

Language learning and teaching

THEORY AND PRINCIPLES

70-127 Badia, Gilbert. A propos de l'enseignement de la 'civilisation' à l'université. [On teaching 'civilization' at the university.] *Langues Modernes* (Paris), **63**, 4 (1969), 378-81.

Replying to Arnavon's article on this subject (abstract 69-330), the author emphasizes some of the practical difficulties arising from the suggestion that lectures on legal, artistic, demographic and technological problems should be given to language students by experts. Experts in desired fields are not always available, particularly in the smaller universities. Foreign assistants are not necessarily competent to lecture on the aspects of their own countries which are required. Germany is divided and it is difficult to illustrate conditions on both sides. West Germans will have difficulty in depicting recent history to a French audience. There is also likely to be much duplication of labour round the country. To avoid this, taped or videotaped lectures are proposed which can be circulated to whichever universities require them. Careful planning of such studies is needed to incorporate them into a full language course to greatest advantage.

70-128 Cook, Vivian J. The analogy between first and second language learning. *IRAL* (Heidelberg), **7**, 3 (1969), 207-16.

Many recent language-teaching techniques have relied on there being an analogy between the ways in which a child acquires his native language and a student acquires a foreign language. Second-language learning diverges from native-language learning in development, error and grading. [Details.] The child is believed to construct interim grammars which he tests and abandons or preserves. The last hypothesis is the final adult grammar of competence in the language. Teachers usually demand that a student's sentences should be

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grammatical from the beginning. Errors, regarded as an integral part of a child's learning of his mother tongue, are considered harmful in second-language learning. The use of 'pidgin' by immigrant children ought perhaps to be commended rather than discouraged, as a stage in progress towards native competence. Material given to second-language learners is graded, usually with more emphasis on structures than on content words. A young child produces chiefly content words and omits grammatical items. He hears an unrestricted number of grammatical and ungrammatical sentences. Perception of patterns seems to be more important for a child than intensity of practice. No foreign-language teaching method can claim affinity with this picture of a child's way of learning and it still remains to be seen whether an analogy between first and second language learning is sound.

70-129 Günter, K. К проблематике ситуативного минимума. [Concerning a situational minimum.] *Русский язык в национальной школе* (Moscow), 2 (1969), 71-4.

More careful selection of extralinguistic features will enable better use to be made of situations for teaching languages. 'Theme' (a loose term, covering topics such as the family, shops, or even groups of topics) needs more rigorous definition and may be subdivided into four categories. (1) *Theme* itself refers to those extralinguistic circumstances, with loosely related characteristics of function and content in a particular sphere of activity, which arise out of the social need to communicate in order to master external reality. (2) *Situational complex* or 'sub-theme', refers to a narrower field of activity with more closely related characteristics. [Examples are listed for a given theme.] (3) *Situation* refers to a specific activity, forming one unit of a situational complex; (participants in a situation normally share correlated motivation and aims and use partially corresponding linguistic material). (4) *Situational type* refers to situations where the linguistic structures used between communicants are similar. The relative importance of these categories—including the distribution of selected linguistic and extralinguistic material—must be studied in designing a programme to include oral practice, reading and writing.

70-130 Hilton, Margaret. A scientific experiment? *Audio-Visual Language Journal* (London), 7, 2 (1969), 97-101.

In 1960 Scherer initiated a two-year experiment in the University of Colorado to evaluate the efficiency of audio-lingual and traditional methods for teaching German to beginners. The results, while showing a slight advantage in understanding and using the spoken language, did not prove any overall advantage for the audio-lingual method. An investigation into the reasons for these conclusions shows that much has still to be learnt about designing experiments relevant to language-teaching practice and considerable unevenness in the treatment of the audio-lingual and traditional groups is pointed out. Traditional methods are undoubtedly affected to some extent by new movements and teaching may be unconsciously modified accordingly.

Psychologists are well equipped to design experiments with few variables so that their data, when handed to statisticians is as unambiguous as possible. When co-operating with teachers they may take it on trust that language-teachers can describe the behaviour they are trying to induce in their pupils and identify the main variables in their specialist activity so that these can be controlled. Teachers cannot yet do this with any precision. The help of experts on teaching-practice, psycholinguists and specialists on learning theory is needed, and linguistics will have to provide adequate descriptions of native language behaviour and help to draw up a scale of approximations to it. We are far from being in a position to experiment in a scientific manner, and to expose rough and ready practices to the scrutiny of statisticians is not science but pseudo-science.

70-131 Hüllen, Werner. Geschriebene Sprache als Lernhilfe im Englischunterricht. [The written language as an aid to learning English.] *Neuere Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main), 68, 6 (1969), 282-97.

For many years the literature on methodology has stressed that teachers of English (instructing German students) should try to impart four skills: intelligent listening, speaking, reading, and writing, in that order, with strong preference being given to the first two.

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The view that the knowledge of a language is a skill rather than an accomplishment of memory goes back several decades and has been strengthened more recently through the development of modern linguistics and new psychological insights into the learning process. Language is seen primarily as a system of acoustic symbols. Imitation of sounds is the natural way of learning one's mother tongue, and it is therefore considered the ideal method of learning a second or third language. Seeing a word written down, especially in English, where there is such a difference between pronunciation and spelling, is regarded as potentially confusing.

Although modern linguistics, and especially structural linguistics in the USA, emphasizes the spoken language, it does not altogether disregard the written language; in fact, with the exception of the field of phonemic analysis, there is evidence that the written language approximates to speech in many respects. Speech is also influenced by the written language because of the latter's social prestige and its standardizing value.

Although the written language cannot express such phenomena as intonation and rhythm, it uses on the whole the same words and syntactic structure as speech. Advocates of the spoken word cannot therefore take modern linguistic theory as an excuse for largely neglecting reading and writing in the teaching of a foreign language.

Oral skills and reading and writing should not be radically separated in the teaching of English, nor should listening and speaking be given exclusive preference. Intelligent reproduction of language is more valuable than pure imitation of sounds. The student should understand what he repeats, and seeing a word written down that he has heard before helps him to grasp it. Being taught to write English might be dispensed with in certain cases, but being taught to read it is always essential.

70-132 Johnson, Francis C. What's wrong with pattern practice. *Kivung* (Boroko), 2, 1 (1969), 30-5.

Pattern practice is variously defined. It is a procedure developed early in the century for drilling similarly structured sentences so that the

overall pattern is emphasized and learned. Pattern practice drills are essentially dull. Language is used to communicate with others and is also an instrument of action. In modern courses learners practise sentence patterns without using the language to cause change or generate action. Normally members of a practice group do not participate except when it is their turn, and then only to produce a formulaic answer pattern, communication here being a one-way process. To serve as a preparation for everyday communication, pattern practice should be used in a context in which learners become dependent on each other for getting something done by means of language. In such practice contexts there would be a preponderance of request and question patterns.

In the classroom there is relatively little individual practice. An attempt is made to compensate for this by means of practice in the language laboratory or in small groups, but the teacher has to be the arbiter of correctness. [The author describes a type of automatic check involving the use of picture cards.]

70-133 Kaplan, Robert B. 491391625162541253661. *Journal of English as a Second Language* (New York), 4, 1 (1969), 7-18.

