

ROUTLEDGE  
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF  
LANGUAGE TEACHING  
AND LEARNING

SECOND EDITION

Edited by  
Michael Byram and Adelheid Hu

“This second edition offers an authoritative up-to-date view of global and multidisciplinary perspectives in language teaching and learning. The editors have met the mammoth challenge of bringing together a wide range of top-flight scholarship into a single comprehensive volume. The result is an indispensable guide for students, teachers and scholars worldwide. Bravo!”

*Sandra J. Savignon, Pennsylvania State University, USA*

“It is exciting to see a new edition of the well-regarded and useful *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning*. The second edition features updated entries, new topics, and several editorial enhancements that make this already-helpful single-volume encyclopedia even easier to use. Covering a wide range of historical, geographical, conceptual, and empirical ground related to language teaching and learning worldwide, the entries are just the right length—short enough to be accessible in a busy world, yet long enough to provide a sufficient scholarly overview of the relevant topic. The references and suggested reading that accompany the near-200 entries, as well as the cross-listing of topics within the volume, all provide immediate places for the reader to go for further study. For audiences that range from students to classroom teachers to researchers, from novices in the field to those with extensive experience, and from those who want a quick overview of an unfamiliar term or concept to those who wish to spend time exploring the numerous interconnections among topics within the volume, the second edition of the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning* will prove to be a valuable asset.”

*George C. Bunch, University of California, Santa Cruz, USA*



# Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning

The *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning* is an authoritative reference dealing with all aspects of this increasingly important field of study. Offering a comprehensive range of articles on contemporary language teaching and its history, it has been produced specifically for language teaching professionals and as a reference work for academic studies at postgraduate level.

In this new edition, every single entry has been reviewed and updated with reference to new developments and publications. Coverage has been expanded to reflect new technological, global and academic developments, with particular attention to areas such as online and distance learning, teacher and learner cognition, testing, assessment and evaluation, global English and teacher education.

Themes and disciplines covered include:

- Methods and materials, including new technologies, materials development
- Contexts and concepts, such as mediation, risk-taking in language learning and intercomprehension
- Influential figures from the early days of language teaching to the contemporary
- Related disciplines, such as psychology, anthropology and corpus linguistics

It covers the teaching of specific languages, including Japanese, Chinese, Arabic and African languages, as well as English, French, German and Spanish.

There are thirty five overview articles dealing with issues such as communicative language teaching, early language learning, teacher education and syllabus and curriculum design. A further 160 entries focus on topics such as bilingualism, language laboratories and study broad. Numerous shorter items examine language and cultural institutions, professional associations and acronyms. Multiple cross-references enable the user to browse from one entry to another, and there are suggestions for further reading.

Written by an international team of specialists, the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning* is an invaluable resource and reference manual for anyone with a professional or academic interest in the subject.

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**In memory of Christopher Brumfit**





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Threshold level; Vantage level; Waystage

**Theo van Els**

*Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen, Netherlands*

Planning for foreign language teaching

**Arthur van Essen**

*Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Netherlands*

Gouin, François; History: from the Reform Movement to 1945

**Marie Veniard**

*Université Paris Descartes Cité, EDA*

Discourse analysis

**Michèle Verdelhan**

*Université de Montpellier, France*

Textbooks

**Georges Daniel Véronique**

*Aix-Marseille Université, France*

Acquisition and teaching; Second language acquisition theories

**Marzena Watorek**

*Université Paris VIII, France*

Alternation hypothesis; Cross-linguistic analyses;

Cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses; Develop-

mental sequence; Untutored language acquisition

**Yu Weihua**

*Hangzhou Normal University, P R China*

Direct method; Grammar-translation method

**Anne Whiteside**

*San Francisco State University, USA*

Adult learners

**Henry Widdowson**

*Universität Wien, Austria*

English; Skills and knowledge in language learning

**Claire Williams**

*Oporto, Portugal*

Portuguese

**Susanne Wokusch**

*Haute Ecole Pédagogique de Lausanne,*

*Switzerland*

Objectives in language learning and teaching

**Jane Woodin**

*University of Sheffield, UK*

Tandem learning

**Colin Wringe**

*University of Keele, UK*  
Journals

**Roslyn Young**

*Université de Franche-Comté, Besançon, France*  
Silent Way

**Geneviève Zarate**

*Institut National des Langues et Civilisations  
Orientales, Paris, France*  
Anthropology

**Yuqin Zhao**

*Harbin Institute of Technology, PR China*  
Community language learning; Interlanguage; linguistic imperialism; Needs analysis

**Nicolas Ziegler**

*Universität Leipzig, Germany*  
Classroom language; Classroom observation schemes; Teacher talk

**Kerstin Zimmermann**

*Technische Universität Berlin, Germany*  
Modern Language Aptitude Test

# List of Entries

|                                            |                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Acculturation                              | Camões Institute                                                                               |
| Achievement tests                          | CercleS – <i>Confédération Européenne des Centres de Langues dans l'Enseignement Supérieur</i> |
| Acquisition and teaching                   | Cervantes Institute                                                                            |
| Action research                            | Chinese                                                                                        |
| Adult language learning                    | Chomsky, Noam                                                                                  |
| Adult learners                             | CIEP – <i>Centre International d'Études Pédagogique</i>                                        |
| African languages                          | CILT – Centre for Information on Languages Teaching Research                                   |
| Age factors                                | <i>Civilisation</i>                                                                            |
| AILA                                       | Classroom language                                                                             |
| ALA – Association for Language Awareness   | Classroom observation schemes                                                                  |
| Alliance française                         | Classroom research                                                                             |
| Alternation hypothesis                     | Cloze test                                                                                     |
| American Army Method                       | Cognitive code theory                                                                          |
| Anthropology                               | Cognitive linguistics                                                                          |
| Applied linguistics                        | Comenius, Johannes Amos                                                                        |
| Aptitude for language learning             | Common European Framework of Reference                                                         |
| Aptitude tests                             | Communication strategies                                                                       |
| Arabic                                     | Communicative language teaching                                                                |
| Area studies                               | Community language learning                                                                    |
| Assessment and testing                     | Competence and performance                                                                     |
| Attitudes and language learning            | Confucius Institute                                                                            |
| Audiolingual method                        | Content and language integrated learning                                                       |
| Audio-visual language teaching             | Content-based instruction                                                                      |
| Authenticity                               | Contrastive analysis                                                                           |
| Autonomy and autonomous learners           | Conversation analysis                                                                          |
| Beginner language learners                 | Corpus linguistics and language teaching                                                       |
| Behaviourism                               | Coste, Daniel                                                                                  |
| Beliefs about other countries              | Council of Europe Modern Languages Projects                                                    |
| BICS and CALP                              | Council of Europe Platform for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education                        |
| Bilingual education                        | CRAPEL – <i>Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pédagogique en Langues</i>                  |
| Bilingual method                           | CRÉDIF – <i>Centre de Recherche et d'Étude pour la Diffusion du Français</i>                   |
| Bilingualism                               | Creoles                                                                                        |
| Bloomfield, Leonhard                       |                                                                                                |
| Braille                                    |                                                                                                |
| British Council                            |                                                                                                |
| CAL – Center for Applied Linguistic        |                                                                                                |
| CALL – Computer Assisted Language Teaching |                                                                                                |

- Cross-cultural psychology  
 Cross-linguistic analyses  
 Cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses  
 C-test  
 Cultural awareness  
 Cultural studies  
 Culture shock  
  
 DAAD – *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst*  
 Developmental sequence  
 Diagnostic tests  
 DIALANG  
 Dictation  
 Dictionaries  
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 Esperanto  
 European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML)  
 European Language Council  
 European Language Portfolio  
 Evaluation  
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 Exercise types and grading  
  
 FIPLV – *Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes*  
 Foreigner Talk  
 Fossilisation  
*Français fondamental*  
*Fremdsprachendidaktik*  
*Fremdverstehen*  
 French  
  
 Gender in language  
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 Generative principle  
  
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 German  
 Global education  
 Goethe-Institut  
 Gouin, François  
 Graded objectives  
 Grammar  
 Grammar–translation method  
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 Halliday, Michael Alexander Kirkwood  
*Handlungsorientierter Unterricht* (Holistic and action-oriented learning and teaching)  
 Hawkins, Eric William  
 Higher education  
 History: the nineteenth century  
 History: from the Reform Movement to 1945  
 History: after 1945  
 Hornby, Albert Sidney  
 Human rights  
 Humanistic language teaching  
 Humboldt, Wilhelm von  
  
 IATEFL – International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language  
 Identity and language learning  
 Idioms  
 IDV – *Internationaler Deutschlehrerverband*  
 Integrated tests  
 Integrative tests  
 Intensive language courses  
 Intercomprehension  
 Intercultural communication  
 Intercultural competence  
 Intercultural training /Cross-cultural training  
*Interkulturelle Didaktik* (Intercultural Didactics)  
 Interlanguage  
 Internationalisation  
 Internet and language learning  
 Interpreting  
 IPA – International Phonetic Association  
 IVN – *Internationale Vereniging Voor Neerlandistiek*  
  
 Japan Foundation  
 Japanese  
 Jespersen, Otto  
 Journals



Kramsch, Claire  
Krumm, Hans-Jürgen

*Landeskunde/Kulturkunde*

Language across the curriculum  
Language awareness  
Language laboratories  
Language planning and policy  
Languages for Specific Purposes

*Langue and parole*

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Learning to Learn  
Lexicography and lexicology

Lingua franca

Linguapax

Linguistic imperialism

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*Linguistique appliquée*

Listening  
Literary texts  
Literary texts and intercultural understanding  
Literary theory and literature teaching  
Lozanov, Georgi

MAPRYaL

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Mediation

Medium of instruction

Medium-oriented and message-oriented  
communication

Mental lexicon

Migrant and heritage languages

MLAT – Modern Language Aptitude Test

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Monolingual principle

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Mother-tongue teaching

Mother tongue use in the foreign language classroom

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Motivation theories

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Native speaker

Needs analysis

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Neurolinguistics

Non-native speaker teacher

Non-verbal communication  
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Palmer, Harold Edward

Pedagogical grammar

Pidgins

Placement tests

Planned languages

Planning for foreign language teaching

Plurilingualism

Poetry

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Portuguese

Pragmatics

Primary Education

Proficiency Movement

Proficiency tests

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Psychodramaturgy for language acquisition

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Reform Movement

Reliability

Research methods

Risk-taking and foreign language learning

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Russian

Sapir–Whorf Hypothesis

Saussure, Ferdinand de

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SEAMEO RELC – The SEAMEO Regional Lan-  
guage Center

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- Sprachlehrforschung*
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- Strategic competence
- Strategies of language learning
- Structural linguistics
- Study abroad
- Successful language learners
- Suggestopedia
- Sweet, Henry
- Syllabus and curriculum design
- Tandem learning
- Task-based teaching and assessment
- Teacher education
- Teacher talk
- Teacher thinking
- Teaching methods
- Technologies for language learning
- TESOL – Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
- Text and corpus linguistics
- Text types and grading
- Textbooks
- Third language learning
- Threshold Level
- Total Physical Response
- Transfer
- Translation
- Translation in language teaching
- Translation theory
- Trim, John Leslie Melville
- Turkish
- Universal grammar (UG)
- Untutored language acquisition
- US Standards for Foreign Language Learning
- Validity
- van Ek, Jan Ate
- Vantage Level
- Variation in language
- Viëtor, Wilhelm
- Vocabulary
- Vocational education and training
- Waystage
- Widdowson, Henry George
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# Thematic list of entries

(\*overview articles)

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\*attitudes and language learning  
autonomy and autonomous learners  
beginner language learners  
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cognitive code theory  
communicative strategies  
competence and performance  
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fossilisation  
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drama  
error analysis  
*Fremdsprachendidaktik*  
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*interkulturelle didaktik*  
language laboratories  
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literary theory and literature teaching  
\*medium of instruction  
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pedagogical grammar  
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    teaching  
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\*teacher education  
teacher talk  
\*teacher thinking  
\*teaching methods  
text types and grading  
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translation in language teaching

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bilingual method

\*communicative language teaching

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Common European Framework of Reference

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interpreting  
language planning  
lexicography and lexicology  
\*linguistics  
*linguistique appliquée*  
\*literary theory and literature  
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\*sociolinguistics  
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text and corpus linguistics  
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\*translation theory  
universal grammar  
untutored language acquisition

# Introduction to the second edition

Michael Byram finishes his introduction to the first edition of the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning* by quoting Umberto Eco, saying “After all the cultivated person’s first duty is to be always prepared to re-write the encyclopedia” (*Serendipities. Language and Lunacy*, 1999: 21). As the first edition of the encyclopedia is now 13 years old and as research in the field of language learning and teaching has developed rapidly within the last decade, it was quite a pleasure for us to accept the offer of Routledge’s senior editor Andrea Hartill to prepare and publish a second and revised edition of the encyclopedia. At the same time it was good to know that the 1st edition had been a success: obviously there is serious and growing interest in questions and background knowledge on language learning and teaching all over the world.

What is new in this second edition? Except a few articles with historical significance (i.e. historically influential figures in the field of language learning and teaching in past centuries), every entry has been revised and updated, including recent developments and new research publications in the respective field. In many cases this has been done by the original author; but as some of the former colleagues are not with us anymore or have finished their academic work, we asked new experts to revise or even rewrite the former text. In these cases, the reader will find two names, the first being the name of the new author, the second name that of the original author. In some cases updating was

carried out by the editors but here only the original names is to be found.

Concerning new topics and entries, we have tried to do justice to the most important developments in the field of language learning and teaching within the last decade. Due to globalization and migration, research on multi-/ plurilingualism has been developed a lot. There are quite a number of new entries dealing with these topics, e.g. the entries on *Third Language Learning*, *Intercomprehension* or the Council of Europe’s *Platform for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education*. As institutional language learning and teaching more and more takes place on the basis of a migration-based bilingualism or even plurilingualism, we also added entries on concepts like *Mother tongue* or *Migrant and heritage languages*. These concepts are becoming more important in the context of language learning and teaching, but also more complex and problematic. In the new entry on migration-based plurilingualism and foreign language teaching we try to relate different types of language acquisition, language learning and language teaching.

Other research fields which have recently developed a lot are ‘language learning and emotions’ and attitudes as well as identity related issues of language learning and teaching. We therefore decided to put more emphasis on these issues in adding entries on *Emotions and language learning*, *Risk taking and language learning*, *Beliefs about other countries*, *Identity and language learning* and

*Learner narratives.* Also the field of new technologies and language learning is represented by a new entry.

As in the first edition we would like to reach an international readership. Although western traditions of research on language learning and teaching are still dominant in this volume, we have tried to include as many colleagues from other parts of the world as possible. We are especially happy that more colleagues from Asia and Eastern Europe

could now participate. Although in some entries specific cultural and historical traditions or perspectives of language learning are deliberately represented, we basically encouraged the authors to write from a more international and global perspective and to include research literature from all over the world.

