ADV, just as *то* functions as place marker for sentences embedded in NP. Other structures have been presented to students in a similarly rigorous fashion, making Russian easier to learn and more enjoyable.

**77-364 Maximov, V. I.** Грамматическая теория и практика изучения языка. [Grammatical theory and the practical study of language.] *Вопросы языкознания* (Moscow), 1 (1977), 28-38.

The proliferation of different theories of grammar has made it difficult for practical students and teachers of language to assess or utilise theoretical findings. An attempt is made to establish criteria of usefulness when evaluating theoretical grammars for practical purposes. To this end an analysis is made of two grammars (the *Academic grammar of Russian 1952-54*, and the *Academic grammar of Russian 1970*) in terms of how these grammars describe phenomena in the areas of word formation and syntax. [Details.] It is concluded that the *Grammar* of 1952-54 is more useful than the *Grammar* of 1970 for practical purposes, for reasons which include the fact that it is less abstract and draws on a much wider range of examples from the language.

**77-365 Whalen, Suzanne.** The impersonal sentence in Russian: a case-grammar approach. *Russian Language Journal* (Michigan), 30, 107 (1976), 39-48.

The difficult problem of impersonal sentences in Russian is approached by isolating impersonal, one member sentences – those with no agent in deep structure. The Fillmorian case grammar model is employed, where role relationships are posited in deep structure and surface cases are assigned by sentence formation rules. A deep structure contains a predicator and one or more noun phrases associated with it in particular case relationships, e.g. agent, experiencer, instrument. Thus semantic case relationships and morphological cases are separated. Different types of impersonal sentences – as they are classified in grammars – are assigned different schemata in this system [examples]. Similarly, impersonal sentences as defined above are derived from deep structures with various case relationships [examples]. This approach, which illustrates the interrelationship between Russian and English, has proved helpful to students.