
Language learning and teaching – theory and practice

Language teaching

97–139 Avila, Enrique (U. of los Andes, Venezuela) **and Sadoski, Mark** (Texas A & M U.). Exploring new applications of the keyword method to acquire English vocabulary. *Language Learning* (Cambridge, MA), **46**, 3 (1996), 379–95.

Previous research on second language vocabulary learned by the keyword method has primarily involved the use of English keywords to learn the vocabulary of other languages. This study used Spanish keywords to acquire English vocabulary. Sixty-three fifth-grade limited English proficiency students learned the definitions of 10 English words either by the keyword method or by control instructions emphasising direct translation and

memory. Cued-recall and sentence-completion tasks were administered either immediately or after a one-week delay in a between-subjects experimental design. Results showed that the keyword method produced superior recall and comprehension both immediately and after one week. Results further suggested that the keyword method is readily adaptable to actual English as a second language classrooms.

97–140 Berry, Mike (U. of Birmingham). Microconcord: a useful tool for language research and teaching. *Rusistika* (Rugby), **14** (1996), 46–9.

Microconcord is a concordancing program which, it is claimed, can be effectively used to handle Russian text. The first part of the article is an examination of Microconcord's capabilities. The program will search through the material listing the number of occurrences of the search word and at the end show the frequency of the occurrences. The output on screen can be organised in alphabetical order of the search word or the words on either side. The program will also provide a list of 'context words'.

In addition to these features, the examples can be edited to remove inappropriate ones and also classified into up to ten categories. In the second part, the use of the Russian adjectives *почтуйский* and *пыцкий* (Russian) is examined with the help of Microconcord. In the third part, some practical advice on how to use the program is given, as well as how to build up a large corpus of Russian materials. Details of how to obtain the program are given at the end of the article.

97–141 Cauldwell, Richard T. (Birmingham U.). Direct encounters with fast speech on CD-Audio to teach listening. *System* (Oxford), **24**, 4 (1996), 521–8.

Learners have problems in perception of fast speech, and teachers have hitherto been unable to find ways of turning academic descriptions of fast speech processes into teaching materials which help learners with this. This article describes how computer software might change this situation. The software captures and makes available, for both auditory observation and learning, the variety of sound shapes that words take on in fast speech. It does this by allowing immediacy of access to, non-destructive editing of, and zooming in and out of sounds on

CD. The paper first gives an example of the type of analysis made possible by the software. It then describes a case-study of postgraduate Japanese students who were high-school teachers of English in Japan, in which the teaching procedure used could help learners' perception and comprehension of fast speech. The paper ends with a call for electronic publication of standard texts to do with the spoken language, so that learners can have direct encounters with fast speech.

97–142 Chun, Dorothy M. and Plass, Jan L. (U. of California, Santa Barbara). Facilitating reading comprehension with multimedia. *System* (Oxford), **24**, 4 (1996), 503–19.

Based on recent theories of the second language reading process that have focused on an interactive approach, i.e. the utilisation of both top-down and bottom-up processing, this paper is concerned with the question of how reading comprehension can be

facilitated with a multimedia application for language learning. On the macro level, the effect of a dynamic visual advance organiser is investigated. On the micro level, the effects of multimedia annotations for single vocabulary items are studied.



In addition, the relationship between vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension is examined. To test the hypotheses, three studies with a total of 160 second-year university students of German were conducted using the multimedia application *CyberBuch*. The results indicate that a dynamic visual advance organiser does aid in overall comprehension and that annotations of individual vocabulary items consisting of both visual and verbal information help

more than verbal information only. Also, a moderate correlation between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension was found. The authors take these results to support the dual coding theory and its extension to multimedia learning, and to underline the importance of visual information in addition to verbal information to support both top-down and bottom-up processing in reading in a foreign language.

97-143 Cryle, Peter (Queensland U., Australia). Teaching for cultural performance. *Australian Journal of French Studies* (Victoria, Australia), **33**, 2 (1996), 278-88.

This paper argues that a more productive relationship is needed between the sometimes polemically opposed methodologies of 'literature' and 'language' teaching, but that literature teachers need to do more than throw away their lists and refuse to pass on the canon, as certain cultural practices remain both distinctive and culturally normative. The sociological semiotics of Pierre Bourdieu offer the notion of cultural ease (*aisance*) as a cultural counterpart to linguistic competence. Distinguished performance, he says, is characterised by assurance, flair, even bluff, and cultural ease is not acquired through formal schooling but acquired from childhood within the family. A research project carried out by the author and colleagues at Queensland University found that cultural knowledge of a literary kind circulates even in journalistic writing, and that there is an everyday

canonical function at work in the form of allusion, for example to Proust and his works. This suggested a need for revised, pragmatically appropriate canonical lists and discovery-orientated ways of teaching them, to enable students to survive in social exchanges involving playful cultural allusion and to see how these are shaped. A course was implemented using an index of allusion, a set of newspapers, and videos of cultural chat shows from French television, with the aim of fostering 'cultural communication', building on the students' existing skill in allusive cultural practices in their own culture. In the final oral assessment, the students' task was not merely to recognise allusions, but to cope with them in appropriate ways and to use conversational tactics practised in class to allow the conversation to flow smoothly.