Durham/Luxembourg

Michael Byram and Adelheid Hu

# Introduction to the first edition

## Purpose

At the turn of the twenty-first century, it has become a commonplace to remark how the world has become a village where people of many different places and origins encounter each other in real or virtual space, in ways which a generation ago would have seemed impossible. Encounters mean communication, and communication should lead to understanding and harmony, or at the very least a reduction of conflict. Yet communication depends above all on overcoming the barriers which languages can symbolise, especially for those who do not live in societies where a variety of languages are already part of their environment.

Language learning has become a necessity for everyone, even those whose first language is English, currently a dominant *lingua franca*, but whose future is unpredictable. Perhaps ironically, this current situation means that this encyclopedia can be published in one language, English, and be accessible to the largest number of readers, although we are acutely conscious that there are still limitations.

When the language(s) that are needed are not readily available in the immediate environment, learning becomes dependent on teaching, for, despite the ease and inevitability of first language (s) acquisition in early childhood, language learning of any other kind turns out to be a complex and difficult task. It is in these circumstances that, for over a century, language teaching has increasingly

become a significant profession. At the same time, the complexity of the task of language learning, and therefore of teaching, has become more and more apparent. That complexity has been met with the ingenuity of learners and teachers to devise methods, to create environments, to understand the processes, to simplify and systematise, to find appropriate institutions, all of which is multiplied by the number of traditions which have developed at different times and places more or less independently of each other.

For those who are professionally engaged in language teaching – as teachers, as teacher educators, as inspectors and evaluators, as testers and assessors, as curriculum designers and materials producers – the field has become so complex that it is difficult to know. Like other professions, they need works of reference, those which describe the languages they teach, and those which describe the discipline which they profess. The former include grammars and dictionaries but also the encyclopedias of languages and linguistics which have become commonplace.

This encyclopedia is in the latter category. It provides an authoritative account of the discipline of language teaching in all its complexity. It does so in a way which makes that account readily accessible, whether for quick reference or as a means of gaining an overview and insight in depth of a particular issue. It also enables the language teaching professional to discover the relationship of



language teaching to other disciplines. It can thus provide rapid help on a particular problem or be the basis for in-depth and wide-ranging study, as one entry leads to another through the use of cross-references in the text and after each entry, and lists of further reading.

## **Readership**

The encyclopedia has been created for the language teaching profession. Language teaching professionals – there is unfortunately no generic term to cover the different branches – are like those in other professions which draw upon a range of academic disciplines, pure and applied. They have their own knowledge and skills, and yet they also need to be familiar with other disciplines, such as psychology, sociology, linguistics. This encyclopedia therefore presents accounts both of professional knowledge and skills, and of the supporting or source disciplines.

Because language teaching as a modern profession is relatively young, having grown very quickly and in many different places in parallel, neither an agreed body of knowledge nor a defined and fixed terminology are widely available. Readers in one country may not be familiar with the advances and terminology of another, and the use of different languages for professional purposes makes the situation even more complex. We hope that this encyclopedia will help to bridge some of these inevitable gaps. It has been deliberately produced with as wide an audience as possible in mind, accepting that this itself creates difficulties. It would have been easier to create an encyclopedia of language teaching in a specific tradition – French, Canadian, Indian, Japanese, etc. – but it is precisely one of the aims of language teaching to create the conditions for increased understanding across linguistic and cultural borders, and to produce an encyclopedia which does not attempt to do the same for the profession would be a contradiction in terms.

We hope therefore that our readership will be international and will find the account of the discipline itself international. For, although Western traditions are dominant in this as in many other disciplines, compounded by the current dominance

of English and English Language Teaching, authors have been deliberately sought as widely as possible, particularly from outside the ELT world, from Asia, from the whole of Europe, as well as from Britain and North America. This means that there are entries with headwords which are not English, because some terms and traditions are not translatable – as linguists are the first to recognise. It also means that the entries about individual people have been chosen to identify those who have been influential in various traditions of language teaching and learning, rather than simply being a ‘hall of fame’ of great language educators.

Contributors have thus been encouraged to write from their own perspective, with as little editorial direction as possible once the general parameters had been set and agreed by the editorial team. If this means that there is not complete harmony within the text as a whole, that there are different views evident in different but related entries, that is a reflection of the discipline in its international character, not an error in production. Readers will be able to pursue topics and see their significance from these different perspectives.

## **Contents and organisation**

The main body of the encyclopedia contains entries of different lengths, from a few lines to major entries of 3,000 words. These entries are both analyses of the body of knowledge and skills of the language teaching profession, and related issues, and second, sources of information about professional matters, e.g. the meanings of acronyms, the origins and purposes of professional bodies. In the case of the former, authors provide references and suggestions for further reading. Many major entries lead on to other entries which provide further elaboration, and all entries have cross references marked within the text, and further suggested links at the end of texts. In the case of information entries, the dominant criterion has been that the item in question should be of international importance. It is not possible or helpful to include all national associations and institutions, but some exceptions have been made when they also have an international standing.

The entries are in alphabetical order in the main body of the text in order to facilitate access. There are also two other routes of access: a list of contents with all the main entries grouped by theme, and an index of key words, including those appearing either as headwords for entries or others within the texts of entries. In both cases, terminology is included which is not English for the reasons stated earlier.

There are entries on the teaching of specific languages and on the teaching of languages in specific countries. It is obviously not possible to be exhaustive in this any more than in other issues, and there will no doubt be readers who regret the absence of a particular language or country. The intention is as much to remind readers of the multiplicity of approaches to language teaching and learning as to portray the history of a particular language or country, and the choice was, though not arbitrary, largely a personal one. This reflects the nature of the endeavour: to include traditions other than the Anglo-American, important though this clearly is.

It is also a symptom of what an encyclopedia can be at the beginning of the twenty-first century. We have become aware that languages need to be understood in their cultural contexts, and this applies no less to teaching and learning processes. On the other hand we have also become aware that any attempt to be not only comprehensive but also exhaustive is doomed to fail. Development and change is constant and ever more rapid, and no publication, even in the new electronic media, can keep up with every change. Third, there can be no pretence that an encyclopedia is 'objective', neither in the sense of being the ultimate arbiter nor in the sense of being separated from the authorial and editorial presence of contributors and editor. The encyclopedia doubtless reflects to a large extent my own view of what is important in language teaching and learning, moderated by the advice and guidance of the editorial team. One result of this is the presence of entries on the cultural dimension of language teaching, on language education policy and on anthropology. On the other hand, I have not attempted to be comprehensive with respect to teaching methods, techniques and aids. There have been almost too many methods and certainly too many panaceas in the history of language teaching.

Methods have been included which have been 'successful', in that they have become well known, but there is no attempt to provide a handbook of methods here.

There is therefore a tightrope to be negotiated stretching from 'comprehensive' to 'interpretative', and this is made all the more difficult in that the encyclopedia has to strike a balance between being an in-depth analysis of the field and a quick reference work, providing the services of a dictionary of terms. I have tended not to provide the latter, since dictionaries already exist.

A similar issue arises with respect to the multidisciplinary of language teaching. The sources on which language teachers draw are numerous, and the disciplines from which they come in their own education may be multifarious. Those teachers who were educated and trained specifically for the profession, acquiring knowledge of relevant disciplines as part of this, are probably still a minority. Yet it cannot be the task of an encyclopedia of language teaching and learning simultaneously to be an encyclopedia of linguistics, psychology, cultural anthropology, to mention only a few. We have tried none the less to provide those teachers unfamiliar with such disciplines with the necessary overview and further reading if they wish.

In short, there are many entries which are expected and, I hope, many which are not. I hope readers will find the encyclopedia useful, not only for quick reference but also to browse from one entry to another, via the cross-references in the text and the further references and readings at the end of each text.

## How to use

The organisation of the encyclopedia thus allows for different types of use. Readers who wish to know about a particular issue may look first in the thematic list of contents for the headword they have in mind. They may also go straight to the main body of the text and find the headword in alphabetic order. If the issue is not represented as a headword, they should turn to the index.

Readers who wish to pursue a particular topic or area of interest should use the thematic list of contents. They may wish to start with one of the major

overview entries or go immediately to a more specific entry. In either case they will find further cross-references to other parts of the encyclopedia and suggestions for further reading. They will also find that there is some overlap between entries. This is deliberate and allows readers to gain different perspectives on the same topic from different writers.

### Endnote – on writing encyclopedias

There have appeared in recent years a number of encyclopedias on language, linguistics, educational linguistics and now on language teaching and learning. This is probably an indication that, after a century of teaching ‘modern’ languages, following the Reform Movement, we have reached a point where a degree of certainty exists about what is worth knowing about languages and language teaching and learning. The coincidence of the term ‘modern’ foreign languages – avoided in French

*langues vivantes* and German *Fremdsprachen* – with ‘modernism’ is not entirely by chance, of course. On the other hand, we do not yet speak of ‘post-modern’ language teaching, despite the widespread critique of modernism.

None the less, it might appear as though we are out of step with the times to be offering an encyclopedia in a post-modern period, and it is important to acknowledge that what is contained in these pages is the state of an art which is constantly changing. On the one hand we must be aware of Umberto Eco’s reminder that ‘After all, the cultivated person’s first duty is to be always prepared to re-write the encyclopedia’ (*Serendipities. Language and Lunacy*, 1999: 21), and encyclopedia writing is never complete. On the other hand, as pedagogues know, there has to be laid down a foundation of knowledge, even if it is later to be challenged. This encyclopedia offers a contribution to that foundation for teachers and learners alike.

# Acknowledgements

The production of the second edition of this volume would not have been undertaken if the original editor had not found a co-editor willing to help review the volume and ensure a second edition was not just an updating of the first. I would like to thank Adelheid Hu for being willing to act as co-editor despite the many other commitments she had.

Michael Byram

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Michael Byram and Adelheid Hu  
Durham and Luxembourg  
December 2011

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Figure 8. From Council of Europe (2001) *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment*,

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## Acculturation

Acculturation is the process an individual needs to go through in order to become adapted to a different culture. For this to take place there will need to be changes in both social and psychological behaviour. Where the target culture involves a different language, a key part of the acculturation process will involve language learning. Research has concentrated on the acculturation of immigrant workers to their host country. The fact that many of the learners in this category fail to master the target language is associated with their isolation and lack of social contact with the host population. This lack of progress and the **fossilisation** of their language **skills** has been linked to pidginisation (Schumann, 1976). Acculturation is not generally associated with foreign language learning because this can take place without any direct contact with the target country. Where pupils do have contact with the target language and culture, for example through a pupil **exchange**, some of the features of acculturation could be seen to have relevance for foreign language learning.

Acculturation requires the learner to adjust their social and psychological behaviour in order to become more closely integrated with the target culture. This distance which separates the learner from the target culture is a measure by which acculturation can be assessed. Byram (1989) talks about the outsider beginning to become an insider, and how critical the move is 'from noticing the boundary markers to appreciating the whole

complexity of the way of life'. The initial contact in this process of adaptation may be associated with **culture shock** as the learner discovers that they need to accept differences in behaviour from those with which they are familiar from their own culture. The learner's **motivation** to become more closely integrated with the target culture will be associated with their individual **needs**.

Acculturation theory originated with the ethnographic work of Linton (1960), who studied the changes Native Americans needed to make in order to become more integrated into mainstream American society. He identified the notion of the distance separating the two cultural groups and the social and psychological changes which would be necessary for closer integration to take place. Social distance would be associated with the actual contact which was available between the two cultures, while psychological distance represented the extent to which the learner wanted to become more closely adapted to the dominant culture. Where differences in language existed between the two cultures, language learning was clearly an important part of the acculturation process.

For Schumann (1978), acculturation theory provided an explanation for individual differences in second language learning and represented the causal variable in the second language **acquisition** process. In his model of the factors determining social and psychological distance, Schumann established the positive and negative elements of acculturation. So, for example, the **attitude** of the learner to the target social group could be a positive

## 2 Acculturation

or negative factor while psychologically, **motivation** would be seen as a key factor. For him the first stages of language acquisition are ‘characterised’ by the same processes that are responsible for the formation of first languages. When there are hindrances to acculturation – when social or psychological distance is great – the learner will not progress beyond the early stages and the language will stay ‘pidginized’ (McLaughlin, 1987). The learner’s language will therefore fossilise due to the lack of contact with the target language group. Further research (Andersen, 1981), has described in more detail these characteristics, identifying a number of different stages in the process of pidginisation and creolisation (development of a more complex form of pidgin). So, nativisation ‘involves assimilation as the learner makes the input conform to an internalized view of what constitutes the second language system’, while denativisation represents the next stage when the learner adjusts this early language to external input. The first stage of second language learning involves, therefore, simplification and regression, while later learning is concerned with replacement and restructuring. McLaughlin (1987) describes nativisation as ‘perhaps the most interesting aspect of Acculturation/Pidginization theory as it relates to the mechanisms of learning’.

The theory of acculturation as developed by Schumann is proposed to explain the factors affecting **adult** second language **acquisition** taking place without formal instruction, in naturalistic situations. As the theory stands, then, it would appear to have little to offer instructed second or foreign language learning (McLaughlin, 1987; Ellis, 1994). However, McLaughlin has pointed to the probable relevance of the notion of psychological distance for foreign language learning in the classroom. Attitude to the target culture and pupil motivation are likely to be key factors in foreign language learning in the classroom. Moreover, where pupils have the possibility of direct contact with the target country through a period of exchange or work experience abroad, they are in a situation where they will need to adapt to new and different cultural situations. The extent to which they are able to become integrated with the family with whom they are staying approximates, even for

a limited period, the kind of changes emphasised by the acculturation theory. The theory provides, therefore, a useful means of assessing the adaptation of exchange pupils to their new environment which could be measured through the use of questionnaires.

Acculturation theory clearly matches, in a number of important areas, the fossilisation theory of Selinker (1972), which pre-dates it. Both theories seek to explain incomplete language learning and the fact that most learners do not achieve mastery of the target language. In their descriptions of simplified and reduced forms of speech not matching target language norms, they are describing similar phenomena. However, whereas fossilisation theory is based on a linguistic analysis of second language development as identified through examples of usage, acculturation begins with the notion of a single external factor – relationship to the target culture – which leads to these recognised limitations in learner **interlanguage**. Acculturation, centred on the degree to which learners are in contact with the target culture, is largely concerned, in contrast with fossilisation theory, with naturalistic and not instructed language learning. While they differ in the learning environment they describe, both theories have concentrated on the permanence of the language features identified. This is a point which McLaughlin takes up in his **evaluation** of the acculturation theory: ‘relatively little attention has been given to the possibility of changes in individual motivation and attitude as they relate to second language acquisition’ (McLaughlin, 1987). Changes in fossilisation theory have begun to address this problem and Selinker (Selinker and Lakshmanan, 1993), recognising the difficulties of identifying a point when language development stops, no longer sees the process as necessarily permanent and identifies the concept of ‘plateau in L2 learning rather than cessation of learning’.

The acculturation/pidginisation theory provides a powerful means for assessing a learner’s involvement with the target culture. By extending the scope of the theory to include instructed language learning it would certainly have, as McLaughlin (1987) suggests, ‘something to say to teaching practitioners’.

