

responses related mostly to learner-centred, experiential aspects of the course. Negative responses indicated learner confusion and stress. A number of changes were made to the course after piloting, and comparison of piloted to revised course implementation results indicated areas of improvement as well as areas of continuing concern. A number of implications are discussed for the benefit of instructors interested in collaborative models.

**98-435 Woodward, Tessa** (Hilderstone College). Working with teachers interested in different methods. *The Teacher Trainer* (Canterbury), **11**, 3 (1997), 7-8.

This article outlines a way for trainers working with teachers who are interested in new methodologies to help first to clarify the teachers' own distinctions between approaches, methods and individual teaching/learning ideas and secondly to fill out the list of components which make up any individual method. This is done using a grid containing participants' examples. Once the grid is established, it can be used over time, vertically to extend the list of method components, horizontally to analyse the differences and similarities between methods, and developmentally to shed more light on the participants' present ways of working, thus highlighting areas that they may choose to learn more about.

## Reading

**98-436 Bond, Guy L. and Dykstra, Robert** (U. of Minnesota). The cooperative research program in first-grade reading instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, DE), **32**, 4 (1997), 348-427.

This paper presents the report of the Coordinating Center of the Cooperative Research Program in First-Grade Reading Instruction. Data were compiled from the 27 individual studies comprising the Program relevant to three basic questions: (1) to what extent various pupil, teacher, class, school, and community characteristics are related to pupil achievement in first-grade reading and spelling; (2) which of the many approaches to initial reading instruction produces superior reading and spelling achievement at the end of the first grade; and (3) whether any programme is uniquely effective or ineffective for pupils with high or low readiness for reading. The instructional approaches evaluated included Basal, Basal plus Phonics, i.t.a., Linguistic, Language Experience, and Phonic/Linguistic. Identical information was gathered in each project concerning teacher, school, and community characteristics, and common experimental guidelines were followed in all 27 studies. Results of the correlational analysis revealed that the ability to recognise letters of the alphabet prior to the beginning of reading instruction was the single best predictor of first-grade reading achievement. The analysis of methodology indicated that the various non-basal instructional programmes tended to be supe-

rior to basal programmes as measured by word recognition skills of pupils after one year of reading instruction. Differences between basal and non-basal programmes were less consistent when measures of comprehension, spelling, rate of accuracy of reading, and word study skills constituted the criterion of reading achievement. The analysis of treatments according to level of readiness for reading revealed that no method was especially effective or ineffective for pupils of high or low readiness as measured by tests of intelligence, auditory discrimination, and letter knowledge.

**98-437 Constantino, Rebecca** (U.S. Congress), **Lee, Sy-Ying, Cho, Kyung-Sook and Krashen, Stephen**. Free voluntary reading as a predictor of TOEFL scores. *Applied Language Learning* (Monterey, CA), **8**, 1 (1997), 111-18.

This paper is concerned with the relationship between pleasure reading and aspects of literacy development, including reading comprehension. The study reported here involved 43 international university students, currently living in the United States, who were asked to fill out a questionnaire probing years of English study, length of residence in the U.S., free reading habits in the first and second language, and television watching. Despite the fact that participants reported little reading in English, this variable was a significant predictor of TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) performance. In addition, English study in the home country and length of residence in the U.S. were also related to TOEFL scores.

**98-438 Dupuy, Beatrice** (Louisiana State University). Lecture-cadeau, lecture-plaisir: des étudiants en FLE et les bénéfices dérivés de la lecture libre. [The gift of reading for pleasure: French language students and the benefits derived from pleasure reading.] *The French Review* (Champaign, IL), **71**, 2, (1997), 182-91.

This paper presents a short study of the value of pleasure reading in the teaching of French at intermediary level. Two classes of students were presented with a sample of texts, selected for their potential interest and accessibility, and were informed about other sources of French texts available to them. The principles of pleasure reading were explained to them: students could choose their own books, could skip pages, and would not be given any pre- or post-reading tests or exercises. Evaluation took the form of a journal in which they logged authors and titles of books read, together with some general reactions to them. This format was designed to mirror as closely as possible the experience of reading for pleasure outside the classroom. After the course, students completed questionnaires about their reactions to the course and the extent to which their knowledge of the target language had been improved. They claimed that they were now much more likely to read for pleasure in French, and felt the experience had had a positive impact on their target language development. The author recommends further research in this area.