97-144 Donato, Richard (U. of Pittsburgh) **and others**. Monitoring and assessing a Japanese FLES program: ambiance and achievement. *Language Learning* (Cambridge, MA), **46**, 3 (1996), 497-528.

This article reports on the third year of an ongoing research project which documents and evaluates an innovative foreign language in elementary school (FLES) programme in Japanese for Grades K(indergarten) to 5 ($N=195$). Two strands of research are reported here. The first is concerned with school and community ambiance: the paper attempts to describe systematically the attitudes and perceptions of various constituents of this curricular innovation. The second concerns the investigation of the language achievement of children in Grades

K-5 for oral proficiency, vocabulary development, and social uses of language. During a three-year period, the children, regardless of age, made considerable progress in foreign language proficiency and developed positive attitudes towards language learning. It is concluded that innovative language programmes in the elementary school can move beyond their often marginalised status to become regularised features of the overall school curriculum.

97-145 Dordick, Michael (Oklahoma State U.). Testing for a hierarchy of the communicative interference value of ESL errors. *System* (Oxford), **24**, 3 (1996), 299-308.

This article reviews previous methodology used for determining a hierarchy of English as a second language (ESL) students' written error gravity, indicating some weaknesses therein, and describes a new error substitution methodology used in this

experimental study for determining the communicative interference effect of ESL errors on naïve native speakers of English. A simple test was administered to 289 native-speaking college freshmen consisting of a short reading passage and 10

multiple choice comprehension questions based on the passage. Nine different versions of the passage were created, each of which contained a different kind of grammatical error. Lexical and verb-related errors proved to interfere with comprehension the most. These findings were consistent with those of several previous studies. It is suggested that these

results have important implications for teachers, both in helping them distinguish between those errors which are in greatest need of being pointed out and those which need less attention, and by suggesting the need to focus more attention on exercises involving word usage and verb tense.

97-146 Edwards, Viv and Walker, Sue (Reading U.). Some status issues in the translation of children's books. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* (Clevedon), **17**, 5 (1996), 339-48.

Changing populations in many parts of Europe and the English-speaking world have given rise to multilingual classrooms, new pedagogies and new learning materials. This paper discusses multilingual resources for children: books in languages other than English as well as dual language books written in both community (or heritage) languages and English. The main emphasis, however, is on dual

language books and the challenges which these present for translators. It is claimed that the insensitivity of publishers to the complexities of multilingual resources has often resulted in inadequate translations which greatly diminish the usefulness of dual language books. Various ways of improving the quality of translation are considered.

97-147 Hanna, Barbara E. (Queensland U. of Technology, Australia). Spies like us: thoughts on cultural conformity and language teaching. *Australian Journal of French Studies* (Victoria, Australia), **33**, 2 (1996), 262-77.

The paper discusses how non-verbal skills and kinesics can profitably be taught more explicitly as a necessary part of the acquisition of culture, and offers gestural behaviour, now gaining legitimisation in pedagogical circles, as a prime example. Students can be sensitised to expectations of gesture in their own and other cultures, and to the fact that inappropriate gesticulation can constitute a non-verbal 'foreign accent'. Training in interpretation of the meaning of unfamiliar gestures can be undertaken, for example using videodisc. Other systems of non-verbal meaning such as handwriting and dress can also be scrutinised, with a discussion of the extent to which conformity can or should be demanded. The target culture is not homogeneous,

but wide exposure to a range of behaviours enables students to establish general principles, and then to 'personalise' this generic brand of nativeness through further cultural contact, although the quest for nativeness raises the problem of suppression of original identity. The real task in hand is not mimicry but intelligence gathering, enabling students to conform, but in an informed and managed way. The paper concludes by suggesting that the role of the teacher should be to reinforce awareness of the need to go beyond the verbal, to train students in awareness of the variables potentially influencing behaviour within a culture, and to help them develop analytical tools for use in future, richer contacts with that culture.

97-148 Harris, John (Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann/The Linguistics Inst. of Ireland). Teagasc na Gaeilge sa bhunscoil tríd an gcur chuige cumarsáideach: Tionscadal taighde agus forbartha de chuid ITÉ [Teaching Irish communicatively at primary level: An ITÉ research and development project]. *Teangeolas* (Dublin, Ireland), **35** (1995), 22-36.

Two research reports which describe a communicative approach to teaching Irish in primary schools are summarised. The reports are published by *Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann (ITÉ)*, the Irish-Government sponsored body concerned with linguistic research. They describe a three-year research project which involved over 60 teachers from both Irish and English speaking areas of the country trying out experimental teaching materials in their own classrooms. Each of the reports consists of guidelines, including detailed specifications for the production and format of the courses themselves, as well as an extensive range of examples of the new

teaching materials for each class. A major aim of the new approach is to make the language learning process itself more enjoyable and interesting. There is an emphasis on communicative games and tasks in which the pupil must use simple Irish in a purposeful way in order to participate effectively. Role-play, sketches and drama also play an important part, as does the acquisition of real new information or skills – e.g. learning Irish dances such as 'Balláí Luimíní' through Irish. If implemented, the proposals would represent the most significant change in teaching Irish at primary level since the audio-visual method was first introduced twenty five years ago.



