centrate initially on post-editing for grammatical accuracy: this component of the software will allow learners to have their German text parsed for grammatical errors, on the basis of which (and including other student data available to the program) feedback will be given to the learner during learner-computer interaction. The implementation of a substantial 'chunk' of German grammar was thus a pre-requisite for all other work on *Textana*–and the coverage of this grammar, together with the underlying morphological and syntactical theory, is touched on briefly here. The main part of the paper is devoted to a more detailed discussion of the implications of SLA research for the design of *Textana*.

99–234   Stuart, Susan (U. of Paisley, Scotland, UK). Should French teachers teach culture? *Francophonie* (Rugby, UK), **18** (1998), 11–14.

In answer to the question posed in the title of this article, the author suggests that teachers of French cannot really avoid teaching a certain amount of culture; indeed, the language itself demands that some aspects of the culture be taught (e.g. the use of *tu* and *vous*). The three main strands in the study of modern foreign languages are seen as the study of literature (in the target language), preparation for a visit to the target language country and–more recently–use of the language as a strategic tool in international commerce. A particular cultural element attaches to each of these areas and needs to be taught. Aspects of methodology and available resources are discussed, with a particular focus on the need for cultural material to be relevant to the students' aims and experiences.

99–235   Thomas, Alain (U. de Guelph, Ontario, Canada). La liaison et son enseignment: des modèles orthoépiques à la réalité linguistique. [The teaching of liaison: from pronunciation models to linguistic reality.] *The Canadian Modern Language Review / La Revue canadienne des langues vivantes* (Toronto, Ont.), **54**, 4 (1998), 543–52.

The irregular dropping of French final consonants since the Middle Ages has left contemporary speakers with a complex 'liaison' problem which is normally solved by mere imitation of usage. Things are not so simple for students of French as second language, who, because they have little opportunity to learn 'by osmosis', must rely on rules or tendencies as set out in pronunciation manuals. This paper first offers a brief historical overview, then examines these rules and compares them with linguistic reality, as defined by various surveys conducted both in France and in Canada. The differences observed between theory and practice lead to practical advice for teachers of French, who face the problem of liaison in their teaching on a day-to-day basis.

99–236   Tsutsui, Michio, Kato, Masashi and Mohr, Bradley (U. of Washington, USA). Closing the gap between practice environments and reality: an interactive multimedia program for oral communication training in Japanese. *Computer Assisted Language Learning* (Lisse, The Netherlands), **11**, 2 (1998), 125–51.

This paper consists of two parts. Part 1 discusses theoretical issues relating to the software program introduced in the paper, *Nihongo Partner*, a computer-based interactive multimedia language learning program developed at the authors' institution. Part 2 deals with practical issues, including technical and pedagogical considerations in implementing the program. It is claimed that *Nihongo Partner* has pulled together new multimedia technologies to close the gap between laboratory practice sessions and actual conversation situations; and that it enables students to master model dialogues with minimum effort and allows teachers to conduct effective role-plays and other communicative activities in class.

Language learning

99–237   Beck, Maria-Luise (U. of North Texas, USA). L2 acquisition and obligatory head movement: English-speaking learners of German and the Local Impairment Hypothesis. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (New York, USA), **20**, 3 (1998), 311–48.

This paper presents results of a response-latency (RL) experiment with 48 English-speaking adult learners of German that investigated to what extent–if any–two different groups of second language (L2) learners permit raising of the thematic verb. The framework under which the study was conducted involves varying theoretical predictions derived from the native-language transfer view of Schwartz and Sprouse (1994, 1996), the gradual-development view of Vanikka and Young-Scholten (1994, 1996), the underspecification view of Eubank (1993/1994) and a local-impairment view which is seen as presenting a more parsimonious solution to the L2 developmental problem than standard 'no access' views. The L2 results reported here show that learners respond in different ways to stimulus sentences with raised and unraised verbs depending on the participants' level of development. Surprisingly, it is the less advanced learners who exhibit an RL preference for apparently raised-verb experimental stimuli; the more advanced learners do not differentiate between raised-verb and unraised-verb stimuli. Analysis of these findings reveals that the less advanced group may only project VPs, consistent with the gradual-development view of Vainikka and Young-Scholten. Crucially, however, it is claimed that the Local Impairment Hypothesis is the only view consistent with the results from the more advanced learners, especially when seen in developmental context.

