

Teaching particular languages

ENGLISH

85–230 Borden, Gloria and others (Temple U.). Production and perception of the /r/-/l/ contrast in Korean adults learning English. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **33**, 4 (1983), 499–526.

Training of Korean speakers in the perception and production of the /r/-/l/ contrast in English resulted in short-term improvement in production with little carryover. Improved identification of the phonemes in a speech perception task, however, did result. Speakers with lowest production scores produced an [r]-like sound for /l/, while speakers with higher scores evidenced fewer confusions and they occurred both ways: r/l and l/r. Identification of items in a [ra] to [la] continuum was better than discrimination between pairs of items. There was a significant relationship between production and self-perception, with live judgements of self in better agreement with experimenter judgements than were taped judgements of self. In some cases, production 'errors' seem to parallel perceptual behaviour, and in other cases they seem to be only a problem in production. Implications for training are drawn from the results.

85–231 Huckin, Thomas N. (Carnegie-Mellon U.) and **Olsen, Leslie A.** (U. of Michigan). The need for professionally oriented ESL instruction in the United States. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **18**, 2 (1984), 273–94.

There is a need for professionally oriented ESL instruction in American colleges, universities and companies. Such instruction should combine aspects of both ESL and ESP in what is here called 'generalised ESP'. Engineering is taken as a case in point, and two illustrations of the approach are discussed – technical communication courses for university students and troubleshooting for technical professionals. Such people are problem solvers, and need to be able to communicate easily with a range of people in their organisation. They need to be able to gather information informally as well as formally, and to report on their findings in writing or orally to people with a variety of different backgrounds, including non-specialists. Such skills are demanding even for native speakers, but especially so for non-native speakers.

Technical communication courses for university students are now widespread in America, and typically address the problems described above. They draw together students from different disciplines and train them to communicate with each other. Unfortunately, most teachers of technical communication have no ESL experience, and most ESL teachers are reluctant to go into a technical communication classroom. But the teacher needs little technical knowledge: the burden is on the student to make his information comprehensible. The better courses follow a communicative approach by engaging students in simulated 'real world' activities, or the 'case method'.

Troubleshooting for technical professionals usually means help with aspects of general English. The ESL specialist should identify communication problems and

suggest solutions. The best teaching approach is an individualised one. Speech problems (with intonation, rhythm, idioms, etc.) are common.

85–232 Hudelson, Sarah (Florida International U.) 'Kan yu ret an rayt en Ingles': children become literate in English as a Second Language. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **18**, 2 (1984), 221–38.

Current research on second language development in children has provided teachers and curriculum planners with multiple possibilities for innovations in classroom practice. In the case of oral language development in ESL, this research has made significant contributions both to classroom teaching and to the materials being published for classroom use. Classroom practices in literacy for ESL children, however, have not kept up with research. This article presents several general findings from recent research on second language reading and writing development in children. These findings suggest: that even children who speak virtually no English read English print in the environment; that ESL learners are able to read English with only limited control over the oral system of the language; that the experimental and cultural background of the ESL reader has a strong effect on reading comprehension; that child ESL learners, early in their development of English, can write English and can do so for various purposes. This article also presents classroom applications for each finding.

85–233 McGroarty, Mary (U. of California, Los Angeles). Some meanings of communicative competence for second language students. *TESOL Quarterly* (Washington, DC), **18**, 2 (1984), 257–72.

This article discusses three distinct groups of ESL users and considers some of the language skills which the speakers in these groups need in order to participate effectively in their particular situations. A review of data from observational and correlational studies and from needs analyses conducted by curriculum designers suggests that the communicative skills which need to be taught to second language students preparing for, or already in, these situations vary considerably. Occupational students of ESL, for example, need various types of listening comprehension and conversational skills, while university teaching assistants need to produce phonologically acceptable and fluent connected discourse in order to be rated as successful. Students in elementary and secondary schools need more diverse language skills, some related to literacy, in order to make normal progress in school. Of particular importance in the school setting is mastery and use of context-reduced language, a text-related type of language observed principally in formal school contexts. Furthermore, evidence suggests that the language skills which elementary and secondary students need can vary developmentally as well as contextually. Thus, 'communicative competence', as a concept, can mean different things for different groups of students; programme planners, administrators, and teachers will be able to provide better instruction only after considering the specific communicative needs of specific learners in terms of the specific purposes for which the language is to be used.

