

Language learning and teaching

THEORY AND PRINCIPLES See also abstracts 79–341, –368, –396

79–358 Hoppenkamps, Hermann and others. Sprachdidakten in der Diskussion – Kriterien zu ihrer Beurteilung. [Criteria for evaluating theories of language teaching.] *Linguistic und Didaktik* (Munich), 9, 33 (1978), 1–42.

Criteria are established for the production and analysis of theories of language teaching. They are concerned with what expectations can reasonably be had about such theories and provide a basis for discussing possible analyses. Given the large number of theories of language teaching, guidelines are needed to make clear which criteria are indispensable, taking into account the needs of the user. The criteria proposed here cover: (1) conception; (2) research stage; (3) general and linguistic educational goals; (4) pupil, and (5) teacher.

Using these criteria, various theories of language teaching are analysed. The results indicate that there is room for improvement, particularly in the areas of theory (= conception) and practical application (= pupil/teacher). The practical examples given are taken almost exclusively from secondary schools. There is no balance yet between theory and practical application.

PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING See also abstracts 79–368, –378, –384, –389

79–359 Levelt, W. J. M. Skill theory and language teaching. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), 1, 1 (1978), 53–70.

The study of skills and attentional processes, 'human performance theory', can usefully be applied to problems of second-language learning. Any complex task, such as language learning, requires attention, of which the supply is limited. Capacity increases with arousal, which in turn is mainly determined by the complexity of the task. At a very high level of arousal, though, capacity no longer increases, and errors are made. Arousal level is also increased by feedback about the performance, but not by incentives.

A general feature of complex tasks is their hierarchical structure (sub-tasks, sub-sub-tasks, etc.). 'Plans' or 'programmes' are required for their execution. The acquisition of skill consists of automation of low-level plans or units of activity. The execution of a unit of activity requires a large amount of mental effort; repeated performance can utilise ready-made plans. Even automated

plans are flexible, and it is plans which should be trained, not their 'terminal' activities. Training a phrase structure plan, for example, requires frequent use of the particular phrase structure in varied lexical settings, not frequent repetition of the phrase.

Insights about effort and skill are applied to an analysis of errors, and six possible causes for erroneous performance are discussed: (1) insufficiency of relevant information, (2) interference (calling the wrong programme), (3) insufficient automation, (4) insufficient supply of capacity, (5) dispersion of attention, and (6) the rewarding effects of failure. [Description of some tests which can be applied to determine the origin of particular errors.]

79-360 Spoelders, Marc. Facteurs affectifs dans l'apprentissage des langues étrangères – aperçu de la recherche empirique. [Affective factors in foreign-language learning – a review of empirical research.] *ITL* (Louvain), 41/2 (1978), 3-57.

The article reviews empirical research carried out during the last fifty years into the role of affective (extra-linguistic, non-intellectual) factors in second-language learning. During the earlier part of this period, from the '30s to the '50s, three approaches may be distinguished: clinically based work, early instrumental work (still fundamentally clinical and qualitative in orientation), and quantitative research. Subsequent to this came the work of the McGill school, and a number of other investigations that draw upon it. It emerges from this review that inquiries into means of developing attitudes and motivation in language learning remain few in number. This may in a sense be explained by an overemphasis of the role of the external variables in teaching situations.

79-361 Stalb, Heinrich. Warum kommt hier NICHT nicht vor? – Regularitäten beim L-2-Erwerb. [Why doesn't 'Nicht' occur here? – Regularities in second-language learning.] *Zielsprache Deutsch* (Munich), 4 (1978), 30-5.

The article analyses the results of a test on negatives given to sixth-form and university students learning German as a second language. The students were asked to decide where to place the negator *nicht* in a series of sentences. The results showed that certain positions for *nicht* were consistently avoided. It was never placed, for example, within the construction: preposition+article (or adjective)+noun, or preceding the subject of the sentence. Control tests established that the avoidance of certain positions for *nicht* was not influenced by the patterns of a student's first language.

After considering and rejecting other explanations for the observed regularities in the tests, the author suggests that adults have strategies available to

them in learning a second language which enable them to process the input containing the NEG element independently of their first language and in such a way that they are able to reject positions of NEG in sentences of the second language as unacceptable. The successful application of these strategies develops with time but results at a relatively early stage in behaviour conforming closely to the pattern of the second language. Possible consequences for second-language teaching are outlined.

79-362 Strauss, Sydney and Stein, David. U-shaped curves in language acquisition and the learning of physical concepts. *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main), 27, 3/4 (1978), 326-40.

Studies of long-term fall-off in performance exist in the areas of both cognitive skills and of language acquisition. Most of the systematic investigations relating to cognitive skills are concerned with the problem of the 'intensive performative quantity' (*intensive performative Quantität*), whereas in the context of language development interest has been focused mainly on the acquisition of irregular verbs, plurals and causatives. These deteriorations in performance are compared, and the authors go on to suggest that these processes conform to a general underlying pattern.

