Language learning and teaching – theory and practice

Theory and principles

89–279 Besse, Henri (Crédif, ENS de Saint-Cloud). Remarques sur le statut de la didactique des langues étrangères dans le champ des sciences humaines et sociales. [Remarks on the status of foreign language teaching in the field of human and social sciences.] *Bulletin of the CAAL* (Montreal), **7**, 2 (1985) [publ. 1989], 7–27.

Known by various appellations, the teaching of a second language brings together the body of knowledge and know-how pertaining to class-room experience of teaching and learning a language whose varieties are foreign to the student (an L2). While this field is of considerable intellectual interest in the West, its specificity as a science or discipline is still far from accepted due to reasons stemming from its objective, the teaching/learning of com-munication skills, less easily simplified to the level of possessed knowledge than other disciplines, and also because of its long dependence on the knowledge of grammarians and linguists. The author proposes that the related natural sciences be re-examined in a different light; in effect, linguistic sciences, psycho-logical sciences, social sciences and educational sciences could be thought of as resource disciplines rather than ones where the theories, methods or results can be 'applied' to L2. Second-language teaching needs to be focused on L2 by means of a carefully worked-out, coherent theory that does not contradict what we already know. The present state of the theory is presented in a table, along with a synopsis of the interdisciplinary L2 teaching project, in the process of attaining autonomy.

89–280 Bucher-Poteaux, Nicole (U. of Strasbourg II). Pour un enseignement centré sur l'élève. [How to achieve learner-centred teaching.] *Langues Modernes* (Paris), **82**, 6 (1988), 32–9.

More important to learner-centred teaching than even training, techniques or information, is changing teacher attitudes. Teachers need to be genuinely convinced of the value of the approach, autonomous and responsible, and aware of and responsive to the needs of individual pupils, and should not merely defer to the decisions of the administrative hierarchy as regards innovations.

Recording an actual class for half-an-hour and analysing and quantifying teacher–pupil interaction, pupil–pupil interaction, teacher and pupil talking-time, activities, and pupils' attitudes and behaviour, makes teachers aware of what actually takes place in a 'classical' teaching situation, and evokes the self-analysis and self-awareness necessary to a con-sideration of the changes needed in the way language is taught.

89–281 Charaudeau, Patrick (U. of Paris). L'interculturel, une histoire de fou. [Intercultural aspects, the story of a madman]. *Dialogues et Cultures* (Paris), **32** (1988), 89–97.

Consciousness of cultural identity and realisation that others are different make us feel imperfect and threatened. Our reaction is often negative, becoming prejudice. This protects our identity, but also robs us of part of it. We notice differences in acceptable polite and remonstrative behaviour, for example. There are no cultural absolutes except within the same social group. Problem areas are those of space, time, verbal communication, physical behaviour and law.

Cultural aspects should be part of foreign language teaching. They include ethnology, social psychology, sociology and history. The advantages and disadvantages of two distinct learning groups are discussed; in the first group two languages and cultures are compared, and in the second group several linguistic and cultural groups are faced with the foreign language and culture. As in the case of the madman who suddenly sees beyond his asylum walls, it is hard to explain that outside there are people who are normal and free. We are all incarcerated in our own culture.

We must observe, compare and analyse. We need authentic texts, namely texts which are full of cultural implication. Understanding others is a contradictory ideal. We must change without changing. We must become different without ceasing to be ourselves.

165

89–282   Embleton, Doug (ICI Chemicals and Polymers Ltd.). Breaking barriers to international business communication. *British Journal of Language Teaching,* **26,** 3 (1988), 139–41.

Many UK companies are engaged in 'quality improvement programmes'. 'Quality' is defined as 'conformance to requirements'. The language requirements of 'UK Ltd.' are clearer than ever, yet we are still not conforming to them. A frequent miscalculation is the underestimate of the time/input required to learn language skills, and an over-estimate of the return on this investment. By 1992 there will be many more exchange studentships in many subjects: will undergraduate engineers, for example, be linguistically able to derive maximum benefit from a study period abroad? It would be wise if 'UK Ltd.' invested in tapping existing resources within the teaching force so that languages other than French could be studied as a first foreign language (i.e. German, Spanish, Italian and Russian). Although links between education and industry are important, school should not concentrate too much on vocationally-trained language students – what is needed is a well-rounded education in foreign language *and* culture. Primary schools are the places where the dismantling of cultural brick walls should ideally begin.

89–283   Galisson, Robert (U. de la Sorbonne nouvelle, Paris III). Éloge de la didactologie/didactique des langues et des cultures (maternelles et étrangères.) [The need for a new discipline of teaching native and foreign language and culture]. *Bulletin of the CAAL* (Montreal), **10,** 1 (1988), 9–24.

Models of language teaching have mostly been based on theories within linguistics – the audiovisual model on structuralism, the communicative model on speech act theory – and the relevant discipline has been called applied linguistics. The case is argued here for a change in name, to '*didactologie/didactique des langues et des cultures*', accompanying a change in content and approach. The new discipline should be able to develop its own theories, and should not be tied to linguistics but free to 'interrogate' all other disciplines equally.

In outlining the scope of the discipline, the author emphasises educational, political and ethical ques-tions, e.g. what has been shown to work in schools, who controls and influences language teaching, whether immigrant children should be forced to learn their parents' language. He divides the discipline into *déontologie* (why teach?), *program-matologie* (what to teach) and *méthodologie* (who teaches and learns, how, where and when?) and tabulates the relation of each to external disciplines. The discipline should include the teaching of culture, indissoluble from language, and should embrace mother-tongue teaching, to harmonise approaches and reduce the shock of transition for the learner.

89–284   Kramsch, Claire (Massachusetts Inst. of Tech.). To group of not to group? Le parler, le faire et le dire en classe de langue. [Form, function and discourse in a language class.] *Langues Modernes* (Paris), **82,** 6 (1988), 16–23.

With the communicative approach to language teaching, group work has become the preferred way of decentralising language work in class. For teaching the use of language in a social context, however, more thought needs to be given to relating the teaching format more closely to the tasks to be performed by students. Learner tasks are defined here on three levels: *le Parler* concentrates on language forms, *le Faire* is the use of language in situations, and *le Dire* is concerned with discourse as a whole. These three aspects of language are considered individually, and specific activities for group work suggested. The three levels are very closely linked, and the teacher needs to consider what orientation to give a particular activity, in order to emphasise which of the three is being practised.

89–285   **O'Shaughnessy, Martin** (George Dixon Sch., Birmingham). Modern languages and antiracism. *British Journal of Language Teaching,* **26,** 2 (1988), 71–3.

An eight-point policy statement on antiracism/ multiculturalism produced for the author's school is outlined and discussed. (1) The school should offer a curriculum which prepares young people to take their place in a multicultural world. (2) Defining racism is also a way of making people more aware of its existence. (3) A well-intentioned and apparently sympathetic person may have negative, patronising or stereotyped views. (4) All pupils should be encouraged to feel that their languages are acknowledged and valued. (5) Specialist knowledge in the school community should be recognised and shared. (6) Teachers also need to be aware of the historical and contemporary processes which have caused and continue to sustain racism. (7) The curriculum, explicit and hidden, must aim to encourage people to recognise that each society has its own values, traditions and living patterns that should be considered in the context of that society. (8) Teachers should ensure that resources are multicultural and contain positive images.

89–286   **VanPatten, Bill** (U. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign). How juries get hung: problems with the evidence for a focus on form in teaching. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **38,** 2 (1988), 243–60.

This paper discusses the claim that attention to linguistic accuracy and/or instruction in grammar is necessary for early stage learners. The arguments for a focus on form revolve around three recurring topics or themes: fossilisation, improved language performance, and the role of error correction. The paper concludes that research evidence to date does not suggest that a focus on form is either necessary or beneficial to early stage learners. Nonetheless, it is suggested that there is room for more research and that research on the effects of a focus might best be conducted in a foreign language context and not a second-language context.

Psychology of language learning

89–287   **Beentjes, Johannes W. J. and Van der Voort, Tom H. A.** (Leiden U.). Television's impact on children's reading skills: a review of research. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **23,** 4 (1988), 389–413.

The authors discuss the hypotheses that explain why television might influence the child's development of reading skills positively (facilitation hypothesis), negatively (inhibition hypothesis), or not at all (no-effect hypothesis). Although the evidence is not unequivocal, most of the research supports the inhibition hypothesis. However, television's relation to reading achievement is complex; the magnitude and direction of the relation are influenced by a number of conditions. Heavy viewers, socially advantaged children, and intelligent children tend to be most vulnerable to television's inhibition effect. In addition, the relation is sensitive to the type of television content watched. The authors evaluate the utility of the five research approaches used in the past, and suggest directions for further research.

89–288   **Bertin, Chaudine.** Le rôle des stratégies de lecture dans la compréhension des textes en langue étrangère. [The role of reading strategies in the comprehension of foreign language texts.] *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **44,** 3 (1988), 527–35.