In second-language classes where the audio-lingual approach is used long sequences of possibly meaningless sounds are learned. The activities of language centres in the second world war were based on research in first-language acquisition. The child has a fully developed intuitive grammar by the time he enters school, and oral language primacy then disappears. Second-language learning does not proceed in the same way as first-language learning. There is serious doubt about the validity of the habit-skill approach and its assumptions about the nature of language and language-learning. Its basic assumption in the audio-lingual language class is that students should not write anything down; but more learning might take place if they did. A literate adult can reproduce a set of numbers or generate a comparable set if he knows the formula and is given a starting-point. This is an argument against postponing other teaching until the manipulative aspects have been mastered. Students may be able to

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manipulate skilfully without communicating. They may or may not be able to abstract a pattern from examples. A student should understand what he is learning, should be presented with grammatical information early, and should have a concrete idea about what he is expected to abstract from information presented to him.

70-134 Muskat-Tabakowska, Elżbieta. The notions of competence and performance in language teaching. *Language Learning* (Michigan), **19**, 1/2 (1969), 41-54.

Different uses of the terms 'competence' and 'performance' have resulted in confusion. [The author uses 'performance' to mean what the speaker produces on a particular occasion, and 'competence' to refer to the speaker's knowledge of the underlying system of rules at a given time.] Competence can be learned and probably taught. It is relative and measurable.

The language teacher should decide what his pupils should be *able* to say, not what they *will* say. He must have a model of the linguistic competence (*competence 1*) which his students are to achieve, and description of this in terms of underlying rules will be provided by a grammar (*grammar 1*).

There is no adequate theory of the structure of the language acquisition device, but it may be assumed that second-language learning is on the same general lines as first-language learning, though there are important differences. Mistakes made by foreign-language learners have a surface similarity to those made by young children learning their native language.

The essence of language teaching lies in providing the conditions for language learning. Data need to be presented, and grammar rules taught.

Establishing interrelations between the amount of competence and the performance of pupils at a given stage involves the classification of mistakes. The theory of competence and performance can help in analysing and explaining these. Occurrence of particular types of error may point to faults in presentation.

70-135 Pike, Eunice V. Language learning in relation to focus. *Language Learning* (Michigan), **19**, 1/2 (1969), 107-15.

Learning a little-known language while living in an area where it is spoken is easier if the learner is 'in focus'; that is, if he interacts with speakers of the language. Junior workers have fewer opportunities of receiving the attention of the people indigenous to the area. This is a sociological problem. Senior colleagues can help by giving the student opportunity for conversational practice. By interacting with people the vocabulary and grammatical constructions are more easily remembered. Intonational features and their emotional implications can be observed in context. [Situations and activities are described through which both children and adults can help the learner.] Co-workers should also talk to each other in the language they are learning.

70-136 van Parreren, Carel F. Lautbild und Schriftbild im Anfangsunterricht. [The spoken word and the printed word for teaching beginners.] *Praxis des Neusprachlichen Unterrichts* (Dortmund), **16**, 4 (1969), 359-65.

The spoken language is now of prime importance in teaching foreign languages, but the length of time during which the pupils should only hear and speak the foreign language is debatable. Recently arguments for audio techniques were set out by G. Zimmermann (abstract no. 70-137) and these are discussed. The merits of teaching by a totally aural method have to be compared with those of using a text for assistance with, for example, reading aloud. Rhythm and intonation are absorbed when the pupils hear as well as read, and analysis of a text may be a stepping stone to spontaneous comprehension; but the written word is not used in learning one's mother tongue, and a comparison between this and the learning of a foreign language is not necessarily inappropriate. No-one has specified how long the initial oral period should last. Introducing the printed word late makes instruction tiring, and pupils instinctively imagine incorrect spellings of words in the absence of correct ones.

Experiments in the psychology laboratory at Utrecht are showing

the effect of teaching the pupils to read but not to write. Learning in order to recognize words again rather than with a view to reproducing words oneself gives good results. Nevertheless pupils must not become dependent on the printed word. It must be the means towards understanding the language without it.

70-137 Zimmermann, Günther. Phasen und Formen der Sprach-
erlernung bei einem audio-visuellen Kurs. [Phases and
forms of language learning using an audio-visual course.]
Praxis des Neusprachlichen Unterrichts (Dortmund), **16**,
1 (1969), 69-78.

The article deals with the bases of language learning by audio-visual methods, illustrated from a course for French pupils, *Passport to English*, in particular from its first part, which is meant to be started at the age of thirteen and takes two to two-and-a-half years to complete.

After a detailed description of the course material (illustrated text-book, tape, filmstrip) the advantages over traditional textbooks are pointed out, especially the situational rather than grammatical approach involving both dialogue spoken by native speakers and pictures of the situation, with which the dialogue is associated in the pupil's memory. The adopting of correct pronunciation and intonation as well as the memorizing of vocabulary and language patterns are greatly facilitated by these aids.

An account is given of how this course was used in a class of German pupils. The stages discussed are: presentation of the material, explanation, consolidation of the new knowledge gained, exploitation, and application of the newly acquired language patterns in a wider context.

The effect of an audio-visual course on the pupils and the changed role of the teacher are investigated. The conclusion reached is highly favourable.

TEACHER TRAINING

- 70-138 Bedford, Richard C.** The role and function of the native teacher. *Language Learning* (Michigan), **19**, 1/2 (1969), 17-25.

Resistance to the oral-aural approach is due partly to some teachers' lack of fluency and partly to the fact that it has radically changed teaching patterns and the classroom atmosphere. There has been an increased demand for foreign 'teachers', and the native teacher is often uneasy about his role. His one asset is his fluency in the students' native language. This fluency will allow him to explain more than his foreign colleague. Not everything can be learnt without explanation, and not everything can be explained. By pointing out contrasts of experience and values between two cultures the native teacher can force students to attend to what would not be thought of or said in their own language. The native teacher can also spot and discourage silent translation, the source of error being immediately apparent to him, and by making the foreign teacher more aware of interferences from the native language he can improve the foreign teacher's performance. A native speaker's most important function is to serve as a living example of success in learning the target language. In day-to-day cooperation with the foreign teacher the native teacher can also increase his own fluency.

- 70-139 Poth, Joseph.** Les apports du circuit fermé de télévision à la formation pédagogique pratique des professeurs de langues appelés à l'utilisation des méthodes audio-visuelles. [The contribution of closed-circuit television to the practical training of language teachers in the use of audio-visual methods.] *Revue de phonétique appliquée* (Mons), **11** (1969), 13-29.

The essential spirit of a class conducted on audio-visual lines cannot be conveyed by traditional means, and direct observation in a class of this type can only be superficial. By watching a fellow student giving a practice lesson on a television screen, other members of the group in

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training are able to identify themselves with their colleague. The lecturer can guide his students to watch the salient points of the first few lessons until they have built up a frame of reference for themselves. They can then be sent out individually to watch a live class and eventually to prepare their own practice lessons. [Diagram shows a suitable closed-circuit installation and the arrangement of a class for this medium for both group and individual teaching.] The student's lesson should be followed by a televised demonstration class given by the teacher trainer which will also be discussed by the students.