**See also:** Cross-cultural psychology; Culture shock; Intercultural communication; Intercultural competence; Second language acquisition theories

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JOHN DANIELS

## Achievement tests

Achievement tests follow a well-defined period of instruction and are designed to check the extent to

which students have learned or absorbed what has been taught over a fixed period. This period can be very short, as in the case of an intensive course, or can extend to a whole year or longer. The content of achievement tests is chosen with reference to a clearly defined **syllabus**, so only the material and skills on that syllabus are tested. The resulting scores reflect the amount the test-takers have learned. Indeed, it is important to remember that an achievement test could be demotivating for the students if it were designed to show up their deficiencies rather than to indicate how successful they had been at absorbing the material they had been taught. Henning (1987), therefore, stresses the importance of pitching the test at the appropriate level for the students concerned.

Achievement test results can be used to make decisions about students' readiness to begin the next stage in their learning; for instance, their readiness to progress from an intermediate to an advanced course. In this respect, achievement tests seem similar to **proficiency tests**, since the results from both are used for decision-making. However, an achievement test is distinct from a proficiency test because the latter does not select its material from a particular syllabus or teaching programme. So, while proficiency tests draw on the language used for a real-world purpose, achievement tests sample only from the language that the students have been taught.

Achievement tests can also be used to evaluate teaching programmes. In such cases, an individual student's score is not of primary interest. Instead, the focus is on the average performance of the group, and this information is used to decide whether changes (if any) need to be made.

**See also:** Assessment and testing; Evaluation

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TINEKE BRUNFAUT

JAYANTI BANERJEE

## Acquisition and teaching

From the very beginning of research on the acquisition of second languages, there has been an interest in the contribution of this work to teaching second languages. In 1976, Krashen (1976, 1981) formulated the **monitor model** which distinguishes between acquisition and learning. According to this model, learners – adults and children – develop competence in L2 following on the one hand a process of acquisition, an unconscious process, identical to the one in which the child acquires its first language, and on the other hand, a conscious process resulting from the action of metalinguistic knowledge, a knowledge which is responsible for phenomena of self-control (monitor). The model proposed by Krashen stimulated a wide debate on the teachability of second languages in relationship to their learnability.

According to Clahsen (1987), learnability has two dimensions, one which takes into account the fact that every human being is able to acquire one or several languages at almost any time of life (Wode, 1981), and another which explains the common developmental itineraries shared, despite variations, by the learners of a specific language. Thus Piennemann (1984, 1985) showed that the fixed order of development of the sentence in German cannot be changed by didactic intervention. In the perspective offered by Piennemann, what is teachable depends on what is learnable.

Research stemming from Krashen's theses led at least at the beginning to relative distrust of explicit language instruction (Doughty, 2003). Following other researchers, Doughty (2003: 267) argues that second language teaching involves implicit procedures and procedures which focus the attention of the learner on forms ('focus on forms'), on the task

and the meaning ('focus on meaning') and on forms and integrated contents ('focus on form') as well as on explicit rules. Doughty's conclusion is that research on the acquisition of second languages can help guided learners to develop their processing abilities in the second language, especially through metalinguistic reflection.

The thesis that the teachability of second languages depends on their learnability, the dominant thesis derived from acquisition research, needs to be refined, however, according to the linguistic elements which are to be acquired in a second language: lexical knowledge, pragmatic skills or grammatical knowledge. This thesis also needs to be considered in the light of debates about the contribution of procedural skills and declarative knowledge in the development of second language competence with respect to the role of consciousness and attention in the process of acquisition (Bange, 2002), and also with respect to the precision of the distinction between explicit and implicit knowledge in a foreign language (Ellis, 2005) or, finally, between intentional and incidental learning (Hulstijn, 2003).

Hulstijn reminds us that if incidental learning is implicated in implicit learning, implicit learning refers to a much broader phenomenon. Intentional learning is defined by Hulstijn (2003: 360) as a deliberate 'attempt to commit new information to memory' whereas explicit learning 'involves awareness at the point of learning'. According to Ellis (2005), explicit and implicit knowledge in foreign language is to be differentiated according to the following parameters:

- awareness, i.e. intuition about the acceptability of an utterance (implicit knowledge) which precedes the ability to provide an explicit metalinguistic explanation;
- the types of knowledge implemented, i.e. internalised procedural skills versus declarative knowledge;
- systematicity, i.e. implicit knowledge seems to be more systematic, even though variable, than explicit knowledge;
- access, i.e. the difference in access to different aspects of knowledge is linked to their procedural or declarative character;

- recourse to previous knowledge of the second language, i.e. learners use implicit knowledge in real-time in speech whereas they have recourse to explicit knowledge in a planning phase;
- verbalisation, i.e. explicit knowledge is verbalisable whereas implicit knowledge is not;
- learnability, i.e. implicit knowledge is only learnable during the critical period, that is before puberty, whereas explicit knowledge is learnable at any time.

It appears from this analysis that implicit knowledge on the basis of procedural skills is scarcely verbalisable, scarcely conscious and automatic.

This kind of dichotomous analysis is criticised by Bange (2002), who argues for an explicit grammatical teaching, providing a metacognitive scaffolding for the efforts in learning made by the learner. Dekeyser (2003) argues for his part that despite the small number of existing studies, the explicit teaching of the forms and operations of the second language produces favourable effects on the mastery of a second language.

Thinking about acquisition and the teaching of second languages has thus taken essentially two forms: the development of a general methodology for teaching second languages inspired by research on acquisition (see Krashen and Terrell, 1983; or the suggestions made by Van Patten, 2003), or proposals to improve and modify the perception of input in the language classroom.

The debate has crystallised around the question of the role of pedagogical activities which draw the attention of learners to formal aspects of the language in an explicit or implicit way ('form focused instruction'). Numerous experiments have shown the importance of emphasising data in the second language ('input enhancement') and the identification of them ('noticing'). In fact learners seem to pay attention only to formal aspects which are being explicitly pointed out to them and which they are able to take into account. Lyster (2004) reports the results of experiments showing the variable effect of teaching orientated towards form ('form-focused') depending on the grammatical field in question. For Ellis (2008), explicit teaching orientated towards form, in the shape of deductive or inductive metalinguistic explanations, of explicit

corrections and of global feedback, support the acquisition of second languages.

Lyster (2007) argues for a 'counterbalanced approach' between teaching orientated towards form and teaching orientated towards disciplinary content ('**content-based instruction**'). He suggests a pedagogical approach where the attention of the learner is drawn on the one hand to disciplinary content and on the other hand to linguistic forms. This alternation aims to unbalance the forms of **interlanguage** through 'noticing' and **language awareness**. According to Lyster, this counterbalanced interaction with on the one hand orientation towards content and on the other hand towards form will provide the learner with multiple opportunities for restructuring the data of their interlanguage. In a mode analogous to that of Lyster, other researchers argue for alternating teaching by example and teaching by rule (Narcy-Combes, 2005: 25–63).

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GEORGES DANIEL VÉRONIQUE

## Action research

Action research is part of a broader movement in education associated with the concepts of 'reflective practice' and 'the teacher as researcher'. It involves a self-reflective, systematic and critical approach to enquiry by participants who are also members of the research context. The aim of action research is to problematise situations or issues the participants consider worthy of investigation, and to intervene in those situations in order to bring about critically informed developments in practice. For example, researchers may decide to investigate particular aspects of **teacher talk**, **task-based learning**, the classroom culture or **classroom language**. **Research methods** for collecting action research data are primarily qualitative and include, for example, **classroom observation** and **journals**.

Several essential features distinguish action research from other forms of educational research. First, it is small-scale, contextualised and local in character, identifying and investigating teaching–learning issues within a specific situation. Second, it involves **evaluation** and reflection aimed at bringing about continuing changes in practice. Third, it is participatory, providing for communities of participants to investigate collaboratively issues of concern within their social situation. Fourth, it differs from the 'intuitive' thinking that may occur as a normal part of teaching, as changes in practice are based on systematic data collection and analysis. Finally, action research is underpinned by democratic principles; it invests ownership for changes in curriculum practice in those who conduct the research.

Action research typically involves four broad phases, which form a continuing cycle or spiral of research:

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- Norris, J.M. and Ortega, L. (eds) (2006) *Synthesizing Research on Language Learning and Teaching*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

- *planning* a problem or issue is identified and a plan of action is developed in order to bring about improvements in specific areas of the research context;
- *action* the plan is put into action over an agreed period of time;
- *observation* the effects of the action are observed and data are collected;
- *reflection* the effects of the action are evaluated and become the basis for further cycles of research (based on Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988).

Action research has its roots in a complex mixture of educational and social reform movements reaching back into the nineteenth century. Amongst these influences are:

1. the Science in Education movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which considered how scientific methods could be applied to educational problems;
2. progressive and experimentalist educational thinkers, notably John Dewey (1929), who argued that educational practices should be tested by inductive scientific methods of problem solving;
3. the Group Dynamics Movement in social **psychology** and human relations of the 1930s and 1940s, which included social psychologists such as Kurt Lewin who was interested in the concept of action in group settings and stressed the importance of democratic and collaborative involvement in experimental enquiry;
4. the emergence of curriculum as a field of enquiry, in which the role of teachers as key participants in curriculum reform and the social organisation of learning were acknowledged by educational philosophers such as Schwab (e.g. Schwab, 1969);
5. the teacher as researcher (Stenhouse, 1975), and reflective practitioner movements (Schön, 1983), which gave prominence to the enquiry-based nature of teaching and the role of teachers in studying classroom practices as a way of identifying the problems and effects of curriculum implementation.

Lewin's contribution, in particular, is important, as he was amongst the first to construct a theory and

develop descriptions of action research processes (1946). He is often credited with being the 'founding father' of action research, although there is evidence that the concepts and terminology were first used by Collier, the US Commissioner on Indian Affairs (1945).

Three broad phases of development characterise the application of action research in educational contexts. The first, a scientific-technical approach, emerged in the United States in the 1950s championed in the work of both Corey (1953), and Taba and Noel (1957), as a way of involving teachers in large-scale curriculum design. This movement was rapidly overshadowed, however, by more scientifically oriented research and development models. The second approach grew from Lawrence Stenhouse's concept of the teacher as researcher and adopted a practical orientation involving scrutinising personal practice and acquiring improved teaching **skills** as the basis for curriculum development. Stenhouse's work in Britain through The School Council Humanities Curriculum Project (1967–72) and that of his successors, John Elliott and Clem Adelman, in the Ford Teaching Project (1972–5) represent major initiatives of this phase. A third phase, associated with the work of Carr and Kemmis in Australia, and Winter and Whitehouse in the UK, has taken an emancipatory-critical approach which proposes that action research has its base in political action, which must inevitably underpin collaborative movements for educational reform. A fourth generation of action research links critical action research with participatory approaches, manifested in the initiatives of Fals Borda in Colombia and Freire in Brazil and connecting action research with broader social movements.

Criticisms of action research have generally focused on questions relating to its rigour and its recognisability as a valid research methodology. Corey's work soon suffered from comparisons with positivist experimental research which placed value on criteria of objectivity, rationality and generalisability. Hodgkinson, in a paper published in 1957, criticised action research for its 'sloppy' methodological approaches, the lack of research training by those who conduct it and its inability to contribute to theoretical developments. Others (e.g. Halsey, 1972) have pointed to the fundamental

tension between ‘action’ and ‘research’ and to the differing, and inherently incompatible, orientations taken by teachers and researchers to educational questions. Winter (1982) and others have drawn attention to the lack of rigour in interpretation and the restricted nature of the data that characterise much action research. Issues of a more pragmatic nature highlight the impediments to teachers becoming researchers (Borg, 2010), suspicion on the part of other staff and principals towards practitioners who adopt a research stance, the complexities of collaborative teacher–researcher partnerships and the risk that the research could be co-opted by academic researchers. The relative newness of action research in the language teaching field means that there is a limited literature and uncertain professional status associated with action research, so that its potential contributions to research and professional development are yet to be fully understood.

However, the broad scope and flexibility of action research mean that its applications to the field of language teaching are potentially numerous (Crookes, 1993). They include:

- to provide an impetus for individual and group action and to elucidate immediate teaching or learning problems (Nunan, 1990; Wallace, 1998; Burns, 2010);
- to facilitate continuing professional development and **teacher education** (Richards and Nunan, 1990; van Lier, 1996; Freeman, 1998; Edge, 2001);
- to underpin educational change and innovation (Goswami and Stillman, 1987; Markee, 1997);
- to play a role in the **evaluation** of teaching and learning programmes (Murphy, 1996);
- to stimulate school and organisational renewal (Elliott, 1991; Burns, 1999);
- to promote researcher and teacher partnerships (Somekh, 1994);
- to support broad educational trends towards school-based curriculum development (Hopkins, 1993).

As the research focus is on the classroom and on immediate practical concerns in teaching, action research holds promise as a site for building

theories about language teaching which are potentially of value and interest to other teachers.

**See also:** Classroom language; Classroom observation schemes; Research methods; Teacher education; Teacher talk

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ANNE BURNS

## Adult language learning

Adult language learning (ALL) occurs either as an independently organised process – although still too rarely so – or in an institutional framework, for example in publicly accredited or private or work-based institutions. ALL attempts on the one hand to bridge the gap, large or small, between the outcomes of school learning and needs and wants in the world outside school, or on the other hand to build up the language competencies needed for the new challenges which appear in adult life, for example professional, social or cultural challenges. There has been increasing interest since the end of the twentieth century in older learners, a target group which can in a sense be seen as a third phase of language learning, not only because of the demographic changes but also because of the specific learning scenarios of this group.

Whilst in the following we shall consider such questions as 'Who learns languages in ALL?'; 'Who teaches languages in ALL?'; 'Where does ALL take place?'; 'What do people learn in ALL?', there are a number of points to bear in mind.

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Whereas discussion of the concept of ALL leads to consideration of the specificity of the language learning of adults, it should not lead to the isolation of this kind of learning but should rather take note of the links with the language learning of young people – or of senior citizens – in order to contribute to the aim of lifelong learning.

ALL has begun to play a more and more important role in the modern world, as shown by examples from Australia (literacy programmes for immigrants), Canada (social integration and cohesion of a bilingual country) and the Scandinavian countries (the importance of ALL in Denmark, Sweden and Finland). In the USA, adult second language learning is most important in the teaching of **English** to non-English speaking immigrants, who need some thirty hours of English instruction in order to qualify for citizenship. There is a similar case, for example, in the teaching of the Estonian language to Russians living in Estonia, who need language competence in order to be integrated in the vocational and social life of the country. The discussion in the Federal Republic of Germany about the problems of integration of migrants is of particular political interest. The question of lack of knowledge of German plays a central role in this discussion and language courses for adults financed by the state are offered by the Volkshochschulen (Folk High Schools) in whose programme these courses play a significant role.

### Characteristics of the language learning of adults

In the light of current thinking it is not possible to define concepts of language learning which are uniquely adult in nature. It is more sensible to accept a degree of uncertainty, because one thereby gains a fruitful flexibility in methodological and didactic terms. This uncertainty is caused by the fact that various criteria more or less overlap with each other.