85–234 Smith, Larry E. (East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii). A communicative approach to teaching English as an International Language. *Cross Currents* (Odaware, Japan), 11, 1 (1984), 37–48.

In English as an International Language (EIL), it is assumed that English is the property of its users – native and non-native – and that all users need training for international communication. A native English speaker's communicative competence is not necessary for non-native speakers, nor is it sufficient for native English speakers. When studying EIL, an Indian may still sound Indian, Japanese sound Japanese, etc., and be accepted without prejudice by native or non-native speakers. In EIL classes, a single model should be chosen for production, but it need not be a native variety of English. Pronunciation is 'good' if the listener's attention is not distracted from the content to the pronunciation. For comprehension practice, students should be exposed to different native and non-native varieties of English. English users must become more accustomed to hearing a relatively wide range of pronunciations.

Responsibility for effective communication is shared by the speaker and the listener. Drama techniques are an effective way of making students aware of this dual responsibility: they include exercises in observation, Talk and Listen, and improvisation [discussion]. Communicative competence can also be developed by reading (including literature from non-native English-speaking cultures which has been written in or translated into English) and writing (autobiography, cartoons). It is important for the teacher to accept each student as he is and encourage him to express himself in the language. In EIL situations there is a greater range of potential interactions than in ESL/EFL, hence the need to provide opportunities for listening to different varieties of educated English. The goal is not to learn about the communication patterns of all the cultures or to prevent all communication problems, but to make students aware of the international role of English and to help them deal with diversity as well as cope with misunderstandings.

85–235 Strevens, Peter. International Maritime English (Seaspeak). *Fachsprache* (Vienna), 6, 1/2 (1984), 1–10.

Among the non-ethno-centred uses of English, maritime communications has recently received close attention. 'Seaspeak' has been developed, to be the internationally agreed form. It integrates existing VHF procedures and usage with rules for constructing messages. The article analyses a typical conversation, showing the use of closely defined 'standard phrases' and also of 'message markers' initiating each message and indicating its discourse type (question, information, warning, etc.). The complex organisation is outlined which enabled the research team to analyse, draft, test and revise the material in 18 months.

FRENCH

85–236 Calvé, Pierre. Un trait du français parlé authentique: la dislocation. [A feature of authentic spoken French: dislocation.] *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **39**, 4 (1983), 779–93.

A sentence like *Moi, mon père, sa voiture, il l'a payée 15,000\$* contains three 'left dislocated' elements. Such sentences (where we usually find only one or two dislocated elements) are very frequent in spontaneous spoken French, yet grammarians and textbook writers consider it (as the name 'dislocation' implies) a syntactic barbarism. The aim of this article is to describe dislocation, to enumerate its various functions and to draw certain pedagogical implications.

Its main function is to separate the topic of the sentence (what is being talked about) from the comment (what is being said about it); but several secondary functions can also be grafted to the primary one. Thus, dislocation allows the speaker to free him/herself from certain constraints imposed on word order, position of accents, by French grammar, and to follow a more 'psychological' order. Pedagogically, we cannot, of course, simply leave out such a typical trait of 'authentic' spoken French [some methodological suggestions are given.]

85–237 Colin, Jean-Paul. Texte littéraire et niveaux de langue. [The literary text and levels of language.] *BULAG* (Besançon), **10** (1983), 44–60.

It is time to break down the false dichotomy between literacy language and ordinary language and to bring literature out of the prestigious ghetto to which it has been relegated. It is both possible and desirable to integrate literature into the teaching of French as a foreign language to relatively advanced students.

Study of carefully chosen extracts from modern authors rather than classical masterpieces – and such a collection should not pose as a history of literature or an introduction to French culture – would increase students' awareness of different levels of language and would assist them towards an appropriate choice of words and expressions.