99–238   Blin, Françoise (Salis, Dublin City University, Ireland). Les enjeux d'une formation

autonomisante de l'apprenant en environnement multimédia. [The issues involved in the creation of autonomous learners in computer-based learning.] *Etudes de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris, France), **110** (1998), 215–26.

This article looks at theoretical and methodological implications for the use and production of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and computer-based language learning programmes in the promotion of autonomous student learning. The first part explores possible definitions in two areas: on the one hand, of what constitutes a computer-supported learning environment, and, on the other hand, of learner autonomy. The notion of social interdependence is added to the traditional concept of the autonomous learner. The second part looks at two main features deemed necessary for integrating CALL into a programme promoting learner autonomy in the context of the specialist language learner: (1) putting into place the necessary social structure and (2) deciding whether to use the computer as a learning tool in conjunction with a tutor or whether to assimilate the computer and replace the tutor. The article then reports the preliminary results of a study carried out at Dublin City University where the relationship between the autonomous development of the learner and the use of the technological tool is examined. It is concluded that the setting up of a social structure which promotes autonomy is a prerequisite for computer support to contribute to autonomy in language learning.

99–239 Brett, Paul (U. of Wolverhampton, UK). Using multimedia: a descriptive investigation of incidental language learning. *Computer Assisted Language Learning* (Lisse, The Netherlands), **11**, 2 (1998), 179–200.

This descriptive study investigates incidental language learning by students using multimedia as a self-study and mandatory component of an undergraduate module. Language items recalled and reused while learners were engaged in a meaning-focused task were compared with those contained in two multimedia applications for evidence of incidental learning. The analysis compared the language items of the multimedia input and, in particular, those made salient through tasks or 'hotspots' with learners' output. It showed a high incidence of reuse of those language items made salient and offering interactive opportunities, but a very low incidence of reuse of other items in the input. It is suggested that the study may show the potential learning value of the multimedia environment's capacity to encourage 'noticing' and 'negotiation' with language input, and that it has implications for the design of courseware to be used in self-study mode.

99–240 Carrell, Patricia L. and Wise, Teresa E. (Georgia State U., USA). The relationship between prior knowledge and topic interest in second language reading. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (New York, USA), **20**, 3 (1998), 285–309.

The relationship between prior knowledge of and interest in a topic is complex: although they may often go hand in hand, they do not necessarily correlate. The purpose of this study was to separate the effects of prior knowledge and topic interest on second language (L2) reading comprehension. Participants were 104 students of English as a Second Language in an EAP (English for Academic Purposes) programme at a large American university. On the basis of a prior-knowledge test and a topic-interest inventory, each student read passages and took multiple-choice comprehension tests on topics for which they had all four possible combinations of high and low topic interest and high and low prior knowledge. Results on the reading comprehension measure for the two main effects of prior knowledge and topic interest, although in the expected direction, did not reach significance, possibly because of a significant interaction between those two variables. There was also a significant effect for English proficiency level, as well as a significant interaction between interest and gender, with males more influenced by high topic interest than females. The results are compared to those of other L1 and L2 studies that have explicitly investigated the interrelationships among topic interest, prior knowledge and gender.

99–241 Chien, Ching-ning (Chung Yuan Christian U., Taiwan) **and Wei, Li.** The strategy use in listening comprehension for EFL learners in Taiwan. *RELC Journal* (Singapore), **29**, 1 (1998), 66–91.