**98-439 Fulcher, Glenn** (U. of Surrey). Text difficulty and accessibility: reading formulae and expert judgement. *System* (Oxford), **25**, 4 (1997), 497–513.

Text difficulty—or text ‘accessibility’—is here deemed an important but much neglected topic in Applied Linguistics. Establishing text difficulty is seen as relevant to the teacher and syllabus designer who wish to select appropriate materials for learners at a variety of ability levels. It is also critical to test developers in selecting reading texts at appropriate levels for inclusion in the reading sub-tests of examinations. Writers of texts for various audiences also need guidance related to the range of factors which make texts more or less accessible. In all these cases, however, decisions are seen as still made very much on intuitive grounds. The research reported here specifically addressed the concerns of text writers, but it is claimed that the findings are still relevant to the first two concerns. The research involved the analysis of a corpus of texts, and shows that factors which make the texts difficult, or less accessible, include poor linguistic, contextual and/or conceptual structure, and unclear operationalisation of the reader-writer relationship. It is argued that factors which are not considered in traditional readability formulae are more important determinants of text accessibility.

**98-440 Hong, Wei** (Purdue U.). Multimedia computer-assisted reading in Business Chinese. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **30**, 3, 335–44.

The main objective of the study reported here was to evaluate the effectiveness of multimedia computer-assisted reading in Business Chinese. The study utilised the software ‘A Multimedia Chinese Reader for Advanced Students’ in the elementary Business Chinese class at Purdue University. Experimental in-class and multimedia computer-assisted readings were conducted to examine the effectiveness of multimedia computer-assisted reading in comparison with the conventional paper-pen-dictionary reading method. The results indicated that computer-assisted reading is much more effective in improving students’ reading efficiency and in enhancing their comprehension of Business Chinese articles than the conventional reading method. Such factors of the multimedia technology as speed, electronic dictionary, and sound effects contributed considerably to the students’ reading efficiency. The study concluded that reading proficiency of second-year Business Chinese learners can be much more efficiently achieved with the assistance of multimedia technology.

**98-441 Lee, Jeong-Won** (Chungnam Nat. U.) and **Schallert, Diane Lemonnier**. The relative contribution of L2 language proficiency and L1 reading ability to L2 reading performance: a test of the threshold hypothesis in an EFL context. *TESOL Quarterly* (Alexandria, VA), **31**, 4 (1997), 713–39.

The study reported here examined the contribution of second language (L2) proficiency and first language

(L1) reading ability to L2 reading ability in terms of the threshold hypothesis of language proficiency. Two hypotheses were tested: (a) the contribution of L2 proficiency is greater than the contribution of L1 reading ability in predicting L2 reading ability; and (b) a threshold level of language proficiency exists such that learners with low levels of L2 proficiency will show little relationship between their L1 and L2 reading ability, whereas learners with higher levels of L2 proficiency will show a positive relationship between their L1 and L2 reading performance. The participants were 809 Korean third-year middle school and first-year high school students who exhibited a wide range of ability in reading both Korean and English and in their English proficiency. Scores from the three measures were subjected to descriptive, inferential, and correlational analyses. The results provided support for both hypotheses. Learners need to establish some knowledge of an L2 *per se* before they can successfully draw on their L1 reading ability to help with reading in the L2.

**98-442 Lomicka, Lara L.** (The Pennsylvania State U.). ‘To gloss or not to gloss’: an investigation of reading comprehension online. *Language Learning and Technology* (<http://polyglot.cal.msu.edu/llt>), **1**, 2 (1998), 41–50.

This pilot study investigated the effects of multimedia reading software on reading comprehension. Specifically, the study aimed to explore how multimedia annotations influence the level of comprehension. Twelve college students enrolled in a second semester French course were instructed to think aloud during the reading of text on the computer screen. Participants read the text under one of three conditions: full glossing, limited glossing, or no glossing. In addition, a tracker was set up in the software to record the amount and type of glosses, and length of time that each was consulted. The raw data clearly indicate an increase in the number of causal inferences generated for students who had access to full glossing. It is concluded that computerised reading with full glossing may promote a deeper level of text comprehension. Pedagogical suggestions for second language teaching and research are discussed.

**98-443 Wright, Lora**. Enhancing ESL reading through Reader Strategy Training. *Prospect* (Macquarie U., Sydney), **12**, 3 (1997), 15–28.