85–238 Crétin, Régis. La mémorisation en français langue étrangère. [Memorisation and teaching French as a foreign language.] *BULAG* (Besançon), **10** (1983), 73–86.

With the advent of the communicative approach to language teaching, memorisation has come to be disregarded. Nevertheless, fixing in the mind what has been learned constitutes an essential part of any language course if free autonomous expression is to be achieved.

There are two kinds of memory: short-term, for immediate use; and long-term, where accepted information is stored. We have evidence that syntactic and semantic information are remembered differently. Furthermore, memorisation is more than simple repetition. The problem remains of ensuring that new language items are retained in the long-term memory. Here there is something to be learned from the success of sleep-learning.

It is suggested that some time should be set aside at the end of the day for reviewing in a relaxed way the lexical and syntactical items learned. Reference to written records can assist the learner until assimilation is complete.

GERMAN

85–239 Kramersch, Claire J. (Massachusetts Inst. of Tech.) Interaction in the classroom: learning to negotiate roles and meanings. *Unterrichtspraxis* (Philadelphia, PA), **16**, 2 (1983), 175–90.

The inability of students to communicate naturally in the classroom is often less to do with deficient knowledge of the language than with their inability to manage the personal, social and cultural context of classroom discourse. Exercises are suggested for activating and developing interactive skills between speakers and hearers in the foreign language (here, German). They are at three levels of increasing complexity: (1) teacher/language orientated (taking turns, giving listener's feedback, constructing a topic, expanding a topic); (2) partner-centred (taking the initiative, capturing attention, listener's signals, steering/avoiding the topic); and (3) topic/situation bound (opening and closing conversations, the speaker/hearer team, personal styles of interaction).

85–240 Ladmiral, Jean-René (U. of Paris X, Nanterre). Stratégie pour une didactique du décodage des textes théoriques de langue allemande. [A strategy for teaching the decoding of German theoretic writings.] *Études de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **51** (1983), 60–77.

Responding to a new and unique demand for a course in German from scratch for French research scientists at Nanterre, the author had to overcome institutional constraints such as shortage of timetable hours and disciplinary fragmentation, and intervene as both outsider and insider in teaching the German of 'theoretical discourse'. There is no special register 'scientific German', merely the language of a specialism, so it was not a question of identifying a linguistic object to teach, but of devising ways of teaching a language already identified. The essence of this method was to start from the learners' knowledge of scientific text in general and give them a strategy based on 'pragmatic redundancy' with which to handle German texts. The resulting course, *L'Allemand-zero*, is essentially a course in syntax, the teaching of a metalanguage based on the shared characteristics of French, German and all languages, and exploiting to the full the fact that most scientific vocabulary is international and that German is consistently pronounceable from its written forms, unlike English. Thus the method is based on a transfer of skills from L1 scientific rhetoric and grammar to those of L2.

85–241 Pasch, Renate. Die Kausalkonjunktionen „da“, „denn“ und „weil“: drei Konjunktionen – drei lexikalische Klassen. [The causal conjunctions ‘da’, ‘denn’ and ‘weil’: three conjunctions – three lexical classes.] *Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (Leipzig, GDR), **20**, 6 (1983), 332–7.

Neither dictionaries nor grammars give explanations for the usage of conjunctions which are sufficiently clear for them to be used correctly by the foreign learner of the language in question. This point is illustrated by examining the entries for *da*, *denn* and *weil* in a German dictionary and the German translations for *puisque* in a French–German dictionary. This failing of reference works is attributed to the fact that the rules for the usage of conjunctions are not conveyed sufficiently systematically and the lexicographers working on the dictionaries in question were not familiar enough with grammatical and semantico-theoretical concepts to be able to describe adequately the conditions for the use of these conjunctions. This article shows some of the results of the author’s attempt to clarify and systematise the rules for usage of these conjunctions.

