

Language Annals (New York, USA), **31**, 4 (1998), 517–34.

This study is designed to investigate the use of reading skills by intermediate and advanced learners of Spanish and to determine whether performance on these skills is uniform across learners and across reading texts, and whether there is a gradation of skills from least to most complex. Participants read two authentic unabridged passages in Spanish and were asked to answer questions based on the skills isolated for the study, i.e., (a) locating details including the subskills recognition and paraphrase; (b) simple inferential skills including understanding words in context and recognising cause and effect; and (c) complex inferential skills including recognising main ideas and drawing conclusions. The results showed a significant three-way interaction of level, passage and skill; a significant interaction both of passage and skill, and of level and skill; and a significant main effect of skill. The findings are seen as lending support to a hierarchy of skills. It is argued, however, that reading comprehension cannot be viewed in terms of a discrete set of skills when the nature of reading is so complex.

99–617 Mori, Yoshiko (Georgetown U., Washington, USA) **and Nagy, William**. Integration of information from context and word elements in interpreting novel kanji compounds. *Reading Research Quarterly* (Newark, DE, USA), **34**, 1 (1999), 80–101.

The study reported here examines the degree to which English-speaking students learning Japanese utilise information from word elements and contextual clues in interpreting novel kanji compounds (i.e., words consisting of two or more Chinese characters). Fifty-nine college students inferred the meanings of novel compounds consisting of familiar characters under three conditions – i.e., words in isolation, contextual clues only, and both. Students were most likely to obtain correct answers when both types of clues were available, demonstrating their ability to combine information from multiple sources to interpret unfamiliar words. Furthermore, use of kanji clues and context use are not correlated, and proficiency correlates with context use, but not with kanji use. Thus, morphological analysis is an independent strategy from guessing word meanings from context.

99–618 Rivas, Rosa María Mera. Reading in recent ELT coursebooks. *ELT Journal* (Oxford, UK), **53**, 1 (1999), 12–21.

This paper presents an analysis of the reading component in a representative sample of ELT coursebooks for intermediate level and above published in the last ten years. It examines the way the coursebooks reflect current theories on foreign language (FL) reading in their treatment of the reading skill. Based on the instructional implications of interactive models of reading, the analysis focuses on the attempts to develop both lower-

level processing skills and higher-level comprehension and reasoning skills in EFL (English FL) learners. It is concluded that, although in general the coursebooks seem to reflect current interactive views on reading, they do differ in the number and type of activities included, and that EFL teachers need to supplement deficient reading activities to help learners become efficient readers.

99–619 Roskams, Tim (City U. of Hong Kong). What's a guess worth? Chinese students' inferencing strategies for unknown words while reading. *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics* (Hong Kong), **3**, 2 (1998), 65–102.

In academic reading classes for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students, inferential strategies for unknown words are often emphasised since the extensive reading required by many courses makes it impractical to use a dictionary to check every unknown word – which, in any case, may bind readers to the sentence level and interfere with global text comprehension. Second language (L2) readers' inferential skills, however, are often poor, especially where context clues are not in the immediate textual environment. Research to date has not included the development of a comprehensive model of L2 inferencing. The purpose of the study reported here was descriptive and exploratory: to examine the use of inferential strategies by L2 readers, rather than examining the links between such strategies and word acquisition/learning. The Hong Kong-based study used a think-aloud protocol to examine the use and seeming effectiveness of 17 first-year Chinese university students' inferential strategies for dealing with unknown words while reading in English. The findings differ in certain respects from previous research and show that advanced L2 readers are moderately efficient at using local and discourse context clues, although wrong assumption of knowledge of a word led to many mistakes. Readers appeared to have a strategic 'style' that was partially based on their previous habits and purposes of reading in L2.

Writing

99–620 Corbeil, Giselle (Acadia U., Canada). L'application d'un modèle mathématique à l'analyse de dissertations en langue seconde: utile ou pas? [Testing the usefulness of applying a mathematical model to the analysis of second language dissertations.] *The Canadian Modern Language Review / La Revue canadienne des langues vivantes* (Toronto, Ont.), **55**, 2 (1998), 260–82.