Reader Strategy Training for English as a Second Language (ESL) students in practice and theory is in its infancy. Recent research, although for the most part successful, has not reported the major gains expected from this method. Many researchers have put this down to contextual factors. In the investigation reported here, seven ESL high school students underwent a short course of reading strategy training. Important factors in the training were pre-assessment of learners’ needs, a focus on the ‘why’ and ‘when’ of the strategies as well as the ‘what’, and carefully selected reading texts. Six of the seven students showed improvement in reading

comprehension in at least one of the two measures used. It is claimed that results support the notion that reading strategy training can be effective in enhancing second language reading.

**98-444 Young, Dolly Jesusita** (U. of Tennessee) and **Oxford, Rebecca**. A gender-related analysis of strategies used to process written input in the native language and a foreign language. *Applied Language Learning* (Monterey, CA), **8**, 1 (1997), 43-73.

The study reported here examined the strategies used by native-English-speaking foreign language (FL) learners to read two Spanish texts and one English text. The primary purpose was to investigate differences in FL reading strategies between males and females. Two further questions were also posed: whether there were significant gender differences in (a) reading recall scores and (b) self-reported levels of understanding and topic familiarity. Forty-nine learners (26 females and 23 males) from a large southern university participated. After reading each passage, they conducted a think-aloud to report the strategies they used. Think-aloud protocols were coded according to two strategy types: local and global. Participants were then asked to retell the story. Results suggest that learners, whatever their level of language learning, processed the Spanish passage using primarily local strategies and the English passage using primarily global strategies. Males and females generally used similar strategies to process these passages, although there were specific strategies that were particular to males and females for each text type. There was also no significant difference in recall scores based on gender, although there were significant differences in recall scores based on the text type. Notably, though significant gender differences in self-reported levels of understanding and topic familiarity did not occur, there were significant differences among these variables according to text type. The authors discuss the results in relation to previous gender-based research in strategy use, and suggest implications for future work.

## Writing

**98-445 Akyel, Ayşe and Kaniş, Sibel** (Boğaziçi U., Istanbul). Composing in first and second languages: possible effects of EFL writing instruction. *Odense Working Papers in Language and Communication* (Odense University, Denmark), **14** (1997), 69-105.

The study reported here investigated the relationship between first (L1) and second language (L2) writing processes and the possible effects of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing instruction on these processes. Specifically, the following research questions were addressed: (a) whether there are similarities and/or differences between the Turkish and English writing processes of Turkish EFL students; (b) whether the EFL

writing instruction has an impact on their writing processes in the two languages and on the resulting compositions; and (c) whether such instruction affects their attitudes towards writing in the two languages. Eight students participated in the study; data came from analyses of think-aloud protocols, written compositions, questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. Findings indicated that the students' writing processes in Turkish and English showed more similarities than differences. Moreover, the EFL writing instruction seemed to have a positive effect both on the students' writing processes and on their attitudes to writing in the two languages.

**98-446 Albrechtsen, Dorte** (The Royal Danish School of Ed. Studies). A discourse analysis of narrative essays written in English by Danish students. *Odense Working Papers in Language and Communication* (Odense University, Denmark), **14** (1997), 1-40.

The aim of the study reported here was to develop a method of analysis that would capture discourse features characterising good and poor narrative essays respectively. The essays were written in English by Danish students (age 16 to 19); and a modified version of the narrative analysis developed by Labov and Waletzky was used. This analysis resulted in a number of measures for each text. A factor analysis was applied to these measures, yielding three factors that together explained 67.9% of the total variance. In relation to the two dominant factors, subsequent analyses of variance and T-tests showed significant differences between skill but not grade level. The findings are related to Bereiter's and Scardamalia's concepts of knowledge telling and knowledge transforming. Finally, tentative teaching implications are presented.

**98-447 Boosalis, Chris** (Arizona State U.). Demystifying business writing for ESL students. *Journal of Language for International Business* (Glendale, AZ), **9**, 1 (1998), 28-42.

This paper presents a procedure intended to make the process of writing business letters concrete to foment development and success in second-language writing classrooms. As many of the rules for writing different types of business correspondence are hidden because of their cultural context, the central focus of this work concerns how to simplify the writing process for English as a Second Language (ESL) students. Various types of business letters, in particular adjustment grant letters, are treated as cultural artifacts of discourse to be explored and examined critically. Attention focuses on how to demystify business writing so that international students can enjoy real learning and real success in ESL classrooms.