This article identifies the source of the comprehension problems faced by learners in reading foreign language texts. Reading activity is analysed on the level of its visual component and on the level of the cognitive process that is involved. In this way, the concept of strategies can be isolated. Experience

shows that the reader of a foreign language relies mostly on local strategies at the expense of the global strategies necessary for the comprehension of the text as a whole. These observations lead to a consideration of the means that would allow teachers to help learners to use these global strategies. Various exercises intended to activate global strategies in reading in a foreign language are recommended.

89–289 Bley-Vroman, Robert W. (U. of Hawaii at Manoa) **and others.** The accesssibility of Universal Grammar in adult language learning. *Second Language Research* (Utrecht, The Netherlands), **4,** 1 (1988), 1–32.

This paper investigates whether Universal Grammar (UG) is accessible to adult language learners. If adult acquirers have consistent access to intuitions of grammaticality in cases where the relevant constraints are underdetermined by the native language, this suggests that Universal Grammar continues to function in adult acquisition.

Advanced Korean adult acquirers of English were given a test of grammaticality judgements on English *wh*-movement sentences, where the relevant constraints are thought to derive from principles of UG. Since Korean does not have syntactic *wh*-movement, correct intuitions cannot derive from native language transfer. Analysis of the results and comparison with native speaker results suggests a complex picture of the function of UG in adult language acquisition; however, clear UG effects were found.

89–290 Compain, Jean (U. of Ottawa). La prise en charge de l'apprentissage par l'apprenant: expérimentation d'un modèle. [The learner takes charge of the learning: experimenting with a model.] *Bulletin of the CAAL* (Montreal), **7,** 2 (1985) [publ. 1989], 39–53.

Numerous studies conducted over the past several years have served to elucidate a series of attitude and motivation-related variables, referred to by Gardner and Lambert as 'degree of integrativeness'. Statistical surveys have also shown that students possessing this quality to a high degree are more active in class, are more liable to pursue their studies in languages, and tend to seek contacts with members of the target-language group. As a result, their learning progress is markedly superior. The teaching model that we have developed from the work of Richterich and Holec incorporates institutional objectives while at the same time proposing to the student the progressive assumption of responsibility for his learning. Thus, the model respects the specificity, the desires and the needs of the student. The author has used it in classes for two years on an experimental basis. Through statistical analysis of results and feedback from the students, the model's positive effect on students' attitudes and motivation has been confirmed.

89–291 Dubois, Danièle (CNRS) **and Aubret, Jacques** (CNAM). Stratégies syntaxiques et compréhension de la langue écrite. [Syntactic strategies and comprehension of written language.] *Langue Française* (Paris), **80** (1988), 51–62.

This article reviews research on the role of syntactic analysis of a text in reading comprehension. Early work in the Chomskyan framework suggested that a separate, autonomous and exhaustive stage of assigning syntactic structures to texts was necessary for processing, but other scholars have shown that lexical, semantic and pragmatic cues may sometimes be more important. The lexis can tell the reader what syntagms are possible; good readers may detect syntactical errors less well than bad readers if the text is coherent and without semantic or pragmatic incongruity; and complete syntactic analysis is undertaken only if necessary to resolve semantic problems. The generativist view of syntactic processing as automatic and unconscious also seems more valid for oral than for written language, where metalinguistic skills are of obvious relevance.

The results are presented of an experiment involving 4585 French schoolchildren who were given two grammar tests and a reading comprehension test. The former correlated highly (0·61) with each other, but only at 0·38 and 0·36 with the reading test. This and other studies suggest that readers do not follow any one invariable procedure when approaching a text, but have recourse to a range of heuristic strategies.

168

89–292   Ehrman, Madeline (Foreign Service Institute) **and Oxford, Rebecca** (Annenberg/CPB Project). Effects of sex difference, career choice, and psychological type on adult language learning strategies. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **72,** 3 (1988), 253–65.

Some 30 students, 26 teachers and 22 trainers at the Foreign Service Institute were given the MBTI personality test, which classifies on the Jungian dimensions of extraversion/introversion, sensing/intuition, thinking/feeling and judging/perceiving, and the SILL self-report instrument, which can be used to classify language learning strategies under 10 headings. Correlations were explored between the results from these two instruments and also with respondents' occupation and sex.

The results confirmed the expected wider use of strategies by women than men, by 'feeling' than 'thinking' types, and by professional language trainers than the other two groups. Many of the researchers' hypotheses, however, were not supported, and several unexpected correlations were found: for example, extraverts reported more visualisation strategies, introverts more searching for and communicating meaning.

89–293   Greenberg, Seth N. and Roscoe, Suzanne (Union College, NY). Echoic memory interference and comprehension in a foreign language. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **38,** 2 (1988), 209–19.

Based on the hypothesis that students who are less able to comprehend speech in a foreign language suffer from greater echoic memory interference, faculty evaluated the listening comprehension of students in several introductory foreign language courses. The evaluations were used to assign students to weaker and stronger comprehension groups. Both groups were tested for echoic memory interference using the standard suffix procedure in which a list of digits is read with either a tone control, or a suffix recall, appended to the end of the

list. Echoic interference is measured by comparing the recall performance in the suffix and nonsuffix (tone) conditions. Poorer recall of terminal digits in lists in the suffix condition, as compared to the nonsuffix condition, indicates echoic interference. The results were consistent with the hypothesis, suggesting that students with weaker listening comprehension depend more upon vulnerable sensory codes in echoic memory, while those with better comprehension rely on stable higher-order codes.

89–294   Hawisher, Gail E. (Illinois State U.). The effects of word processing on the revision strategies of college freshmen. *Research in the Teaching of English* (Urbana, Ill), **21,** 2 (1987), 145–59.

This experimental study explores the effects of word processing on the revision strategies of 20 advanced college freshmen enrolled in a required writing course. The purpose of the investigation was to discover whether students revise more extensively and more successfully with a computer than with conventional methods. The 20 students were randomly divided into two groups of 10 that alternately wrote a series of four essays on and off the computer. In addition to undergoing text analysis, the essays were judged by trained rates using an analytic scale.

Results of 4,048 between-draft revisions of 80 essays indicated that writing on a computer did not lead to increased revision for these able students. That there was no positive relationship between extensive revision and the quality ratings, however, suggested that manipulating text for the sake of revision had little value for these students. Those essays produced with pen and typewriter, moreover, received comparable quality ratings to those produced with a computer.

Language learning and teaching ■

89-295 Hidi, Suzanne and Baird, William (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education). Strategies for increasing text-based interest and students' recall of expository texts. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **23**, 4 (1988), 465–83.

Recent research has indicated that how interesting a text is will affect students' cognitive performance. This kind of 'interestingness', or text-based interest, was the focus of the study. More specifically, the authors attempted to develop strategies to create text-based interest in expository text used in schools in order to improve children's recall. Three versions of a single text were constructed utilising three interest-evoking strategies. All fourth- and sixth-grade students in one suburban school were randomly assigned to study and recall one of the versions. Although overall recall was relatively high across the three text versions as compared with recall of standard texts in an earlier study, the strategies did not result in any significant difference in recall. However, children's interest ratings indicated that two of the three strategies resulted in increased subjective interest. A content analysis performed on the recall protocols showed that the interest-evoking strategies were most effective in increasing children's recall of concrete, specific, or personally involving information, and did not enhance the acquisition of more abstract, general, or scientific information.

89-296 James, Allan R. (U. of Amsterdam). Prosodic structure in phonological acquisition. *Second Language Research* (Utrecht, The Netherlands), **3**, 2 (1987), 118–40.

This article discusses the acquisition of the prosodic characteristics of a second language in the light of the development of a target language phonological grammar. Prosodic characteristics are conventionally taken to refer to the intonation and accent patterns in a phonological system. However, nonlinear theories of phonology view the pitch and stress values of a language as defining a separate representation or component in a phonological grammar, i.e. the prosodic structure. A 'metrical' type model of prosodic structure is presented, in which the structural layers of a phonological hierarchy are characterised by the occurrence of particular contrastive (paradigmatic) features and particular phonetic (syntagmatic) effects at each unit-level. The course of acquisition of the prosodic structure of a second language is then shown to be describable in terms of the gradual development of target language values per unit-level of the hierarchy. Data from the L2 English of two L1 Dutch speakers are examined by way of illustrating some of the claims of the model.

89-297 Jordens, Peter (U. of Amsterdam). The acquisition of word order in Dutch and German as L1 and L2. *Second Language Research* (Utrecht, The Netherlands), **4**, 1 (1988), 41–65.

In a recent paper, Clahsen and Muysken (1986) argue that children acquiring German as their first language have access to the 'move alpha' matrix when constructing a grammar for German. This should explain why children have SOV base order and the rule of verb-fronting from the very beginning. In this paper, it is argued that children's OV utterances cannot be related transformationally to VO utterances. Initially, children acquire OV and VO with different sets of verbs.