1. The distinction of **adult learners** is made partly in terms of age, although this criterion is only partly valid since learners in school are often of the same age as learners in adult education who have already left school

for the world of work or for **vocational training**. The distinction is better made in terms of:

2. the daily rhythm determined by professional life;
3. personal characteristics, which may be less developed in young people, such as independence, responsibility for one's own learning, cognitive insight, capacity for comparison, ability to self-evaluate;
4. social responsibilities, for example towards children, family, employer;
5. economic conditions, which for example oblige learners to acquire (additional) qualifications;
6. biographically based characteristics: for example **motivation** – for example a desire for social contacts through participating in a language course; previously acquired competencies such as languages acquired earlier; previous – positive or negative – experiences of the teaching and learning process, for example anxieties about learning;
7. adult-oriented learning resources as opposed to learning conditions and aims which are determined by the school curriculum. The school should prepare the path from one phase to the other if it is to contribute to lifelong learning. This preparation for ALL is above all crucial in the area of **language awareness** and in communicative and **cultural awareness**;
8. tourist, cultural and other interests, often in connection with planned activities such as travel;
9. professional demands, for example the acquisition of additional qualifications for applications for jobs or specific activities such as a sojourn abroad;
10. **needs** which arise from particular social and political situations and which can influence the aims and contents of language teaching for adults in specific ways. A notable example is the opening of the Iron Curtain, and also the gradual integration of an enlarged Europe, which had political, economic, social and also cultural effects on the integration of Europe. The increasingly important role of economic interconnections in East and South Asia are

changing needs in language competences. Other examples are **internationalisation** and **globalisation**, which we shall return to later in this entry;

11. social, vocational and cultural integration of immigrants into the society of many countries, often in connection with literacy programmes;
12. the ‘voluntary’ participation of adults in a language course, as opposed to the largely obligatory teaching of language to school pupils – a central and difficult matter. The problem lies in the question whether all or almost all of the criteria mentioned above are obligations, internal or external, which lead to participation in language courses;
13. There are quite new opportunities for self-organised language learning appearing in the internet. Three internet-based levels can be distinguished: 1) the management of information: i.e. seeking, evaluating, and using information; 2) social computing: communication management through web-communities such as Facebook and Xing, etc.; 3) self presentations on the net (e.g. blogs). Social computing is no doubt more widespread among young people but they will soon bring the techniques of these modes of communication to the attention of the adult world.

These criteria are relevant for adult learners in different degrees and to a different extent, and it is this which creates increased demands on teachers in adult education. It is evident that the methodology of language teaching has to take into account the characteristics which have been listed here. There are certain consequences for teaching:

- on the one hand, teachers and institutions, i.e. those who offer languages, attempt to cater for the average, in order to serve as many learner groups as possible and to offer something for everyone;
- on the other hand, it is necessary to consider whether learners with specific characteristics should be offered specific help, i.e. by differentiated teaching or through specific externally differentiated courses.

## Characteristics of language courses for adults

Language teaching for adults is organised in specific ways, although here, too, it is not possible to give a unique definition but rather to identify particular emphases.

1. From an institutional point of view, language learning for adults is basically designated as ‘post-school’, and is therefore institutionally part of further education.

Language courses for adults which are organised outside school are offered by various providers. In certain countries there are evening schools that teach the secondary school programmes; in others there are citizens’ and workers’ institutes; higher education institutes often offer language courses to citizens (in their language centres); in the USA, most cities offer their citizens adult education programmes that include foreign languages. The market usually includes, in addition to public or publicly accredited providers and language courses internal to firms, a large, unquantifiable number of private institutions, although this is not the case in the USA, for example. This situation, which is characterised by multiplicity and competition, has been described for a specific region and is regularly up-dated.

The difficulties of allocating this kind of learning to further education are evident and include the following:

- there are pupils who take up language courses in further education whilst still at school;
  - certain forms of school-based course could in fact be described as adult education, for example teaching in vocational schools which may for institutional reasons be defined as ‘school’ courses.
2. The teaching and learning of languages in adult education have specific characteristics on account of the learner characteristics mentioned above, at least in theory. ALL is fundamentally characterised by the following facts:
    - In adulthood there are possibilities, which scarcely exist in schools, of determining



aims, methods and contents autonomously, taking into consideration the needs and wants of the learners and also the conditions of the institution;

- This basic premise is realised in various ways: for example by developing curricular approaches which are offered to learners to make their own choice. This is the case, for example, with The European Language Certificates (TELC). The alternative is that in a particular language course specific learning programmes are agreed on the basis of the participants' interests.

This independence with respect to learning content exists, however, in practice only to a limited degree, and has not existed for very long or indeed everywhere.

- The work of the **Council of Europe** starting in the beginning of the 1970s, is closely linked to the publication of the **threshold level**, *Niveau seuil*, *Kontaktschwelle Deutsch* and so on, and the foundation of this work, besides the innovative ways of describing language, was above all the methodological description of needs and wants analysis. This was the basis for adult education to free itself from definitions of learning **objectives**, determined by the curriculum and widely seen as imposed from outside. The difficulty of realisation in practice is less in the approach to the individuality of needs and wants – which is not a basic problem due to the nature of the analyses – but rather in the variability or dynamic of the results of analyses. These results have to be continuously updated on account of the unstable and scarcely predictable changeability of the needs situation, i.e. they have to be changed to fit a given constellation of factors. In practice, however, this goes beyond what is apparently feasible. Furthermore, the diagnosis which is possible on the basis of such analyses creates the need for another large step, namely the transfer into a 'therapy' of lesson planning and practice.
- The limitations in terms of content and methodology include the fact that language

teaching in adult education in the twentieth century was very dependent for its methodological concepts on school-based language teaching. The exceptions are schools which use **native speakers**, just to mention one example of a very progressive approach, albeit of limited extent. The situation in further education began to change mainly in the 1960s and 1970s, partly through the work of the Council of Europe and also as a consequence of other influences such as learning theory, psycholinguistics, approaches to oral language description, vocational orientation, changes in the ways of thinking about language and education, and emphasis on practice. This has brought considerable success in the emancipation of adult education, and was the basis for further developments which in turn have influenced schools. There remains a strong link between school and further education, particularly in language teaching, which for further education has been both fruitful and inhibiting. This difficulty is increased by the fact that many teachers in adult education simultaneously work in schools, although these numbers are falling, and they bring their school teaching approaches into adult education unless they are prepared and given the opportunity to acquire and experience the specificity of language teaching adapted to adults.

- Despite the realisation that linguistic competence is a necessity, it has not yet been possible to professionalise the training of teachers for ALL or to anchor it institutionally in academic activity. The widely used alternative of offering in-service instead of pre-service courses cannot provide the qualifications which are required for teaching and learning appropriate to adults.

## The science of language teaching for adults

### *Institutional aspects*

The systematic concern with language teaching and learning for adults is a scientific activity, but it

cannot be said that a scientifically established discipline has emerged from this, which might for example have a place in **higher education**. To illustrate this from the Federal Republic of Germany, there have been considerable efforts on the part of the German Institute for Adult Education (*Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung* – DIE), although this is not a university-type institution, and the ‘variety’ of the higher education sector was described by Quetz and Raasch in 1982 and has not changed essentially since. In France the situation is different, although similar. There came significant developments from organisations such as **CRÉDIF** (until 1998) and **CRAPEL**, and from universities in more or less haphazard ways, for example on the basis of the founding of chairs in French as a Foreign Language at the Universities of Besançon, of Paris III etc., which train students in **French** as a Foreign Language (FLE – Français langue étrangère) and whose graduates in many cases later teach in ALL institutions. In certain countries (e.g. in France) the law obliges employers to organise courses for employees as part of their continuing education (or to pay for such courses organised by specialised institutions).

### ***Content and subject aspects***

The important contributions of the scientific discipline of ALL to the discussion of foreign language teaching are in the following areas:

- **autonomous learning**
  - **needs analysis**
  - **distance learning**
  - **quality** assurance, quality control and auditing
  - target group orientation
  - modular courses
  - certification of learning
  - professional orientation of language teaching
  - teaching **language for specific purposes**
  - **pragmatic**–functional language descriptions instead of emphasis on morpho-syntax
  - development of international cooperation (e.g. **RELC** Singapore, the **European Centre for Modern Languages** in Graz, Austria).
- Some of these can be described in more detail:
- ***Certification*** One of the interesting specific aspects of ALL is the development and implementation of examinations and certificates. The statistics of the major examining bodies demonstrate the extent of the need; examples include the Cambridge English examinations, the DELF/DALF French examinations and the Goethe-Institut German examinations. The need that adults have to take examinations is doubtless largely attributable to the increasing requirement for professionally valid certificates, but this cannot be the only explanation. Self-motivation, self-discipline and learner autonomy are other explanations, and in the European context there is an approach to portfolio (self-) assessment at school level (the **European Language Portfolio**) which is being transferred into further education, together with the **Common European Framework**. This approach gives a decisive impulse to lifelong, or life-accompanying, learning which is particularly characteristic for language learning. Certification is of great indirect significance for foreign language teaching and learning because it contributes to the development of modular forms of teaching, allows learning to be organised in approachable stages, sanctions what has been achieved, and thereby creates motivation to continue. These are some of the advantages of certification practices independent of the professional significance of certificates.
  - ***Modular learning and definition of learning aims*** For professional purposes more than traditionally for learning which is independent of a professional purpose, it is important that the results of learning can be read concretely from the certificates of achievement. Both employees applying for jobs, and employers or personnel officers selecting from among applicants, rely on this. Certification thus does not mean simply giving a mark, it should also provide a detailed account of what has been achieved. This produces a pressure on further education institutions to describe their courses in much more transparent ways than has hitherto been the case. It may also have some influence on schools. This transparency in the description of learning aims, which also of

course has methodological implications, is an important step in the realisation of adult-specific learning, and corresponds to one of the most important demands characteristic of adults. It is the pre-condition for the organisation of language courses according to target groups.

- *Professional language courses* A significant step in ALL is made through the professional orientation of language learning. What has been achieved here includes also, in part, vocational schooling, although the effect on general education and higher education language teaching is limited. In professional activity, it is not formal ('systemic') or educationally oriented competencies which are required, so much as capability for **inter-cultural communication** abroad or with speakers of the target language. In this context there is a need for a theory of **cultural studies/Landeskunde** teaching oriented to adults which should take place in the following steps, each building on the previous ones:

1. knowledge about the culture of the target country and its inhabitants;
2. ability to compare knowledge of the target country with one's own culture;
3. capacity for accepting the other/the foreigner (empathy competence);
4. capacity to act together with others on the basis of the previous steps (**intercultural competence**) whilst taking into account the otherness of other cultures;
5. capacity to create, in common with other cultures, a new mutually organised and validated over-arching culture.

This progression leads to the pre-conditions for public political action as it is needed, for example, in Europe (integration of the European Union) or in South America (development of a free trade area 'Mercosur'/'Mercosul'). This kind of planning for cultural learning is particularly oriented to adults, i.e. to the challenges which adults in particular have to meet, whether in their professional life or in their ordinary life as responsible active citizens. In this theory of cultural learning, there is an assured place for contemporary language description (with an orientation to language for action) as

the basis for methodology, including autonomous learning and open teaching. These aims are also especially served by attempts at innovative approaches which are the central aims of language developments by the European Union and its programmes such as LEONARDO DA VINCI, SOCRATES, GRUNDTVIG etc.

- *Autonomous learning* Self-directed learning and **self-access** which can offer those in employment the necessary flexibility are not yet much developed in practice. The pre-conditions which determine self-directed learning above all are that, besides the theoretically adequate description of learning strategies, there should be practical realisations of these in the form of thoroughly concrete learner counselling by the teaching institutions, and learning materials, in an appropriate introduction to the use of these strategies, in the creation and use of user-friendly, comprehensive self-assessment processes. Since these pre-conditions are still largely absent, and furthermore are not visibly developed in school foreign language teaching, there is still in practice a lack of the desirable combination of institutional and self-directed learning. The corresponding expectations of technology, especially in software development (for example in multimedia courses, web-based courses and authoring systems) have so far been only partially fulfilled. In this sense, autonomous learning has not yet become a characteristic of ALL. What are today considered to be the priority communicative skills are in fact difficult to handle and have so far only been developed singly rather than as a comprehensive whole. It has to be emphasised that the development work needed for autonomous learning does not concern only technology, but is inseparable from psychological, psycholinguistic, linguistic and pedagogical-methodological aspects of self-directed learning. Until this work becomes a central concern of **research**, rather than that of individual initiatives and publishing houses, the situation will not change fundamentally. One of the consequences is that language learning among adults cannot yet be sufficiently differentiated from the school learning scenario.

## Conclusion

Language learning for adults has the opportunity through quality control and **quality management** to make a major step forward.

Quality assurance is so far limited to organisations in adult education. This is explained by the fact that quality control has become usual in the economy. Schools have so far avoided these controls but many further education institutions, especially publicly accredited ones, are also holding back. Perhaps this is because of the fear-inspiring term 'control' which should be replaced by 'management' in order to gain more acceptance.

The pre-condition for quality assurance is to have an appropriate instrument. A model proposed here (see Figure 1) includes the various factors and their interrelationships. The model has eight 'corners' to which the factors are attached.

Teaching must always be seen in relation to other factors, and we have used this model as a basis for the presentation here and discussed all the factors, although not all equally. We have also shown that there lies around the model's octagon a circle which we can call 'society', and influences from this circle penetrate the system. These include, for example, changes in the integration of Europe or South America, or the professional situation of many people who need qualifications for certain activities, including qualification in linguistic competence. This becomes particularly clear through phenomena such as internationalisation – defined as intentional effort towards international cooperation; and globalisation – defined as unintentional, worldwide developments such as

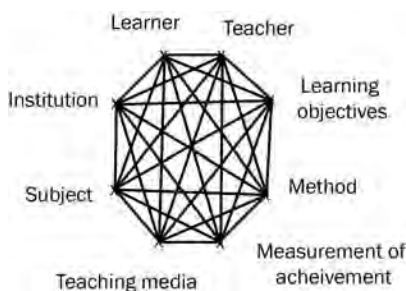


Figure 1 An appropriate instrument for quality assurance in ALL

environmental catastrophes or uncontrolled movements of capital. Adults experience these developments either as opportunities or as threats or challenges, and it is here that language learning for adults has an increasingly important role. This task is a characteristic of ALL, although as yet a missing characteristic.

**See also:** Age factors; Autonomy and autonomous learners; Council of Europe Modern Languages Projects; Languages for specific purposes; Needs analysis; Notions and functions; Psychology; Self-access; Teacher education; Teaching methods

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ALBERT RAASCH

## Adult learners

Unlike children, adult learners have established ways of doing and thinking. More self-reliant and preoccupied with responsibilities and time constraints, they come with prior knowledge and specific goals, making strategic decisions about information relevant to their needs. Their encounters with social and historical forces beyond their control leave them equipped with identities, cultural beliefs and theories that shape both how they learn and how they evaluate their learning experiences. These beliefs, expectations and goals, along with learners' histories of formal or informal learning, must be taken into account in adult language curricula and programme design.