79-363 Walberg, Herbert J. and others. English acquisition as a diminishing function of experience rather than age. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), 12, 4 (1978), 427-37.

Self-ratings of English fluency of 352 Japanese students who lived from 0 to 12 years in Japan and 0 to 12 years in the United States, and ratings of English competence made by American teachers of an overlapping sample of 360 students were regressed on linear and logarithmic forms of numbers of months lived in the US and in Japan, and their product. A simple regression of the ratings on the log of months in the US yields Rs of from 0.52 to 0.62 which are generally not increased significantly by additional terms. The hypothesis of special competence of young children for language acquisition is not supported. The rate of acquisition, however, diminishes with time in the USA in children of all ages in the sample.

CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

- 79–364 **Berman, Ruth Aronson.** Contrastive analysis revisited – obligatory, systematic, and incidental differences between languages, with specific reference to the structures of modern Hebrew and English. *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin* (Utrecht), 3, 2 (1978), 212–31.

Contrastive analysis can and should be a significant field of research in both linguistic theory and language pedagogy – though for different reasons and in different ways. A theory of contrastive analysis is needed, specifying how and along what dimensions languages can best be compared with one another, and anchored in an adequate theory of universal grammar departing somewhat from the classic generative requirements.

A worthwhile aim would be to establish a 'hierarchy of significance' – not in psychological terms of what is more difficult for the learner from the point of view of transfer or interference, but in terms of the relevance of a particular property or phenomenon to the language in question, to its own overall internal structure and operation as a language. This would seem of value both for explanation in linguistic analysis and for the choices made by a person learning a new language.

- 79–365 **Erdmann, Peter.** 'There' constructions in English and German. *IRAL* (Heidelberg), 16, 3 (1978), 187–211.

Some important lexical differences between English *there* constructions and corresponding German constructions with *es* (or *da*) are discussed, e.g. *There was someone at the door* = *Es war jemand an der Tür* or *Da war jemand an der Tür*. The approach is functional in the Prague School sense – the differences are principally to be found in the lexical restrictions which apply to English *there* constructions. English cannot shift its indefinite subject nominal to post-verbal position by introducing pro-nominal *there* except when the finite verb that appears in the sentence is either morphologically or lexically related to the verb *be*. German on the other hand has no such restrictions, e.g. *Es schicken wenige Verwandte meiner Mutter eine Karte*; **There send few relatives my mother a postcard*. Other interlingual and intralingual results are presented.

ERROR ANALYSIS *See also abstract 79–359*

- 79–366 Johansson, Stig.** Problems in studying the communicative effect of learners' errors. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), 1, 1 (1978), 41–52.

After errors have been identified, a scale of errors needs to be established, based on communicative needs rather than purely linguistic criteria. The lowest grade of erroneous sentence is one which is fully comprehensible and causes no irritation to the receiver. For errors which affect comprehensibility or cause irritation, the principles of generality and frequency are relevant. Some examples of research into direct (subjective assessment) and indirect (overt behaviour) measures are discussed. In both types of experiment, the same ordering between the error types was found: word order errors were the most acceptable, then concord errors, then errors in verb complementation were found least acceptable. The direct approach is an easier way of establishing error gravity, and appears equally valid.

- 79–367 Selinker, Larry and Lamendella, John T.** Two perspectives on fossilisation in interlanguage learning. *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin* (Utrecht), 3, 2 (1978), 143–87.

The permanent failure of the vast majority of adult second-language learners to achieve complete mastery of TL norms remains a serious problem. In this paper, the current understanding of fossilisation is described in theoretical terms, building on the notions of Selinker (1972). Fossilisation is defined in terms of a permanent cessation of interlanguage learning before the learner has attained TL norms at all levels of linguistic structure and in all discourse domains in spite of the learner's positive ability, opportunity, and motivation to learn and acculturate into the target society. The precise nature of fossilisation remains unclear, but is differential in at least two senses: learners fossilise differentially at varying distances from the TL norm at various levels of language structures, and fossilisation appears to occur differentially in different discourse domains. Thus a given learner can reflect at the same time a number of distinct interlanguages, all relevant to the same general interlingual situation, some of which are fossilised and some of which are not.

The nature of fossilisation must be approached by an investigation into the sources of fossilisation, the points at which it can or must occur, the language units which are the objects of fossilisation for given types of learners, and the identification of those learners who are likely candidates for fossilisation.

- 79-368 Widdowson, H. G.** The significance of simplification. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), 1, 1 (1978), 11-20.

Simplification is defined as the process whereby a language user adjusts his language behaviour in the interests of communicative effectiveness, with either increasing or decreasing complexity of usage. Errors can be seen as efforts to make communication more effective by calling on strategies which the learner uses in his own language. They are therefore evidence of success rather than failure, and they should be exploited rather than corrected.

Implications for language teaching are: (1) the teacher's simplification of language data (the conventional structural syllabus) does not correspond with the learner's. Erroneous forms might be presented initially, and correct standard forms brought into focus later on. This would run the risk of distorting the learner's concept of language and would not adequately provide for the development of reference rules. Another more promising possibility is that the language being taught should be directly associated with other school subjects. [References.]