Clahsen and Muysken (1986) also claim that interlanguage rules of adult L2 learners are not definable in linguistic theory. Du Plessis *et al.* (1987) reply to this in arguing that the interlanguage rules of adults acquiring L2 German word order fall within the range of systems permitted by the Headedness parameter, the Proper Government parameter, and the Adjunction parameter. Therefore, these adult learners should have access to Universal Grammar (G). It is argued here that it is not necessary to make this assumption. The L2-acquisition data can be easily accounted for within a simple model of L1-structural transfer.

89–298 Kirby, John R. (Queen's U., Kingston, Ontario, Canada) **and Gordon, Christopher J.** (New South Wales Dept. of Ed., Bathurst, Australia). Text segmenting and comprehension: effects of reading and information processing abilities. *British Journal of Educational Psychology* (London), **58** (1988), 287–300.

A study is reported which tests the hypothesis that segmenting text into appropriate syntactic units will facilitate the comprehension of readers who have adequate word-level skills but poor comprehension skills. This specific hypothesis is not confirmed, but evidence is presented that poor comprehenders, regardless of word-level skills, do benefit from text segmenting. A second hypothesis tested concerns the information processing skills involved in syntactic analysis. Results confirm that simultaneous processing is involved in the forming of syntactic units. In conditions in which the text is already segmented, however, successive processing is shown to be involved, as well as simultaneous processing, it is argued, at a higher level. These results suggest that syntactic analysis is a potential bottleneck in reading, and that training studies should be designed, employing simultaneous and successive processing, to improve syntactic analysis skills and facilitate reading comprehension.

89–299 Neuman, Susan B. (U. of Lowell). The displacement effect: assessing the relation between television viewing and reading performance. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **23**, 4 (1988), 414–40.

Television's implications for reading performance and school achievement are examined within the framework of the displacement hypothesis. This hypothesis suggests that watching television may affect student's reading achievement by displacing other activities crucial to the development of reading skills, such as leisure reading. A synthesis of eight statewide reading assessments and a secondary analysis of the 1984 National Assessment of Educational Progress, which included measures of scholastic achievement, out-of-school activities and reported television viewing exposure, are used to analyse four theories of displacement: that television displaces activities with functional similarity, activities in physical and psychological proximity, marginal fringe activities, and activities that have become less appealing due to reorganisation of the child's functional needs with age. Results indicate that the differences in reading scores for those students watching 2–4 hours per day are small, but that beyond 4 hours of viewing, the effects are negative and increasingly more deleterious. Analysis of outside activities suggests that television viewing is tied to a different set of needs and gratifications than leisure reading, sports, or spending time with friends. Small but negative relations are reported between television viewing and homework activities. For the vast majority of children, however, time spent television viewing is tempered by the increasing demands of schooling and the onset of social activities as children grow older.

89–300 Nowak, Ulrich (U. of Leipzig). Zum Verhältnis von Sprache und Gedächtnis beim Fremdsprachenerwerb – eine empirische Studie. [The relationship between language and memory in foreign language acquisition – an empirical study.] *Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (Leipzig, GDR), **1** (1989), 15–19.

This research investigates whether learning a new work in a foreign language involves direct association with the underlying concept (the concept association hypothesis), or whether the process is mediated by the word's mother tongue equivalent, until increased mastery of the FL allows direct activation of the meaning (the word association hypothesis).

These alternative hypotheses were tested on three groups of Arabic speakers studying in the GDR. The times taken to supply familiar FL words in response to mother tongue and picture stimuli were compared. Faster reaction times to the mother tongue stimuli than to the picture stimuli supported the word association hypothesis, but there was no evidence from the most advanced group of a later transfer to the concept association strategy. The latter finding was taken as an indication that group had not yet attained sufficient cognitive flexibility in the FL to allow this transfer to take place.

Results are interpreted as indicating the necessary role of the mother tongue in early stages of FL learning. Implications for instruction are discussed.

89–301   Perkins, Kyle and Brutten, Sheila R. (Southern Illinois U.). Using a facet design to assess the effects of the form, the source, and the frequency of information necessary to answer ESL reading comprehension questions. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **38**, 2 (1988), 171–85.

Determining what reading comprehension questions actually measure is difficult to ascertain objectively. Facet theory and design suggest a means to define operationally what a given item measures by studying how an item is related to textually or non-textually based information. Three facets or structs (the form of information [explicit or implicit], the source of information [text or non-text], and the frequency with which the information appeared in the text) were entered into regression equations to determine how much variance the structs accounted for in the item scores from ESL reading comprehension tests from different levels of proficiency. The results suggested that the facets were differentially related to the item scores at different levels of proficiency.

Further true experimental research is suggested using the facet design to study the effects of the structs and to provide useful diagnostic information in terms of a typology of items that readers answered correctly and incorrectly.

89–302   Poulisse, Nanda (Katholieke U., Nijmegen). Problems and solutions in the classification of compensatory strategies. *Second Language Research* (Utrecht, The Netherlands), **3**, 2 (1987), 141–53.

It has been common practice to classify communication strategies (CmS) by means of taxonomies which are largely product-oriented. In such taxonomies different types of achievement strategies (also known as compensatory strategies (CpS)) are distinguished on the basis of the resources (source language, target language, gestures) which are used to encode the strategy, and the linguistic structure in which the strategy is couched. In this paper it is argued that these taxonomies are inadequate for a number of practical and theoretical reasons. As an alternative, a process-oriented approach towards the classification and study of CpS will be proposed. This approach distinguishes between two basic strategy types only, conceptual and linguistic. It is demonstrated that the choice between these two strategies is largely constrained by the nature of the experimental task and, to a much smaller extent, by the subjects' foreign language proficiency level. It is expected that a systematic study of these constraints in terms of the process-oriented taxonomy described here will increase our ability to explain and predict CpS use.

89–303   Radecki, Patricia M. and Swales, John M. (U. of Michigan, Ann Arbor). ESL student reaction to written comments on their written work. *System* (Oxford), **16**, 3 (1988), 355–65.

Although studies of instructor response to student writing are numerous in both L1 and L2 contexts, the literature on student reaction to those comments is small in L2 research. Partly for this reason, the authors examined ESL students' own preferences and views on feedback. The attitudes of 59 students in four ESL-oriented classes were surveyed. The questionnaire elicited their opinions on the usefulness of various types of comments, the scope of teacher markings, responsibility in error marking and correction, and revision. Eight students were then selected for interview (either audio- or video-taped). The respondents can be divided into three categories, primarily according to their degrees of acceptance of revision and of teacher intervention in providing input: Receptors (46 %), Semi-resistors (41 %), and Resistors (13 %). The survey revealed that as students progress from English language learners to apprentices in their chosen discipline, the more restricted is the role they assign to the language teacher.

89–304 Reinking, David (U. of Georgia). Computer-mediated text and comprehension differences: the role of reading time, reader preference, and estimation of learning. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, Del), **23**, 4 (1988), 484–98.

Do readers comprehend a text better when it is displayed electronically by a computer (computer-mediated) than when displayed conventionally, on printed pages? Previous studies have suggested that computer presentations that offer the reader access to additional information, or control the reader's processing of the text, do facilitate comprehension. The author attempted to replicate these findings. In addition, he investigated whether computer presentations of texts would affect readers' passage preference, their estimation of their own learning, and the time taken to read the text, and whether these factors in turn would contribute to comprehension differences. Thirty-three good and poor readers in fifth and sixth grade read expository passages on a printed page and in three computer presentations that varied as to the availability of computer assistance, and whether the computer or the reader controlled the computer manipulations. As in previous studies, subjects' comprehension increased when they read computer-mediated texts that expanded or controlled their options for acquiring information. As expected, reading time was longer for the computer-mediated texts with options for assistance, but even after the effect of reading time was removed statistically, comprehension scores remained significantly higher for readers of the computer-mediated texts that offered computer assistance. Based on the results, the author attempts to clarify which factors associated with computer-mediated texts may affect reading comprehension.

89–305 Ross, Steven (Kobe U. of Commerce, Tarumi, Japan). Accommodation in interlanguage discourse from an EFL perspective. *System* (Oxford), **16**, 3 (1988), 347–54.

Recent research on interlanguage in the classroom suggests that strategic pairing of learners with differing native language backgrounds and proficiency levels may provide the optimal context for extended negotiation and repair. This study examined the process of accommodation in interlanguage discourse in a foreign language context, i.e. one in which learners share a common native language. Dyads of different proficiency levels were rotated in four information gap tasks. Analyses of variance with repeated measures were used to examine the effects of various accommodation and negotiation strategies.

The study provides evidence of accommodation in mixed dyads. The accommodation observed can be considered akin to that seen in interaction between native and non-native speakers. Lower proficiency speakers benefit from task-based exercises most if they are paired with interlocutors with a wider repertoire of communicative strategies than themselves. However, the question of equal benefit for the higher proficiency interlocutor in mixed dyads remains problematic. If the task syllabus is to be adapted to the foreign language context, a variety of tasks must be devised to suit abilities and interests of all ranges of proficiency in the mixed level class.