## Age and learning

As adults age, loss of perceptual acuity, memory and disease can interfere with learning. But these effects may be offset by the increased efficiency and organization associated with adult learning. Adults rely more on explicit learning processes than children, whose development favours implicit, unconscious processes (De Keyser and Hall, 2005).

Neuro-imaging studies of brain function and development show that mature brains undergo changes that affect learning. The brain continues to be 'plastic' and to produce new neurons through adulthood, although plasticity may be limited to certain regions (Mahncke et al., 2006; Singer,

## Further reading

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2008). During childhood, the developing brain relies on genetic coding for its blueprint, but its functional architecture is also shaped by learning and experience: ‘neurons that wire together fire together’. Until puberty, developmental stages or ‘critical periods’ favour certain neural connections and inhibit others. Following puberty, learning is constrained by existing architecture, but the brain continues to make new connections and to strengthen established ones.

### Childhood bilingualism/multilingualism vs. adult second language learning

Children who learn two or more languages simultaneously learn differently from later sequential learners, but linguists disagree about why and how. Following Chomsky’s theory of **Universal grammar**, many linguists consider first language learning to be a separate process from general learning. They suggest that first language learners and early bilinguals have access to a language-specific innate device with general built-in language-generating principles. Exposure to a first language sets ‘parameters’ for a mental model of language that limit the way learners handle languages they subsequently learn (White, 2003).

Other linguists argue that language learning processes are consistent with general cognitive processes, and that mental grammars develop through interaction (Lee and Schumann, 2005; Tomasello, 2003). Language grammars have been compared to dynamic systems, with first language grammar-like attractors that affect without permanently determining the development of subsequent grammars (Larsen-Freeman, 1997; Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008).

### Age and language learning

During the early stages of second language learning, adults sometimes progress faster than children (Muñoz, 2006), but children are more likely to achieve native-like fluency, particularly in pronunciation and grammar. Nonetheless, native-like performance of late learners is neither rare nor typical (Birdsong, 2009). Brain studies show that highly proficient late learners’ brains appear to

process language in ways indistinguishable from those of native speakers.

Studies of performance show that the later people begin learning a language, the less likely they are to become highly proficient, particularly in grammar and pronunciation. Yet there is little consensus about a ‘critical’ time period or limit for optimum learning. And although many late learners’ performance differs from native speaker performance, there is no language domain that proves consistently difficult (Birdsong, 2005). Less proficient speakers often get stuck using non-target-like forms of language, sometimes referred to as **fossilization**. Yet some researchers question the utility of this concept, suggesting that even the language of monolinguals is characterized by variable performance with no end-state or target, and there is no evidence that these non-standard forms are permanent (Birdsong, 2006; Larsen-Freeman, 2006).

### Schooled and unschooled adults

Adult language learners bring a range of formal and informal schooling to the challenges of second language speaking, reading and writing. Formal education provides advantage: highly educated learners have meta-language that helps them notice and retain language forms. Extensive first language lexicons help with equivalent and non-equivalent concepts in second language vocabulary. First language reading proficiency speeds the acquisition of second language and academic literacy. Although writing systems vary across languages, highly proficient readers can generally transfer their skills. Readers of a logographic language like Chinese may take time to become proficient readers in alphabetic languages and vice versa, but their reading skills will facilitate eventual acquisition.

Prior knowledge and experience may also hinder learning. Schooled adults may have preconceptions about what constitutes good pedagogy that do not match new contexts, and their assumptions about orthography or written discourse may interfere with second language literacy (Hansen, 2009).

As for adults with no schooling or print literacy, for most of human history people have learned languages orally. Speakers of many languages

neither read nor write them, and multilingualism is the norm. Only 200 of the world's 6,000 languages are national languages with state supported education and extensive bodies of written text. Yet little research exists on adult second language learners who are preliterate (without extant first language written forms), non-literate (without text literacy) or semi-literate (without functional literacy). These adults have resources that support language learning: they may already be bilingual, be familiar with various oral genres or have social practices that facilitate language learning (Bigelow and Schwartz, 2010). But recent studies suggest that these adults struggle to learn to read for the first time in a second language. The skills of those with less than fourth grade reading levels may not transfer (August, 2006) and few achieve functional literacy in the short run (Kurvers et al., 2009). They appear to process oral input differently than advanced readers (Tarone et al., 2009); on oral tasks that focus on meaning, their performance may be equal to those of their literate counterparts, but they perform significantly worse on tasks that focus on forms such as phonemes, syllables or words (Tarone et al., 2009); and they have difficulty recognizing word boundaries (Kurvers et al., 2006). Many questions remain about how best to teach low-educated adult language learners.

### Immigrant language learners

Immigrant language learners have different motives and experiences than academic learners, and their exposure to the target language is limited neither to classrooms nor to standard varieties. Much of what we know about second language acquisition comes from research on foreign language learners and children; little is known about naturalistic acquisition, i.e. outside of school, where the social context of learning varies to a much greater extent than for academic learners and where language learning and use are indistinguishable. Coming from all class backgrounds, many immigrants start their new lives in immigrant 'enclaves', or working with other immigrants (Portes, 1995). New technologies allow them to communicate cheaply, extensively and often with their home countries, reinforcing transnational ties and blurring boundaries (Levitt, 2001).

While some gradually acculturate, others experience legal and social barriers to their incorporation that affect their motivation or 'investment' in the target language and culture (Noels and Giles, 2009). They may have limited access to native speakers or academic literacies. They may enter formal second language instruction years after immigrating, already speaking lingua franca and basic varieties that contrast the standard variety of language programmes.

**See also:** Acculturation; Adult language learning; Age factors; Attitudes and language learning; Learning styles; Migrant and heritage languages; Universal grammar; Untutored language acquisition

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## African languages

Interest in learning and teaching African languages outside Africa predates the colonisation of the continent, as shown by early attempts to record some of their aspects. A conference in Berlin in 1884–85 marked the beginning of active colonisation including missionary activity. Books on African languages showed a greater appreciation for the intricacies of the structure of those languages. In Africa, European powers increasingly involved native Africans in missionary and governmental activities. Pedagogical grammars were used to learn and teach African languages, particularly in the British and Belgian colonies.

During the Cold War and its aftermath, Africa offered an attractive set of colonies, and later, a group of independent countries, to be wooed by the West and the East. Citizens of Cold War powers went to Africa to assist the emerging nations. As these citizens learned African languages, their governments provided support for such endeavours. Linguists intensified their efforts into understanding, describing, analysing, and classifying various African languages.

In the early 1960s, the audio-lingual and audio-visual methods were used to teach African languages. Major strides in research on second language acquisition were made in the 1970s and 1980s. The 1990s saw an expansion into computer generated interactive multi-media technology. The target in the study of African languages is now the acquisition of communicative and performance competency and proficiency, and an efficient education for all.

Since the independence years of the 1960s, many African countries progressively have improved their educational systems by carrying out reforms that include a greater use of African languages both as subject and medium of instruction. The bi/multilingual educational system based on native African languages is the core of most recent research and experimentations in Africa.

### Earliest works on/in African languages

Muslim scholars used Arabic to produce the earliest known written records of African languages

between the tenth and twelfth centuries. During the fifteenth century, as the Portuguese explored an ocean route to India, their contacts with Africa led to the first European record of Karanga, a Bantu language, in 1506. In 1624, *Doutrina Christaa*, a 134-page Roman Catholic catechism attributed to Matheus Cardoso, became the first book in an African language because although the book was written in Portuguese, it contained an interlinear translation into Kongo. The first known grammar of an African language is the 98-page grammar of Kongo written by the Italian Giacinto Brusciotto in 1659. The title of this book is *Regulae Quaedam pro Difficillimi Congensium Idiomatis Faciliori Captu ad Grammaticae Norman Redactae*. Several other European publications on different African languages preceded, and followed, this first grammar book (Sebeok, 1971: 1). The fifteenth-century Portuguese exploration of Africa and the subsequent European interest in the continent culminated in the 1884–85 Berlin conference that partitioned the continent into several European possessions. The solidification of colonial administration was accompanied by an intensification of missionary activities. This led to a quest for orthographies to be used in translating the Bible and other scriptures into indigenous African languages.

Thomas Mofolo (1876–1948) was the first African novelist to publish in an African language, i.e. Sesotho, his mother tongue. His best known novel, *Chaka* (1925), has been translated into many languages, including English, French, German, Hindi and Afrikaans.

### Learners of African languages

It is important to remember that the majority of the populations of the continent are native speakers of African languages. So, the pertinent question here is who learns African languages when they are formally taught whether outside or inside Africa? Learners of African languages may be categorised into five main groups: (1) academic, (2) professionally driven, (3) neo-cultural, (4) illiterate adults, (5) school children.

*Academic learners:* These learners are primarily associated with institutions of higher learning. Some institutions outside Africa require students to

take a certain number of hours in a foreign language prior to graduation. Some non-African academic learners simply enjoy learning an African language without using it for an academic programme. In quite a few African countries (e.g. Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Morocco) scholars and students are carrying out research on African languages and therefore get to know them better. African scholars and ICT experts are intensifying their efforts to localise software in African languages in collaboration with universities.

*Professionally driven learners:* Such learners study an African language to assist them in their professions (academic, governmental, religious, etc.) in an African country. Professionally driven learners may have developed an interest in an African language as academic learners. They are mostly non-Africans.

*Neo-cultural learners:* Neo-cultural learners are those who have at least one African immigrant parent, or who are themselves African immigrants. As Africans migrate to other continents, transplanted African ethnic communities have sprung up in cities outside Africa. In an effort to maintain aspects of their culture, such communities encourage their offspring to learn their ethnic or national language. Adults who feel that they are forgetting their homeland languages also make efforts to learn them.

*Illiterate adults:* This category of learners is the target of generations of literacy programmes carried out throughout Africa by missionaries, governmental institutions and NGOs, backed by international organizations.

*School children:* In their effort to reform their educational systems, most African countries have gradually accepted that bi/multilingual education based on native languages and additive models gives the best results in all respects. Hence, though local situations, models and methods vary from one country to another, almost all the educational reform programmes integrate the African languages as subject, **medium of instruction** or both, at least in the first years of primary school.

## Languages taught

Among the many African languages *regularly* taught in institutions of higher learning outside Africa are:

Amharic, Bambara, Fulfulde, Hausa, Lingala, Shona, Somali, Swahili, Twi, Wolof, Xhosa, Yoruba, and Zulu. One or more of these may be taught by one institution. Instruction at institutions is available at the beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. Languages are taught by: (1) fluent **native speakers**; or (2) non-native speakers who have acquired native speaker, or near native speaker, fluency; or (3) limited fluency instructors, who know the structure of the language. If a fluent native speaker is available, such a person may assist the limited fluency instructor by handling speaking proficiency. This third group of instructors, understandably, has dominated instruction in African languages outside Africa.

Inside Africa, there is a general trend to teach most if not all of the national languages of a given country. In some countries national languages are defined in a limited official list of languages (e.g. 10 in Niger, 8 in Senegal, 13 in Mali, 11 in South Africa, 4 in the Democratic Republic of The Congo). In other countries, all the indigenous languages are considered as national (e.g. Togo, Ghana, Benin). A few countries (e.g. Madagascar, Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Central African Republic) have one native national language spoken throughout the country's territory. National languages are the first category of African languages to be taught and learned on a regular basis whenever a local language policy is implemented.

Many of the major languages of Africa are vehicular cross-boarder (VCB) languages, covering several countries in a given area. Recent research carried out by the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN) has identified forty-one widespread VCB African languages (Diki-Kidiri and Alidou, 2009: 10), out of which the following twelve are prioritized for linguistic cooperation between African states (ACALAN, 2009: 9): Modern Standard Arabic and Berber (North Africa), Fulfulde, Mandeng and Hausa (West Africa), Kiswahili, Somali and Malagasy (East Africa), Chichewa and Setswana (Southern Africa), Lingala and Beti-Fang (Central Africa).

## Language materials

Computer based interactive multi-media materials now point to the trend in the development of

instructional materials for African languages. Efforts are being made to produce Africa-oriented 'clip art' for language instruction. Content of materials is being redesigned. Plans are being made for distance learning. This trend will enable language instruction materials to be more easily accessible anywhere in the world. The new emphasis is on the acquisition of speaking, listening, reading, and writing proficiency. The aim is to empower the learner to acquire native or near native competency and proficiency. Learners are assessed on three proficiency levels: novice, intermediate and advanced, each level involving different degrees of proficiency. Appropriate assessment tools are being devised to evaluate learner proficiency. Hard copy based instructional materials still dominate the market in spite of the shift to electronic media, particularly in Africa where the shift to multilingual education systems based on national languages entails a huge production of quality school books to cater for the new pedagogical approaches. However, it is important to mention that several African universities, private societies and ICT networks (e.g. African Network for Localization (ANLOC); Pan-African Localization (PAL)) are localising software and carrying out advanced research in African languages human-machine technology. The immediate application fields of this research are translation and language teaching and learning.

### **Institutions offering African languages**

Outside Africa, the US based African Language Teachers Association (ALTA – <http://altaonweb.org/>) plays a leadership role in the USA in teaching and learning African languages. ALTA has five Language Task Forces for: Yoruba, Swahili, Hausa, South African languages and West African languages. ALTA organises annual conferences on African language teaching, and workshops for language teachers.

The US Federal Department of Education, through its Title VI programmes, has designated some institutions as National Resource Centres (NRCs) and Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship Programmes. These institutions, about twenty-two universities, receive

competitive three-year renewable grants. They award post bachelor degree fellowships to support the study of various African languages, and they serve as the focus of the bulk of African language instruction in the US.

The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London has played a pioneering role in teaching African languages. Among other institutions that teach African languages are: the University of Oslo; the NTNU–University of Trondheim, Norway; the Norwegian Aid Agency (NORAD); Cambridge University; Goteborg University, Sweden; Uppsala University, Sweden; the Institut National de Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO) in Paris; the Langage, Langues et Cultures d'Afrique Noire (LLACAN) in Villejuif, France; the Instituto Universitario Orientale, Italy; Warsaw University; McGill University, Canada; and Leiden University, the Netherlands. Several German institutions also teach African languages. Prominent among these are the universities of Hamburg, Frankfurt, Cologne, Bayreuth, Leipzig, the Humboldt University in Berlin, and the University of Mainz. The German Foundation for International Development and Co-operation (DSE) at Bad Honnef also offers short-term intensive courses in African languages. The Osaka University of Foreign Languages at Kyoto, Japan also offers courses, as do Australia's Sydney University Language Centre, and Melbourne University.