97-149 Harley, Birgit and others (Ontario Inst. for the Study of Ed., Toronto U.). Teaching vocabulary: an exploratory study of direct techniques. *The Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto, Ont.), **53**, 1 (1996), 281-304.

The authors gave systematic vocabulary teaching to two groups of English high-school students in immersion and extended French classes. This teaching took place over four weeks, and involved extensive use of semantic mapping techniques, exercises with scrambled words, sorting tasks, exercises where students had to form derivatives of the test words, and a series of discussion tasks. Vocabulary learning was tested using a Yes/No recognition test, a self-report form, a word

association test, and a test of derivational knowledge. Formal analysis of the results showed large vocabulary gains for grade 9 students, and slightly smaller gains for the more advanced group of students. An informal analysis of the students' reactions to the programme is also reported. It was concluded that such direct teaching techniques have a positive role to play in the communicative L2 classroom, even though formal word analysis proved difficult for students.

97-150 Hill, Victor J. (U. of Salford). Verb-form clustering and syllabus design. *System* (Oxford), **24**, 4 (1996), 529-36.

Within language teaching, verb form is generally recognised to be the central organising principle of the syllabus. An examination of current materials for teaching English as a foreign language, however, reveals a failure to take into account the fact that verb forms are not discrete linguistic items but cohere together in functional clusters, each of which characterises one of the major communicative contexts of language; description, narration, etc. The article begins by arguing the view that social language, because of its complexity and

unpredictability, needs to be delayed on a language course until a core of relatively unmarked and formally regular factual language, or language for the conveying of information, has been built up. It goes on to give a brief account of verb-form clustering, together with some of the problems caused by a discrete, step-by-step treatment of verb forms. By way of exemplification of clustering, a fairly detailed examination of the context of the description is given, together with suggestions as to how this might be implemented in terms of syllabus design.

97-151 Hosenfeld, Carol (State U. of New York) and others. Adapting a Cognitive Apprenticeship Method to foreign language classrooms. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **29**, 4 (1996), 588-96.

Apprenticeship approaches to education have been used throughout history, and are used in many countries today to teach manual and intellectual skills. Recently, a new form of apprenticeship has emerged in education to teach cognitive skills used in performing classroom tasks: 'Cognitive Apprenticeship Methods', used chiefly with native speakers of a language. This article aims to reconceptualise one of these current methods to provide beginning foreign language (FL) learners

with the knowledge they need to acquire the four strategies of reciprocal teaching within a 'cognitive apprenticeship' framework. The author provides a detailed set of lesson plans (with extensive examples in French), which embed the teaching of requisite declarative and procedural knowledge needed to perform higher-order cognitive tasks. Translation of the tasks into English allows teachers of other languages and/or using other textbooks to adapt the principles and ideas to their own materials.

97-152 Hyland, Ken (City U. of Hong Kong). Nurturing hedges in the ESP curriculum. *System* (Oxford), **24**, 4 (1996), 447-90.

There is a popular belief that scientific writing is purely objective, impersonal and informational, designed to disguise the author and deal directly with facts. But while English for special purposes (ESP) courses often provide the linguistic means to accomplish this invisibility, they often ignore the fact that effective academic writing always carries the individual's point of view. Writers also need to present their claims cautiously, accurately and modestly to meet discourse community expectations and to gain acceptance for their statements. Such

pragmatic aspects of communication however are vulnerable to cross-cultural differences and L2 students are rarely able to hedge their statements appropriately. This paper argues that hedging devices are a major pragmatic feature of effective scientific writing and that students should be taught to recognise and use them in their own work. It examines the frequency, functions and realisations of hedges and discusses a range of strategies for familiarising students with their appropriate use.

97-153 Juel, Connie (U. of Virginia). What makes literacy tutoring effective? *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, DE), **31**, 3 (1996), 268-89.

This study explored factors that may account for successful tutoring outcomes when poor readers tutor other poor readers. 30 dyads of poor readers comprising elementary school children (tutees) and university students (tutors) were audio- and video-recorded in tutoring sessions over a school year. The recordings were analysed into type of verbal interactions (i.e., scaffolded or modelled processes) and time spent engaged in seven tutoring activities (e.g., reading literature, writing, letter-sound instruction). Multiple measures of reading, writing, and attitude towards school were also administered at the beginning and end of the school year both to the children and to the student tutors (who also engaged in additional reading and writing activities

outside of tutoring), and to control groups. It was found that both tutors and children made significantly greater literacy growth than their respective control groups. Two activities and two forms of verbal interactions were found to be particularly important in successful dyads, respectively: (a) the use of texts that gradually and repetitively introduced both high-frequency vocabulary and words with common spelling patterns, and activities in which children were engaged in direct letter-sound instruction; and (b) scaffolding of reading and writing, and modelling of how to read and spell unknown words. The findings point to the existence of a synergistic relationship between the form and content of instruction.

97-154 Kobayashi, Hiroe (Hiroshima U.) **and Rinnert, Carol** (Hiroshima City U.). Factors affecting composition evaluation in an EFL context: cultural rhetorical pattern and readers' background. *Language Learning* (Cambridge, MA), **46**, 3 (1996), 397-437.