89–306 Sa'adeddin, Mohammed Akram A. M. (U. of Kuwait). Text development and Arabic–English negative interference. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **10**, 1 (1989), 36–51.

This article focuses on the distinction between aural and visual modes of text development in Arabic and English, and on the functions of these modes in their social contexts. Three Arabic texts are presented in translation. The first is in two versions, a 'semantic' one, and a native English one conforming to the visual mode, which is dominant in English academic writing. This provides a clear illustration of the differences in text development and helps to explain the problems of the negative transfer of habits from one language to the other, particularly into English, where the aural mode is normally not acceptable for written prose. The latter two texts illustrate the presence of the visual mode in Arabic, which is merely one of the options. Finally, an analysis of the major distinctions between aurally and visually developed texts is presented. The proposals put forward in this paper have major implications for the teaching of English writing to native Arabic students.

173

89–307 Sprenger-Charolles, Liliane (INRP and UA 1031 CNRS) **and Khomsi, Abdelhamid** (U. of Nantes). Le rôle du contexte dans la lecture: comparaisons entre lecteurs plus ou moins compétents. [The role of context in reading: more and less competent readers compared.] *Langue Française* (Paris), **80** (1980), 63–82.

Two groups of children with an average age of 10, half of whom had reading difficulties while the rest were considered 'good' readers by their teachers, were shown pictures of objects or animals and asked to say, without reading the words aloud, whether the words accompanying the pictures were right or wrong and to give their reasons when they thought the words were wrong. (Some of the 'wrong' words were semantically incorrect, others were misspelt.)

As had been predicted on the basis of previous research, the children with reading difficulties relied heavily on context. They recognised words by their general shape, not having reached the stage of decoding. They seemed to have smaller vocabularies, which may have been either the result or the cause of their reading problems. The good readers, on the other hand, were less rigid and more flexible in their approach. They proved more adaptable, adopting different strategies as and where appropriate, and were more successful at recognising misspellings. Also their performance improved during the course of the test whereas that of the other group did not.

89–308 van Buren, Paul (U. of Utrecht). Some remarks on the subset principle in second-language acquisition. *Second Language Research* (Utrecht, The Netherlands), **4,** 1 (1988), 33–40.

In his stimulating paper, 'Configurationality and the subset principle: the acquisition of V′ by Japanese learners of English' (to appear) Zobl concludes on the basis of experimental evidence that, as currently defined, the so-called 'subset principle' – which has recently been proposed for first-language acquisition – is inapplicable to second-language acquisition. He also concludes that, given certain adaptations, it may have a role to play in second-language acquisition. This latter conclusion is potentially of considerable importance to the study of second-language acquisition if only because 'principles' are rather thin on the ground in this field of research. However, in this article it is argued that the conclusion in question is unwarranted in the theoretical context in which it is drawn.

89–309 Zeidner, Moshe and Bensoussan, Marsha (U. of Haifa). College students' attitudes towards written versus oral tests of English as a Foreign Language. *Language Testing* (London), **5,** 1 (1988), 100–14.

The major aim of the present research is twofold: (a) to compare students' attitudes towards oral versus written English language tests; and (b) to examine the nature of the relationship between students' affective dispositions toward language tests and level of test performance. The study is based on a sample of 170 students at Haifa University enrolled in the advanced reading course of English as a foreign language. Students responded to an examinee feedback inventory specifically designed to gauge examinees' perceptions of key variables related to mode of test presentation (oral *v.* written examinations). In addition, background information was collected on students' gender, sociolinguistic background, father's education, the university psychometric entrance examination (including the English proficiency test score), and average grade in department of study. On the whole, students preferred written over oral tests and rated the former more favourably along a variety of dimensions. Written tests were perceived to be more pleasant, valuable, fair, less anxiety-evoking and more reflective of students' comprehension of the English text than oral tests. Oral tests, on the other hand, were viewed to be more interesting to take than written tests. No meaningful relationship, however, was observed between students' attitudes and test performance.

89–310 Zobl, Helmut (Charleton U., Ottawa). Categorial distribution and the problem of overgeneration. *Second Language Research* (Utrecht, The Netherlands), **3**, 2 (1987), 89–101.

Overgeneration raises in acute form the problem of how learners succeed in fixing the proper bounds of grammars on the basis of limited evidence. This paper looks at an overgeneration found in the English production data of Japanese-speaking learners in which finite S (not introduced by Wh) occurs as a complement of P. An analysis is proposed whereby the acquisition of configurationality in the VP is the necessary antecedent knowledge to an eventual correction. It initiates an altered perception of complement category distribution, one which now includes a movement rule to a non-argument position. The inability of this rule to execute with PP expunges the overgeneration. The paper concludes with the suggestion that overgeneration is not as intractable a learnability problem if grammatical development consists of qualitative jumps in the perception of the input data rather than continuity with local modifications.

Research methods

89–311 Chaudron, Craig. Classroom research: recent methods and findings. *Prospect* (Adelaide, Australia), **4**, 1 (1988), 11–23.

This article reviews some of the principal methods used to study second language classrooms and summarises some recent findings from classroom research. Classroom research is based on observation and analysis of classroom activities, teachers' and learners' speech and behaviour, and the form and function of social and pedagogical interaction in L2 classrooms.

In the 1970s many coding category instruments and discourse analytical systems were developed to describe and analyse the teaching–learning interaction. The most common type of observation instrument is 'interaction analysis'; 'discourse analysis' describes language functions and 'moves'. 'Ethnography' in classroom research focuses on processes, trying to understand the social assumptions which lead to each individual's interpretation of classroom events.

Important methodological issues concern the unit of analysis (differences in units and categories of analysis across studies make it difficult to compare and draw conclusions), and the reliability/validity of the analysis.

Key findings from recent research are reported concerning the effects of instructional context (foreign or second language, programme type, classroom organisation, and task) on classroom processes; and concerning the relationship between processes and learners' comprehension and production.

89–312 Watson-Gegeo, Karen Ann (U. of Hawaii at Manoa). Ethnography in ESL: defining the essentials. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **22**, 4 (1988), 575–92.

Ethnography is the study of people's behaviour in naturally occurring, ongoing settings, with a focus on the cultural interpretation of behaviour. The ethnographer's goal is to provide a description and an interpretive–explanatory account of what people do in a setting (such as a classroom, neighbourhood or community), the outcome of their interactions, and the way they understand what they are doing (the meaning interactions have for them). Some principles of quality ethnographic work are discussed, including the focus on behaviour in groups, holism, emic-etic perspectives, comparison, grounded theory, and techniques of data collection and treatment. The promise of ethnography for ESL research, teacher training and classroom practice lie in its emphasis on holistic, richly detailed descriptions and analyses of teacher–learner interaction and the multilevel contexts in which these interactions occur.

Error/contrastive analysis

89–313 Abbi, Anvita (Jawaharlal Nehru U., New Delhi). On teaching–learning strategies: contrastive analysis, error analysis, or interlanguage? *Indian Journal of Applied Linguistics* (New Delhi), **13,** 1 (1987), 25–36.

This paper tests the eight-level scale of learning difficulties suggested by Stockwell and Bowen by recording the speech of French speakers learning Hindi sounds. The errors analysed indicate a variant pattern which suggests that a contrastive study of mere sounds of the two systems (that of the native language and of the target language) does not help much. What is needed is the study of sounds in various contextual environments. This would entail foremost the study of sounds in various positions, of syllables, of various combinational possibilities of vowels and consonants, and words. Instead of the current notions of the 'new' and 'old' sounds, an attempt is made to draw attention to the degree of newness of the sounds of the target language. It is shown that the varying degrees of novelty of the sounds affect the degree of errors rendered by the learners. The study also establishes that while predicting difficulties of learning a foreign language due weight is to be given to the bilingual/multilingual competence or to the 'previous knowledge' of the language learnt last by the learner. It is the overall competence and not the competence in the native language alone which affects the learning of a foreign language.

Testing

89–314 Alderson, Charles (U. of Lancaster). Testing and its administration in ESP. *KMIT's EST Bulletin* (Bangkok, Thailand), **5,** 1 (1987), 23–38.

Testing is a neglected area in applied linguistics, much more investigation/experimentation having been done on, for example, materials writing and teaching. Testing practice has thus lagged behind developments in other pedagogic areas, despite the fact that (particularly in ESP contexts) tests play a vital role, often certifying learners as linguistically competent for employment and training situations.

Three main aspects of ESP test design are discussed: i.e. the question of content/degree of specificity, how assessments are carried out, and how tests are validated. In the latter case, the author maintains that at present there are no means available of knowing/observing in any meaningful way whether tests are valid from a content, construct or face validity point of view: we simply cannot determine what totality of language skills is really required to perform adequately in, for example, various jobs. A linguistic needs profile for tertiary level Social Science students (developed in the light of Munby's 'Communicative Needs Processor' model) is examined. Despite its apparent comprehensiveness, the taxonomy of sociolinguistic skills described has major gaps, and does not involve vital psycholinguistic elements. It is concluded that the superiority claimed for ESP courses/tests needs to be substantiated.