TESTING

- 79-369 Huart, Michelle.** Propositions pour une auto-évaluation. [Self-assessment.] *Études de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), 29 (1978), 6-21.

The use of self-assessment in language teaching is intimately bound up with two relatively recent pedagogical orientations: concentration on the learner, and the desire to integrate evaluation procedures into the teaching process. It is argued that self-assessment must be a formal, structured activity, and that it should aim to go beyond intuitive impressions in order to provide a qualitative evaluation sufficiently precise to play an effective role in the learning process.

Within this general orientation, the article undertakes a wide-ranging review of various problems relating to self-assessment: What are its aims? How is it to be incorporated into the process of language learning? What form should it take? How should it relate to other forms of assessment?

- 79-370 Larsen-Freeman, Diane.** An ESL index of development. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), 12, 4 (1978), 439-48.

A report on the progress the author is making in an attempt to establish a second-language acquisition index of development. Such an index would be a developmental yardstick by which researchers could expediently and reliably gauge a learner's proficiency in a second language.

Encouraged by the findings of an earlier pilot study, a more ambitious project involving the analysis of 212 compositions was undertaken. These compositions,

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written by university ESL students, were analysed using several measures based on Hunt's T-unit performance variable. Two measures applied in the analysis, the percentage of error-free T-units and the average length of error-free T-units, proved to be the best discriminators among the five levels of ESL proficiency represented in this population.

In addition to a discussion of these results, there is a survey of L2 acquisition studies which have also employed T-unit length as a proficiency measure. An outline is offered of the studies currently being conducted in an attempt to refine these measures further.

LANGUAGE PLANNING

79-371 St Clair, Robert N. The politics of language. *Word* (New York), 29, 1 (1973) [published 1979], 44-62.

The areas of language planning and the language of oppression are discussed within the theoretical framework of existential sociolinguistics. The latter is contrasted with the contemporary models of positivism with their assumptions about constancy and quantification. The proposed model, by contrast, brings in social history, intent, consciousness, and other extensions of the data, and combines them into a methodology of hermeneutics. These new perspectives ask different questions about how language is used in social terms; the model makes radically different claims about how language is legitimised by the power élite who wield community power, and how people are socialised into external patterns of recognisable behaviour which are imbued with salient values. The model can account for many of the basic concepts regarding pluralism within the discipline of political science: it provides a coherent treatment of such sociological endeavours as labelling theory, neo-symbolic interactionism, the sociology of knowledge, and phenomenological sociology.

COURSE DESIGN

79-372 Dabène, Louise and others. De l'analyse de la demande à l'élaboration méthodologique. [From analysing demand to designing a course.] *Études de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), 29 (1978), 67-81.

The first stage of this project was a study of overall foreign-language demands among adults in Grenoble. The sample was 200, of whom 100 were already on a FL course and were all under 45, mostly male and had educational qualifications. Sixty had professional use for the language, all thought a FL a necessary acquisition. The other 100 were drawn from the general population by quota: they regarded English as a culture-free tool with the highest demand.

Other languages were coloured by reputed difficulty and/or affective values. The second stage was an experiment in formulating a course according to demand. The chosen FL was Arabic for Grenoblois in contact with immigrant workers. The course developed modules comprising: a basic linguistic core plus optional modules in (a) language (socio-medical lexis; legal-administration lexis); and (b) background information (Algerian heartland; migrant problems). The teaching was able to exploit each tape or slide item in more than one module. During the survey it was really the subjects who were asking questions: about themselves, about their milieu, etc.

79-373 Schinnerer, Julia and others. A student-centred approach to learning English. *Practical Papers in English Language Education* (Lancaster), 1 (1978), 43-122.

A description of the application of an approach to language and language learning in the designing of an eight-week summer course for Saudi Arabian students studying at the University of Lancaster. The overall course plan is outlined and the major components of a teaching unit described and illustrated with sample materials, exercises and teaching notes. A postscript discusses issues raised in the implementation of the course.

MATERIALS DESIGN

79-374 Davies, Alan. Textbook situations and idealised language. *Work in Progress* (Edinburgh), 11 (1978), 120-33.

The materials writer selects an appropriate sample of language, which he then idealises. It is naive to think that language carries situation along with it. A comparison is made between some raw language data (the author's family at breakfast) and some examples of supposedly similar data in language-teaching materials.

In analysing the raw data, four stages in the idealisation process were elaborated: (1) transcription, (2) spoken prose, (3) function and (4) grammaticalisation. These four stages towards idealisation remove situational features and indeed all non-code features.

Real situational language teaching is of two kinds: (a) restricted linguistic routines (e.g. what to say in certain types of shop, or modes of address); (b) 'relatively determined contexts' in which many language options exist. Knowledge of such options is, in fact, what is meant by 'communicative competence'. [Appendix gives transcriptions and extracts from teaching materials.]