The study reported here aimed to identify the listening strategies of Chinese learners of English in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context. Participants were students from two first-year university classes in Taiwan. The study looked at the differences in strategy use between the mostly advanced learners and the lowest-level learners in grammar and vocabulary; and compared four groups of different proficiency levels in their application of various categories of listening strategies, in order to identify the causal relationship between a range of strategies and good performance in listening assessment. Data collected by means of tests, questionnaires and interviews were subjected to analyses of variance. The results indicated a significant difference in strategy use between groups: the highest-ranking groups were good at using a greater number of strategies simultaneously. The authors suggest that learners' attitudes towards foreign language learning are important in achieving better performances in listening comprehension.

99–242 Diehl, Erika (U. of Geneva, Switzerland). Vom Deutschunterricht zum Deutscherwerb? Das Genfer DiGS-Projekt [From German teaching to German acquisition? The Geneva DiGS Project.] *Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (Berlin, Germany), **35**, 3 (1998), 162–68.

This paper reports preliminary findings of the three-year DiGS Project (*Deutsch als Fremdsprache an Genfer Schulen*–'German as a foreign language at schools in

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Geneva'), which aims to examine the validity of cognitive acquisition theory in the context of foreign language teaching, using as broad a database as possible, i.e. to examine whether the construction of grammatical competence for students is dictated by grammar teaching or whether students follow their own acquisition dynamic. The study involves a team of 35 German teachers and over 200 French-speaking German learners at primary and secondary level, and examined phrasal expressions and sentence structure in a corpus of 1700 student essays collected over a two-year period. The researchers noted the first discrepancies between teaching and acquisition in the *Cycle d'orientation* (the 7th to 9th class, the 4th to the 6th constituting the primary cycle). A relatively long period of incubation and an extended experimental phase are required for mastering the constructions *modal verb* + *infinitive* and *auxiliary* + *participle*. Other discrepancies were also noted during this period. Following completion of the project, the researchers will recommend revision of current German syllabuses in the light of the students' natural progression, and introduction of new methods of evaluation based rather more on the level of acquisition than on number of errors.

99–243 Domas, Oskar (U. of Silesia, Sosnowiec, Poland). Die Rolle der Elaboration beim Verstehen und Behalten von fremdsprachigen Texten. [The role of elaboration in understanding and retaining foreign language texts.] *Glottodidactica* (Poznan, Poland), **25** (1998), 9–17.

This paper deals with the process of elaboration in the understanding and retention of foreign language texts. The introduction discusses recent literature dealing with the relation between cognitive processes–including elaboration–and their influence on the learning process in text comprehension. The author briefly sketches the characteristics of foreign language comprehension processes as a prelude to offering a thorough definition of the process of elaboration. The main section of the paper describes an experiment carried out to verify whether elaborative processes do indeed result in better comprehension and retention of information. Participants were 30 students deemed of equal linguistic ability, all students of German as a foreign language, who were split into 2 groups–a non-elaboration group and an elaboration group. The results clearly show the elaboration group achieving a higher level of comprehension and retention. The non-elaboration group reproduced 44% of the conceptual information in a particular text, in comparison to the elaboration group achieving 62%. The author considers as central the question of the steering and control of these elaborative processes, which he sees as requiring further empirical testing before any conclusions can be drawn for foreign language teaching methodology.

99–244 Dörnyei, Zoltán and Kormos, Judit (Thames Valley U., London, UK). Problem-solving mechanisms in L2 communication: a

psycholinguistic perspective. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (New York, USA), **20**, 3 (1998), 349–85.

This paper investigates the various ways speakers manage problems and overcome difficulties in second language (L2) communication. Following Dörnyei and Scott (1997), four main sources of L2 communication problems are distinguished: (a) resource deficits, (b) processing time pressure, (c) perceived deficiencies in one's own language output, and (d) perceived deficiencies in the interlocutor's performance. In order to provide a systematic description of the wide range of coping mechanisms associated with these problem areas (e.g. communication strategies, meaning negotiation mechanisms, hesitation devices, repair mechanisms), the authors adopt a psycholinguistic approach based on Levelt's (1989, 1993, 1995) model of speech production. Problem-solving devices, then, are analysed and classified according to how they are related to the different pre- and post-articulatory phases of speech processing; and the various mechanisms are illustrated by examples and retrospective comments taken from L2 learner data.