This paper reports an investigation of how 465 readers with different backgrounds (differing first language, academic status, and amounts of writing instruction) evaluated 16 versions of Japanese university English as a foreign language (EFL) students' English compositions containing different culturally influenced rhetorical patterns, i.e. Japanese vs. American English, as well as two other features: coherence breaks and language use errors. Among other factors, including coherence and language use, culturally influenced rhetorical patterns affected assessment of EFL student writing on an analysis of effects topic. Overall, Japanese students who had not received English writing instruction preferred the Japanese rhetorical pattern, native English speakers favoured the American rhetorical pattern, and

Japanese students who had received English writing instruction together with Japanese teachers valued features of both patterns. There were no significant differences between the two teacher groups in the overall assessment of the two rhetorical patterns, but Japanese English teachers (similar to Japanese students) gave significantly higher scores than native English teachers to the Japanese introduction. On a comparison/contrast topic, other discourse features, particularly paragraph level coherence problems, appeared to override rhetorical pattern in terms of influence on writing quality scores. The results suggest that a flexible approach to permissible rhetorical patterns and a greater emphasis on coherence may prove beneficial for EFL writing instruction.

97-155 Lancaster, Rosemary (U. of Western Australia). Paris as it is written: classroom strategies for discussing literature in a cultural context. *Australian Journal of French Studies* (Victoria, Australia), **33**, 2 (1996), 233-48.

This paper discusses the need to smooth the transition from high school French to university literature courses whilst capitalising on students' communicative training. To this end, a course was devised in cultural studies/literature, with a focus on genre and cultural theory. This graded programme built on communicative competence by revealing the use of everyday idiom and attitudes beyond popular writing, promoting the ability to read and analyse texts judiciously as an empowering skill. 'Literature' came in the form both of canonical texts and of material from the media and popular culture, and students practised a variety of analytical approaches to different genres, e.g. a 'feminist'

reading of a film. The course objectives are illustrated by the module *Paris littéraire*, which used material as diverse as 1990's pop songs, the poetry of Apollinaire and the *Guide Michelin* to show that Paris is not merely a geographical location but a complex cultural signifier. It is suggested that the more diverse the reading programme, the more comprehensively students appreciate the cultural values the works convey. Indications are that the course has been successful in fostering critical reading, motivating students and preparing the ground for subsequent, more theoretically centred literature courses.



97-156 Lapkin, Sharon and Swain, Merrill (Ontario Inst. for Studies in Ed., Toronto U.). Vocabulary teaching in a grade 8 French immersion classroom: a descriptive case study. *The Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto, Ont.), **53**, 1 (1996), 242-56.

This paper provides a detailed description of the way a single teacher in a grade 8 immersion class approaches the teaching of vocabulary in French. It identifies six types of strategy. The teacher studied here teaches vocabulary in a way that can be described as planned, systematic, oral but formal, making use of the prior knowledge of the students, directly controlled by the teacher, and equally focussed on both form and meaning. The analysis

makes clear that there is an underlying systematicity to the teacher's 'spontaneous' vocabulary instruction, and that he is well aware that learners need 'depth' as well as 'breadth' of vocabulary knowledge. It is further suggested that an inventory of the strategies used, along with examples, might form a useful component of a teacher education syllabus.

97-157 Latoja, Luis (Columbus State Community Coll.). Un programa de español para colegio universitario: esfuerzos por lograr una mejor articulación. [A Spanish language programme for university colleges: striving for better organisation.] *Hispania* (U. of N. Colorado, Greeley), **79**, 3 (1996), 523-30.

A three-year plan for a university college Spanish language programme is described, which aims to offer both improved course structure and a more sound organisation. The Columbus State Community College programme aimed to expand the Spanish language programme across the university curriculum. A description of the status of Spanish studies in the college is used to provide the background for the subsequent changes implemented. Details are given of how the programme organisation affects the infrastructure of the college, and a distinction is made between

horizontal and vertical organisation. Horizontal organisation is achieved through the director of the college, who observes and feeds back on faculty. Vertical organisation is provided by encouraging links between university, primary, and secondary education. The advantages and potential problems of such types of organisation are discussed. Suggestions are made as to how better vertical organisation can be achieved by means of joint pedagogical projects involving the university college, secondary schools, and the state university.

97-158 Meara, Paul (U. of Wales, Swansea) **and others**. Classrooms as lexical environments. *Language Teaching Research* (London), **1**, 1 (1997), 28-47.

In many second/foreign-language classrooms, students are expected to learn much or even most of their vocabulary without explicit instruction, simply through exposure to a rich variety of words in meaningful contexts. In fact, however, there are few studies which would allow us to estimate the number of words learners are typically exposed to in second/foreign-language classrooms. In this study, the vocabulary available in the speech of ten teachers in intensive communicative English as a second language classes for children in Quebec was analysed using specially designed computer programs. The words which occurred in classroom transcripts were

classified according to their status as high-frequency or 'unusual' words, according to lists developed by Nation. The working assumption was that a large number of unusual words would be indicative of a rich lexical environment, whereas the absence or extreme rarity of such words would indicate that the classroom vocabulary was poor. The number of unusual words was found to be quite low in short periods of classroom interaction. However, an interpretation of the findings suggests that the actual richness of the vocabulary available may be greater than it appears in terms of this measure.