- 79-375 Geddes, Marion and White, Ron.** The use of semi-scripted simulated authentic speech and listening comprehension. *Audio-Visual Language Journal* (Birmingham), 16, 3 (1978), 137-45.

The use of authentic material raises the following problems: it may not be appropriate for learners, or in a form which can be used, and it may be random in respect of lexis, structures and functions. The solution is to simulate authenticity so that the discourse which is produced has both a high probability of occurrence while also exhibiting features which are usable within a planned language syllabus. Authentic spoken discourse, as compared to scripted or written discourse, tends to have a lower lexical density and a higher redundancy of content; it is less well organised, and normally reflects and requires the feedback characteristic of face-to-face settings. It takes place in real time, which imposes constraints. The learner needs controlled experience of authentic language from an early stage, together with training in selective listening, abstracting the gist of the communication, to prepare him for uncontrolled situations outside the classroom.

Four variables are involved in simulating authentic speech: the script, the nature of the discourse, the learner, and the speakers themselves. [Discussion of a variety of techniques, not all successful, which the authors have tried out to simulate authentic speech, with transcribed examples.]

- 79-376 Kameen, Patrick T.** A mechanical, meaningful and communicative framework for ESL sentence-combining exercises. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), 12, 4 (1978), 395-401.

Although controlled experiments have revealed that sentence combining (SC) exercises greatly enhance syntactic growth and bring about statistically significant improvement in students' overall writing quality, there are at present no materials presenting a systematic, comprehensive SC programme designed to provide intermediate and advanced ESL composition students with an understanding of and practice in the wide range of syntactic and stylistic options at their disposal during the composing process. Such a programme would provide a carefully sequenced progression of activities from skill-building exercises to skill-using exercises designed to stimulate autonomous language use in the composition classroom. It would help students discover the range of choices within the structure of the language and thereby increase their self-confidence in writing.

This article lays the groundwork for the sequencing of SC exercises aimed at accomplishing these goals. A discussion of the theoretical foundation for SC exercises is followed by a description of a three-stage sequencing of exercises, each successive stage corresponding to a less controlled level within Paulston's (1970) framework of mechanical, meaningful and communicative exercises.

TEACHING METHODS See also abstracts 79–375, –386, –388, –395

79–377 Achtenhagen, F. and Wienold, G. Lernmaterial und Lehrer-Schüler-Verhalten im Fremdsprachenunterricht: Bericht über eine Felduntersuchung. [Learning materials and teacher-pupil interaction in foreign-language teaching: a report on a field study.] *Folia Linguistica* (The Hague), 11, 3/4 (1977), 339–49.

The article sets out the interim findings of an investigation based on 10 weeks' continuous and systematic observation of pupil-teacher interactions and materials used during English lessons in two classes of a Göttingen school. Structural characteristics of the main teaching text which might generate learning difficulties were identified, for example the speed with which new items were introduced. The results of analysis of learning difficulties related to syntactic and semantic problems experienced by the class and of pupils' test results were used in conjunction with the analysis of the text as a basis for restructuring the teaching material.

The materials used have a considerable influence on the teaching and learning processes; in previous studies they have been wrongly regarded as variables which could be carefully monitored and controlled. This investigation demonstrates that the teacher can easily be deceived about the level of difficulty of materials and about the most appropriate way of using them. Differences in teachers' expectations of pupils affect not only the frequency of interactions between the teacher and any particular pupil but also the quality of the material chosen by the teacher for those interactions. The crucial factor governing the teacher's ability to foster the progress of each individual pupil is the relationship between the control of learning activities and the structure of the learning material.

BILINGUAL TEACHING

79–378 Butzkamm, Wolfgang. Fremdsprachenunterricht und natürliche Zweitsprachigkeit: Spracherwerbssituationen im Vergleich. [Second-language teaching and natural bilingualism: a comparison of language-acquisition situations.] *Zielsprache Deutsch* (Munich), 4 (1978), 11–20.

The fact that schools provide a completely artificial environment for language learning is seen as one of the main problems of the modern-language teacher. It is suggested that one way to solve this problem could be to regard the school itself as an important area of experience and social interaction. Efforts should be made to find out the communicative needs of pupils in the classroom and to incorporate them into lessons – the needs of here and now such as

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complaining about homework or about being teased, not communication problems which might arise later, as on visits abroad.

The problem with second-language teaching is to introduce the language naturally into the classroom situation. For the children of guest workers the problem is completely different. The everyday language of the school becomes a 'socialising language'. The main role of the teacher must then be not to institute formal learning programmes, but to help the child to develop his own language-learning strategies. This involves the evolution of social strategies. The child first learns to use set phrases in recurring situations before he can segment utterances into their constituent units of meaning and go on to combine them to produce new phrases. The teacher must therefore do all he can to involve the child in the life of the school. A series of concrete suggestions is given which it is hoped will aid teachers who have foreign children in their regular classes.

79-379 Genesee, Fred. Second-language learning and language attitudes. *Working Papers on Bilingualism* (Toronto), 16 (1978), 19-39.