99–245 Dunn, William E. and Lantolf, James P. (Cornell U., USA). Review article: Vygotsky's Zone Of Proximal Development and Krashen's *i* + *1*: incommensurable constructs; incommensurable theories. *Language Learning* (Malden, MA, USA), **48**, 3 (1998), 411–42.

Second language scholars, in public research and in public discussions, have suggested that Krashen's construct of *i* + *1* is similar to Vygotsky's Zone Of Proximal Development, and that it might therefore be feasible to integrate the two constructs in a way that would be productive for second language acquisition (SLA) research. After surveying publications relevant to the issue, the authors of this article argue that this enterprise is futile, not only because the concepts are unrelatable, but also because they are rooted in incommensurable theoretical discourses. The present authors also propose a way in which SLA research and theory might deal with incommensurability.

99–246 Duquette, Lise and Renié, Delphine (Ottowa U., Canada). Stratégies d'apprentissage dans un contexte d'autonomie et environnement hypermédia. [Learning strategies for autonomy in a multimedia environment.] *Etudes de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris, France), **110** (1998), 237–46.

This article looks at language learning strategies in a multimedia environment. Parts 1 to 3 examine the literature in different areas. In Part 1, the literature encompasses research that is both language- and non-language-specific, since the research on second language learning strategies has been influenced by cognitive psychology and humanist psychology. Part 2 looks at autonomy and how principles of autonomous learning overlap with and complement the develop-

ment of learning strategies. Part 3 examines the most recent literature on the use of learning strategies in computer-based learning, whether language-specific or not. Despite the variety of these studies in the context of autonomous learning, they generally focus on three characteristics: differences of behaviour due to individual differences, the importance of metacognition for multimedia learning, and the different structure of computer programmes. Part 4 gives a sample analysis of a verbal protocol carried out by the authors using the videodisc *Vi-Conte*. Analysis of student metacognitive strategies allows them to distinguish between efficient and non-efficient learners. It is concluded that, ideally, computers should have programmes that adapt to learners' strategies: they should provide feedback during the learning process and encourage different strategies when those used have led to failure.

99–247 Hamilton, Robert (U. of South Carolina, USA). Underdetermined binding of reflexives by adult Japanese-speaking learners of English. *Second Language Research* (London, UK), **14**, 3 (1998), 292–320.

This article reports on an experimental study of the acquisition of English reflexives by adult Japanese-speaking learners of English. It is argued that, consonant with a review of previous studies on binding in second language (L2) acquisition, the results of the experiment yield no evidence of an interlanguage grammar that is illicit (i.e. incompatible) with respect to Universal Grammar (UG). Moreover, it is argued that a particular asymmetry in the nonlocal binding of English reflexives exhibited by the learners in this study is underdetermined with respect to both the L2 English input and learners' L1 Japanese competence in such a way as to suggest that these learners had direct access to Condition A of UG binding theory.

99–248 Jake, Janice L. (Lugoff, South Carolina, USA). Constructing interlanguage: building a composite matrix language. *Linguistics* (Berlin, Germany), **36**, 2 (1998), 333–82.

The aim of the present paper is to develop an explanatory account of second language acquisition (SLA), which it does by treating interlanguage as language contact. The proposed model is informed by three sets of assumptions. First, lexical structure is composed of levels or substructures; the relevant levels are lexical-conceptual structure, predicate-argument structure, and morphological-realisation patterns [references are given]. Second, the distinctions between content and system (i.e. functional) morphemes, developed in the matrix language frame model of intrasentential code-switching [reference given], determines how lexical items can contribute to building the interlanguage grammatical system. Two types of system morphemes are recognised: conceptually 'activated' system morphemes and structurally assigned system morphemes [references are given]. Finally, the matrix-language and embedded-language distinction structures interlan-

guage. In SLA an *intended* matrix language, the target language, and a *de facto* matrix language, the developing linguistic competence, are recognised. The first language (L1) acts as an embedded language. Interlanguage structures are projected by lexical substructures of the three linguistic systems in contact. Principles structuring language contact and the nature of the grammatical elements projecting lexical structure determine what types of grammatical structures each system can contribute and how they are combined into a developing composite matrix language.