It should be possible, with the help of a computer, to break down items to be taught into very small units and thereby build up an ideal demonstration lesson. A coding system for the students' lessons would also supply visual and scientific documents showing progress made and deficiencies noted.

TEACHING METHODS

70-140 Aleamoni, Lawrence M. and Richard E. Spencer. An evaluation of the Pennsylvania foreign language project. *Modern Language Journal* (St Louis, Missouri), **53**, 6 (1969), 421-8.

This critique is concerned with specific elements in two of the final reports on the Pennsylvania project, which attempted to compare the alternative teaching approaches to foreign language instruction and evaluate them (with special interest in the achievements of the audio-lingual approach), to determine which of the most commonly used language laboratory systems is most effective as an adjunct to foreign language instruction, and to discover the most effective way of integrating it into one or more of several alternative teaching strategies. The aims were somewhat diffuse and ten more specific objectives in the field are stated. The general conclusion reached, after some detailed criticism of the sampling, design and analyses of the project, is one of doubt about the feasibility of using the results to say anything about the comparative effectiveness of language-

teaching systems. Recommendations based on the results would accordingly be suspect.

[Further articles in the same issue of the *Modern Language Journal* by Frank Otto and Elton Hocking deal specifically with the teacher and the language laboratory.]

70-141 Bauer, Camille. Culture et civilisation françaises: buts et méthodes. [French civilization and culture: goals and methods.] *French Review* (Baltimore, Md), **43**, 1 (1969), 64-71.

There has been some doubt as to the true coverage of the words 'civilization' and 'culture'. It would be preferable to reserve 'culture' for the social traits of an ethnic group, but at present it more often implies literature, fine arts, philosophy. However worth while these studies are, students are more likely to be interested in contemporary social background. They may be cynical and blasé, and such studies can help to destroy chauvinism and provincialism and develop objectivity and tolerance. In order to appreciate a foreign civilization students need to be made aware of their own. Eating habits and tastes are used as an example of such an approach and considered in some detail. Suggested topics at a similar level are listed and also topics of literary and political interest for more profound study.

70-142 Bedford, Richard C. The aural-oral approach reviewed. *English-Teaching Forum* (Washington), **7**, 3 (1969), 2-5.

To define language as oral expression is inadequate. Not all students of English need to speak it. Reading and writing programmes have usually been deferred until aural-oral fluency is advanced. The relationship between the oral and written forms is more complicated than the listening-speaking-reading-writing sequence suggests. In English there is a low correlation between sound and spelling. Many meaningful sounds have no written equivalents. Oral and written forms differ markedly in morphology, syntax and vocabulary. Most foreign students arriving in America need reading, writing and listening ability immediately. The aural-oral approach calls for

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fluency on the teacher's part and is taxing; it was not devised for teacher training. Pupils taught by teachers where English is scarcely intelligible to a native speaker will be still less intelligible. No improvement in methods and materials can eliminate the need for continued reinforcement, but often this is not available. If there is little opportunity to practise English, there is no need to learn to speak it. More experiment is needed with new ways of teaching reading and writing.

70-143 Chastain, Kenneth. Prediction of success in audio-lingual and cognitive classes. *Language Learning* (Michigan), **19**, 1/2 (1969), 27-39.

An experiment conducted with six classes of students, three taught by audio-lingual methods and three by cognitive methods, showed a high correlation between achievement and past academic record. For the cognitive group, the significant predictors of achievement were aptitude and school rank: the same data as would be used for other subjects on the curriculum. Prediction was less sure in the audio-lingual classes. Results also showed that it would be possible, taking account of a student's capabilities, to place him more suitably in the one type of class than in the other.

70-144 Rallo, John A. A cooperative French program: a new approach. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **2**, 4 (1969), 474-6.

Because a class of students will acquire an uneven mastery of the basic language skills during a school year it is difficult to stream them adequately for the following year. Darien High School, Connecticut, tried the experiment of group teaching; new materials being presented to the whole year's students at once and then reinforcement and individual help provided in three groups. After periodic testing the students were regrouped according to progress. The students appreciated the increased attention they received and the teamwork of the teachers, and made great efforts to respond and progress.

70–145 Shchukin, A. О способах проверки владения языком. [On the methods of checking language mastery.] *Русский язык в национальной школе* (Moscow), 1 (1969), 82–4.

Experiments were conducted on Singalese after two months' study of Russian to investigate the effects of three methods commonly used in presenting lexical meaning. Three groups of five subjects consisting of adolescent schoolchildren, workers aged between 20 and 30 with secondary education, and university teachers aged between 35 and 40 underwent three series of experiments, involving the same lexical items. The methods used for the presentation of meaning consisted of translation into English, pictures and explanation in Russian. Tests were carried out by asking for a translation from English into Russian (reproduction) and from Russian into English (recognition).

The adolescent schoolchildren performed better with the pictures than with the two other methods, the university teachers displayed the best overall results from all three methods, while the workers gave fewer correct answers than the university teachers. Age and linguistic background obviously exert great influence on the recognition and reproduction of lexical items. The schoolchildren appreciated pictorial presentation since they were already well acquainted with visual teaching techniques and because perception at their age functions through the concrete and the visual. Adults showed a preference for explanation reflecting their tendency towards abstract rather than concrete thinking.

These particular characteristics underline two types of foreign language mastery: intuitive and logical. The former is thought to be of more value, since it lays more stress on the practical and productive use of language than the latter, which tends to rely more on translation for its effectiveness.

[Recommendations follow for implementing the intuitive type of language learning.]

- 70-146 Valette, Rebecca M.** The Pennsylvania project, its conclusions and its implications. *Modern Language Journal* (St Louis, Missouri), **53**, 6 (1969), 396-404.

This four-year study was initiated in 1965 to evaluate (1) the relative effectiveness of traditional, audio-lingual and modified audio-lingual teaching methods; and (2) the relative merits of three language laboratory systems: audio-active, audio-active-record, and the classroom tape-recorded. Published reports indicate that no substantial advantages were found for modern methods but these reports oversimplify complex findings. The findings are reviewed, the project described, and the implications studied. Some detailed implications are that tests used to evaluate student achievement should be revised; criterion-referenced tests should be developed; student learning rates should be re-examined; programmes need to be restructured to accommodate all types of learner; language laboratories should be reviewed as a means of individual instruction rather than of drilling; finally the relationship between teacher proficiency and teacher competence needs investigation.

- 70-147 Wilpert, Klaus.** Some aspects of modern-language teaching in West Germany. *English Language Teaching* (London), **24**, 1 (1969), 71-5.

German schools use 'the moderate direct method'. Ministries prescribe teaching methods and the material to be taught. [The author describes the stages of a typical lesson, which extends over about ten periods. He deals also with types of homework.] The text of the lesson is translated into German. Vocabulary learning starts after this. Grammar teaching is on inductive lines. In English easy stories are introduced after one year, in French after three years. The reading of complete texts is confined mainly to the *Oberstufe*. [The author gives a lesson plan.] The pupils' abilities are tested in various ways, but especially by reproduction of a story and comment on it.

CLASS METHODS

- 70-148 Partington, J. A.** Streams, sets or mixed-ability groups. *Modern Languages* (London), 50, 3 (1969), 112-20.