In Africa, many institutions are involved in teaching African languages either within the framework of literacy programmes for adults or as part of reforms in educational systems. In countries like Tanzania, Kenya or Ethiopia where one single national language (i.e. Kiswahili or Amharic for the latter) is widely and intensively used, it is taught in nearly every institution of the country from primary schools to universities, even if the country practises a multilingualism policy. Several universities throughout the continent offer courses in local African languages, for example Addis-Ababa University (Ethiopia), the University of Dar-es-Salam (Tanzania), University Cheikh Anta Diop (Senegal), the University of Ghana, the Bureau of Ghanaian Languages (Ghana), the University of Ibadan (Nigeria), several universities in South Africa (e.g. the University of South Africa

(UNISA) in Pretoria, the University of Pretoria, and the University of Cape Town. Moreover, each of the eleven South African national languages has a National Language Board (NLB) and these are supervised by the Pan South-African Language Board (PanSALB). In Morocco, the Institut Royal de la Culture Amazighe (IRCAM) is dedicated to the promotion and teaching of Berber language and culture. In most African countries there is at least one institution of applied linguistics that carries out research on African languages and another one that specialises in educational research and applications.

**See also:** Bilingual education; Migrant and heritage language

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## Age factors

It is popularly believed that the age at which an individual begins to be exposed to a language has a determining influence on how quickly and/or efficiently the **acquisition**/learning (the terms will be used interchangeably here) of that language proceeds. A very widespread assumption is that the earlier learning begins the more successful it will be. This idea has been extensively explored within the language sciences within the context of discussion of the critical age or critical period hypothesis, which in its strong form posits that unless language acquisition gets under way within a particular maturational phase (often thought of as ending around puberty) it will never take place. As far as L2 development is concerned, the claim made by many Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers is that after a certain maturational point the beginning L2 learner is (i) no longer capable of attaining to native-like levels of proficiency, (ii) and/or needs to expend more conscious effort than in earlier second language acquisition, (iii) and/or makes use of different mechanisms from those deployed in L2 acquisition during childhood; in any case, the suggestion is that beyond a particular maturational stage he/she (iv) exhibits a sharp decline in L2 learning potential (different in nature from the more gradual age-related declines in general learning capacity).

There is widespread acceptance among language acquisition researchers that there are age-related factors in language development, although the strong version of the critical period hypothesis is treated more sceptically. One indicator of age playing a role is the way in which the major 'milestones' of normal L1 development appear to follow a maturational timetable (cooing beginning between 1 and 4 months, 1-word utterances around 12 months and 2-word utterances between 18 and 24 months, etc. – see Singleton and Ryan, 2004: ch. 2). Another body of pertinent evidence comes from studies of **sign language** acquisition. The profoundly deaf are frequently deprived of access to an L1 in early childhood because, on the one hand, they are cut off from auditory stimuli and, on the other, owing to anti-sign language prejudice, they are often not provided with opportunities to learn sign language until later in life. Research suggests that individuals who begin to acquire a sign language in their childhood show marked advantages in terms of control of syntax over those who start learning sign language in adulthood (see, e.g., Emmory, 2002). To be noted is that, even if some deficits are indeed observable, sign language does not completely fail to develop if begun after a given maturational point, but is typically acquired to a functional level. It is also arguable that deprivation of language input during the phase in a child's life when cognitive development is at its most intense is likely to have general psychological/cognitive effects (cf. e.g. Woolfe et al., 2002), and that it may be these general effects that are reflected in later sign language development.

With regard to L2 acquisition, the balance of evidence still favours Krashen et al.'s (1979) reading of the research evidence. According to Krashen et al., in situations of 'naturalistic' exposure in the initial stages of learning older **beginners** tend to outperform their juniors – at least in some respects – but, in terms of long-term outcomes, generally speaking, the earlier exposure to the L2 gets under way the better. The critical period concept in relation to L2 acquisition (see above) is, however, undermined (see, e.g., Singleton and Leśniewska, 2009) (i) by evidence of later L2 acquirers' attaining to native-like levels of performance; (ii) by indications that conscious, deliberate

input enhancement is not always strictly essential for very high attainment in later acquirers; (iii) by the absence of a conclusive demonstration that there are qualitative differences in the mechanisms used by younger and older L2 acquirers; and (iv) by the ongoing debate regarding the purported abruptness of any age-related decline, which many researchers interpret, in fact, as linear and continuous.

As far as instructed L2 learning is concerned, the consistent finding (see, e.g., Muñoz, 2008) is that learners exposed to an L2 early in their schooling, who then at secondary level are assessed alongside later beginners, are not found to maintain an advantage for more than a modest period over these latter. The apparent discrepancy between such evidence and the naturalistic evidence has been in the past explained in terms of the de-motivating effect on children who have had some early experience of an L2 of being put into a class where most pupils are starting from scratch, and also in terms of the vast differences in exposure time between naturalistic and instructed learning (see, e.g., Singleton and Ryan, 2004: 198ff.). Muñoz (2006), however, suggests, on the basis of a long-term study of younger and older formally instructed L2 learners, that younger learners may have a fundamentally different (disadvantaging) cognitive relationship with classroom L2 learning as compared with adolescents and adults.

Whereas in recent years the question of age and language acquisition has been approached with a high degree of empirical rigour, discussion of this matter in the past was based largely on anecdote and assumption. For instance, the psychologist Tomb (1925) refers to hearing English children (in the days of the British Raj) fluently conversing in English, Bengali, Santali and Hindustani, while their parents barely had enough Hindustani to issue instructions to the servants. Science appeared to loom larger in the 1950s, when the neurologist Penfield took an interest in the discussion (Penfield and Roberts, 1959). However, in fact, Penfield's advocacy of early L2 instruction owed much more to his personal experience of bringing up his own children than to his work as a scientist (see Dechert, 1995). Even the neurolinguist Lenneberg based part of his contribution to the age debate on

folk wisdom rather than evidence. For Lenneberg the critical period was a by-product of the lateralisation process, by which one hemisphere of the brain (usually the left) was thought to become specialised for language functions, and which Lenneberg posited as ending at puberty. One of his arguments in this connection (1967: 176) was that after puberty L2 learning required ‘labored effort’ and foreign accents could not be ‘overcome easily’ – a claim for which he offered no hard evidence whatsoever.

To return to current research and thinking in this area, while age-related factors are widely acknowledged to play a role in language acquisition, the notion of absolute maturational constraints is increasingly put under scrutiny. One problem for this notion, as we have seen, is that some late L2 acquirers reach comparably high levels of proficiency in their target language to very young acquirers. Another is that there is no agreement about the precise endpoint or endpoints of a critical period or language acquisition. Estimates range from the first few months of age to adolescence and beyond; nor is there any real consensus on how one might explain the precise nature of such maturational constraints, with different researchers proposing different possibilities (cf., Singleton, 2005). A further question is whether the crucial factor influencing L2 attainment is actually maturation as such or whether concomitants of younger age conditions such as those relating to quality of context of exposure and quantity of input are not the really important determinants (cf., e.g., Moyer, 2009).

Clearly the age issue is not something which is of academic interest only. It is a major element in the debate about the point at which L2 programmes should be introduced into formal education. However, it is important to emphasise in this connection that the relevance of the age factor in instructional settings has been much debated (see, e.g., above, Muñoz’s, 2006 comments). After all, the early introduction of mathematics in schools depends not on any notion of a critical period for numeracy but rather on the general idea that this is such an important area that it needs to be broached as soon as possible. On the other hand, the question of when an L2 component should begin to figure in

the curriculum obviously cannot be divorced from that of the availability of resources (suitably qualified personnel, appropriate materials, etc.).

**See also:** Acquisition and teaching; Gender and language learning; Planning for foreign language teaching; Psychology; Second language acquisition theories

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## AILA

AILA is the acronym for Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée or International Association of Applied Linguistics.

AILA is an international federation of national or regional associations of applied linguistics with a current membership of more than 8,000 individuals through its member associations. The objectives of the association are to promote research and teaching dealing with all fields of applied linguistics, to disseminate the results of this research, and to promote international and interdisciplinary co-operation in these fields. In order to attain these objectives, the association does the following:

- holds a triennial world congress;
- establishes and supports Research Networks (ReNs);
- promotes the dissemination of scientific information by a variety of means, including its website

and various publications (a scholarly journal, a book series and a newsletter);

- collaborates with other organizations with related objectives and goals;
- makes available Solidarity Awards to support the attendance of academics from developing countries at the World Congress.

AILA was founded in 1964 at an international colloquium on applied linguistics at the University of Nancy, France. This decision was the result of two years of preparatory work and discussion, with the financial support of the Council of Europe.

AILA is a non-governmental organization having FCR (Formal Consultative Relations) with UNESCO.

### Website

[www.aila.info](http://www.aila.info)

## ALA – Association for Language Awareness

The Association for Language Awareness (ALA) was established in 1992, at the same time as the journal *Language Awareness* was launched at the First International Conference on Language Awareness at the University of Wales–Bangor. International conferences are held biennially.

ALA has a worldwide membership and aims at supporting and promoting activities across the whole breadth of language awareness, in any country. Language awareness research and practice is conducted in a wide range of fields. There is a focus on, for example, cultural awareness, multilingualism, mother tongue learning, foreign language learning and teaching, learning of an additional, second, third, etc. language, teacher education, language use in professional settings and in the workplace (such as in health or business) as well as language awareness in the community and in political contexts. Language awareness research and practice targets a variety of levels, for example primary, secondary and tertiary education, professional training and practice, community education and public programmes; and with objectives

in different domains, for example effects on language performance, on attitudes to language, or on language policy. Research includes a multi-perspective approach (Finkbeiner, 2009) and other alternatives to a binary stance or method (e.g. Herdina and Jessner, 2002).

ALA pursues its goals in a variety of ways: for example, by collecting and disseminating information on language awareness initiatives, promoting research into language awareness (Svalberg, 2007), and arranging international conferences and meetings for practitioners, theorists, and those with interests in language awareness.

**See also:** Hawkins; Language awareness

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## Alliance française

The *Alliance française* is the oldest French secular organisation whose purpose is to 'disseminate the French language in the colonies and abroad'. It was created in 1883 at a time of colonial expansionism, international competition and patriotic militarism, and was a response to several contemporary needs: that of supporting the influence of French language and civilisation outside France; that of re-establishing international image of France which had been weakened by its defeat by Prussia in 1870; and that of being the secular and ecumenical

counter-balance to the networks of missionaries existing outside France.

The *Alliance française* has existed since its foundation as an association because of its concern to remain independent from official and governmental organisations. Committees created in France and abroad recruit volunteers such as people influential in the economic, literary, publishing or diplomatic spheres. Outside France, each *Alliance* is anchored in the structures of the host country. However, the *Alliance* has gradually formalised its relationships with the French state. It was present in the French pavilion at the universal exhibitions around the turn of the twentieth century. It gradually increased contacts with the ministries for the colonies and foreign affairs, and with various French presidents, and presidents of the current Fifth Republic are honorary presidents of the *Alliance*.

The educational activities of the *Alliance* began in 1894 with the creation of language courses designed for foreign teachers of French, followed by an *Ecole Supérieure de Langue Française* in 1911, by the introduction of courses in French conversation, by the dispatching of lecturers across the world, and then by the founding in Paris of an *Ecole Pratique* which offered courses for foreigners from 1919. Exhibitions, journals and international conferences followed and reinforced the initial developments which were based on the concept of the universality of French language and thought. The two world wars of 1914–18 and 1939–45 forced the *Alliance* to reduce its activities, but were also the starting point for new work once over. The *Alliance* developed its own textbook for teaching French, which became familiar to thousands of learners throughout the world under the name of its author (Gaston) Mauger and by its red and blue cover.

The *Alliance française* is currently represented by 1,016 *Alliances* across 135 countries which represent approximately 490,000 participating students. It is particularly strong in Europe (354 *Alliances*), Latin America (274 *Alliances*), Asia and Oceania (114,000 students) and Africa (83,000 students). Teachers are recruited in two different ways. First, 12,000 teachers are locally recruited and paid directly, at local rates, from individual



*Alliance* budgets. Second, 230 directors are generally recruited by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This network is backed by a charitable foundation that works towards the fair governance of the *Alliances* and provides them with a legal and moral code, assists with the creation of new *Alliances* and offers assistance with staff development.

**See also:** French

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## Alternation hypothesis

A variant of **contrastive analysis** specifically geared to making testable predictions about orders of **acquisition** (cf. **developmental sequence**), elaborated by Jansen, Lalleman and Muysken (1981). The hypothesis, generally stated, is that when the language to be learned contains two (or more) structural possibilities, and the learner's L1 contains but one equivalent possibility, then this latter possibility is acquired first in the L2. The prediction was tested by a **cross-sectional, cross-linguistic** approach, of which the following is a simplified account. These researchers compare word order phenomena in the utterances of Turkish and Moroccan learners of Dutch, observing that, in Dutch, main verbs may 'alternate', occurring in the second or final position of the sentence, whereas Turkish is a verb-final language and Moroccan a verb-second language. The prediction is, then, that learners will initially analyse the Dutch input for – and find – the structural possibility of their own

language, and overgeneralise it. Jansen et al. looked at groups of learners of different proficiency levels and found that the **beginners** indeed overgeneralised as predicted, and that the more proficient the learner, the more the other structural possibility was used. Such a cross-linguistic methodology allows greater precision in characterising **transfer** effects.

**See also:** Untutored language acquisition

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MARZENA WATOREK

CLIVE PERDUE

## American Army Method

The Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) or 'Army Method' was developed after the entry of the USA into World War Two and represented a significant shift in foreign language teaching and learning in America. Aimed at producing, with a degree of urgency, skilled interpreters and speakers, the programme moved away from the prevailing consensus in foreign language teaching methodology in the USA, which was largely oriented towards **reading** skills. This method, although relatively short-lived, contributed to the development of **audiolingualism** which, by the mid-fifties, had become the main American approach to teaching English as a Second Language.

Until the war, foreign language teaching in the USA had set itself the fairly limited 'but more realistic goal of establishing a reading knowledge of the foreign language only' (Wilkins, 1990: 523). The influential Coleman Report of 1929 had concluded that this was the way forward for US foreign language teaching, and it was the context up until the war. Richards and Rodgers state that the reading-based approach 'emphasized teaching

the comprehension of texts' (1986: 44). **Vocabulary** lists were introduced and some discussion of foreign language texts took place in English, with some stress on silent reading but very little on conversation.

American language teaching methodology was fairly traditional, according to Wilkins (1990: 524), and comparatively underdeveloped when compared to those being explored by applied linguists in Britain and Europe. Linguists there had already begun to look at language content more systematically with attempts to standardise vocabulary and **grammar** items and grade key stages in foreign language learning. There was not the same emphasis on producing skilled readers who were not very competent at actually speaking the target language.

The deficiencies became apparent when the US entered the war and the authorities saw the pressing need for fluent speakers of Japanese, **German** and the languages of occupied countries, especially in East Asia. Interpreters and translators in various government departments were urgently required who could do more than comprehend set texts. Rapid and systematic training was required to produce personnel with all the desired language abilities and **skills**. This new situation led to the US government commissioning linguists at several universities to develop a foreign language programme suitable for military personnel.