English pupils in the sixth and eleventh years attending French immersion classes and regular French programmes replied to a questionnaire designed to evaluate (1) what they felt when they had to express themselves in French, (2) to what extent they used French outside the classroom, (3) to what extent they were motivated to learn French, and (4) how they saw their own competence in French and, where possible, their attitude to the French immersion programme.

The reports from the immersion students showed that they felt more at ease, more confident and more willing to express themselves in French outside the classroom than the pupils in the regular programme. Moreover, the immersion pupils felt more confidence in their ability than did pupils in the regular programme. But there was no evidence that immersion pupils actively sought opportunities to use French. These results are explained as a function of three possible variables: (1) the feeling of the students that their speaking skills are weaker than their other French language skills; (2) their instrumental motivation for learning French (promotion or professional reasons) reduces their immediate use of it; and (3) general social norms in their community. In general, nevertheless, students were well satisfied with the immersion programmes.

CLASS METHODS *See also abstracts 79–387, –392/3*

- 79–380** **Goethals, Michael.** Role play in foreign-language teaching: a description of the teaching strategy. *ITL* (Louvain), **41/2** (1978), 87–117.

Role play can help students make a guided transition towards free usage of the foreign language. Role play is the acting out of a given situation, and may be either 'open' or 'closed', depending how much information is provided in advance. The aim is to elicit communicative behaviour, so most attention is given to the verbal aspect of applying the language that has been learned. The initial situations must elicit, or at least allow, practice of newly learned items, and the players should organise their interaction so that the language item is practised. As a daily exercise, role play should take no more than ten minutes. [Preparation and classroom methods and activities are outlined in detail.] [Appendix gives transcriptions of two role plays.]

LANGUAGE FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES *See abstracts 79–372, –381***READING** *See also abstracts 79–332, –334, –399*

- 79–381** **Cohen, Andrew D. and Fine, Jonathan.** Reading history in English: discourse analysis and the experience of native and non-native readers. *Working Papers on Bilingualism* (Toronto), **16** (1978), 55–74.

This paper reports on the fourth in a series of studies focusing on the problems encountered by Israeli students in reading technical texts in English. This study deals with non-native students' understanding of what they read and on how their understanding compares with that of natives. The authors were also testing a method for investigating students' understanding of texts. The theory of cohesion developed by Halliday and Hasan provided a useful tool for analysing the target text and for generating a series of questions. These questions were asked of a small number of native and non-native readers of English.

It was found that cohesive factors distinguished non-native from native readers but it was not established which of these factors was most important in the reading process. Collecting introspective information from non-native informants about how they answer comprehension questions could be helpful in understanding second-language reading.

- 79-382 Düwell, Henning.** Vorschläge für Untersuchungen und Innovationen im Bereich „Lesen im Fremdsprachenunterricht“. [Proposals for investigations and innovations in the field of 'reading in foreign-language teaching'.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main), 5 (1978), 412-29.

Reading is an aspect of foreign-language study which has received little attention so far, despite the fact that for the majority of students it is the ability to read in a foreign language which will be of most use in later life, both professionally, for the reading of technical literature, and socially, for the reading of menus and travel brochures.

Whilst specific aspects of this subject have been examined, such as the problem of the selection and preparation of texts and problems of methodology, there has been little attempt to analyse the process of reading and understanding as a whole. There are many avenues which could be fruitfully explored. In particular six problem areas would merit future investigation: the objectives of reading and the means by which they can be achieved, the relationship of reading to other linguistic activities, the requirements of specific types of student, the selection of reading material, the development of teaching methods, and ways of assessing achievement.

- 79-383 Feldman, Doris.** A special reading system for second-language learners. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), 12, 4 (1978), 415-24.

A special reading system was developed for elementary school children who were learning to read for the first time in their second language, English. This paper describes the reading system and traces its success over a four-year period as measured through standardised testing instruments.

- 79-384 Mayer, Richard E.** Advance organisers that compensate for the organisation of text. *Journal of Educational Psychology* (Washington, DC), 70, 6 (1978), 880-6.

In the first experiment subjects read a 24-frame text on computer programming that was presented in logical or random order. For random organisation, subjects given an advance organiser performed better on a post-test than control subjects, but the opposite pattern obtained for logical organisation. In the second experiment subjects read a four-paragraph text concerning imaginary countries that was presented in name or attribute organisation. Low-ability subjects given an organiser before reading performed better on questions that required integrating across different paragraphs of the presented text, and subjects given the organiser after reading performed relatively better on questions concerning information they had read within the same paragraph. Apparently, advance organisers served as an assimilative context for unfamiliar organisations.

- 79-385 Neville, Mary H.** Learning to read in Japan. *Reading* (Manchester), 12, 1 (1978), 21-8.