Although research has indicated the power of metacognitive processes in many disciplines, little is known about the nature of such processes in writing literary essays, less still in second language (L2) essay-writing. A cognitive-metacognitive framework therefore seemed likely to be useful in identifying these processes. As it

has been suggested that solving an essay question requires the activation of processes similar to those involved in solving a physics problem, a cognitive-metacognitive framework developed for mathematical problem solving was applied to essay writing. To test this hypothesis, a small number of L2 students of various abilities were asked to write an essay while thinking aloud, and their protocols were analysed in the light of the mathematical framework. Results indicate that the framework is a reliable tool provided that certain adjustments are made. These adjustments are discussed, and a cognitive-metacognitive model more geared towards essay writing is suggested.

99-621 Lock, Graham and Lockhart, Charles (City U. of Hong Kong). Genres in an academic writing class. *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics* (Hong Kong), **3**, 2 (1998), 47-64.

This paper identifies and describes the genres that a group of tertiary level English Second Language students produced during a process writing class in which they were free to decide their own topics, purposes and audiences. Participants were 27 students randomly selected from 54 Cantonese-speaking first-year university students. Six expository genres are identified: description, advice, analysis, report, discussion, and argument. Characteristics of these genres, the relationships among them, and their schematic structures are described. It is concluded that students in the study simply reproduced the genres familiar from secondary school and its examination-oriented syllabus. It is argued that students need to extend their repertoire of genres beyond those of their previous educational experience by writing on more specialised topics for more specific audiences and purposes, and by producing longer and more complex texts.

99-622 New, Elizabeth (U. of North Texas, USA). Computer-aided writing in French as a foreign language: a qualitative and quantitative look at the process of revision. *The Modern Language Journal* (Malden, MA, USA), **83**, 1 (1999), 80-97.

Little documentation currently exists on the writing strategies and habits of foreign language (FL) writers. This study was designed to observe, as unobtrusively as possible, the revision strategies of five students of FL French enrolled in a one-semester intensive intermediate college French course. The participants completed a two-part writing task with the aid of the software program *Système-D* (Noblitt, Solá & Pet, 1987, 1992). Of considerable interest is the program's keystroke tracking device, which records the lexical, grammatical and thematic information accessed by students while writing. Analysis of the compositions, computer records, videotapes of writing sessions, and student responses to post-writing questionnaires provide a detailed picture of how and when the students revised in real time – with minimal impact on the writing process itself. Results showed that both the self-reported good writers and poor writers engaged in the process of revising and that, as expected, surface-level changes far outnumbered the changes to content. These findings suggest that linguistic concerns and lack of explicit instruction on revision and computer strategies impede the reviewing and reworking of texts.

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99-623 Parks, Susan (Université Laval, Quebec, Canada) and **Maguire, Mary H.**. Coping with on-the-job writing in ESL: a constructivist-semiotic perspective. *Language Learning* (Malden, MA, USA), **49**, 1 (1999), 143-75.

Despite a long-standing interest within applied linguistics in the analysis of written genres, few studies have attempted to show how such genres are appropriated by new members in second language (L2) academic or workplace settings. Based on a 22-month qualitative study, this article reports on how francophone nurses, who were newly hired in an English-medium hospital in Montreal, Canada, developed skill in writing nursing notes – which differed from the way they were done in French – in English. Central to the analysis is the construct of mediation, explored in terms of how collaborative processes, both overt and covert, shape text production as well as other less visible, taken-for-granted aspects of the social context. The article concludes with reflections on the implications of such inquiries for L2 writing theory, research, and practice.

99-624 Ramanathan, Vai and Atkinson, Dwight (U. of Alabama, USA). Ethnographic approaches and methods in L2 writing research: a critical guide and review. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford, UK), **20**, 1 (1999), 44-70.

This paper discusses central concepts and issues regarding ethnographic research in education, particularly as they pertain to studies of second language (L2) writing. After a consideration of Watson-Gegeo's (1988) six principles of ethnographic research, the present authors propose their own 'prototype' definition. Following a discussion of some key concepts in that definition, they then review three recent studies of L2 writing which are ethnographic in nature. They next discuss the vexed issue of 'generalisability', and consider two further studies of L2 writing in that regard. They end by introducing a series of issues which are critical to recent ethnographic concerns in anthropology and sociology, but which have had little influence so far on ethnographically oriented L2 writing research.

Language testing

99-625 Beglar, David (Temple U., Osaka, Japan) and **Hunt, Alan**. Revising and validating the 2000 Word Level and University Word Level Vocabulary Tests. *Language Testing* (London, UK), **16**, 2 (1999), 131-62.

Few researchers have undertaken detailed investigations of the reliability and validity of tests designed to measure vocabulary size. The purpose of this study, there-