89–315 Baker, Colin (University Coll. of North Wales, Lon Pobty, Bangor). Normative testing and bilingual populations. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* (Clevedon, Avon), **9,** 5 (1988), 399–409.

The problems and procedures of producing test norms for bilingual populations are considered. The difficulty of defining sub-populations for separate test norm production (e.g. first-language and second-language populations) causes problems of empirical classification. Problems of classification of population groups by skill level and by functional usage are analysed. Four practical solutions are detailed: school classification, person classification, test score classification and language background classification. Criticisms of these four methods are considered, and a discussion of triangulation procedures using a combination of methods. The construction of a Welsh language spelling test is used as an example of a procedure for population classification using latent class analysis, a form of cluster analysis. The empirical classification, using a language background questionnaire, allocated the 2,262 children into four groups which implicitly questions the usual *a priori* procedure of L1/L2 classification for test norm purposes.

89–316   Buck, Gary. Written tests of pronunciation: do they work? *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **43**, 1 (1989), 50–6.

The use of paper and pencil tests of pronunciation is quite common in some EFL situations. A study was carried out in Osaka to determine the reliability and validity of such tests as they are. used in Japan. Results showed that reliability was very low in-deed. Furthermore, correlations with more direct measures of pronunciation indicated that the written pronunciation tests had very low validity, and that the theoretical basis of such tests is open to question. The implications of these findings are discussed.

89–317   Chapelle, Carol (Iowa State U.). Field independence: a source of language test variance? *Language Testing* (London), **5**, 1 (1988), 62–82.

Recent language testing research investigates factors other than language proficiency that may be re-sponsible for variance in language test performance. There is some evidence indicating field indepen-dence may be one variable responsible for intro-ducing systematic error into language test scores. This paper reports research investigating the re-lationship between field independence and language measures. Results indicate differential relation-ships of field independence with cloze, dictation, and multiple-choice language tests. The relative strengths of these relationships also differ for native speakers in regular English classes, native speakers in remedial English classes, and non-native speakers. Directions for further research are suggested.

89–318   Cleary, Christopher (Sultan of Oman's Air Force). Testing lower intermediate writing: a comparison of two scoring methods. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **26**, 2 (1988), 75–80 and 88.

This article compares in detail three commonly used approaches to the scoring of written work: the holistic, error count and categorical methods, as they relate to a pilot study aimed at the addition of a written component to the Sultan's Armed Forces 'Standard One' English examination. The main problem involved was in finding a method most appropriate to the practical demands of the test situation, and to the purpose of scoring, which would also not influence adversely reliability and validity.

The error count method (the one finally chosen) evinced a coarse and arbitrary use of word limits; a mere tallying of discrete errors could also not assess important aspects of written expression such as fluency and coherence, but is at least efficient and easy to do. The categorical method, on the other hand, is holistic, and involves summing a set of subjective scores on elements such as relevance, sentence grammar, legibility and 'mechanics'; however, it effectively doubled the marking time.

The pilot study itself [graphical data] revealed many discrepancies between the categorical scores, revealing apparent marker bias. The error count method appeared to demonstrate comparable ranking powers and inter-marker correlation and seemed most appropriate in a situation involving the need to process a large number of examination papers.

89–319   Dudley-Evans, Tony (U. of Birmingham). A consideration of the meaning of 'discuss' in examination questions. *ELT Documents* (London), **129** (1988), 47–52.

ESP textbooks adopt a 'common-core' approach to the instruction verbs which appear in examination questions, but verbs, particularly 'discuss', can vary in meaning between different disciplines. This article presents an analysis of the use of 'discuss' in various MSc examination questions taken from the De-partment of Plant Biology at the University of Birmingham.

Textbooks make the point that a 'discuss' question requires (i) independence of thought and (ii) at least two points of view. They are not clear about whether the writer should give his own

177

opinion, although the implication is that he should. When, however, 'discuss' questions in MSc papers set by the Department of Plant Biology were reviewed, it was found that 'discuss' had a much wider range of meaning. There were three types of 'discuss' question: (1) requires the writer to present various opposing points of view and to conclude by giving his own opinion; (2) requires him to describe a theory or process and 'give some further explanation; and (3) requires points in favour and against an argument in which there are unlikely to be either established viewpoints or room for personal opinion.

89–320 Hale, Gordon A. (Educational Testing Service, Princeton, N.J.). Student major field and text content: interactive effects on reading comprehension in the Test of English as a Foreign Language. *Language Testing* (London), **5,** 1 (1988), 49–61.

It was hypothesised that a student's academic discipline would interact with the text content in determining performance on the reading passages of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). To test this hypothesis, this study examined performance on the reading passages in TOEFL forms used in four operational test administrations. The results supported the hypothesis, as students in the two key major-field groups, the humanities/social sciences and the biological/physical sciences, performed better on passages related to their own groups than on other passages. The effect was significant for three of the four test forms. The effect was relatively small in each case, however, as expressed in terms of points on the TOEFL scale, perhaps because TOEFL reading passages are drawn from general readings rather than specialised textbooks. Thus, it is important to distinguish between the statistical significance and the practical significance of the effect.

89–321 Henning, Grant (Educational Testing Service). The influence of test and sample dimensionality on latent trait person ability and item difficulty calibrations. *Language Testing* (London), **5,** 1 (1988), 83–99.

The present study was designed to test the effects of violation of the unidimensionality assumption on Rasch Model estimates of item difficulty and person ability. Also considered was the sensitivity of the Bejar Method, Rasch Model fit statistics, classical internal consistency estimation and principal components analysis in detecting the nature and extent of violations of unidimensionality.

For the study of test item dimensionality, use was made of a simulated testing situation involving a two-dimensional 60-item test administered to an illustrative 120-person sample. For investigation of person sample dimensionality, the simulation involved use of a 120-item test with an illustrative 60-person sample.

Results clearly suggested that violations of item unidimensionality produced distorted estimates of person ability, and violations of person unidimensionality produced distorted estimates of item difficulty. The Bejar Method was found to be sensitive to such distortions, and results of applying the Bejar Method along with internal consistency estimation and principal components analysis were mutually confirmatory.

89–322 Lennon, Paul. Conversational cloze tests for advanced learners. *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **43,** 1 (1989), 38–44.

This article reports performance on proficiency tests and 'conversational' cloze tests for a small group of advanced learners of English at the outset and conclusion of a six months' period of residence at the University of Reading, in England. For each subject, responses at Time 1 and Time 2 for each cloze item are compared, so as to provide some insight into the linguistic developmental processes which learners may have been undergoing in the interim.

It is found that linguistic improvement deriving from extensive exposure to the target-language community in the absence of formal instruction did show up in scores on a written multiple-choice test, particularly for vocabulary, but that the conversational cloze tests separated out subjects more effectively.

From the changes in response made by subjects from Time 1 to Time 2, it becomes evident that the language of the advanced learner is characterised by

178

uncertainty, that learning does not consist of a process of incremental additions to a fixed store, but that 'backsliding' occurs, as well as non-critical variation and improvement. Learners would appear to differ in the extent to which they are satisfied with an 'acceptable' but not fully native-like response, and in the indices of certainty they attach to their L2 linguistic repertoire.

The use of cloze tests with advanced learners may be beneficial as a teaching and diagnostic device, in alerting the learner to degrees of linguistic appropriacy, and enabling the teacher to identify both the over-experimenter and the under-experimenter among learners.

89–323   Magnan, Sally Sieloff (U. of Wisconsin). Grammar and the ACTFL oral proficiency interview: discussion and data. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **72**, 3 (1988), 266–76.

This article reviews the current debate over the role of grammar in the OPI, in particular with respect to the concern voiced by Savignon that the elicitation procedure focuses too heavily on specific grammatical structures, overemphasising accuracy at the expense of fluency. There is some confusion over the definition of 'grammar' in the first place, and a lack of empirical data clarifying the precise role played by grammar (and indeed other components) in the assignment of proficiency ratings. The impressionistic RCM (Relative Contribution Model) posited by Higgs and Clifford is also discussed.

The limited French OPI study carried out by the author is then described: it considers 'grammar' in terms of seven basic morphological/syntactic features (e.g. verb conjugation), and only from the Novice Mid through Advanced Plus levels, using a sample base of 40 interviews. Using such techniques as the calculation of correct usage/error ratios, it was concluded that a relationship indeed exists between percentage of grammatical errors (at least as defined here) and the resultant OPI rating, grammatical error increasing, in general terms, as proficiency level increases [diagrams].

89–324   Perkins, Kyle and Brutten, Sheila R. (Southern Illinois U.). A behavioural anchoring analysis of three ESL reading comprehension tests. *TESOL Quarterly*, (Washington, DC), **22**, 4 (1988), 607–22.