97-159 Murphy, Brendan (U. of Coventry). Computer corpora and vocabulary study. *Language Learning Journal* (Rugby), **14** (1996), 53-7.

This paper discusses the application to vocabulary study of corpus resources and research methods. Using the Key-Word-In-Context (KWIC) concordance program output, classroom applications are discussed which develop language awareness from a contrastive viewpoint. It is suggested that corpus concordancing can offer the possibility for

contrastive investigation of vocabulary by helping students examine the contexts of occurrence for recurring patterns of language. Using examples from Spanish, the paper considers how KWIC output can be used to present a wide variety of contexts for words in fields, as a means of examining characteristic use. Combined with KWIC output,

collocational lists supplied by the corpora are shown to aid the process of gaining a more complete understanding of the use of lexical items by observing patterns across knowledge fields. This permits the material writer to introduce new words

into their most likely context, so that the links that exist between them and other vocabulary items can be more easily seen, and more authentic language teaching material produced.

97-160 Paprašarovski, Marija (Zagreb U.). Dramska igra u nastavi stranih jezika. [Drama techniques in foreign language teaching.] *Strani Jezici* (Zagreb), **24**, 3-4 (1995), 149-56.

This article suggests ways in which drama techniques can be used in foreign language teaching. The emphasis is on dramatic play used in class which need not necessarily be realised as a full performance; the play is utilised in the teaching process so as to develop the learners as individuals (the educational objective) and to practise verbal and non-verbal

communication (the teaching objective). Teaching techniques of physical dynamics, movement and communication can encourage learners to listen and look carefully at themselves and others, to use body language, gestures and sounds in a foreign language context, and to express themselves in and cope with new situations.

97-161 Patthey-Chavez, G. Genevieve and Clare, Lindsay (U. of California). Task, talk and text: the influence of instructional conversation on transitional bilingual writers. *Written Communication* (Thousand Oaks, CA), **13**, 4 (1996), 515-63.

This study traces the development of ideas explored during reading lessons in children's writings from one transitional bilingual fourth-grade classroom in a school where 93% of the pupils were Hispanic. Using transcripts from audio- and videotaped lessons, the paper describes the ways in which the reading lessons, designed to facilitate discussion to enhance student reading comprehension, turned into an anchoring activity for the negotiation of joint meaning. They served as a springboard for joint exploration and the generation of intersubjective and co-constructed ideas that bridged the worlds of

home and school. The development of these ideas is traced in representative pieces from five student portfolios. Discussions served to display a number of important literacy processes, and ideas and interpretations from these discussions reappeared in the students' writings. The authors suggest the study will be of particular interest to educators concerned both with understanding better the influence of classroom discourse on student writing and with finding ways to incorporate students' cultural backgrounds into classroom practice.

97-162 Pica, Teresa (U. of Pennsylvania, PA). Second language teaching and research relationships: a North American view. *Language Teaching Research* (London), **1**, 1 (1997), 48-72.

This article discusses the relationship between second language (L2) teaching and research from the multiple perspectives of a North American context, with particular focus on: coexistence of teaching and research activities, on similar topics, but with different goals; collaboration of teaching and research efforts, toward understanding and addressing mutual interests and concerns, through shared data collection, analysis, and interpretation, action research, and ethnographic studies; complementarity of teaching and research

contributions, toward a more complete picture of L2 learning and retention, through theoretically motivated treatments, designed and initiated in the research context, and studied in the classroom; and compatibility of teaching and research interests, with respect to the cognitive and social processes of L2 learning, and the materials and activities through which work with L2 learners is carried out. The article begins with a brief overview of the relationship between L2 teaching and research as it has unfolded over time.



97-163 Rieken, Elizabeth (InterPrep Inc., Atlanta) **and others**. Building better bridges: middle school to high school articulation in foreign language programs. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **29**, 4 (1996), 562-70.

Research was conducted to identify factors that facilitate a smooth transition from middle school to high school for foreign language students. Data were collected via survey to determine the type of programme subjects taught in, degree of success in transition, problems in achieving effective articulation, and effective articulation strategies. Results indicate that middle schools are more likely to offer either exploratory or sequential programmes;

fewer middle schools offer both of these two programme types. In many cases, the programmes are viewed as being in conflict. Almost half the respondents indicated that articulation was not successful in their schools. Findings also suggested that the greater the number of articulation strategies practised, the greater the likelihood that successful transition would occur; and that different articulation methods made a difference in success of transition.

97-164 Roberts, J.T. (U. of Essex). Demystifying materials evaluation. *System* (Oxford), **24**, 3 (1996), 375-89.