The arguments against the segregation of children into different types of secondary school can also apply to the segregation of children by ability within the school. Most of the experiment with mixed-ability groups has been with content subjects, such as history and geography. Mathematics and languages are cumulative subjects where later stages can only be built on secure foundations. A language is also a skill which cannot be practised alone.

If children are grouped into sets for language learning it is better to base this grouping on attainment. Different approaches are usually needed for the different sets. The Pimsleur report shows that students have a positive bias towards learning either by ear or eye. Further research is needed on the manner in which this affects language learning; it could well be a factor in 'setting'. Experimentation with different groupings is necessary in view of the social argument for mixed-ability classes.

- 70-149 Varkovitskaya, L.** Работа над репликами диалогической речи. [Experimental work on the cues and responses of dialogue.] *Русский язык в национальной школе* (Moscow), 4 (1969), 19-25.

The syntactic links which exist between the cue and response elements of dialogue were taken as a working basis for experimentation with young pupils learning Russian as their second language.

Experiments showed that, with specific training, the natural use of both these elements of dialogue could be developed successfully. Such training centred around the use of dialogue in seeking and giving information and in exhortation to perform a specific activity. Naturalness was best encouraged by linking the dialogues to a definite situation, and success in their composition depended largely on the degree to which the topics chosen conformed to the age and interests of the pupils involved. Even the weakest pupils were able to take

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part in such dialogues and remembered the material better than they would have remembered a text intended for retelling.

Textbooks should avoid introducing forms of speech not typical of the language of the children using the books, and be more orientated than at present towards training pupils to pose and answer questions in a natural fashion.

[Examples of the dialogues obtained by using games, pictures and situations as stimuli amply illustrate these points.]

TRAVEL

70-150 Allen, Virginia F. Understanding the cultural context. *Modern Language Journal* (St Louis, Missouri), **53**, 5 (1969), 324-6.

The cultural associations of words for native speakers, the meaning of contemporary expressions and social customs are quite difficult for a learner to acquire. While visiting a country where the target language is spoken one should try to establish contact with people in different age-groups, get to know people considered conservative by their fellows, find out what games, songs and stories children grow up with, learn what forms of behaviour are acceptable, discuss contemporary fiction and newspapers, follow radio and television and attend religious and civic ceremonies and sporting events. It should be a language learner's goal to experience the situations that give a language its meanings.

70-151 Brooks, Nelson. Teaching culture abroad: from concept to classroom technique. *Modern Language Journal* (St Louis, Missouri), **53**, 5 (1969), 320-4.

One concept of culture may be a dialectic between self and life, an interaction that takes place in a matrix of language. 'Cultural shock' is a function of the 'self versus life' encounter, in which life demands a conformity that the self cannot supply without bewilderment and even injury. A further concept may be termed the pragmatics of

language. It is insufficient to know the dictionary definition of a word without knowing what associations that word may have for a native speaker of the language. Culture study may be seen as an extension of the study of language and literature. Culture, civilization and society are defined and the objectives of culture study are stated as: to understand, to empathize, to participate. The fourth step is a better understanding of oneself and one's compatriots. In the classroom students can be told what to look for and what to expect. Techniques depend on the learner's age and language competence [suggestions].

TEACHING AIDS

70-152 Neumeister, Herman. Über die Beschäftigung von Lehrassistenten. [On the employment of foreign assistant teachers.] *Neuere Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main), **18**, 9 (1969), 417-38.

Looking at the question mainly from the point of view of foreign assistants in Germany, but also considering briefly German assistants overseas, a detailed analysis is given of the kinds of task a foreign assistant can be asked to undertake. Much useful practical advice is given on the kind of help a young student in a foreign country needs with living accommodation, explanation of the school system, social facilities, use of leisure and so on. The need is stressed for the modern-language teacher to spend a great deal of time with his new assistant initially, explaining how he himself conducts his classes (which the assistant should be allowed to attend at first and, if possible, contribute to) and detailing what will be required of his assistant, how he should limit his vocabulary and what topics he can choose for conversation. Mechanical aids, their use and places of storage must be explained and made available.

Attention is drawn to the contents of preparatory courses for assistants held late in the summer by the British Council in Germany and the education authorities in Geneva and Lausanne. [Bibliography.]

TEXTBOOKS

- 70-153 Heuer, Helmut.** Lehrbuchforschung und Lehrbuchkritik. [Textbooks—research and criticism.] *Praxis des Neusprachlichen Unterrichts* (Dortmund), **16**, 4 (1969), 365-87.

There is need for research into what a textbook should consist of. From an examination of various methods of criticism it is concluded that there should be a synthesis between theoretical and empirical methods. A nineteenth-century textbook, Plate's three-volume textbook for the English language, is chosen for detailed consideration since such a book is not subject to current controversy. The various ways of evaluating a textbook are enumerated—the book's historical and actual merit, whether it achieves its declared aims, its similarities or differences from other such books, its structure, and the various problems confronting researchers of the present day.

VISUAL AIDS

- 70-154 Bennett, W. A.** The organisation and function of visual material in second language teaching. *Audio-Visual Media* (London), **3**, 2 (1969), 28-35.

Although illustrations have long been a part of textbooks, the relationship between material and illustration has not been systematic and limitations which used to be the result of technical difficulties have continued after those difficulties have been overcome. Pictures in language teaching have traditionally dealt with situational meaning. A sequence of pictures represents dynamic human behaviour, while the wall-picture presents static events and relies on the teacher to concentrate the students' attention. No picture should be overloaded with irrelevant detail. The study of gesture and expression and the semantic coding of colour are matters that have received relatively little attention. Teaching material, whilst striving to mirror reality, must be organized. A great deal of the work on the production of visual material for language teaching has been intuitive. The tradi-

tional teaching distinction between active and passive language items has often been forgotten in the establishment of frequency counts. If a text for illustration contains a large amount of passive or redundant language it is best served by a film. The contrast between 'audio-visual' and 'audio-lingual' has often represented the contrast between situational and formal approaches to language description and teaching. Formal teaching (or drilling) may be conducted with a visual as a stimulus, which also codes the basic material, thus avoiding the distortion of the language elements when they are isolated as cues in substitution exercises.

LANGUAGE LABORATORIES

70-155 Ager, D. E. 'Open-ended' exercises in the language laboratory. *Modern Languages* (London), **50**, 2 (1969), 73-8.

Advanced students find it hard to connect their thoughts rapidly, to colour what they say, and to concentrate on what they are saying. Open-ended exercises are more likely to encourage these three abilities than pattern and structure drills are. Retelling can be developed into a more complex exercise in the laboratory and can be used to practise the colouring of statements. Comprehension is a form of test, and the questions should not involve the student in language difficulty unnecessarily. The pure comprehension exercise allows students to concentrate on the subject-matter. Response exercises are a form of memory training and repetition. Description and commentary in response to visual stimuli is a free and flexible though demanding exercise. Oral essays are of various types, practise all three abilities, and test in much the same way as a written essay; and recording follows teaching or learning. The student can absorb clichés and everyday expressions from pre-recorded tapes of conversation, discussions, interviews, etc. The laboratory can help students to prepare speeches and to rehear material and commentary. Comprehension and comment are crucial processes in language learning. Listening and reproducing are basic to the natural language learning process. The laboratory is private and students can use their own time

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there. The exercises are not self-correcting. Students enjoy improving their own versions.