This article reports the results of a behavioural anchoring analysis of three ESL reading comprehension tests. For each test, anchor points on a continuum of ability level were selected for analysis. Items that discriminated between adjacent anchor points were batched and analysed in terms of their relation to the structure of the text, the reader's prior knowledge, and the cognitive processes required to answer the question. The results indicated that for each of three proficiency levels (levels 2, 3, and 4), the higher-ability students could

comprehend micropropositions, whereas the lower-ability students could not. The higher-ability students at levels 3 and 4 could comprehend questions whose sources of information were implicit, whereas the lower-ability students at these levels could not. Higher-ability students and lower-ability students at all proficiency levels showed competence with linguistic structures that related parts of the text. And finally, the derivational complexity and the readability levels of the texts covaried with an increase in proficiency level.

89–325   Roy, Marie-José (Sheffield City Poly.). Writing in the GCSE – modern languages. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **26**, 2 (1988), 99–102.

The GCSE examinations offer the possibility for foreign language learning to become interesting, practical and educational. Although attitudes are now less inflexible than before, the stated aims of the syllabuses are not being realised and students often have less opportunity or encouragement to demonstrate their ability.

Less emphasis has been given to writing skills in the GCSE, as it is often seen as irrelevant for most pupils. The written test has therefore changed from writing a composition to writing a message. Many of the functions defined in the syllabus are ignored and the resulting tasks set, such as writing postcards and answering letters, lack variety. Some examining

boards have even been attempting to re-introduce picture composition.

The tasks set should be more relevant, authentic and demanding and should give the more able candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their ability. Questions should cover a wider range of subjects; students should be encouraged to express ideas and feelings. There should be less emphasis on letter writing and more attention paid to other forms of writing, such as paragraph writing.

89–326 Statman, Stella (Bar-Ilan U., Israel). Ask a clear question and get a clear answer: an enquiry into the question/answer and sentence completion formats of multiple choice items. *System* (Oxford), **16**, 3 (1988), 367–76.

The paper presents the hypothesis that multiple choice items which have the format of a question with one of four distractors giving the correct answer are a clearer, authentic and more valid way of testing the reading comprehension of foreign learners of English at university level than is the common format in which the testee has to complete a sentence stem by choosing one of four distractors. The theoretical basis for the hypothesis is presented and further support is culled from the author's classroom experience and from the results of two pilot tests which are described.

Course/syllabus/materials design

89–327 Coleman, Hywel (U. of Leeds). Analysing language needs in large organisations. *English for Specific Purposes* (New York), **7**, 3 (1988), 155–69.

Munby's approach to the analysis of learners' needs is considered. Two assumptions underlie this approach: that the identity of the learners is not problematic, and that there is a one-to-one relationship between the identification of needs and ways of satisfying them. This paper questions the validity of these assumptions – particularly in large organisations – by reporting a case study in one such large organisation, a university in Indonesia. A composite picture of the condition of English in the university is developed. The university comprises many organisational units which fit together in a complex web. In time, members of some units become members of other units. Thus the units interact with each other not only on a synchronic dimension but diachronically as well, and consequently an accurate description for needs analysis purposes must be both complex and dynamic. The paper concludes with comments on the implications which this has for the performance of needs analysis in large organisations. It is proposed that a two-stage needs analysis may be appropriate. The first stage would reveal the complexity and dynamism of the organisation and then, at the second stage, attention would be paid to the specific needs of the organisation's constituent units.

89–328 Courtney, Michael (OTIC/British Council, Sultanate of Oman). Some initial considerations for course design. *English for Specific Purposes* (New York), **7**, 3 (1988), 195–203.

This paper attempts to outline in theory what a more holistic approach to the design of an ESP course might have to take into account and how a more adequate descriptive base might be built. It begins with a theoretical justification for the inclusion of an ethnographic perspective and then goes on to illustrate how considerations deriving from this and other perspectives influenced the design of a communication skills course for computer practitioners in the Sultanate of Oman.

89–329 Hubbard, Philip (Stanford U.). An integrated framework for CALL courseware evaluation. *CALICO Journal* (Provo, Utah), **6**, 2 (1988), 51–72.

The evaluation of courseware for CALL is one of the more challenging tasks a language teacher is faced with. Currently, most evaluation schemes consist of either a checklist or a list of questions to be answered. This paper offers an alternative approach to evaluation in the form of a flexible

framework from which teachers can develop their own evaluation procedures. The components of the three major sections of the framework – operational description, teacher fit, and learner fit – and their interactions are described and some suggestions for use are offered. The evaluation framework described is one module of a more comprehensive framework incorporating courseware development and implementation as well.

89–330 Morgenstern, Douglas (Massachusetts Inst. of Tech.). Simulation, interactive fiction and language learning: aspects of the MIT project. *Bulletin of the CAAL* (Montreal), **8**, 2 (1986) [publ. 1989], 23–33.

An experiment in the development of software for college-level language learning is under way at MIT. Its objective is to produce communication-based, task-oriented prototypes for several languages. Simulation, a technique originating in other disciplines, and the newer genre of interactive fiction offer potentially useful frameworks for structuring the interactive experience. Some of the prototypes use interactive videodisk technology to create the illusion of immersion in the 'microworld'. An important challenge for the project is the creation of an artificial intelligence system which would permit the illusion of interaction, via input typed on the keyboard, with 'characters' that reside in the programme. *No recuerdo*, the Spanish prototype, attempts to combine all of these modalities.

Teacher training

89–331 Jones, Marian Giles (U. College of North Wales, Bangor). Reading – the poor relation. Report of a modern language in-service course. *British Journal of Language Teaching*, **26**, 2 (1988), 81–8.

A programme of in-service courses is under way in England and Wales to promote new approaches to the teaching of reading. At one such course in Gwynedd, Wales, modern language teachers were asked to translate a Romanian text: after initial panic and frustration they achieved considerable success, mainly by using cognates. The insights acquired were transferred to a French and a German text in a second activity, then explored in a talk. A pre-course questionnaire revealed a discrepancy beween the high importance which teachers attach to reading and the rarity of in-class reading, at least in years one to three.

Recent APU and HMI surveys confirm this rarity, but reading activities are more popular with pupils and more effective than supposed. Pupils can be taught to rely less on teacher help, and can learn skills such as skimming, scanning and gist comprehension. Problems include the paucity of reading objects in published curricula, and poor text-books which use reading texts for testing rather than teaching and to exemplify language points rather than to convey meaning.

89–332 Tollefson, James W. (U. of Washington). A system for improving teacher's questions. *English Teaching Forum* (Washington, DC), **27**, 1 (1989), 6–9 and 51.

This article describes a system intended for training teachers to ask a broader range of referential questions of varying cognitive difficulty. It includes three main items: a taxonomy of questions, a list of key phrases to help identify different types of question, and a checklist for keeping track of the types of question occurring in classroom discourse. Studies show that there are important differences in the impact of different types of question on learners and the learning process. Some questions require nothing more than simple recall of a phrase, a detail from a text, or a vocabulary item, while other questions may require students to formulate and express an opinion or an evaluation of an event or a reading passage. Differences such as these affect not only the cognitive complexity of students' responses, but the grammatical complexity as well. These important differences among levels of difficulty of

181

questions are captured by a taxonomy of questions developed by Thomas Barrett and adapted for use in ESL classes.

The taxonomy divides questions into five levels of complexity: (1) literal comprehension, (2) re-organisation, (3) inferential comprehension, (4) evaluation, and (5) appreciation. These categories are ordered according to increasing difficulty based on the demands on cognition that each level places on the student. An outline of the taxonomy is given, which includes the main levels and subcategories, with a brief statement of the cognitive task presented at each level. It can be used after two or three hours of training: teachers should first analyse actual classroom interaction, discussing specific questions, then analyse their own classes by means of videotapes. They can then prepare questions within specific levels of the taxonomy as part of their lesson planning. [Sample checklist for keeping records of different types of questions.]

89–333 Westgate, David (U. of Newcastle-upon-Tyne). Initial training of foreign language teachers: two issues for discussion. *British Journal of Language Teaching,* **26,** 3 (1988), 147–52.

The absence of any theoretical consensus on the analysis of teaching, and the relationship between courses in teaching methods and students' experiential learning are the 'two issues' of the title. These related problems are addressed through an account of work done by language teaching students on a PGCE course.

The programme of their school-based experience (agreed to have been successful by all those concerned) is described. Video recordings of the students teaching in school, intended originally to give swift feedback on their performance, proved an excellent way, together with their transcripts, of providing a stimulating context for the discussion of wider issues, not only of the skills that were required, but also of the assumptions of teachers, tutors and student teachers on what language teaching is about. Examples are given of how video transcripts can be fruitfully explored in the non-school components of a teacher-training course, thus helping to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

89–334 Woodward, Tessa (Pilgrims' Language Courses, Canterbury). Loop-input: a new strategy for trainers. *System* (Oxford), **16,** 1 (1988), 23–8.