Example sentences are given and the interchangeability and non-interchangeability of *da*, *denn* and *weil* in these sentences discussed and illustrated. Syntactically independent clauses are then analysed into their components: *p* = the proposition which identifies the meaningful content (sv) of the clause or sentence; *e* = the component which indicates the attitude of the speaker to the content identified by *p*. *e* is further identified as the ‘operator’ and *p* as the ‘operand’ of *e*. The conjunctions *da*, *denn* and *weil* are then examined for their functionality as ‘operator’ or ‘operand’. Results of this examination explain why these conjunctions are not absolutely interchangeable and indicate why, how and when it is appropriate to use them. *Da* and *denn* are seen to be more closely connected with each other than they are with *weil* and an attempt is made to differentiate between *da* and *denn* by formulating differentiated conditions for their use.

Grammar works should be more concerned with describing the different classes of conjunctions, and grammar lessons should be more orientated towards modern linguistic theory. In this way, dictionary writers would be better equipped to provide adequate and systematic descriptive entries for conjunctions which would make clear their different and differentiated uses.

85–242 Schmitz-Berning, Cornelia. Die Behandlung des Themas „Öffentlicher Sprachgebrauch im Dritten Reich“ in Sprachbüchern und Kursmaterialien für den Deutschunterricht. [How the theme of ‘language in public speaking in the Third Reich’ is treated in language books and other course materials used for the teaching of German in schools.] *Sprache und Literatur* (Munich), **52** (1983), 106–12.

The function of public speaking in different periods of history is prescribed in all state curricula. However, it presents problems for the teacher of German because there are conflicting opinions on how political language should be analysed. This means that the German teacher cannot rely on any firmly established and universally accepted ideas when he wants to analyse the language of political texts. Another problem is the

balancing of the linguistic analysis of such texts with other aspects concerning them such as sociological and psychological factors. While the German teacher can best deal with linguistic, stylistic and rhetorical aspects of a text, he finds he has to turn to the history and sociology teachers and to self-study of psychology in order to be able to appreciate and convey the full implications of the text in question.

The fact that there is no universal model for the analysis of political texts which embraces all other necessary aspects is reflected in a number of books on the language of National Socialism. These works reflect a certain uncertainty and arbitrariness of method in the analytical criteria used. The development of schoolbooks on the language of public speaking in this period is traced here. A trend towards more pragmatic thinking is recognisable in the materials published up to 1975. Also noticeable, however, is the fact that in some books the concentration is on textual analysis, with the description of the historico-political situation playing more of a supporting role, while in other works this weighting of concentration is reversed. Individual works are analysed for their content and suitability for the groups for which they are intended.

The conclusion is that while the past ten years have produced increasingly useful materials for the teaching of the analysis of political and National Socialist language, German as a school subject has not as yet made a significant contribution to a universal theory of political language which could unite the existing isolated and individualistic approaches to the subject.

85–243 Tesch, Gerd. Sprachliche Entlehnung. Linguistische Analyse und Modellvorschlag für die Sekundarstufe II. [Language borrowing. Linguistic analysis and a suggestion for its treatment in the upper school.] *Sprache und Literatur* (Munich, FRG), 52 (1983), 69–87.

The prominence in contemporary German of borrowings from other languages is highlighted, as is the need for the phenomenon to be treated in a systematic fashion in schools. The author distinguishes loan lexis from other aspects of the lexis. Loan coinages may fall into the following categories: loan translation, loan transfer, loan creation and loan meanings. In addition, a distinction is made between loanwords, partial loanwords, and – within the category of neologisms – pseudo-loanwords. Motives for borrowing are briefly outlined. The ways in which borrowings may be viewed in sociolinguistic terms are also touched upon.

The second part of the article sketches ways in which the mother-tongue teacher can deal with the phenomenon in school. Specialist literature which is of help is reviewed. Three broad complementary approaches are proposed. The first looks at the position of lexical borrowing in terms of the language system (e.g. the degree of phonetic or morphological integration into German of loan coinages). Secondly, the vantage point of language usage is adopted; in this connection material taken from newspaper articles can be usefully employed. A final focus would then be the assessment on the basis of the foregoing facts of various criticisms which have been voiced on the subject of borrowings in German.