70-156 Banathy, Bela M. and Boris Jordan. A classroom laboratory instructional system (CLIS). *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), 2, 4 (1969), 466-73.

Six years ago the CLIS system (planned interaction of live instruction, a classroom laboratory and other media) was introduced, and recently an evaluation has been undertaken. [Some details given of the method.] The use of the classroom laboratory within the system increased student participation. Other advantages are the quality, intensity, consistency and quantity of language materials and signals. One disadvantage is that the tempo and quantity of language material are the same for all students but individual work with students during the laboratory session can overcome this. Another disadvantage is that facial and body movements normally used in conversation are absent from laboratory work. Kinesics seem to contribute to a student's ability to communicate but it is not known to what extent. With the CLIS system the student is in direct contact with the teacher for half of every lesson. The teacher is a manager of learning rather than just a source of information and a drill master. He is a guide to the learner and monitors both his progress and the adequacy of the recorded programme.

70-157 Freedman, Elaine S. An investigation into the efficacy of the language laboratory in foreign-language teaching. *Audio-Visual Language Journal* (London), 7, 2 (1969), 75-95.

Having examined previous attempts to test language laboratory efficacy in the teaching of foreign languages, the present experiment was devised to teach only one point of grammar, the use of the French infinitive as a noun introduced by *à* or *de* or no preposition. The class was divided alphabetically to form a control and an experimental group. [Details of the type of laboratory and of the

teaching and testing of this point are given.] The language laboratory method was found to be more effective but a reminder is added that the laboratory is only a tool which works well when good teachers prepare good materials for it. It may also affect the student's attitude to foreign-language learning enabling him to achieve better results because his interest is held and he is highly motivated to learn. [Bibliography.]

70-158 Gutschow, Harald. Der gegenwärtige Stand der Methodik und Didaktik der Sprachlaborarbeit. [The present position of language-laboratory methodology.] *Sprachlabor* (Frankfurt am Main), 3 (1969), 80-95. (Supplement to *Die Neueren Sprachen*).

The use of language laboratories in schools has brought a new precision to teaching. The relationship of programmed learning to language laboratory work is questioned as the learner with a programme works at his own pace whereas the language laboratory sets the pace for its students. Few teachers have judged it impossible to integrate laboratory work with the normal class teaching. The laboratory enables practice, to the point of over-learning if required, of material already introduced in class, native speakers can be used not only for their accent but also to avoid an unnatural type of 'school English'. Manipulation exercises have to precede free communication. Recently much attention has been given to the contextualization of drills. This enhances learning even though there is an attendant danger that a realistic situation will involve the learner in expressions too difficult for him to handle.

Laboratory programmes can be designed (1) to give practice on isolated points with or without a situation, (2) as an accompaniment to a textbook, or (3) as independent courses. The pattern which is emerging now is: (1) dialogues as starting-point, forming situations to which drills refer, (2) drills on small units of communication, (3) drills on any particular points of difficulty at that point in the programme, (4) oral work combining points which have been practised (often taking the form of role-playing in the dialogues).

The language laboratory has its limitations. Different opinions

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have been expressed on this point arising from individual experience, but it is certain that the laboratory best performs the functions for which it was designed, namely to teach the spoken language. It may help to improve the pupils' attitude to language learning, though some may find that they do not perform so well in the laboratory as they did in ordinary class teaching. On a master-tape the use of a man's voice for girls and a woman's voice for boys should be considered, and the length of time in which concentration in a language laboratory (and in the classroom) is possible. Attempts are being made to use the laboratory not only for practice but for the introduction of items, for bridging primary- and secondary-school work, for adult teaching, businessmen's courses, army language work, etc.

A possible further development of the laboratory is its closer integration with visual material. Computer-assisted instruction for the teaching of foreign languages is also under discussion and experiment.

70-159 Heuser, Inge and Hans Messelken. Zum didaktischen Wert des Vierphasenrhythmus in der Sprachlaborarbeit. [On the value of the four-phase rhythm in language-laboratory work.] *Sprachlabor* (Frankfurt am Main), 3 (1969), 76-80. (Supplement to *Die Neueren Sprachen*.)

The four-phase language laboratory drill has been criticized as inefficient. A check made in Freiburg showed that 25 per cent of the answers given in drills were wrong and two-thirds of these remained unnoticed by the student after correction. Girls made fewer mistakes than boys and a higher proportion noticed their errors and corrected them. Younger children were better than older children at giving correct answers and noticing errors which they made. [Detailed tables given.] It is possible that correction may be hampered by previous error, causing the boys' errors to increase, but this would seem to be contradicted by the fact that the difference in the percentage of recognized errors between good and weak pupils was relatively small. The fourth phase is thereby shown to be important for the weaker pupils. For this reason four-phase drills will be retained for English teaching in the *Hauptschule*.

- 70-160 Lee, D. A.** The language laboratory and reading in a foreign language. *Audio-visual Language Journal* (London), **7**, 2 (1969), 103-7, and *Review for Applied Linguistics* (Louvain), **3** (1969), 18-25.

Many people working in higher education would be glad to convert an elementary knowledge of a foreign language acquired at school into a useful reading ability. The language laboratory can be used to help students by devising a series of comprehension and answer tapes based on simplified magazine articles which will have been prepared by the teacher using only high-frequency vocabulary and structures. 'Phrasal synonymy' (comparing the simplified structure with the original section of the text) can then be conducted in class or with laboratory tapes to introduce the student to more complex language in a context which he already understands. Familiarity with high-frequency function words is important. It is useful to supply lists of these items and ask the student to fit them correctly into sentences. This focuses his attention on high-frequency items and ensures understanding of the sentence. Important vocabulary items from special fields can also be drilled in this way, at the same time providing the student with further examples in the register which he wishes to read. After the preparatory work the context of the subject-matter will have become familiar and subsequent reading will become easier. [An example from a French text illustrates the stages of this method.]

- 70-161 Sager, J. C.** The language laboratory and contextual teaching methods. *IRAL* (Heidelberg), **7**, 3 (1969), 217-29.

Modern language-teaching methods utilizing various forms of audio-visual equipment have been developed under two guiding principles: simultaneous teaching of morphology and syntax, taking the sentence as the smallest study unit; and studying language only in the context of real language situations. These principles are drawn from observation of the learning process of the mother tongue, but in second-language learning structural and contextual principles may be in

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conflict. This is particularly true in the field of language laboratory exercises. The relative importance of each method will depend on the age and stage of learning of the pupils. These factors will also decide the kind and frequency of language laboratory exercises. Language-laboratory teaching is most difficult at an advanced level. Here special vocabularies and registers can be illustrated and practised. The student can be asked to transform an order into a polite request or establish a specified time relationship by means of conjunctions, adverbs or change of tenses. Situational teaching, of most value at the primary stage, can be adapted to fit context, grammar or stylistic orientation suitable for the adolescent, adult beginner, or adult advanced learner respectively.

70-162 Wakeman, Alan. How much silence? *Journal of English Teaching* (Tokyo), 3, 3 (1969), 152-7.