99–249 Joe, Angela (Victoria U. of Wellington, New Zealand). What effects do text-based tasks promoting generation have on incidental vocabulary acquisition? *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford, UK), **19**, 3 (1998), 357–77.

A large proportion of vocabulary is acquired incidentally from written contexts. However, in text-based studies promoting generative processing, it is not clear if, or to what extent, generation influences incidental vocabulary learning. The study reported here examined the effects of text-based tasks and background knowledge–prior vocabulary knowledge and a disposition to use generative learning tactics when tackling new vocabulary–on incidental vocabulary acquisition. The generative model is outlined, then the study is detailed. Forty-eight adult English as a Second Language learners were randomly assigned to one of three treatments: (a) reading and re-telling a text with explicit generative training and without access to the text during recall; (b) reading and re-telling a text without explicit generative training but with access to the text during recall; and (c) neither reading nor re-telling a text. All participants sat a pre-test (individual interviews and a read and retell task) and post-tests (individual interviews and two multiple-choice tests) designed to tap partial vocabulary knowledge gains. Results indicate that the process of reading and re-telling a text promotes incidental vocabulary learning and that generative processing enhances vocabulary learning, with greater levels of generative processing leading to greater vocabulary gains for unknown words.

99–250 Jones, Francis R. (U. of Newcastle, UK). Self-instruction and success: a learner-profile study. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford, UK), **19**, 3 (1998), 378–406.

In recent years, the learner autonomy movement has argued that foreign language learners should, as far as possible, determine their own learning plans, materials and strategies, which in many cases involves advocating that some or all of a language course be self-instructed. This study explores the apparently crucial issue of the relationship between solo foreign language learning and achievement. Interviews of 70 British adult learners with experience of self-instruction in a range of foreign languages generated profiles of language experience at learner and at self-instructed language-token level. Multivariate analysis showed: clear separation

between languages with and without self-instruction; the most effective learning route appears to be starting with classwork, but adding or going over to self-instruction at a later stage; *ab initio* self-instruction results in low command and high dropout, but may meet modest, short-term learner needs. Sense of success, however, seemed to be based more on self-image than on external achievement; and first/second language cognacy factors appeared to have little effect on achievement.

99–251 Kaplan, Tamar I. (U. of Iowa, USA). General learning strategies and the process of L2 acquisition: a critical overview. *IRAL* (Heidelberg, Germany), **36**, 3 (1998), 233–46.

One of the critical debates in (adult) second language (L2) acquisition research surrounds the question of how L2 acquisition proceeds. Some argue that Universal Grammar (UG) plays a significant role–i.e., L2s are learned in ways similar to learning any random skill. This paper reviews the literature on general learning strategies as they pertain to the 'UG-or-not-UG' debate and the L2 acquisition process, and discusses this literature in the context of the literature on learning strategies from psychological research. It becomes apparent that general learning strategies do not play a notable role in distinguishing L2 from L1 acquisition: the few that have been found to exist are present in both children and adults, suggesting that general learning strategies cannot be the characteristic which distinguishes adult L2 acquisition, and that L2 researchers should thus abandon this notion. The present author suggests they should focus instead on developing a theory of domain-specific strategies–i.e. strategies specific to language–which could account for the L2 acquisition process, and how these might be similar to or different from UG.

99–252 Laufer, Batia (U. of Haifa, Israel) **and Paribakht, T. Sima**. The relationship between passive and active vocabularies: effects of language learning context. *Language Learning* (Malden, MA, USA), **48**, 3 (1998), 365–91.