ITALIAN

85–244 Tosi, A. (Oxford Poly.) Community language learning and foreign-languages examinations: how far from a reconciliation? *Incorporated Linguist* (London), **23**, 3 (1984), 173–77.

There is a marked difference in Britain between learning Italian as a foreign language and learning it as a community language as an Italian immigrant or the descendant of one. (1) Learners' linguistic background – it can no longer be assumed that the learner has one language and has a native command of it; in fact there is no single common pattern. A large majority of learners already have a bilingual experience to whatever level their competence has developed. The pupil's learning develops through a substantial bilingual experience. Normally, the source language becomes the medium of instruction to teach the target language, but in community-language teaching, the teacher has to resort to occasional sentences or comments in English, but teaches mainly in the target language. (2) Learners' association with the foreign /community culture. In FL learning, the learner begins the course from a zero beginner level in both language and culture, and may never become emotionally and cognitively involved, whereas the community-language learning experience is powerfully associated with the values and customs embodied in that culture. The course designer, who normally must assume the total alienation of the learner from the foreign language and culture, can with community-language learning refer easily to a common set of interests and meanings. Thus far, the peculiarities of community-language learning offer an advantage. (3) The target language. In traditional FL learning, any model or variety is equally alien; the course planner must simply be consistent. In community-language learning, the problem of cultural discrepancy between the variety chosen for instruction and the one actually spoken in the community has enormous social and emotional implications. The language of instruction and literacy is so diverse in structure and cultural meaning that it is almost as alien to the learner as a foreign language. (4) Evaluation of the learner's progress is normally made according to the chosen standard. In community-language learning, the question of deciding what is and is not a deviation is far more difficult. Learners are likely to bring to the classroom a repertoire of community usages which deviate considerably from the original mother-tongue model. Should that repertoire be regarded as interference and deviation, or as development in the new linguistic environment? (5) Design of a syllabus for instruction and evaluation must consider the different experience, the opportunities for contact and practice, which the community-language learner has with his target language. The functional syllabus imposes norms of behaviour on community-language learners; they cannot feel emotionally neutral about these. Two priority issues are (a) what should be the variety or dialect chosen for instruction, and (b) how should that language be taught and competence in it examined?

RUSSIAN

85–245 Arutyunyan, V. P. and others. География на русском языке. [Geography in Russian.] *Русский язык в национальной школе*, **5** (1983), 30–4.

The experimental introduction of the teaching of geography in the Russian language in three Armenian Russian Language Special Schools is described. It involved the lexical and grammatical analysis of existing geography textbooks in Russian for the age-groups involved (class 5 onwards), the development of preparatory language teaching materials for class 4 onwards and some adaptation of the original textbooks. Teaching of the preparatory materials was carried out by Russian language teachers; the geography courses were taught by Russian-speaking geography specialists.

85–246 Do Din' Tong. Способность и мотивация при овладении русским языком вьетнамскими школьниками. [Ability and motivation as factors in achievement in Russian language among Vietnamese schoolchildren.] *Русский язык за рубежом* (Moscow), **6** (1982), 77–83.

A change in emphasis from 'teaching' to 'learning' is noted in recently produced materials for Vietnamese schoolchildren. In following a communicative approach it is necessary to avoid stereotyping children as 'able' or 'weak', and to examine different types of ability – memory, aural acuity, lingual dexterity, as well as range of general cognitive skills relevant to language learning – and to seek ways of matching teaching to the varied aptitudes and stages of development of each individual pupil. It is essential to assume that each child is ultimately capable of learning the target language, and to adopt a range of techniques of presentation, practice and testing. The teacher attitudes which this requires contribute to pupil motivation. Other motivational factors discussed include the selection of relevant linguistic material, appropriate ways of structuring it, techniques for accepting and correcting errors, contextualisation, the development of confidence and a readiness to take risks. Attention is drawn to the danger of 'underloading' as well as that of overloading pupils, and to the necessity for pupils to be presented with tasks which stretch them, yet which are achievable.