The author reviews the literature on materials evaluation, commenting on previous attempts to provide systematic quantitative and qualitative checklists: while these contain a significant element of subjectivity and terminological vagueness, the author does not in the main perceive materials evaluation as a 'black art'. He describes the vital pre- and post-publication stages (wherein feedback can be obtained through piloting, to assist in fine-tuning or redesigning the content/form of language teaching materials), and emphasises the importance of understanding and defining the specific context(s) in which materials are to be used. Such factors as teaching time, class sizes, learner age/interests/motivation are discussed, and it is suggested that

successful evaluation is best measured in regard to local (and appropriate) rather than absolute criteria. In any case, the checklists produced thus far invariably relate to particular environments, and are therefore somewhat limited in general applicability; and it is argued that concern for the detail of the local context will actually reduce subjectivity and enhance informed judgement about the success (or otherwise) of particular coursebooks. The author also suggests that there is no need for consensus as to criteria across contextual boundaries, though the principle of using current checklists as 'food for thought' (and to design prioritised local evaluation instruments with relevant 'exit' points) is generally recommended.

97-165 Robinson-Stuart, Gail (San Diego State U.) **and Nocon, Honorine** (U. of California, San Diego). Second culture acquisition: ethnography in the foreign language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal* (Madison, WI), **80**, 4 (1996), 431-49.

This article reports the findings of a study with university foreign language students, which employed ethnographic interview techniques as a pedagogical tool to promote positive attitudes towards speakers of the language studied. Informed by the theory of culture as process, the National Language Resource Center (LARC) at San Diego State University trained elementary-level university Spanish students to conduct ethnographic interviews in preparation for a cross-cultural project that was integrated into the course curriculum and class requirements.

Quantitative and qualitative results indicate that the project enhanced student attitudes towards the study of Spanish as well as their understanding of their own culture and the culture of local Spanish speakers. Furthermore, by learning and conducting ethnographic interviews, students practised formally the life skill of active listening. In addition to providing a review of relevant literature and research findings, this article describes a programme for implementing ethnographic interview techniques in the foreign language classroom.

97-166 Ryan, Phyllis M. (National Independent U. of Mexico). Sociolinguistic goals for foreign language teaching and teachers' metaphorical images of culture. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **29**, 4 (1996), 571-86.

As foreign language teachers teach a language and its linguistic features, they are necessarily involved with sociolinguistic aspects of language. When they discuss culture, it becomes apparent that they have different definitions, concepts, and underlying

assumptions about culture; and it is suggested that their beliefs need to be explored as a first step toward understanding the relationship between their thinking and classroom instruction and curriculum design. Studies involving teachers of both Spanish

and English as a foreign language suggest that metaphors provide teachers with a useful visual image to represent their personal views and the elusiveness of cultural concepts. This article proposes

that teachers become ethnographers investigating their own beliefs and those of other teachers while developing sociolinguistic goals for their communicative programmes.

97-167 Schrier, Leslie (U. of Iowa). A prototype for articulating Spanish as a foreign language in elementary schools. *Hispania* (U. of N. Colorado, Greeley), **79**, 3 (1996), 515-22.

A model is offered for the organisation of Spanish language programmes in elementary schools, and examples provided of how it may be implemented within a current elementary schools' curriculum. The influences of the *Standards For Foreign Language Learning*, together with the needs of the student, the teacher, and the local community are considered within the model. The first section outlines the influence of internal and external factors such as teachers' abilities, students' attitudes, parents'

concerns, and community interests, upon the success of the proposed model. The second section provides some ideas on how the programme might be developed around the central tenets of a service-learning programme. The paper concludes with a sample curricular unit developed in collaboration with elementary school social studies, mathematics, and science teachers, and provides an example of the kind of activity to be created from this type of interactive curriculum.

97-168 Stierholz, Stefan J. (Pädagogische Hochschule, Erfurt). Grammatik im Wörterbuch. Zur Wörterbuchbenützung aus fremdsprachiger Perspektive. [Grammar in the dictionary. Dictionary use from a foreign-language perspective.] *Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (Berlin, Germany), **33**, 4 (1996), 223-32.

Seven dictionaries, two German monolingual (Duden, Langenscheidts), one English monolingual (Longman), four bilingual (German-English, German-Portuguese and *vice versa*, all Langenscheidts), are analysed in terms of the information they give on the prepositions and prepositional phrases which can follow particular nouns. Detailed tables for sample nouns show serious omissions. There are also problems with how information is presented, especially with punctuation and other conventions. In particular, it

is often unclear if the preposition in an example is determined by a preceding noun or a preceding verb. Overall, it is felt that Langenscheidts monolingual is the best structured, but with many weaknesses of detail; Duden gives too little information; and Longman has good, explicit entries but needs more semantic differentiation. The bilingual dictionaries are considered to be most helpful when a preposition's translation equivalent is given, but this is felt to be too seldom the case.

97-169 Storch, Neomy and Tapper, Joanna (Melbourne U.). Patterns of NNS student annotations when identifying areas of concern in their writing. *System* (Oxford), **24**, 3 (1996), 323-36.

Research evidence is inconclusive about the effectiveness of error corrections for non-native speakers (NNS) in university writing classes. Assisting students to monitor their own grammatical accuracy, without the usual over-reliance on teachers' error corrections, is therefore a desirable strategy. This study investigated the use of an annotation scheme, based on Charles (1990), in which 22 advanced English as a second language students identified their own concerns by means of marginal or end-notes addressed to their teachers.

Analysis focused on form, content and students' views on the scheme, and in particular on their patterns of annotation use. The results showed that students annotated mainly for syntax and lexis, in the form of confirmation requests. Although no clear connections were found between annotations and student background, distinctive patterns of use were identified, which appear to be related to student language proficiency. Relevant teaching and research implications for writing programmes are discussed.