This study investigated the relationships among three types of vocabulary knowledge–passive, controlled active, and free active–within the same individuals, taking four variables into consideration: passive vocabulary size, language learning context, second (L2) or foreign (FL), length of residence in L2 context and, among the Canadians, knowledge of French. Participants were adult learners of English in Israel (N = 79) and in Canada (N = 103) at different proficiency levels. The Levels Test was used for passive vocabulary size; also used were a Controlled Active Vocabulary Test and the Lexical Frequency Profile (for lexical richness in free written expression). It was found that three dimensions of vocabulary knowledge developed at different rates. Active, particularly free active, vocabulary developed more slowly and less predictably than passive vocabulary. Also, the relationships among the three dimensions

of vocabulary knowledge differed between the two learning contexts. Although passive vocabulary was always significantly larger than controlled active and free active, the passive-active vocabulary gap was smaller in the FL than in the L2 context. The benefits of residence in an L2 context only began to appear after about two years, as passive vocabulary was activated and the gap reduced. In the Canadian context, knowledge of French was an asset at the earlier stages of L2 English learning.

99–253 Myles, Florence, Hooper, Janet and Mitchell, Rosamond (U. of Southampton, UK). Rote or rule? Exploring the role of formulaic language in classroom foreign language learning. *Language Learning* (Malden, MA, USA), **48**, 3 (1998), 323–63.

This article investigates the role in foreign language learning of rote-learned formulas or 'chunks'. Data from a longitudinal study of 16 child beginner classroom learners of French (ages 11–13) were examined for occurrences of three chunks, against which definitional criteria were first tried out. These chunks were tracked for two years in order to chart their breakdown and to explore their contribution to the development of a creative language capacity. It is claimed that the data show that most of the learners not only gradually 'unpacked' their early chunks, but also used parts of them productively in the generation of new utterances. These findings are taken to demonstrate that rote-learning of formulas and the construction of rules are not independent processes, but that they interact and actively feed into one another.

99–254 Nagata, Noriko (U. of San Francisco, USA). The relative effectiveness of production and comprehension practice in second language acquisition. *Computer Assisted Language Learning* (Lisse, The Netherlands), **11**, 2 (1998), 153–77.

The study reported here concerns the relative effectiveness of computer-assisted production (output) practice and comprehension (input) practice in second language acquisition. An earlier study by the present author indicates that, given the same grammatical instruction, output-focused practice is more effective than input-focused practice for the production of Japanese honorifics and is equally effective for the comprehension of those structures. The present study addresses the question of whether the advantage of production practice over comprehension practice still obtains when the target structures are relatively simple. Participants were 26 university students taking second-semester Japanese. Two computer programs were developed: (1) an input-focused program which provided the students with explicit grammatical instruction and comprehension exercises, and (2) an output-focused program which provided the same grammatical instruction together with production exercises. The results are consistent with those of the previous study: the output-focused group developed more grammatical skill than the

input-focused group, suggesting that the production practice required more syntactic processing on the part of the learner than the comprehension practice.

99–255　Nakuma, Constancio K. (U. of Tennessee-Knoxville, USA). A new theoretical account of 'fossilization': implications for L2 attrition research. *IRAL* (Heidelberg, Germany), **36**, 3 (1998), 247–56.

This paper deals with fossilisation, which is the term generally used to denote what appears to be a state of permanent failure on the part of a second language (L2) learner to acquire a given feature of the target language. The author reviews different accounts of this phenomenon and offers another account. It is hypothesised that fossilisation is a performance-level phenomenon occasioned by the L2 learner's conclusion that a given L2 form need not be acquired because it is already available to the target L2 system from his or her pre-acquired language system(s) through transfer. Fossilisation, then, is engendered *necessarily* by the inter-lingual identification of an L2 form with an L1 form by the L2 learner. The implications of this new account of fossilisation for L2 attrition research are discussed.

99–256　Paradis, Johanne, Le Corre, Mathieu and Genesee, Fred (McGill U., Canada). The emergence of tense and aspect in child L2 French. *Second Language Research* (London, UK), **14**, 3 (1998), 227–56.