The introduction of a language laboratory moves the onus of a good lesson from the teacher's shoulders to the pupils'. They will realize this and it may make them nervous. The temptation for the teacher is to overcome their nervousness by recording his tapes slowly (as he would speak slowly to gain their confidence in class) leaving gaps between each item, but too much silence on a tape will also make students nervous. It is essential to make sure they know exactly what is expected of them in the pauses and that there should only be pauses where they are expected to speak. A normal native rate of speaking is best as students will only speak at a normal speed if they are accustomed to be taught at that rate.

TEACHING MACHINES

70-163 Rosenbaum, Peter S. The computer as a learning environment for foreign language instruction. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), 2, 4 (1969), 457-65.

IBM Research has been developing and testing computer-based learning which could provide more individually supervised practice

than can be achieved in a conventional classroom. There would be no gain from the mere use of a computer but only from a clear view of the relation between several essential components of instruction which are equally valuable for classroom and computer-assisted instruction: acceptable content, a readily comprehensible system for imparting information, and a supervisory system assigning tasks on an individual basis. If any one of these components is seriously defective, even a CAI (computer-assisted instruction) course will fail. The student, given this ideal environment, must have a sense of achievement and must not be forced to repeat poor work too long if he has not grasped a point. Giving the student options in his work will teach course writers which are the best strategies. Considerable progress was made by first-year students of German at the State University of New York using a CAI laboratory. A control group taught by an audio-lingual course did not perform so well in reading and writing though they did equally well in aural exercises. The gains were much greater for the average and poor students than for the best and this result is important as many language learners are average or below average.

IMMIGRANTS

70-164 Krear, Serafina E. The role of the mother tongue at home and at school in the development of bilingualism. *English Language Teaching* (London), **24**, 1 (1969), 1-4.

If immigrants are discouraged from using their mother tongue at school, they may develop a feeling of guilt and serious emotional problems can result in a loss of identity. The relationship between mother and child, once established in a given language, is too personal for the school to change. When the mother tongue is used in the home, English can be mastered without an accent. Parents who speak incorrect English with their children are providing poor language-models. Positive attitudes towards the use of the mother tongue at school provide an environment of acceptance for the non-English speaker. Positive attitudes towards use of the mother tongue at home

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provide an atmosphere of security, authentic speech models, an absence of poor speech models of English, and a perfect opportunity to become bilingual.

SPEECH

70-165 Schwartz, Leon. The other M's: manipulation and mastery. *French Review* (Baltimore, Md), **43**, 1 (1969), 81-92.

Many audio-lingual teaching programmes have failed to guide the learner to 'real-life' language use. It is not possible, even in advanced conversation classes, to move too quickly from a narrative model to free conversation and the attainment of independent speech at an elementary level may be impossible. Nevertheless it is possible to encourage the students to vary a dialogue using past experience of the language. One partner may start from a known script while the other improvises his replies. The class may work in teams. [An example is given of a telephone conversation planning an outing, and also of more advanced question and answer work on a text about the Common Market, gradually working away from the text to a discussion on American industry.] No textbook could contain complete illustrations of expansive drills and development work and the class teacher has to supplement them in order to make a proper transition from pattern drilling to the natural use of language.

70-166 Varro, Gabrielle. Des articles de presse dans les cours de conversation. [Newspaper articles in the conversation class.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), 66 (1969), 35-43.

Adults studying a foreign language for pleasure or for their work present great problems for the teacher of a conversation class. The newspaper and magazine will provide the richest source of subjects of all kinds for discussion and help to provide the necessary cultural background. An article or extract of no more than 600-800 words can be taken from any paper or magazine, except a 'daily' since this

may be too political or require continuous reading over several days. The chosen article should as far as possible be free from 'journalise' and should be usable in part or as a whole, as a basis for discussion, explanation or grammatical elucidation. [Example worked out in detail from an industrial upset reported in *Paris-Match*.] One hour should be devoted to a close study of the text of the article, practice of constructions in it, and explanation of references. A second hour can then be devoted to free discussion and conversation arising from it. As the students advance, the first stage of textual study can be carried out to some extent orally, a student instead of the teacher reading the passage initially, and another providing an oral summary of it sentence by sentence in indirect speech. Later, all the students can be asked to take notes during the reading and write a précis of the passage.

PRONUNCIATION

70-167 **Lebel, Jean-Guy.** Apport des exercices systématiques de discrimination auditive dans la correction phonétique. [The contribution of systematic exercises in auditory discrimination for phonetic correction.] *Revue de phonétique appliquée* (Mons), 10 (1969), 3-9.

When attempting to rectify students' pronunciation, it is essential to make sure that they hear the sounds correctly. Their powers of auditory discrimination should be tested and where necessary the ear has to be educated. [Several examples of systematic exercises in auditory discrimination are given, and a description of eight different types of exercise, which are directed towards English learners of French.]

GRAMMAR

- 70-168 **Torrey, Jane W.** The learning of grammatical patterns. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*. (New York), 8, 3 (1969), 360-8.

An experiment was designed to show that it is possible to learn a sequence of abstract linguistic categories apart from any sequences of particular words. Russian was used for the experiment which was conducted by teaching sentences as substitution drills. Sixteen students were drilled extensively in producing simple Russian sentences of three different patterns, and sixteen control students were given explicit grammatical rules followed by equal training on the same set of words learned separately. The students trained with the pattern drills were faster and more accurate in producing, completing and remembering sentences than were the control students, although the test sentences contained none of the same sequences of words that had occurred in the pattern-drill training. A third group of sixteen students trained by a combination of the two methods performed better than the control students but not as well as the drill students.

There are still limitations on these 'rule-learning theories' as theories of language learning. We need to account for the difference between conscious application of rules (control students) and automatic unconscious conformity to grammatical rules (drill students). Another limitation is that this theory applies only to rules defined as form-class sequences. No theory will be complete till it accounts for the learning of other types of rules.

VOCABULARY

- 70-169 **Zasorina, L.** Частотные и учебные словари. [Word frequency lists and teaching vocabularies.] *Русский язык в национальной школе* (Moscow), 2 (1969), 20-5.

It was once hoped that word-frequency lists, like the one now being compiled in the Department of Mathematical Linguistics of Leningrad University, would resolve fundamental problems of the amount

and choice of vocabulary for various categories of learners. Whilst minimum word-lists cannot be compiled without reference to statistical data, other factors must also be taken into account. In the definition of 'basic' vocabulary, word-frequency counts are of great importance.

Statistical data give an approximate picture of the stratification of vocabulary. Our knowledge of the distribution of content words is less precise than that of form words, which give about 50 per cent coverage of a text. There have been recent attempts to define the most frequent 2,000 content words in Russian. The importance of word-frequency lists has however been exaggerated and the percentage coverage of a text wrongly equated with comprehension—a complex process in which other factors are important. Using all four parameters of the count (total frequency, stability of dispersal of frequencies, range and local frequency), the vocabulary can be broken down into five layers each related differently to the thematic content of texts. [Diagram.] The concept of a basic vocabulary must therefore be rejected as too primitive.