A small survey revealed low awareness, in language teacher training, of process options in training sessions. The present paper attempts to raise trainer awareness of different methods of transmitting information to trainees. This is done mainly by out-lining a new framework for experiential learning that requires less time than the simple transmission model and fewer manpower resources. The new model, nicknamed 'loop-input', entails mirroring the content of training sessions in the process of these sessions. Two short, simple examples of 'loop-input' are given, followed by a longer one.

Teaching methods

89–335 Barrett, L. R. (Elmira Coll., NY). On teaching foreign literature. *British Journal of Language Teaching,* **26,** 2 (1988), 121–5.

Instead of reading foreign literature in the original only, studying it line by line, as is usually done, it is preferable for the students to read an English translation first to get a first impression without too much effort. The teacher then specifies the main themes or topics of interest about the work and pupils make notes under these headings. Then pupils read the original text, lingering on passages of special interest. They then expand their skeleton notes. This method serves the keen scholar as well as the average student. The method normally employed is supposed to thwart reluctant pupils from taking short cuts, and to avoid 'spoonfeeding' them with answers. But it also frustrates the keen student and slows his progress.

89–336 Borodkin, Thelma L. Validation counselling: a catalyst for learning to make appropriate linguistic choices. *TESL Canada Journal* (Montreal), **6,** 1 (1988), 40–9.

The article describes how validation counselling can be used as a consciousness-raising catalyst enabling students to take charge of their learning and to make appropriate linguistic choices. Validation counselling has developed from the work of Rogers (1951), *Client-centred therapy*, and consists of three steps: (1) validation, i.e. legitimising whatever the client is feeling or doing (non-judgemental acceptance is crucial); (2) consideration of options, and (3) evaluation, i.e. selection of the appropriate choices. Through this process the clients gain control over their situations.

The article describes the application of this approach with ESL students who are newcomers to the USA or long-stay immigrants. They tend to hold preconceived notions which are detrimental to

successful language learning, worry about grammatical correctness, and feel guilty about which language they should be using. The teacher tries to show them that in fact they know a great deal about English; they discuss the advantages of being bilingual and of having access to another culture. One of the most useful techniques is the introduction of a guest speaker, a now successful former student, who relates his/her language-learning experiences. This helps to raise the students' awareness of the language-learning process. The realisation that other people have surmounted the same difficulties helps to reduce feelings of anxiety and frustration. Other activities include reading about dialects and language-learning strategies.

89–337 Danesi, Marcel. From context to text: synchronising language teaching to the neurology of language learning. *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **87,** 5 (1988), 454–70.

Traditional teaching methods have the fundamental flaw that they are incompatible with the dual nature of the brain's neuro-functional organisation. The concept of 'neurological bimodality' is coined to provide a framework for talking about 'brain compatible' language teaching. The two hemispheres of the brain work in complementary interaction in the case of complex learning behaviour. L-mode functions allow us to analyse, abstract and process incoming discrete units of speech, while R-mode functions are concomitantly involved in putting the bits and pieces together into meaningful discourse wholes. Substantial debate is going on in neuropsychology on the nature of individual hemispheric dominance or style, the role of the right hemisphere in initial learning tasks, and the neurology of memory. The debate with the most significant implications for language teaching concerns the role of the right hemisphere in initial learning tasks. Research suggests that after the right hemisphere has processed new information, the left hemisphere is ready to take it over, once the appropriate system that it forms has been discovered. The educational implications are that the only kind

of brain-compatible instruction is one which follows this 'right-to-left' directionality. This implies going from the exploring and intuitive functions of the R-mode in the idea-generating stages to the sequential and organisational L-mode functions in the secondary and formalising stages.

Bimodality is useful for assessing methodological claims and teaching techniques. Most traditional methods are 'unimodal' and favour the L-mode, whereas functional or active theories are biased in favour of the R-mode. Five principles which are central to the concept of bimodality and which can guide the teacher are enumerated: (1) modal directionality (R-mode → L-mode, as discussed above, context → text); (2) modal focusing (the shift to the L-mode, incorporating techniques such as pattern practice, grammatical explanations, etc.); (3) contextualisation, to aid the student in carrying out L-mode tasks (visual aids, regalia, games); (4) creativity, i.e. using language in creative/expressive ways; (5) personalisation (the use of humanistic or affectively-coded techniques): the classroom environment should be congenial and non-threatening.

89–338 Decoo, Wilfried (U. of Antwerp). Informatique et linguistique appliquée: la dimension humanisante. [Computer science and applied linguistics: the humanising dimension.] *Bulletin of the CAAL* (Montreal), **8**, 2 (1986) [publ. 1989], 7–21.

This article examines the role of computer science in applied linguistics. The early hopes of automatic translation by computer have not been realised and research now concentrates more on aspects such as translation or teaching, which is assisted by a computer. The rich diversity of current research is illustrated by many examples, such as the making of dictionaries, or aids for blind people. Three basic phases in the evolution of programmes for applied linguistics are described.

Computer-assisted language instruction is examined from four aspects: (*a*) How versatile is the teaching programme? Can it be easily adapted to different situations? (*b*) Are programmes often of too interrogating a nature? Too many stops and starts can damage the teaching value. (*c*) Is the procedure of typing responses onto a screen somewhat slow? Consideration must be given to oral replies. (*d*) Can the programme content allow the realisation of different activities and degrees of progression?

In conclusion, people's fear of, and prejudice against, new technology is described and emphasis is placed on the many humane and useful advantages which can ensue from using computers.

89–339 de Quincey, Paul (British Council). Stimulating activity: the role of computers in the language classroom. *CALICO Journal* (Provo, Utah), **4**, 1 (1987), 55–66.

Typical computer programs deal with a specific language area, and are not really relevant to contemporary language-teaching approaches. The British Council has therefore developed six programs which offer a range of uses. LETTERHUNT is a manipulative game, limited in use and providing little scope for interaction. CODE-BREAKER is a problem-solving game involving discussion, and it can be used to practise fluency skills. STORYBOARD involves text reconstruction, discussion, group work, and critical analysis. DEADLINE involves text creation and, amongst other activities, word-processing, which allows the student to create, revise and edit texts. FAST FOOD is a simulation program, providing a realistic environment and requiring student–computer interaction to complete the task. A group of students compete with other groups, and further activities, such as a report-writing, are possible. The final program is LONDON ADVENTURE which provides a controlled environment and specific tasks. Adventure game programs offer a measure of interactivity, but are not as free as simulation programs.

It is recommended that programs should be more flexible, and should act as a stimulus to learning when the student is away from the monitor. Students should be enabled to manipulate data held by the program.

89–340 Dickins, Pauline M. Rea (Ealing Coll. of Higher Ed.), **and Woods, Edward G.** (U. of Lancaster). Some criteria for the development of communicative grammar tasks. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **22**, 4 (1988), 623–46.

Grammar has been neglected in favour of notional, functional and communicative approaches to language learning and teaching. Yet there is considerable evidence that grammatical competence is a main component in communicative competence. Grammar is important in that it provides signals for interpreting a message, for example systematic ordering of parts indicates subject, verb, object relationships, tense forms express time relations, modality expresses a scale of probabilities. In other words, grammar is a resource with which to express crucial elements in the accurate production and understanding of a message. But it should be remembered that grammar is a means to an end rather than an end in itself. Rules are of a relative rather than an absolute nature.

The following recommendations are made: grammar rules should be extended beyond traditional grammar-teaching methods to include pragmatic factors in communication, and integrated in the communicative curriculum in such a way as to involve learners by developing their insights into the rules of use. Students should be given exercises which demonstrate that grammatical competence and communicative competence are complementary. Awareness of the possibility of grammatical choices and of the importance of the appropriate and accurate choice in a given context should be encouraged. Students should be asked to explain their choices, and be given explicit information on how the grammar system of English operates.

184

89–341   Hafiz, F. M. and Tudor, Ian. Extensive reading and the development of language skills. *ELT Journal* (Oxford), **43**, 1 (1989), 4–13.

A three-month extensive reading programme using graded readers was set up involving one experimental group and two control groups of ESL in the UK. The programme, inspired by Krashen's Input Hypothesis, was designed to investigate whether extensive reading for pleasure could effect an improvement in subjects' linguistic skills, with particular reference to reading and writing. The results showed a marked improvement in the performance of the experimental subjects, especially in terms of their writing skills. A number of recommendations are made regarding the setting up of extensive reading programmes.

89–342   Hirvela, Alan (Chinese U. of Hong Kong). Marshall McLuhan and the case against CAI. *System* (Oxford), **16**, 3 (1988), 299–311.

The article challenges the role of the computer as a medium of language instruction. While computers have added much to the success of academic research, increased pedagogical possibilities, and provided professional advantages for students with knowledge of how to use them, there has been little progress in computer-assisted instruction since its inception in the early 1960s.