The study reported here examined the acquisition of tense and agreement by second language (L2) learners of French. It looked at whether the features <tns> and <agr> and the categories AGRP and TP emerged simultaneously or in sequence in the learners' grammars. Interviews were conducted with 15 English-speaking children acquiring L2 French and with five grade-matched native-speaker controls once a year for three years. The data were analysed for the productive use of morphosyntax encoding tense and agreement. Results revealed that items encoding agreement emerged before items encoding tense, suggesting that the abstract grammatical structures associated with these morphosyntax items emerge in sequence. The findings are interpreted with respect to three prevailing views on the acquisition of functional phrase structure in L2 acquisition: Vainikka and Young-Scholten's Lexical Transfer/Minimal Trees hypothesis; Eubank's Weak Transfer/Valueless Features hypothesis; and Schwartz and Sprouse's Full Transfer/Full Access hypothesis. Possible reasons for the existence of this acquisition sequence in French are also discussed.

99–257　Ruiz de Zarobe, Yolanda (Universidad del País Vasco, Spain). El parámetro pro-drop y la adquisición del inglés como segunda lengua. [The pro-drop parameter and second language acquisition.] *ITL Review of Applied Linguistics* (Louvain, Belgium), **119-120** (1998), 49–63.

This paper reports on an analysis of five different properties related to the pro-drop parameter: null subjects, expletive pronouns, the inflectional system, free subject-verb inversion, and that-trace effect. The first part of the paper discusses the phenomenon of pro-drop in first and second languages. The second part of the paper presents the results from a study in which 150 native speakers of Spanish learning English were tested to see how they activate the pro-drop parameter in second language acquisition. Subjects were given 28 sentences to translate which included aspects of the pro-drop parameter. Through analysis of the translations and the errors committed it was hoped that certain innate rules might be demonstrated. It was found that these subjects carry over the parameter from the first to the second language (L2), until some aspects of the auxiliary system make them readjust the parameter to the L2 value. The author suggests that the free subject-verb inversion and the that-trace effect properties come from different movement rules and therefore do not form part of the pro-drop parameter.

99–258　Salaberry, M. Rafael (Pennsylvania State U., USA). The development of aspectual distinctions in L2 French classroom learning. *The Canadian Modern Language Review / La Revue canadienne des langues vivantes* (Toronto, Ont.), **54**, 4 (1998), 508–42.

The accurate use of the tense-aspect system of the Romance languages is notoriously difficult for English-speaking learners. This paper presents the results of a study analysing the selection and use of past-tense aspectual markers (i.e. *passé composé/imparfait*) in French as a second language (L2) among 39 English-speaking college-level students enrolled in a second-semester course in French. A cloze test and a written narration of a short film were performed by the students and also by 30 native speakers. The students' use of grammatical aspect was examined in terms of the inherent semantic aspect of each verb phrase. Analysis of the narrative reveals that learners marked verb endings according to the *telic* or *atelic* nature of the verbal phrase (i.e. according to whether or not the activity referred to by the verb had a clear terminal point, e.g. *kick* (something) = telic, *play* = atelic). Findings from the cloze test indicate that learners showed native-like judgements in the use of prototypical grammatical aspect (i.e. correspondence of lexical and grammatical aspect) but avoided the use of non-prototypical grammatical aspect with stative verbs. The author suggests that (1) classroom instruction may increase the rate at which learners develop past tense aspectual marking (prototypical value); and (2) lack of access to L2 discursive-pragmatic conditions may prevent learners from achieving an adequate grasp of the target language value of aspectual viewpoints.

99–259　Saleh, Sbéa-Jarbue (Yarmouk University, Jordan). L'influence des polysémes de la langue maternelle sur l'apprentissage du

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vocabulaire en langue étrangère. [The influence of polysemic mother-tongue words on learning vocabulary in a foreign language]. *IRAL* (Heidelberg, Germany), **36**, 2, 161–71.