Japanese children learn two different syllabic systems of writing known as Kana; they also need to know Chinese characters, or Kanji, which make up about 30 per cent of adult texts. Japanese children appear to learn to read easily and to have no illiteracy problems. This seems to be because of the nature of the Japanese language: the Kana symbols relate to syllables and the syllable/graphic symbol relationship is stable and predictable. Motivation from the home background is also important. Spaces are used in the reading books to mark out word groups in the early stages; adult texts have no differential spacing between symbols, except after punctuation. Kanji, on the other hand, can present problems. The characters are ideographic, take a long time to learn, and can have several alternative readings. But they have the advantage of standing out against the other characters and as they are usually nouns, roots of verbs and adjectives, and adverbs, they tend to carry the main ideas. They thus enable more advanced readers to pick up key notions as they read. Because Japanese children work with the syllable as a unit and there are not too many of these to learn, they initially have an easier task than English children, though they later have to learn to reconcile their two writing systems as they read.

COMMUNICATION See also abstracts 79-376, -380, -392

- 79-386 Littlewood, William T.** Communicative language teaching. *Audio-Visual Language Journal* (Birmingham), 16, 3 (1978), 131-5.

There have been clear developments in communicative language teaching, both in the underlying view of the learning goal, and in methods for defining objectives more adequately in relation to learners' needs. But much less has been done at the methodological level. There tend to be three main approaches: (1) to retain old techniques but adapt them to reflect the functional nature of language more clearly; (2) to develop new techniques to complement the old (such as communication tasks and games, and simulation/role-playing), and (3) to develop a new methodology of teaching not language so much as communication through language. The role of the teacher may require re-examining.

COMPREHENSION See also abstract 79-332

- 79-387 Beile, Werner.** Towards a classification of listening comprehension exercises. *Audio-Visual Language Journal* (Birmingham), 16, 3 (1978), 147-54.

Exercises for developing listening comprehension are described, grouped according to the teaching aim and the appropriate phase in the teaching/learning

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process. (1) Orientation phase – the learner needs to be given the information which a native speaker in real life would have, and possibly additional aids, such as film or videotape. He should be given an indication of situation, theme, text-type or special features of the text, together with key words to act as a guide. A simplified version of the text can be worked on before tackling the authentic text. (2) Directed listening phase – guided listening comprehension exercises in which attention is drawn to the main ideas in the text [examples]. (3) Undirected listening phase – exercises are presented after the pupil has heard the text, some requiring a productive answer, others not. (4) Exploitation phase – a transcript can be provided at this stage, and the linguistic material used as a basis for further exercises, e.g. role-playing, register exercises, reformulation of the content. [Sample German text with exercises.]

79–388 Giunchi, Paola. Understanding spoken discourse in a second or foreign language: pedagogical considerations. *ITL* (Louvain), 41/2 (1978), 59–75.

Studies on memory of sentences in recent years have had little to suggest about the problem of understanding and remembering larger units of language or discourse. Linguists have underestimated the differences between spoken and written discourse; in addition, the use of written texts as data is misleading.

Authentic spoken interaction is unplanned and unedited. Although prospective students need the ability to understand it, most materials fail to cater for it. Examples are given from Mackin and Dickinson's (1969) course, *Varieties of Spoken English*, which provides transcriptions of conversations together with a 'spoken prose' version. An intensive listening phase focuses the listener's attention on particular items. The second stage is 'general comprehension' and requires the learner to make inferences, relate different parts of paragraphs, etc. The overall structure requires intensive and extensive listening: in the intensive phase the attention is concentrated on isolated items, while in the extensive phase it is concentrated on larger units of thought. [References.]

79–389 Oyama, Susan and College, John Jay. The sensitive period and comprehension of speech. *Working Papers on Bilingualism* (Toronto), 16 (1978), 1–18.

Sixty male Italian immigrants listened to English sentences masked with white noise at four signal-to-noise ratios. Comprehension scores were correlated with age of beginning English but were not predicted by number of years in the United States or by other variables investigated. Scores of those who arrived before early adolescence resembled those of native speakers, while those subjects who began English toward the end of adolescence showed a marked

comprehension deficit. These results supported the hypothesis that a sensitive period exists for the acquisition of a second language.

The sensitive period as a developmental concept is discussed; observations are also made on various problems involved in attempting to explain adult difficulties with second-language acquisition by invoking motivational and input factors.

TEXTBOOKS *See also abstract 79-374*

- 79-390 Hartman, Pat L. and Judd, Elliot L.** Sexism and TESOL materials. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **12**, 4 (1978), 383-93.

The treatment of women in current ESL materials is explored, starting with an analysis of the portrayal of the sexes in textbooks. Some observations are that women are often less visible than men, are often the butt of many jokes and are often placed in stereotypical roles and assigned stereotypical emotional reactions. Illustrations in the books serve to reinforce the biased linguistic patterns previously noted.

Discussion follows of terms which have been labelled as prejudicial to women by writers who have been analysing the question of sexism and the English language [the use of the word *man* as both an independent word and as a bound suffix, the generic *he*, the *boy/girl* distinction, and titles used to refer to men and women.] All features were found to bias the portrayal of women in the texts. Changes are suggested which can reduce the bias.

AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

- 79-391 Brinton, Donna and Gaskill, William.** Using news broadcasts in the ESL/EFL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **12**, 4 (1978), 403-13.

A report on the independent experiences of an EFL instructor in Germany and an ESL instructor in the States using TV and radio broadcasts in the classroom. The videotaped broadcasts consisted of BBC's 'News of the Week', a weekly in-depth broadcast; those used for the audio presentation were two-minute news capsules from a Los Angeles radio station.

Particular emphasis is placed on various techniques for adapting the taped broadcasts for the classroom and on various types of materials used to complement an audio or video-taped presentation. [Discussion of the use of simple short-answer questions, true/false questions, short essay questions, and close passages to assure student comprehension of the broadcast.] Vocabulary

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recycling was noted by both instructors during their in-class use of news broadcasts. Positive aspects of the presentations include improved student comprehension of broadcasts, increased interest on their part in issues, and better understanding of the government and institutions of the target culture.

IMMIGRANTS *See abstracts 79-372, -378, -389*

DRAMA AND ROLE PLAYING *See abstracts 79-380, -392*

ENGLISH *See also abstracts 79-363, -370, -373/7, -380, -388, -390/1*

79-392 Shaw, P. and Wilkinson, R. S. A role-playing exercise for students of English as a foreign language. *ITL* (Louvain), **41/2** (1978), 77-85.

An exercise is described which was used with first-semester students at the University of Bonn, and aimed to elicit the communicative use of English. The exercise was adapted from (a) enacting situations to practice the expression of various 'notions', and (b) simulation - enacting the roles of those involved in an organisational or decision-making process. It was also characterised by a combination of encounters and discussions.

Stereotyped, rather than realistic roles were used, of a type familiar to both German and English cultures. The chosen setting was an English village. Each participant was given a description of his role and character with possible topics of conversation [examples] and a map of the village. A final session was used to comment on errors. The students rated the activity highly for usefulness and enjoyment. [References.]

FRENCH *See also abstract 79-379*

79-393 Mariet, François. L'approche pédagogique des textes politiques dans le cadre de la formation des adultes. [Teaching approach to political texts in the framework of adult education.] *Études de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **29** (1978), 20-34.

Inquiry shows that adult students take most interest in politico-legal and psycho-social subjects, and their impact on daily life. Four texts are taken as examples of political programmes which refer to the relationships between families and educational systems. Chapter, section and paragraph headings are compared and contrasted in a tabulated grid, relative space devoted to main topics is calculated, degree of authority attributable to each text is assessed,

rhetorical styles are evaluated [classifications], and, where early and late versions exist, the opportunity is taken to show how changing circumstances result in modified statement. Political pomposity can be deflated by re-writing jargon in plain words [examples]. Students work out who is really writing on behalf of whom, to whom and for what purpose; who is not mentioned and why not. It is unlikely that these students would spot the implications without this kind of linguistic training.

79–394 **Martins-Baltar, Michel.** Parler de soi dans trois situations d'entretien. [Talking about oneself in three types of interview situation.] *Études de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **29** (1978), 35–44.

Only by limiting the field of investigation and thus reducing the number of linguistic variables can a complete study of both content and expression be obtained. A research project is accordingly proposed whereby interviews of three different types would be taped (with the permission of the interviewer but unknown to the interviewee), the data collected serving as the basis for further research: (1) interviews about language tuition in an institution for further education – the interviewee provides information about himself; (2) interviews with a doctor – the interviewee provides information in order to secure medical treatment; (3) interviews for employment – the interviewee provides information in order to make a good impression. It is envisaged that the results of this study will have relevance for the teaching of French as well as for linguistics and sociolinguistics. [Bibliography.]

GERMAN See also abstracts 79–361, –387

79–395 **Krüger, Michael.** Übungs- und Sozialformen im Fremdsprachenunterricht Deutsch. [Types of learning activities and forms of social interaction in the teaching of German as a foreign language.] *Zielsprache Deutsch* (Munich), **4** (1978), 2–10.

Any kind of learning involves not only the acquisition of knowledge and skills but also the learning of behaviour patterns and attitudes. This applies particularly in the case of small-group learning in schools, universities and colleges. The immediate aim of the language teacher must be to provide language-learning activities that are oriented towards the needs of the learner in real situations and not the transmission of systems of grammatical description.

Examples of language-learning activities designed to develop both receptive and productive skills are analysed in detail. Numerous suggestions are offered of situations around which activities could be based and of how these might

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be exploited to the best advantage using more formal exercises such as multiple-choice tests.

79–396 Lewandowski, Theodor. Didaktik der deutschen Sprache. [German language didactics.] *Deutsche Sprache* (Munich), 4 (1978), 345–67.