97-170 Sullivan, Nancy (Texas A & M U.) **and Pratt, Ellen** (U. of Puerto Rico). A comparative study of two ESL writing environments: a computer-assisted classroom and a traditional oral classroom. *System* (Oxford), **24**, 4 (1996), 491-501.

Networked computer technology has become prevalent in higher education but little research has been conducted to attest to its benefits for the English as a second language (ESL) student writer. This study compared intermediate university students in two ESL writing environments: a networked computer-assisted classroom and a traditional oral classroom. Three measures were used to examine attitudes towards writing with computers, writing apprehension, and writing quality. In addition, data from transcripts (computer-assisted class) and audio/videotapes (oral class) of large group discussions and peer response groups were evaluated for qualitative differences. The results of the quantitative analyses showed that writing environment had no effect on attitudes

toward writing with computers or writing apprehension. However, significant at the 0.08 probability level, writing quality did improve in the computer-assisted classroom. A qualitative analysis of the data indicated that types/patterns of discourse in the two writing environments were clearly different. During large group discussions, the teacher's role was minimised in the computer-assisted classroom, while the opposite was found in the oral classroom. During peer response group sessions, the comments made in the computer-assisted classroom were more focused although in the oral classroom, the comments were more numerous. It is claimed that the findings support previous research showing positive effects for the use of networked computers in writing classrooms.

97-171 Tschumi, Corinne and others (U. of Neuchâtel). Un logiciel qui aide à la correction en anglais. [A computer program to assist correction in English.] *Les Langues Modernes* (Paris), **4** (1996), 28-41.

A computer program called ARCTA has been developed to help native-speakers of French who have to write in English. It operates in two stages. During writing, it can provide eight tools as on-screen windows: bilingual (two) and monolingual dictionaries, synonyms, verb conjugations, grammar and vocabulary guides, abbreviations. After writing, it detects possible or probable errors and suggests alternatives. It covers errors of grammar and vocabulary, but not spelling, for which existing

programs are deemed adequate. The program writers used a corpus of 90 examination answers containing 27,000 words and 2862 errors. They adopted a conservative approach, because if a computer suggests an error where none exists this disconcerts non-native speakers far more than natives. They also used a neutral tone, as both aggressive and over-familiar messages from a computer were found to offend. The program was preferred to existing alternatives in 32 of 33 trials.

97-172 Turner, Karen (Inst. of Ed., U. of London). The National Curriculum and syllabus design. *Language Learning Journal* (Rugby), **14** (1996), 14-18.

In response to the requirements of the 'post-Dearing' National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages in the United Kingdom, this article attempts to review some contemporary approaches to syllabus design and to outline a syllabus which adheres to the National Curriculum but combines both semantic and structural aspects. Many foreign language teachers currently work with a topic-based syllabus, and it is suggested that the disadvantage of this is that structural items are presented in an ungraded and unconnected manner. Three typical coursebooks in different languages are examined for

their treatment of gender and verb forms in particular, and it is concluded that the semantic approach they take is illustrative of general trends in that it leaves learners confused about grammar. To combat this, using grammatical aspects of the language as the organising principle of the syllabus is proposed. Brumfit's 1981 model, which puts grammar at the core of the syllabus, is cited as a way of coordinating grammar with topic areas and semantic items. Thematic units of work would be retained but would be supported by coherent and progressive attention to structure.

97-173 Vigner, Gérard (Académie de Caen, France). Lire: comprendre ou décoder? [Reading: understanding or decoding?] *Le Français dans le Monde* (Paris), **283** (1996), 62-9.

This paper discusses reading, best described as interaction between text and reader, the latter seeking to reduce uncertainty; it is strongly affected by prior knowledge and expectations. It involves a variety of processes, from high-level (e.g. analysing context, memory search on topic) to low-level (e.g. dealing with morphology, meanings of single words, letter shapes). It is both understanding and decoding. [Table of processes, arranged by level.] Learners of French as a foreign language often have insecurities and fears about low-level problems, for which they cannot compensate, as they can in the first language,

by higher-level strategies. Teachers can help them to acquire higher-level knowledge, e.g. about the organisation of a French newspaper, or about French family life or how the French argue; but help and practice is also needed to automatise decoding. Fourteen sample activities are offered, each focusing on one level of the reading process, from recognising French words mixed with foreign ones and solving anagrams, through finding referents of relative pronouns, to recognising the social conventions underlying an amorous encounter in a Balzac novel.

97-174 Wade, Terence. Using word derivations in teaching Russian. *Rusistika* (Rugby), **14** (1996), 15-21.