This article reports on a study carried out in the Department of Modern Languages of the University of Yarmouk, Jordan, which looked at the negative ways in which polysemic words in their mother tongue (Arabic) influenced undergraduates' learning of French vocabulary. An analysis of their spoken and written performances, of which numerous examples are given, shows that, in contexts where the target language requires greater semantic precision than would be the case in the mother tongue, these learners experience considerable difficulty in making or even understanding the correct lexical choice. The author argues that this problem is exacerbated by the considerable linguistic distance between the two languages in question and that such learners have much in common with children learning their mother tongue.

99–260   Thomas, Margaret (Boston Coll., MA, USA). Programmatic ahistoricity in second language acquisition theory. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (New York, USA), **20**, 3 (1998), 387–405.

Second language acquisition (SLA) theory conventionally represents itself as having been invented *ex nihilo* in the last decades of the twentieth century. This article investigates the nature of this largely unexamined disciplinary self-concept and questions its validity. The author disputes arguments that might be formulated to support the notion that SLA theory has no relevant earlier history, enumerates what she sees as some of the unfortunate consequences of maintaining this belief, and speculates about benefits to the field that might accrue from abandoning it. Instead of presenting SLA theory as having its origin in the last 20 or 30 years, she suggests that we need to look for ways to identify, investigate and eventually reconceptualise its true history.

99–261   Truscott, John (Nat. Tsing Hua U., Taiwan). Instance theory and Universal Grammar in second language research. *Second Language Research* (London, UK), **14**, 3 (1998), 257–91.

This article considers the possibility of applying instance theory to the study of language, second language in particular. Instance theory de-emphasises the role of abstract principles in knowledge and its acquisition and use, focusing instead on the storage and retrieval of specific experiences, or *instances*. It is argued here that the application is feasible only if one also adopts a restrictive theory of Universal Grammar (UG). A sketch is then presented of a combined UG-instance theory approach, in which invariant aspects of UG are maintained and variability is allowed in exactly the same areas as in standard theories, but the variation occurs in pools of stored instances, not in abstract parameter values. It is suggested that this approach can be productively applied to various problems in language

learning research, including noisy input to learners, undoing of errors during the learning process, transfer and fossilisation, and the non-discrete character of learning.

Reading

99–262   Lee, Wai Ying and Allison, Desmond (Nat. U. of Singapore). Developing a reading-based support course for secondary school students of physics. *RELC Journal* (Singapore), **29**, 1 (1998), 34–54.

Although recent discussions of second language reading comprehension suggest that it is more effectively taught and learned in content-based classes, there have been very few published investigations of comprehension difficulties experienced by students in English as a Second Language settings in the course of content-based reading, and relatively few accounts of pedagogic initiatives in this important area. This article reports an exploratory study which was motivated by concerns over difficulties apparently encountered by secondary school learners of physics in reading, understanding and applying the material in their subject textbook. The study combines two phases: (1) a diagnostic phase, in which the 14–15-year-old learners' perceptions of their own reading habits and difficulties were examined through questionnaire and interview; and (2) an implementation phase, which involved the development, teaching and evaluation of a short course in content area reading. The article sets out the main findings of both phases, and suggests implications for pedagogy and educational change.

99–263   Wilkinson, Ian A. G. (U. of Auckland, New Zealand). Dealing with diversity: achievement gaps in reading literacy among New Zealand students. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, DE, USA), **33**, 2 (1998), 144–67.

Among all countries participating in the latest survey of reading literacy conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), New Zealand showed the second largest difference in achievement between girls and boys in primary school and the largest difference in achievement between those students learning in their home language and those not. The study reported here sought to identify school and classroom factors moderating the gender and home language gaps in the reading achievement of New Zealand students. Using data from the IEA survey, comprehension and word recognition scores and other information relating to 3,027 nine-year-old students from a sample of 176 primary schools were analysed using the hierarchical linear model. The magnitudes of the gender gap for comprehension and of the home language gaps for comprehension and word recognition were found to vary across schools. Factors moderating the gap were largely