The article is a survey of the current state of German language didactics. 'Language didactics' is defined as a discipline, the task of which is to investigate the methods and results of linguistics from the point of view of educational theory. The main areas considered include the influence of Weisgerber, the language didactics of Glinz and of Helmers, and the relationship between language didactics and social criticism. It is argued that, despite all the work in the field, the state of German language didactics is still unsatisfactory and that one of the reasons for this is the large number of ways, sometimes arbitrary, in which the tasks of the discipline have been defined. A summary of the main types of approach is given. An excessive dependence on arguments drawn from social theories is criticised, and it is suggested that progress is most likely to be achieved by smaller-scale, more careful and self-critical research and theory.

SPANISH

79–397 Bergen, John J. A simplified approach for teaching the gender of Spanish nouns. *Hispania* (Appleton, Wis), 61, 4 (1978), 865–76.

Learning the gender of Spanish nouns represents a major area of difficulty for English speakers. Previous attempts at providing a set of rules for distinguishing gender (Bull, Dalby, Da Silva, Dinny and Ramsay) are examined and rejected on the grounds of complexity and/or inaccuracy. Phonemic not semantic criteria constitute a reliable basis for determining gender in Spanish. A new framework is proposed consisting of two semantic and eight phonemic rules – considerably fewer than any of the above systems; most exceptions to these rules themselves fall into two main categories and the learner is therefore faced with a minimum number of exceptions to memorise. These individual exceptions are few in number and the majority of them are very common words whose frequency aids their memorisation. [Tables.]

RUSSIAN

- 79–398 Ahmad, K. and others.** On the teaching of Russian numerals by using an online computer. *ALLC Bulletin* (Stockport, Cheshire), **6**, 3 (1978), 235–41.

Some of the problems facing undergraduates learning Russian can be dealt with effectively by using an online computer. A Russian numerals drill programme is described which aims to help the student in tackling the morphological arbitrariness and some aspects of the syntax of the Russian numerals.

- 79–399 Arant, Patricia.** Russian for reading: a classroom model and stratagems. *Russian Language Journal* (Michigan), **32**, 111 (1978), 19–32.

A one-year, two-semester course with the limited goal of teaching Russian for reading is described. The first semester (on which this article focuses) is devoted to instruction in the formal rules of grammar and systems of word-building. The second semester involves practice and extension of vocabulary. In the first semester students may choose between class-based teaching with paced assessment and a modified PSI/Keller Plan approach. Absolute beginners are catered for.

Progress in reading will be inhibited if an attempt is made to develop any of the other language skills. However, the need for an audio image is recognised, and hence regular pronunciation practice is given. The script alphabet is taught as it is used for blackboard explanations and for exercises. Grammar formation rules are practised because active responses are seen as an aid to remembering. The emphasis on reading calls for a re-ordering of grammar presentation and introduces new perspectives. Problems which loom large in the three-skills course, such as the double-imperfective verbs of motion, are reduced; participial forms require early treatment.

A range of strategies is examined, including the use of descriptive labels, e.g. 'm' forms of verbs as person markers rather than tense-related; forewarnings, such as those provided by punctuation; approaches to word order.

- 79–400 Derbyshire, William.** Семантические свойства ИК–2. [Semantic characteristics of intonation construction no. 2.] *Russian Language Journal* (Michigan), **32**, 111 (1978), 13–18.

The second intonation construction as elaborated by Bryzgunova is examined against the hypothesis that all its applications share a common semantic element. ИК–2 is used in questions involving a *WH* or other questioning word, in exclamations and imperatives, in sentences with contrasting elements, in

supplementary/clarifying questions, and in sentences where the speaker is asserting the truth of a particular word – *Он живет на пятом этаже.*

When *ИК-1* and *ИК-2* are applied to a sentence such as *Весь зал смеется*, the former gives a neutral statement; the latter, with stress on *зал* gives a more assertive statement. The case is then made that there is an assertive component in all uses of *ИК-2* and that this can be taken as its underlying meaning.

79-401 Vsevolodova, M. V. О некоторых вопросах управления. [On some problems of reaction.] *Русский язык за рубежом* (Moscow), 4 (1978), 54-8.

The traditional, narrow, definition of reaction, or government, is rejected in favour of a broader one, defining it as the integration of nominal elements into syntactic structure. Case and prepositional constructions are divided into syntactic (unmotivated) and semantico-syntactic (motivated), and it is claimed that a third class of such expressions is justified (constructionally motivated), where the form has a specific meaning, but only in certain constructions [e.g. the 'subjective' meaning of *с тамой – обморок* 'Mother is having a fainting fit' as opposed to the normal comitative meaning of the preposition *с-приту с мамой* 'arrive with mother'].

Five points are presented as of special importance for pedagogical purposes: (i) unmotivated government should be presented in terms of lexico-semantic groups, rather than individual verbs; (ii) relationships of converseness frequently occur in constructions other than the passive, and need to be presented in terms of sentence paradigms; (iii) sentence paradigms are also necessary to show the equivalence of certain syntactic and semantico-syntactic case markers; (iv) differences in government between languages often relate to the different possibilities of abstract uses of nouns; (v) languages not only express given meanings differently, they may also differ in terms of the systems of meaning themselves.

ARABIC See abstract 79-372