The article suggests that with senior pupils it may be helpful to establish a 'time-chart' of Russian vocabulary, beginning with words of Indo-European origin (*δpam* – brother) and proceeding to words deriving from Common Slavonic (*ведpo* – bucket), finally the East Slavonic and Russian strata. At the Indo-European level pupils can be encouraged to find cognates of Russian words in other European languages. An examination of 'loan-words' can be set against a survey of the present flood of borrowings, like *дилep'* – dealer. When studying loan-words, the concept of 'opaque' and 'transparent' vocabulary can be introduced. While

familiarity with Russian roots helps to rationalise meaning, a knowledge of affixes adds a new dimension to the learning of vocabulary. When studying homonyms, only etymological analysis can clarify the relationship between members of a homonymous group. Onomatopoeia can also help in assimilating vocabulary; and knowledge of 'calquing' procedures can transform opaque into transparent lexis. Russian relies on 'root variants' in the creation of new vocabulary, and is suggested that familiarity with word-formatory processes will facilitate the learning and retention of Russian vocabulary.

97-175 Westfall, Ruth and Forester, Sharon (U. of Texas, Austin). Beyond aspect: new strategies for teaching the preterite and the imperfect. *Hispania* (U. of N. Colorado, Greeley), **79**, 3 (1996), 550-60.

Traditional textbook explanations of the preterite and imperfect tend to focus on their aspectual differences. This paper suggests that a comprehensive analysis of the interaction of the preterite and imperfect in narrative, however, must go beyond aspect to include their respective temporal and discourse properties. The linguistic principles behind these properties have to do with the introduction or non-introduction of new reference times into the discourse and the forward

movement of the narrative timeline. It is claimed that textbook and classroom explanations and exercises based on these properties would provide a more effective way to present the preterite and the imperfect. In addition, preparatory input exercises and visual tools for analysing and creating narratives would add to students' exposure to and awareness of important meaning distinctions between the preterite and the imperfect.

97-176 Xie, Mian Mian and Derwing, Tracey M. (U. of Alberta, Canada). Adult EFL in community schools in Beijing, China. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* (Clevedon), **17**, 5 (1996), 385-95.

This study investigates the characteristics of Beijing's relatively new community English language programmes and the students who participate in these programmes. It is based on a survey of 140 students and the administrators of English programmes in 15 community schools in Beijing.

The findings show that community English as a foreign language (EFL) programmes provide a much needed component to EFL instruction in China. They are unique in areas such as programme planning, funding, course offerings, educational rationale, admission, hiring practices and language



skill emphasis. The students in the programmes range widely in age, occupations, special needs and interests. Their motivation to learn is high. They display many characteristics of good language learners, yet they need assistance in developing

learning strategies. It is concluded that community language programmes for adults offer a worthwhile, flexible, and effective educational experience that differs considerably from traditional, government-run programmes.

Language learning

97-177 Al-Qadi, Nassir Saleh (King Abdulaziz U., Saudi Arabia). Testing the acquisition of English productive and non-productive derivatives by native-Arabic speakers. *ITL: A Review of Applied Linguistics* (Louvain, Belgium), **113-114** (1996), 203-20.

This paper discusses how vocabulary development might be enhanced through helping the foreign learner of English to acquire productivity and non-productivity in English derivation. It is suggested that English productive derivatives be paid special attention in teaching to and learning by native-Arabic speakers, given that the Arabic language is a language of derivation and is highly productive. The paper explores how adult native-Arabic speakers learning English as a foreign language acquire English productive and non-productive derivatives. Contrastive analysis (CA) is used to compare

productivity in standard written Arabic and standard written English. This approach is deemed helpful since Arabic is a language of productive derivation while English is a language of more than one source of word-formation – borrowing, compounding and derivation – with low productivity. In addition, morphology is subject to the phenomenon of avoidance by foreign learners. The paper claims therefore that CA has a high predictive value in this context, and should prove helpful, particularly (but not only) to teachers of English to native-Arabic speakers.

97-178 Antón, Marta M. (Indiana U.–Purdue U., Indianapolis). Using ethnographic techniques in classroom observation: a study of success in a foreign language class. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), **29**, 4 (1996), 551-61.

Research on classroom interaction within an ethnographic perspective views the classroom as a cultural setting with its own norms of behaviour. Recent studies from this perspective have focused on uncovering the (often-unspoken) norms of behaviour that need to be internalised in order to be a successful member of the classroom community. This article illustrates how to use ethnographic techniques to achieve a better understanding of

classroom dynamics, which it is suggested will be of value to teachers and supervisors in planning and evaluating their courses. Focusing on the characterisation of 'success' in an Italian class through the analysis of interaction patterns and purposes of the participants, the study seeks to reveal the need for a continuity of teacher and students' goals, methods, and forms of education.

97-179 Cameron, Lynne and others (U. of Leeds). Language development of bilingual pupils in the mainstream: how do pupils and teachers use language? *Language and Education* (Clevedon), **10**, 4 (1996), 221-36.

This paper examines language development in mainstream education through analysis of the language demands made on bilingual pupils by tasks and interactions in subject classrooms, and the responses pupils make to these demands. The data were gathered while working with mainstream secondary subject teachers on an in-service language development project. While no claims of representativity are made for the data, the authors claim that the samples analysed demonstrate clearly the potentially crucial role of contextual factors in

the English language development of bilingual pupils. Such factors include the amount of language production generated by task organisation, the availability of potential discourse roles to pupils, and the amount of interactive input and feedback pupils receive. Implications for in-service training of mainstream subject teachers in the area of language development, and for future directions for research and theory in the field of language development of bilingual pupils in the mainstream, are discussed.