The case against computers is based on several perceived shortcomings: they offer no more than an average teacher or text-book and programs are based on methods which are not in accordance with desirable teaching practices; there are no guiding principles for their use in language acquisition; software is limited, especially in provision of meaningful feedback and authentic interaction. Word processing, which is a useful application, is merely an advanced form of type-writing, and the cost of hardware and software is substantial. Teachers who do not use computers are regarded with scorn by those who do. The possibility that the novelty factor will wear off is yet another matter for concern, as is the lack of interest in the student's assessment of programs.

But the fundamental question is an ethical one: should students and children be expected to use computers when so little is known about possible negative side effects? Marshall McLuhan's concern about the effects of electronic technology on users and on communication is recalled. It is concluded that the power of technology should not be underestimated, especially when it is so little understood.

89–343   Higgins, John. Response to Hirvela's article 'Marshall McLuhan and the case against CAI'. *System* (Oxford), **16**, 3 (1988), 313–17.

This article is a refutation of Alan Hirvela's case against computer-assisted instruction [*see abstract* 89–342]. It is agreed that the computer will change the environment. Eyestrain may be caused, drill-and-practice programs are a limited pedagogical resource, a theoretical framework for computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is lacking, hardware and software are expensive, and some teachers are excessively devoted to CALL. But in each case preventive measures can be taken and imbalances redressed. In fact, the computer is a responsive device, depending on the software. It can contribute in many meaningful ways to the process of language learning.

89–344   Johns, Tim (U. of Birmingham) (French translation by F. Roussel). Implications et applications des logiciels de concordance dans la salle de classe. [Whence and whither classroom concordancing?] *Langues Modernes* (Paris), **82**, 5 (1988), 29–45.

Computer-assisted learning only poses a threat to the kind of teacher who formerly clung slavishily to the textbook. The author's program MICRO-CONCORD, described here, is designed to teach scientific or technical English (ESP). It is based on the principle that language learning consists of exploration and discovery, and can also be used independently by the learner. Concordancing makes

it possible to search a vast number of texts for a given word or phrase and to print out all the examples found, in context. Because of its ability to furnish multiple contexts for each item and because of a type of presentation which allows for comparison of different types of text, the concordancing program is one of the most flexible that can be offered the learner, as well as among the richest in potential. Further refinements are envisaged particularly as regards classroom uses. Much still remains to be done to extend the range of computer-assisted learning. [The English original of this article is to be published in H. Wekker and others (eds.), *Computer applications in language learning*, Foris.]

89–345 Jung, Udo O. H. Das Satellitenfernsehen zwischen Prozeß und Produkt. [Satellite television – both process and product.] *Die Neueren Sprachen (Frankfurt am Main),* **87,** 6 (1988), 609–31.

A distinction is made between process media (television/radio) and product media (video/audio). Satellite television can be utilised as a process medium in order to transmit foreign-language broadcasts by foreign networks directly into the classroom. However, it can also be employed merely as a vehicle for the transmission of videos. The author proposes a graduated model in which satellite TV would nevertheless be utilised as a back-up for the use of video practice material. He begins with a description of the prerequisites for satellite and cable TV broadcasts. He then outlines the state of knowledge, drawing on an international report of the literature, and cites examples to elaborate on the types of drills/practice material made possible by the use of video in foreign-language teaching. The article concludes with an outline of the methodology of satellite TV.

89–346 McAllister, Carole and Louth, Richard (Southeastern Louisiana U.). The effect of word processing on the quality of basic writers' revisions. *Research in the Teaching of English* (Urbana, Ill), **22,** 4 (1988), 417–27.

This study investigated the effects of using word processors on the quality of revision of 102 college basic writers. Three teachers' fall and spring classes were examined. In the fall semester, all three teachers operated under comparable conditions (using computers in class once every two weeks). In the spring semester, however, these three teachers' classes were divided into two experimental groups that used computers and one control group that did not. The first and final drafts of an assigned paragraph for all six groups were judged by trained raters blind to experimental conditions. A set of planned comparisons revealed no significant difference in the three groups' quality of revisions the fall and a significant difference in the quality of revisions between the experimental and control groups in the spring. The results indicated that word processing does have a positive effect on the quality of revision in basis writers.

89–347 Moisan, Renate (U. Laval). Le vidéodisque dans l'enseignement des langues: état présent des recherches. [Videodiscs and their use in language teaching: current research.] *Bulletin of the CAAL* (Montreal), **8,** 2 (1986) [publ. 1989], 125–36.

This article sums up research on videodiscs and their use in second-language instruction. The documents gathered in the BIBELO project (part of a joint IBM-Université Laval project) yield a definition of the videodisc and a description of its various uses for specific purposes, including instruction in general and language instruction in particular. Among these documents are several prototypes of interactive videodiscs which are described briefly. The future for videodiscs is discussed.

89-348 Rivers, Wilga M. (Harvard U.). Opening doors and windows through interactive language teaching. *Babel* (Victoria, Australia), **23**, 1 (1988), 6–14.

Ten principles of interactive language learning and teaching are enumerated: (1) The student is the language learner. (Corollary 1: Motivation springs from within; it can be sparked, but not imposed from without.) (2) Language learning and teaching are shaped by student needs and objectives in particular circumstances. (Corollary 2: Language teaching and course design will be very diverse.) (3) Language learning and teaching are based on normal uses of language, with communication of meanings in oral or written form basic to all strategies and techniques. (4) Classroom relations reflect mutual liking and respect, allowing for both teacher personality and student personality in a non-threatening atmosphere of co-operative learning. (5) Basic to use of language are language knowledge and language control. (6) Development of language control proceeds through creativity, which is nurtured by interactive, participatory activities. (7) Every possible medium and modality is used to aid learning. (8) Testing is an aid to learning. (9) Language learning is penetrating another culture: students learn to operate harmoniously within it or in contact with it. (10) The real world extends beyond the classroom walls; language learning takes place in and out of the classroom.

89-349 Snow, Marguerite Ann (California State U., Los Angeles) **and Brinton, Donna M.** (U. of California, Los Angeles). Content-based language instruction: investigating the effectiveness of the adjunct model. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **22**, 4 (1988), 553–74.

This article describes the adjunct model of language instruction, in which English/ESL courses are linked with content courses to integate better the reading, writing and study skills required for academic success in the university setting. Following a rationale for the adjunct model and a description of its key features as employed in the Freshman Summer Programme (FSP) at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), the findings of two studies carried out at UCLA are presented: (a) former students' evaluation of the programme and (b) follow-up interviews with selected ESL students and results of a simulated examination comparing the FSP follow-up students and non-FSP ESL students.

89-350 Soulé-Susbielles, Nicole (U. of Paris VIII). Mais que peuvent-ils donc se dire? Explorations dans le travail de 'paires'. [But what can they be saying to each other? Explorations in pair work.] *Langues Modernes* (Paris), **82**, 6 (1988), 24–31.

The analysis of a recorded face-to-face dialogue between two students is described. Four aspects of the dialogue were analysed: thematic, functional, structural (i.e. the discourse structure) and inter-active. Examples of the results of each analysis are given and illustrative points selected for comment. The students subsequently discussed their recordings and the analysis with their teacher, and this threw further light on each aspect studied. The author concludes that both students and teachers benefited from the study, which showed up not only the students' ability (or otherwise) to manage inter-action, but also their attitudes towards each other. This is a rich source for further research (some suggestions are made).

89-351 Stevens, Vance and others. New ideas in software development for linguistics and language learning. *CALICO Journal* (Provo, Utah), **4**, 1 (1986), 15–26.

Language teachers and linguists have been de-veloping their own computer-assisted language learning (CALL) software for use in research and language learning. This report describes several such programs which meet a need for communicative, inductively-based software; that are controlled by the students using them; and that can be used as tools in research as well as having applications in the classroom.

187

89–352 Wulf, Herwig. Das Sprachlabor im Zeitalter des Computers. [The language laboratory in the age of the computer.] *Die Neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **87,** 6 (1988), 631–45.

The language laboratory is often assumed to be irrelevant to language teaching today, due to the development of new technologies, especially computers, and new approaches replacing the audio-lingual approach which underpinned its earlier use. It has, however, retained a moderate popularity in certain areas, especially adult education, and can be used in ways consonant with modern approaches (cognitive and communicative).

One neglected use is for listening comprehension exercises, which can be more authentic if oral responses are required. Drills can be made more meaningful by, for example, requiring the use of words not given in the stimulus; by giving a general instruction (e.g. 'you are a vegetarian') to motivate positive and negative responses (in this case to the offer of food); by allowing two correct responses, both modelled (by different voices) in the imitation phase; by learners changing places and listening to each other's responses. Learners should not be expected to produce the exact phrases given on the tape: anything with the same communicative force is acceptable, and this can be checked with the teacher if necessary.

Computer-assisted learning can be highly un-communicative, emphasising testing rather than teaching and written rather than spoken language. The best features of laboratory and computer can, however, be combined in 'audio-enhanced computer-assisted learning', with branching pro-grammes supplying and explanations on audio-tape.