Those involved in developing the new scheme looked for alternatives to the prevailing reading-based methods. They found one in the language training of anthropologists, linguists and other field-researchers intending to study cultures where the languages were often not written, such as Native American. As there were usually no **text-books** in such cases, a different approach was taken to facilitate the required mastery of the languages of the target groups. Linguists such as **Bloomfield** at Yale had been developing such programmes, and their methods were considered to possess the relevant requirements and outcomes.

This field-research preparation language training was sometimes referred to as the 'informant method' (Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 45), as it involved the use of a **native speaker** (the informant). This person would provide phrases, vocabulary and

sentences for imitation by the learners. Also involved in the training would be a linguist, not necessarily a native speaker, whose role was to elicit the basic structure of the language from the informant. They would be trained in these skills rather than the language and would supervise the drilling of the given phrases and sentences. The linguist and students together would participate in guided conversation with the native speaker and thus would learn the language as well as gain an understanding of basic rules of grammar, which were implicitly rather than explicitly introduced. Usually there were fifteen hours of drill with the 'informant', as well as private study of twenty to thirty hours, assisted by the linguist and spread over two to three six-week sessions.

Adoption of this field training method resulted in the ASTP in 1942, and by early 1943 fifty-five universities were involved in it (Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 44). It was a very intensive method, which together with the wartime context and the high **motivation** level of the learners accounts for much of its success. The students had specific goals linked not only to linguistic mastery but to assisting the war effort by carrying out military-related jobs and tasks. They studied for 10 hours a day, six days a week, as did the linguists and anthropologists in the model upon which the ASTP was founded. The drilling was also intensive, with mostly oral work, and there was 'only a minimum of explicit grammar' (Wilkins, 1990: 524). The Army usually chose mature students for the programme and teaching was in small classes, which also added to the high levels of success.

The programme lasted until the end of the war and was much discussed during this time as well as in the subsequent decade. Its novelty and high rates of success led to the consideration of its suitability for ordinary foreign language courses in the post-war situation. It failed to be widely adopted, however, for a number of reasons.

One reason was its lack of a well-developed methodological basis. Its success, as previously stated, was largely due to its intensity and the high level of motivation of the students. The linguists who helped develop the programme, secondly, were not particularly interested in language teaching *per se*,

according to Richards and Rodgers (1986: 45). There was not much theoretical interest in this method to develop and, once the war was over, linguistic interest in the 'Army Method' declined. Its lasting impact, however, lies in its contribution to the development of an intensive, oral-based approach in contrast to earlier predominantly reading-based methods. The results helped to persuade a number of leading American linguists who were interested in language teaching and learning to shift attention to this type of method and develop suitable theoretical and methodological foundations which were lacking in the 'Army Method'.

One linguist in particular to be influenced by the method was Fries (1945), and his proposals for EFL teaching had widespread impact on the teaching of languages in the USA and elsewhere (Wilkins, 1990: 525). The ideas of Fries were related to the intensity of the ASTP method and the notion that drilling with the spoken language was viewed as more important than the written. This led to the popularity of the audiolingual method of the 1960s.

The Army Method served its purpose during the war years and assisted the important shift from a fairly limited, reading-based approach to the audiolingual method.

**See also:** Audiolingual method; Behaviourism; Bloomfield; History: after 1945; Structural linguistics

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RUTH CHERRINGTON

## Anthropology

Anthropology refers to a domain which was constituted as a scientific discipline in the nineteenth century in the West. It responds to the need every society has to know the culture or cultures of which it is composed and to know those which are foreign to it. In this sense, anthropology occupies a border position between two or more cultures. Although it takes a global perspective by sometimes seeing its task as bringing together all the disciplines in the study of man, its least controversial findings are those established on the basis of the study of primitive or rural societies. In the European context this latter domain is sometimes termed ethnology.

## Anthropology and languages

Anthropology adopts a multi-disciplinary perspective and is related to the following domains: economics, history, politics, religion and linguistics. Despite the diversity of these, there are methodological assumptions in common which underpin the field of study of anthropology and distinguish the anthropological approach from the sociological. Anthropology prefers restricted social units which are accessible to direct observation, and which are studied by qualitative analysis. This involves the anthropologist at a personal level and requires of them the ability to overcome the effects of their own subjectivity. By explaining the functions of values which have been acquired implicitly by the individual in a given society, the anthropologist shows that behaviours which are experienced empirically as natural are not universal but the product of cultural learning. They are thus part of the identity of a community.

Countries which had a policy of foreign conquests (the colonies of Ancient Greece, the Great Discoveries of the sixteenth century, colonialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries) created the foundations for the confrontation of different cultures, on the basis of military and economic interests and spheres of cultural influence. The Other was seen from the double perspective of threat and wonder (Greenblatt, 1991). The need to have access to the language of the foreigner was immediately recognised as being indispensable for

military knowledge of the terrain, and for commercial exchange, to overcome the limitations of the simple language of gesture and exchange. Interpreters, the conquerors who lived with indigenous women, or these women themselves, were the first to experience the multiple functions of the linguistic and cultural intermediary, as was for example the case of Malinche, also called Doña Marina, the mistress of the Spanish conqueror Cortes, described by Diaz del Castillo in the sixteenth century.

In the face of linguistic difference in the field, anthropologists overcome their lack of language and check their data by using intermediaries who serve as guides, informants or interpreters (or *drogmans*), and ascertain the correctness of their assertions. (For an account of daily practices in the field, see the New Guinea journal of Malinowski which he kept between from 1914 to 1915 and again from 1917 to 1918, and the work of his pupil Firth.) Anthropologists thus developed skills focused on the relationship to the other which can compensate for what, seen from a language teaching perspective, seems to be a linguistic handicap. In the course of the twentieth century it has been recognised that the competence of the anthropologist includes mastery of the language, but that this competence is not sufficient to guarantee the scientific value of their work. The skills of anthropologists do not consist only in the ability to suppress their subjectivity, which is inevitable, but also to recognise its existence, and to overcome the effects of exoticism, by becoming involved in the daily life of the society being observed. The complexity of the relationships between anthropologists and their field, in the continuum between the two poles of involvement and distancing, can be described as a paradox (Clifford, 1988) and the basis for the process of taking an objective view.

For those countries which during the nineteenth century developed a policy of disseminating their language abroad, linked to a policy of colonisation (Britain, Germany, Russia and the USSR, France, Italy, etc.), the relationships between anthropology and education are influenced above all by the national interest of the colonisers. The dissemination of French and German cultures beyond their national frontiers reflects two different interpretations of

national feeling, influenced by the three wars between these two countries in less than 100 years (1870, 1914–19, 1939–45). German *Kulturkunde* incorporated the particularity of the German spirit (Elias, 1969) whereas the dissemination of the French language was linked to the dissemination of the *civilisation française*, the bearer of universal values. These cultural models created a relationship of political, economic and cultural dependency in the countries where the language was disseminated.

**Linguistic imperialism** is linked with cultural imperialism (Phillipson, 1992).

By the end of the twentieth century, the recognition of cultural and linguistic diversity was one of the points on which there was agreement between the claims made on behalf of the findings of anthropology and those made in the name of politics. The concept of **human rights**, which is fundamental to a pluralist vision of democracy and concerned with minorities and the respect for cultural identity, plays a mediating role between the human sciences and educational and political interests. The use of the term 'ethnic group' provides for a positive categorisation of cultural diversity and the development of an official policy of multiculturalism, linked to the defining of identity and national citizenship. This is what happened in the 1970s in the USA, Canada and Australia, which recognised the role of indigenous minorities ('First Nations' in North America, and Australia's Aborigines) in the definition of their national identity, although they did not recognise officially the linguistic pluralism which is its equivalent. The contrast between mother tongue and culture and foreign language and culture is not deemed to be relevant in this case. The fundamentals of multi-ethnic education in which reduction of prejudice, anti-racist education, cultural awareness, equality and equity of rights are relevant to language teaching, were institutionalised in the context of courses designated as multicultural.

These approaches, also evident in Europe, ensure continuity between a pluralist interpretation of citizenship, the national identity of each European country and the recognition of the multi-ethnic dimension of a society. One of the aims of the **Council of Europe**, stated in 1949, is to 'favour the recognition and valuing of European identity

whilst combating all kinds of intolerance'. The Treaty of the European Union (1992) uses for political purposes concepts borrowed from the field of anthropology, such as cultural values and heritage. The development of the European dimension in education is related directly to the learning and the dissemination of the languages of the EU member states. The language field is seen, at the level of the whole education system, as being appropriate for the diffusion of a message of tolerance.

### Anthropology and language learners

As it was developed from the study of societies called primitive, anthropology initially focused on a naturalist approach to humankind in particular based on the study of anatomical variation. This starting point, called physical anthropology and similar to the interests of archeology, aimed to classify populations in terms of biological, cultural and sociological factors, and to measure physical differences by anthropometric classification. Today the description of the influence of physical factors on social factors is only a marginal aspect of the discipline. These theories were invalidated scientifically, after the Second World War, by the recognition of symbolic systems, the attack on the reductive effects of cultural evolutionism based on a Western view of progress (Lévi-Strauss, 1958), but also politically by the political fallout of racial ideology, decolonisation, and the acceptance of humanist values by international organisations such as UNESCO and the Council of Europe. Anthropology rejected a unitary vision of the development of humanity, asserted the equality of cultures in the scientific approach to comparison, and contributed to the popularisation of its knowledge by attacking threats to identity and the ethnocentrism of prejudice towards foreigners. The implications of this for language teaching are important: the notion of the native, borrowed from anthropology and reused in the expression **native speaker**, neutralises the ambiguous and pejorative values contained in the term 'foreigner', especially when this notion was preceded by such notions as 'the barbarians', 'the bedeviled', 'the enemy' and 'the colonials'. However, the anthropologist relativises the ability

of the native to describe the culture to which they belong, giving them the status of informant, whereas in a traditional mode of thinking in language teaching, the native is generally an absolute model whom the foreigner is encouraged to follow.

In the context of the internationalisation of the economy, the requirements created by geographic mobility also make the debates and discussions in anthropology relevant to language teaching, in connection with expatriation and immigration. The issues of short- or medium-term residence abroad have arisen in different geographic contexts and structures according to the social categories involved. On the one hand there are the managerial staff who have to leave their own country in order to export the technological know-how of their company. On the other hand, there are the immigrant workers bringing their labour to richer countries than the ones where they were born. For example, as the United States' policy of economic expansion was established, work was developed to respond to the needs of the commercial world. This had to take into consideration the constraints of efficiency and economic viability whilst developing the skills of negotiation and persuasion of those sent abroad. It involved for example, the raising of awareness of the unconscious models which in every culture structures the concepts of time (Hall, 1959) and space (Hall, 1966), of cultural misunderstandings which trouble communication between interlocutors socialised into different cultures, and of the effects of the length of the period of residence abroad, in particular the concept of **culture shock**.

A quite different direction was taken in the 1970s in Europe with the beginning of a common European linguistic policy, focused on adult and child migrants who needed to be educated in their host country. The response to this in linguistic terms was accompanied by a critical analysis of the concept of **acculturation** which had direct implications for family structures, the transmission of inherited languages though family links, and the question of citizenship. For example, in France the terms 'integration', 'assimilation' and 'insertion' were used to designate the measures taken with respect to these groups, measures which devolved from the French conception of the universality of

values, whereas in Britain, the focus was on 'differentiation by class as opposed to differentiation by race' (Todd, 1994), and Germany preferred to maintain the identity of the ethnic groups it hosted, as the terms *Ausländer* (foreigner) or *Aussiedler* (migrant) imply, designating respectively immigrant and asylum-seeker.

Language teaching attempts to systematise the description of the difficulties arising from the movement from one culture to another by using the term **intercultural competence**, and is beginning to focus on the resolution of these difficulties. This term provides a common perspective on all those who are involved in the relationship between two languages: those who learn a language in which they have not been socialised, and those who belong to the culture whose language is being learnt. The creation of European mobility programmes creates a new area of interest, in particular with respect to exchanges of university and school students. The aim that every European should in the long run speak three languages of the European Union (European Commission, 1996), can be related to the globalisation of information, to flexibility in education and employment, and to the construction of a European identity.

Wherever such mobility exists, for example between North America and East Asian countries, it requires language teaching to recognise the reciprocity of identities and the valuing of linguistic and cultural pluralism. This means for example that in the context of a period of residence abroad, when they participate in new ways of life and become involved in a different education system, students should move beyond the status of a foreigner and not relate to the country as a tourist. Their position is comparable to that of the anthropologist.

### Anthropology and language teaching

The dissemination of anthropological knowledge in language teaching can be envisaged on two levels. On the one hand there is the question of the nature of the information about the culture whose language is being taught. On the other hand, there are the processes used in anthropology which are relevant to teaching.

In the first case there is an obvious use for work related to the anthropology of the body – studies of the perceptions of illness, health, ill-luck and death – and historical anthropology, which studies the evolution of mentalities in the form of a history of national emblems, of eating habits, of religious thought, of living conditions, of private life, of taste, hygiene, the family and sexuality. A second source of interest is the accounts of discoveries and voyages, autobiographies of explorers and migrants, and travel diaries. The quality of the anthropological information in these areas could now influence the direction of the language classroom. The **European Language Portfolio** is nowadays a starting point to make explicit the personal lived experience of otherness (Byram et al., 2009). But the purpose of this support is to further deepen the analysis of the unique experience of each individual.

There is a parallel and often complementary development linked to the ethnography of communication, which studies the social distribution of linguistic skills and the linguistic variation evident in different societies. Here, anthropology sensitises the teacher to the social diversity in any group of learners, to the variety of cultural practices which co-exist in any educational environment. It also contributes to the raising of learners' awareness of the complexity of a culture which initially they often see in a reductive way.

The transfer of methods from anthropology to language teaching can contribute to the modernisation of the foundations of the teaching of languages which were established in the middle of the twentieth century. The anthropologist's purpose is to develop a description of the way of life and the system of values of a given cultural community. It is also to systematise a research method based on an inside knowledge of the society arising from long-term contact with the community being studied and, second, on the principle of openness to the other which ensures the anthropologist's own independence of thought. The anthropologist's work is characterised by the collection of information on foreign cultural products and values, the comparison of this information with another cultural system, and the juxtaposition of the known and the unknown. There is, then, a

parallel between the anthropologist, the teacher and the learner.

Although teachers and learners are most often valued in terms of their linguistic competence, they nonetheless share with the anthropologist their position of being on the borders between several cultural systems. The social role of the teacher, like the anthropologist, is to offer a description of a foreign society which is free of prejudice, which takes into consideration cultural distance between the society being described and the one producing this description, and which is part of the process of understanding this distance. There are several theoretical models to underpin the process of comparison. First, use of the notion of the cultural bridge takes into account the issue of intercommunication between groups and the difficulties involved. Second, the analysis of mutual perceptions of two cultures in a specific domain – for example, the media or school textbooks – emphasises the possibility of changing these perceptions. Third, and more broadly, the study of images of the foreigner in different sections of a given society shows how the sense of proximity and distance between cultures depends on the way information is received, and on the international geopolitical context. Fourth, the analysis of practical situations of language teaching, where the focus is on issues of mobility rather than strictly educational objectives, is linked to the methodology of anthropology in so far as such analysis is concerned with relationships in the field and with confrontation with cultural otherness.