A purely lexical approach to language learning is unrealistic. The process of learning a language is much more complex than learning vocabulary by rote. By learning words in context, many of their associative relations which operate in language are fixed in the student's 'linguistic memory'. The discovery of a reserve vocabulary which operates in support of the basic vocabulary in spontaneous use of language is important. Its composition may change according to the speaker's psychological state, his current interests, etc. In view of all these factors, work on word-frequency lists is leading to a better understanding of basic vocabulary.

READING

70–170 Pretzschner, Wilfried. Entwicklung von Fertigkeiten und Fähigkeiten im stillen Lesen mit Wörterbuch. [The development of facility in silent reading with a dictionary.] *Fremdsprachenunterricht* (Berlin), 13, 6 (1969), 266–72.

Attempts to help pupils to read fluently have been made by selection

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of graded material, but little has been done to develop a systematic method for helping them to read silently as individuals. A sample investigation of pupils' present habits showed that 48 per cent tried to read rapidly through the passage first to get the gist of it without the dictionary, 27 per cent simply attempted a translation, and 25 per cent looked up any unknown words first and then translated.

A method is suggested for improving the approach to silent reading for upper secondary pupils from 15 to 18 years of age using texts of medium difficulty.

A certain acquisition of vocabulary and structure has to be assumed and the pupils must be in a position to recognize the main grammatical divisions of a sentence and their syntactical relationships and must understand the construction of the dictionary and what help can be expected from it. Secondly, help can be given by a word-symbol outline of the content of the passage which, without revealing the content in such detail that the pupil no longer needs to read in order to answer questions on the passage, nevertheless provides a guiding framework to help him grasp the sense. [Examples.] Reading speed must gradually be increased by setting more to be read in the appointed time. A check-list of questions is provided which the student can ask himself to check his understanding, with points indicated at which he may reasonably turn to the teacher for help.

COMPOSITION

70-171 Dykstra, Gerald. Breaking down your writing goals. *English for American Indians* (Washington, DC), 3 (1969), 1-10.

Teaching goals are often too remote or too amorphous. They should be broken down into components that are small enough to be readily attained by the student. Samples of good writing should be used as models. Basic handwriting ability will have to be acquired and skill with punctuation, spelling and layout in the form of margins and paragraphs. A certain amount of accurate copying will be necessary

in the early stages, turning the print of the model passage into handwriting. Next, small changes may be made in the paragraph; the student may be asked to alter *he* to *they* and make the accompanying adjustments. Small changes of topic may then be made. Advanced stages of such a writing programme will require discussion of the model text, and will involve various types of free writing. The student may be asked to write a paragraph on a key sentence, or on a given subject with sub-topics suggested for guidance. Eventually a student may be allowed to choose a subject and write freely to the extent required by the teacher. It is not desirable to teach without seeing progress but this will be the result if the teacher's goals are beyond the students' abilities.

70-172 Winfield, J. Marking and correcting English compositions. *English Bulletin* (Hong Kong), 5, 5 (1969), 14-21.

The marking of compositions is always a heavy task. Conscientious teachers tend to overmark but undermarking is of little help to the pupils. A simple, unified marking code can be a help and a standardized version used by all English teachers would be of even greater help. Many correction problems disappear if the composition is effectively controlled. There should be a means of consolidating work already mastered. Pupils must be encouraged to eliminate carelessness by rereading carefully for their own errors. It is part of the teacher's job to develop an eye for inaccuracy in his pupils. The most difficult to deal with are structural errors involving points of grammar and syntax. Minor points can be settled by a paragraph reference to the course book. Major errors may be corrected through a series of cards on which are written brief explanations and related exercises. The pupil is referred to the number of the card for study and extra practice [specimen given]. Errors made by a number of pupils can be corrected by remedial work in class.

Opinions vary on the extent to which marked work should be corrected by pupils but it is agreed that different errors should be corrected in different ways. Square brackets can indicate a selected part to be rewritten.

ENGLISH See also abstract 70-131.

70-173 Claxton, M. M. Queen's English by royal charter: the work of the British Council. *Times Educational Supplement* (London), 2840 (October 24, 1969), 34.

English teaching forms a major part of the work of the British Council in nearly all the seventy-five countries where it operates. Attention is given particularly to advanced students, the teachers and their trainers, and work is carried out where possible through local education authorities and institutions. Much thought is devoted to the crucial early stages of language learning, to improving the reading abilities of advanced students and to modernizing tests and examinations. Assistance is given with libraries and technical aids, and specialists undertake brief overseas tours or help to staff summer schools. Teachers are recruited through the Council for governments and institutions overseas. Overseas work is supported by the large library and information service of the English-Teaching Information Centre in London headquarters, and also by a teaching institute engaged in experimental teaching.

70-174 Kamratowski, Joachim and Joachim Schneider. Zum Problem der englischen Rechtschreibung. [Problems of English spelling.] *Englisch* (Berlin), 4, 3 (1969), 69-74.

Good readers are usually good writers and conversely, through attention to spelling, pupils may become faster readers. An experiment was conducted to discover the kind and quantity of English spelling mistakes made by English children between eight and eleven years of age compared with German learners of twelve years of age. The scores showed 47 per cent of error from the English group and 42 per cent from the German group. The mistakes are analysed in diagrams and the factors found to influence spelling are: the frequency of use of the words, length of words, regularity of spelling, similarity of German and English words, powers of concentration of the child. Spelling games and visual aids need to be used regularly to ensure accurate learning.

- 70-175 Lendon, K. H.** Teaching English literature at the advanced levels in Japan. *Journal of English Teaching* (Tokyo), **3**, 3 (1969), 197-201.

Methodology for teaching literature at an advanced level has received less attention than the problems of language at a lower level. Discussion of literature is often more useful than a lecture but this is difficult to conduct in Japan possibly because of shyness. 'Interviews' in pairs with the teacher may help students to overcome their initial reluctance to speak. Intensive study of a text makes students dependent on the teacher. More works of an author, or examples of a genre might be studied. Blackboard notes of relevant background history may be provided. A brief list of questions indicating the critical categories which may apply to work being studied can be given so long as it is regarded as a flexible tool and not a table of commandments. A working compromise between historical study and critical appreciation can be achieved through an historical approach to the subject of literary style.

The difficulties in Japan are related to the wide cultural gap between Japanese and English literature. The difficulties are a challenge but once the gap is crossed, the insight gained is very valuable.

- 70-176 Pergnier, Maurice.** Pour une contribution de la linguistique à la pédagogie des langues vivantes: le groupe nominal simple en anglais et en français. [A contribution of linguistics to the teaching of modern languages: the simple nominal group in English and in French.] *Langues Modernes* (Paris), **63**, 4 (1969), 39-45.