85–247 Kostomarov, V. G. and Mitrofanova, O. D. (Pushkin Inst., Moscow). Учебны принцип активной коммуникативности в обучении русскому языку иностранцев. [The principle of active communication in the teaching of Russian language to foreigners.] *Russian Language Journal* (Michigan), **36**, 125 (1982), 7–23.

While striving to establish a direct association between real situations and the target language, one cannot ignore the continuing role of the native language. In view of the fact that more problems arise from the complexity of the target language than from interference between the native and the target language, it is appropriate in the communicative method to ascribe some pedagogic value to use of the native language in explaining facts about the target language. The communicative method is distinguished by the emphasis it places upon motivation, which is seen to depend upon

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a sense of purpose in linguistic activity. A distinction must be drawn between real communication and 'pseudocommunication'. While the latter recognises the need to acquire and practise elements of language, real communication is typified by social and psychological features which relate to emotional aspects of motivation. It is the role of teachers to establish a favourable psychological climate, one which allows learners to view them as equal partners in dialogue while also accepting their guidance in terms of the selection and grading of linguistic material. Learning situations must be organised to provide enjoyment and success, and this calls for a high level of participation on the part of learners and a high level of control on the part of the teacher. The more realistic the communication activity, the less obtrusive this control will be.

Critics of the communicative approach have failed to understand its systematic nature, seeking traditional linguistic explanations where a linguodidactic model provides a more appropriate framework for discussing objectives, teaching methods and evaluation; for distinguishing between knowledge of and knowledge about the language being learned; for allocating a place to the knowledge of rules in an inductive approach to learning; and for allocating a place to the native language in foreign language learning.

85-248 Leaver, Betty Lou (Foreign Service Inst., Arlington, VA). Twenty minutes to mastery of the Cyrillic alphabet. *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), 17 (1984), 215-20.

Every teacher of Russian knows that sooner or later the Cyrillic alphabet must be taught in all elementary Russian courses. Unfortunately, the process of teaching and learning the alphabet for many is dull and time-consuming. But teaching and learning the alphabet need not be simply an activity to be tolerated. Alphabet acquisition can actually be achieved rapidly, enjoyably, and successfully, through the application of mnemonic research. The method described in this article teaches students to recognise the entire Cyrillic alphabet in twenty minutes. The syntax of the model is based on Lorayne and Lucas's Memory Model of Instruction. Within the syntax are five phases: attending to the materials, developing connections in class, practising recall, using the information memorised as a basis for acquiring new information, and testing recall over time. The success of the model stems from the fact that the syntax is based on current, very convincing theories of information processing, many of which originate with Piaget's work in mnemonics and learning. The differences between long- and short-term memory and their significance for alphabet acquisition are discussed. The syntax of the model also takes into account other key information-processing concepts, such as the dependence of memory on understanding, a variable of which is age, and the enhancement of memory by heightened awareness. A letter presentation order and accompanying suggested work list is given, as well as a sample in-class or homework exercise.

85–249 Vyatyutnyev, M. N. (Pushkin Inst., Moscow). От методов к целостному подходу в обучении владению русским языком как иностранным. [From separate methods to a unified approach in the teaching of Russian as a foreign language.] *Russian Language Journal* (Michigan), **36**, 125 (1982), 25–38.

The evolution of teaching methods is described with reference to six main approaches: grammatical, direct, behaviourist, reading, group, communicative/individualised, each with its own sub-groups. A preference for mixed methods is seen as a sign of increased pragmatism on the part of language teachers and designers of teaching materials.

Specific attention is given to the communicative/individualised approach, as the one which unifies the main linguistic areas of culture, psychology and language systems (the domains of the sociolinguist, the psycholinguist and the structural linguist). While the importance of cultural context is widely accepted by those following the communicative/individualised approach, and while existing knowledge of language systems is adequate to allow course designers to proceed with their work, it is acknowledged that little is known about the psychological processes involved in communication across the range of human activities.

In discussion of a model of the communicative individual approach, and of its advantages and limitations, the importance of relating linguistic material to the communication needs of individual learners is stressed. This concern for individual needs, and the emphasis upon the act of communication, can still be accommodated within a systematic approach to the selection of material and to linguistic progression.