Using one particular point of English grammar, a line of research into the contribution of linguistics to teaching method is suggested. French children always have difficulty in remembering to write and pronounce the final *-s* of English plurals. This apparently simple point causes a disproportionate amount of difficulty. Traditional grammar teaching failed to deal with the numerous problems, but a structural approach can clarify the problem by looking at the nominal group as a whole, instead of the noun and its article in isolation. It is

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helpful if the learner is made aware that the *-s* of the English noun plural is not just a matter of usage but is of vital significance for the meaning. The use of the English definite article with a plural noun gives a quite different meaning from the absence of an article—a contrast which is lacking in French. The plural *-s* on nouns is pronounced in English while the article in French has the double function of marking number and determination. It is impossible to ignore a child's mother tongue when teaching him a second language. Teaching a language involves substituting one mode of analysis for another and it is important to ensure that the learner can penetrate the system of the foreign language and become aware of the way in which the new language differs from it. School grammars are justified in working from the learner's knowledge of his mother tongue. Their fault has been that of using inaccurate descriptions and not providing a real comparison of structures. If audio-visual methods have been more successful than traditional methods, it is not only because of the visual aids but also because the learner is provided with the raw linguistic material and from it builds his own analysis. This does not mean that all pedagogic effort is useless but it does mean that a thorough knowledge of the systems of mother tongue and of the foreign language will enable the teacher to guide the child's analysis and grasp of the new system and enable him to learn much more rapidly.

70-177 Reisener, Helmut. Zum Problem der Sprechsituation im Englischunterricht. [The problem of a speech situation in English teaching.] *Englisch* (Berlin), 4, 4 (1969), 100-4.

The speech situation is of central importance in English teaching. The teacher can make use of the child's many natural impulses in shaping a situation in which he can willingly take part. Children soon realize their own limits and are willing to ask for help, their enthusiasm for play lasts later into life than adults imagine. They need to move about, like to acquire and own things and are prone to aggression and contradiction. The list is not exhaustive but indicates the psychological motivation which ought to be exploited in preparing situations and dialogues which will encourage children to talk.

- 70-178 Schiebeck, Doris.** Ein Versuch zum Frühbeginn des Englischunterrichts in Bochum. [An experiment in starting English early at Bochum.] *Englisch* (Berlin), 4, 3 (1969), 65-9.

An experimental class of seventeen boys and thirteen girls were taught English at an average of eight years two months. They had three lessons of fifty minutes each and their teacher was first a specialist only, and was later made their class teacher. The aim was to teach the children to understand what was said and to speak with very little reading and writing, as these skills were not yet far developed in their mother tongue. The subject-matter consisted of toys and animals, the body, clothes, classroom, family, weather, and days of the week. Many songs, rhymes and games were used. Motivation was high. The children enjoyed learning to make new sounds, and pronunciation was easier for them than for older children. The teacher found that she functioned best as a specialist since the children then associated her only with English and spoke to her in English even in the playground. The lesson time was found to be too long for oral work with a limited vocabulary. Six lessons of twenty-five minutes would have been preferable. The subject-matter of normal beginners' books was more suitable for younger children and so were the play methods.

FRENCH See abstracts 70-141, -176.

GERMAN

- 70-179 Kaufmann, Gerhard.** Die Erarbeitung eines Grundwortschatzes Deutsch für das Fach Deutsch als Fremdsprache. [Drawing up a basic vocabulary for German as a foreign language.] *Deutschunterricht für Ausländer* (Munich), 18, 1/2 (1968), 7-20.

The first attempt by research workers at the Goethe Institut to

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produce an acceptable basic vocabulary for the teaching of German was not successful because it was too subjective and not based on linguistic criteria. It was found that the meaning of a word was affected by its role in a sentence and a second attempt to draw up a basic teaching vocabulary was based on a grammar of basic German word types published in 1967. The aim was to select (1) words with which most commonly occurring ideas could be expressed, (2) the commonest linking words, (3) words which would enable a learner to express himself with ease in basic sentence structures. Considerable difficulty was found in classifying the resulting collection of words partly because of the very nature of a lexis built on considerations of frequency.

A complete understanding of the phonetic and morphological systems would also be needed by a student, and the teaching of numerous structures cannot be avoided. Only in the field of vocabulary can the material be restricted. Semantics, syntax, morphology and phonology, are all interdependent. For instance, if a learner can understand 80 per cent of German vocabulary when he knows 1,000 words, this does not mean that he can understand any sentences containing these words.

Statistical frequency counts must not be restricted to the 'signifiants', in Saussure's meaning. The multiple 'signifiés' and the whole question of content are important and this implies that the structures which will convey the desired meaning must be known and used. To ensure this, words will have to be classified in a card index showing the meanings of words in specific contexts. [Example using *belegt*.]

At the elementary level an accurate use of words must be ensured and thus a foundation laid for a rapid increase in vocabulary coverage. Students with certain mother tongues may need to practise sentence structure along with some kind of semantic progression.

RUSSIAN *See also abstract 70-149.*

70-180 Levin, Maurice I. On presenting the Russian verb. *Slavic and East European Journal* (Madison, Wisconsin), **13**, 2 (1969), 229-41.

Some American teachers now present Russian verbs by a 'one-stem system'. For every regular verb, there is one stem from which every form of that verb with its proper stress can be derived. According to whether they have a suffix or not, stems may be divided into two basic types, primary and secondary. Primary verbs all belong to the first conjugation and may be divided into two groups according to the type of consonant they end in. Secondary verbs can be grouped according to whether they belong to the first or second conjugation.

The stems of all primary verbs end in a consonant. Secondary verbs end in the consonant 'j' or in a vowel. Thus when endings are added to stems, any of the combinations of vowel and consonant are possible. When unlike elements combine, the result is simple addition, the combination of like elements frequently results in some kind of change—usually the truncation of the first element. [A schematic presentation of the system and discussion of the placing of stress in verb conjugations follows.]

Other features of the verbal system (e.g. past passive participle suffixes) can be simply stated when this system is adopted. The main advantages of using the one-stem system are that all forms of a regular verb can be derived from a single form and that it enables the student to see verbal conjugations as a whole. He sees that the mutation of consonants and stress-shifts are predictable. The main difficulty in using the one-stem system is that it calls for a restyling of the presentation of verbs in most textbooks. Ideally it should be presented to beginners. It has, however, been used successfully with intermediate and advanced students of Russian.

70–181 Makhmudova-Avtandilyan, S. Обучение восприятию русской речи на слух. [Teaching comprehension of spoken Russian.] *Русский язык в национальной школе* (Moscow), 2 (1969), 68–71.

Exercises designed to develop the student's ability to comprehend speech should be based on known lexical material. There should be others to widen his vocabulary, and provide repetition of it, so devised that comprehension can easily be checked. Some elementary exercises may use supporting visual aids. At an elementary stage it is advisable to allow students to listen to a spoken text whose content is within their intellectual grasp, and which they have read previously. [Examples.]

Dialogue-exercises are useful in developing comprehension without reliance on accompanying visuals since dialogues call for an appreciation of situation. They develop recognition and understanding of the patterns which make up dialogue. These patterns may be combined and varied by the student as a preparation for active speech production. Such exercises may be used to develop perception and comprehension of responses indicating agreement, refusal, request, etc. [Examples.] Students should be practised (1) in comprehending the same utterance in different forms; (2) in understanding the gist of a passage; (3) in recognizing the moment at which they may enter a conversation.

[Fourteen types of exercise are suggested as preparation for comprehending monologue.] Where students at an advanced level require training in comprehending lectures in Russian on their specialist studies, exercises may be used which require them to pick out specialist terms or replace words and sentences in a text they have heard by others with similar meaning. They may also be encouraged to formulate their own questions on the text. Other exercises can be provided to develop perception and aural comprehension of grammatical structures.