The debate on the relationships between anthropology and language teaching is now concentrated on the **assessment** of intercultural competence. If the concept of ‘intercultural competence’ is used in its singular form, it infers a monolithic approach; used in its plural form, it underlines its inherent complexity and extends the debate to its components. The other part of the debate is focused on progression in intercultural competences: Are they linked to linguistic competences (for example to the six levels of communicative competence described by the *Common European Framework of Reference* (Byram, 1997), or are they independent of linguistic competences and linked to personal experience (Zarate and Gohard-Radenkovic, 2005)? The

responses to these questions have important consequences in the language assessment market.

## Conclusion

In common parlance, the term ‘language barrier’ tends to be used indiscriminately to describe all the difficulties of communication with a foreign language and culture. Often, cultural difference is spontaneously interpreted in terms of human progress, in a linear and ethnocentric perspective, especially in a tourist context. When the findings of anthropology are transferred to the field of language teaching, they confirm the significance of the cultural dimension of language teaching by identifying the limitations of purely linguistic competence and performance in a foreign language. There are certain areas, otherwise marginalised by a strictly linguistic approach – non-verbal communication, for example – or certain kinds of competence, such as attitudinal competence, which can be based on this and acquire academic status. Contrary to the ideological discourses which idealise or reject the Other, the findings of anthropology offer a differentiated reading of difference, between universality and particularity (Geertz, 1973) and allow us to choose between several levels of interpretation – political, economic, historical, linguistic, educational – through which to approach a foreign culture. The link now established between language biography and intercultural experience invites teachers and learners to take into account the self, various forms of mobilities (transnational, social, etc.), and to view the learner as a social actor (Zarate et al., 2011).

**See also:** Area studies; Assessment and testing; Attitudes and language learning; *Civilisation*; Cultural awareness; Cultural studies; Culture shock; Exchanges; Linguistic imperialism; Stereotypes; Study abroad; Textbooks

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GENEVIÈVE ZARATE

## Applied linguistics

### Introduction

The role of applied linguistics as a source discipline for language teaching is not one that is easy to define. This is in part due to the fact that the term 'applied linguistics' has changed its meaning several times since it was first used in the 1940s as an academically respectable way of talking about language teaching theory. As a result of this, the relationship between applied linguists and language teachers has not been a stable one, and has undergone many changes.

### The emergence of 'applied linguistics'

The emergence of 'applied linguistics' as a formal discipline can largely be traced to the Second World War. There was at the time considerable interest in teaching languages quickly and effectively, especially as part of military training, and many professional linguists got involved in this work, both in the US and in the UK. Since many of these people had been involved in the development of structural linguistics in the 1930s, it was natural that they should attempt to use the insights that structural linguistics provided to inform the way they thought that languages should be taught. Linguists trained in structuralist techniques were able to produce good, usable descriptions of these languages, and were able to use these descriptions to make contrastive analyses of the target language and the learner's L1. These linguistic descriptions were soon linked together with training methods derived from behavioural psychology, and teaching aids made possible by the rapid development of

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sound recording technology. The combination proved to be very effective, and underlies much of the audio-lingual teaching methodology that emerged in the 1950s.

Of course, the combination of good linguistic descriptions, good teaching practice and exploitation of technological developments was not a new one: the best language teachers had been doing this long before the emergence of 'applied linguistics'. A good example of this would be the work of Harold **Palmer** (e.g. Palmer, 1922), who never described himself as an applied linguist, but published work which would certainly be classified under that heading today (cf. Bongers, 1947 for a full description of Palmer's work).

Sridhar (1993) suggests that the growth of applied linguistics as a formal discipline owes much to the desire of language teachers to upgrade their formal academic status by associating their work with linguistics, which was considered at the time to be the most rigorous, and most successful, of the social sciences.

Applied linguistics in the United States is particularly associated with Charles Ferguson, and the work of the Centre for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in Washington (cf. Ferguson, 1975). In the United Kingdom, the emerging discipline crystallised around a number of important figures, notably Pit Corder and Peter Strevens, who were influential in setting up university departments that specialised in 'applied linguistics'. In practice, these departments were mainly involved in advanced training for English language teachers, and, in particular, English language teachers working outside the UK. Corder's views on the relationship between applied linguists, linguists and language teachers are explicitly laid out in his book *Introducing Applied Linguistics* (Corder, 1973), which is probably the classic text of this school of thought. Corder believed that there was a clear hierarchy of responsibility between these three groups. Linguists produced descriptions of languages. The immediate consumer of these descriptions was the applied linguist, whose job was to mediate the work of the linguist, by producing pedagogical grammars. These pedagogical grammars were turned into textbooks and teaching materials, and eventually reached the teachers whose job it was to

actually teach the language to learners. Corder's model allowed for little, if any feedback from teachers to applied linguists, and minimal interaction between linguists and applied linguists: the information flowed only in one direction. 'The applied linguist is a consumer, or user, not a producer of theories' (Corder, 1973: 10). In practice, of course, this hierarchy was not as rigid as it may have been in theory. Many people worked both as linguists and applied linguists, many teachers moved into applied linguistics, and many people who thought of themselves as applied linguists also taught languages.

For many years, this relationship appears to have worked well, although there were inevitably tensions between linguists and applied linguists. Strevens refers to applied linguistics being 'tolerated' as long as it was narrowly interpreted as 'linguistic theory applied' (Strevens, 1992). In practice, this narrow definition was not closely followed, and 'applied linguistics', at least as taught in British universities, soon came to encompass a lot more than only the application of linguistic theory. A glance at the contents of the four volumes of the *Edinburgh Course in Applied Linguistics* (Allen and Corder, 1974, and Allen and Davies, 1977) reveals how wide the boundaries of the discipline would soon become. By this time, the scope of applied linguistics had come to include course design, practical phonetics and phonology, pedagogic grammar, error analysis, contrastive analysis, language testing, reading and writing, stylistics, and experimental methods, as well as broader applications of educational technology in the form of language laboratories, programmed learning techniques, and the use of audio-visual materials.

### A period of tension

Relationships between theoretical linguistics and applied linguistics became increasingly strained in the 1970s. At this time, linguistic theory, particularly the theories associated with the work of Noam **Chomsky** (e.g. Chomsky, 1965a) rapidly moved into a dominating position in academic linguistics. At first, these formal theories seemed to strengthen the position of applied linguistics. They were not

easy for lay readers to understand, and needed to be interpreted before they could be used for practical purposes. This seemed to reinforce Corder's idea of the applied linguist as mediator, and a number of pedagogical grammars based loosely on Chomskyan linguistics appeared. (e.g. Thomas, 1965) Chomsky himself, however, made it clear that he did not think his theories had anything to say about language teaching, and that he was 'rather sceptical about the significance, for the teaching of languages, of such insights and understandings as have been attained in linguistics and psychology' (Chomsky, 1965b). This made it increasingly difficult for applied linguists to argue that they were 'applying linguistics' in any obvious way. Gradually, theoretical linguistics became increasingly more formal, particularly after the development of Government and Binding Theory and Minimalist Theories of Syntax (cf. Radford, 1997). With these developments, it became ever more difficult to argue this position with conviction.

Paradoxically, the complexification of theoretical linguistics seems to have increased the importance of 'applied linguistics' as an academic discipline. As linguistics became increasingly closely identified with abstract syntactic theory, many researchers working in areas that lay outside this central field seem to have become disaffected, and applied linguistics seems to have provided a home for them. Many people who identified themselves as linguists were not primarily concerned with the formal tenets of linguistic descriptions. These people shared a common belief in language as communication and interaction, rather than language as formal system, and for a short time, applied linguistics served as a sort of refuge discipline, which provided a framework for these people to work in, and a set of shared assumptions about the social function of language. Sridhar (1993) calls this 'extended linguistics'. It was not uncommon at this time to find meetings of applied linguists discussing a much wider range of topics than would have been common during the earlier period. Sociolinguists, speech therapists, child language specialists, translators, discourse analysts, lexicographers, neurolinguists, as well as the traditional language teachers, would all have been considered active applied linguists at this time. When AILA, the

International Association for Applied Linguistics, decided to organise its work through a series of Scientific Commissions, all these subject areas were considered to be part of its formal remit.

As a result of this broadening of boundaries, applied linguistics was no longer based on a narrow view of language that built on Chomsky's ideas about linguistic competence, but on an increasingly broad view that focused on language as text and language as interaction, or, more generally, on the complexity of language, language use, language learning and teaching.

### Recent developments

Since the 1990s, applied linguistics has come to be used as an overarching umbrella term for a broad interdisciplinary field (Kramsch, 2000) that has considerably shifted away from its origins as 'linguistics applied' (Widdowson, 2000). General or theoretical linguistics were no longer considered sufficient to serve as core disciplines whose insights could simply be 'applied' to real world language problems. In a multilingual world, the problems applied linguists face are not merely linguistic in nature, but require consideration of psychological, educational, sociological, political, and cultural dimensions. The global spread of the English language, for example, makes it paramount for applied linguists to study English not only as a linguistic system that is used and taught worldwide, but also to focus on larger social, psychological, and cultural dimensions that enable applied linguists to understand and explore the politics of English as an international language and its impact on individual learners and discourse communities (e.g. Kachru, 1990).

In the 1990s, the growing complexity of objects of study and the relatively limited theoretical and methodological options available in mainstream applied linguistics were the subject of a series of debates on the nature and development of what 'applied linguistics' is and should or should not be. These self-reflexive debates not only indicated that applied linguistics had evolved into a mature academic discipline that turned critically towards its own history and purposes, but the debates were also symptomatic of a seismic shift towards more

interdisciplinarity in a field that had long been dominated by structuralist concepts of language and psycholinguistic concepts of **second language acquisition** (SLA). Instead of searching for one common research paradigm and one overarching theoretical model (Beretta, 1993; Long, 1993), it was suggested that applied linguists deploy a variety of perspectives and research approaches to language in order to better understand its real world use and its teaching and learning (Block, 1996). Similarly, the psycholinguistic focus of SLA was challenged on the basis of its largely context-free view of the learner, and the experimental research designs it employed to investigate learning. Instead of viewing the learner as a 'deficient communicator' and focusing on language learning as a phenomenon internal to the learner, it was argued that understanding the complex process of language learning requires a view of the learner as a person who communicates within socio-cultural contexts, and who is constantly engaged in meaning-making activities (Firth and Wagner, 1997).

As a result of these debates, applied linguistics has seen a marked shift towards socio-cultural perspectives (Lantolf and Thorne, 2006) and what has been referred to as the 'social turn' (Block, 2003). This has led to the inclusion of further theoretical approaches and perspectives, e.g., feminist theory (Norton, 2000), critical theory (Pennycook, 2001), cultural studies (Kramsch, 1998, 2009). With the advent of computer technology, applied linguistics saw further changes, both regarding linguistic analysis and its application in language learning environments (e.g. Blake, 2008). Since language lies at the core of much of today's real world and virtual world problems, the overarching discipline of applied linguistics provides a home for many new and timely perspectives and methods of inquiry.

## Conclusion

One of the most powerful indicators of the multifaceted nature of contemporary applied linguistics is the variety of contributions to the flagship journal of the British, American, and international associations of applied linguistics. Special issues of

*Applied Linguistics* since 2000 have been devoted to micro- and macro-analysis of language, social interaction and text in different societal domains (i.e. classrooms, workplaces, legal contexts and other environments that foreground the role of language in social life), emergentism and complexity theory, qualitative interviews in scholarly inquiry, etc. In light of the ever-broadening fields of language-related problems, the purpose and scope of applied linguistics have been, and will likely continue to be, expanded. On the one hand this has led to a less homogeneous disciplinary field. On the other, it is a vital sign of the importance, as well as the potential, of applied linguistics to: (1) contribute significantly to the exploration of the challenges posed by a multilingual world; (2) further understand and explore language(s); (3) investigate the social and cultural dimensions of language use as well as its teaching and learning; and last, but certainly not least, (4) mediate between individuals and their symbolic world(s). As such, applied linguistics continues to be a discipline that is of vital importance to language teaching and learning.

**See also:** American Army Method; Audio-lingual method; Corpus linguistics and language teaching; Identity and language learning; Linguistics; Pedagogical grammar; Second language acquisition theories; Structural linguistics

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## Aptitude for language learning

The concept of aptitude has been developed to explain differences among individuals in language learning. It is considered to be a capacity specific to language learning rather than a general ability to learn, although there may be some indirect links between the two, and it applies to both first and subsequent language learning. In foreign language learning, aptitude can be used as a means of predicting. However, the degree to which success can

be predicted on the basis of a measure of aptitude alone is limited, but not without significance.

The definition of language aptitude evolved slowly from the 1950s (Skehan, 2002), when work was first conducted by Carroll and Sapon to develop the **modern languages aptitude test**. Carroll defined aptitude in terms of an individual's ability to identify distinct sounds, to retain and associate them with symbols, 'phonemic coding ability'; their sensitivity to grammatical structures; their ability to learn items of a foreign language by rote; their ability to infer rules about a language from experience of the language. Since then further research has confirmed that aptitude has a number of sub-components (Skehan, 2002; Sparks et al., 2011) including phonological awareness and working memory. Skehan (1998) suggests that there are three components: auditory ability, similar to Carroll's phonemic coding ability; linguistic ability, combining Carroll's notions of grammatical sensitivity and ability to infer rules; and memory, further differentiated into what learners do to assimilate or code new material, how they store the memorised material in terms of patterns and generalisations, and how they retrieve material from memory.

If an individual's aptitude for language learning is assumed to be stable and a given which cannot be improved upon, the implications for pedagogy appear to be discouraging. If teaching cannot overcome low language learning aptitude, then teachers may feel that their efforts are not worthwhile. If research showed that the predictive success of measures of aptitude is high, teachers might feel justified, but since other factors are also important – notably measures of motivation – then teachers should not label learners solely in terms of aptitude.

Furthermore, the identification of sub-components of aptitude opens the possibility that learners are not equally apt in each component. Their aptitude can be described in terms of a profile of different abilities and this can be the basis for differentiated teaching – and methods which favour particular components (Erlam, 2005) – to cater for different components and different **learning styles** corresponding to them. Moreover, the definition of aptitude refers to cognitive abilities rather than **attitudes** and affective dimensions of learning, and it may be the case that aptitude measures can predict

achievement in cognitive language capacity rather than ability to communicate on an interpersonal level (cf. Cummins' 'basic interpersonal communications skills', and 'cognitive academic language proficiency' – **bics and calp**). Nor does language aptitude include reference to culture learning and its implications for developing **intercultural competence** as a basis for communication with people of other cultural identities. Such a capacity for interpersonal communication, which may be the **objective** of some language courses, will not necessarily be predictable by measures of language aptitude as presently constituted. The use of aptitude tests for selecting learners for courses should therefore be circumspect.

**See also:** Attitudes and language learning; Modern Language Aptitude Test; Motivation

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MICHAEL BYRAM

## Aptitude tests

Designed to capture an underlying ability to learn a language or acquire a skill, **aptitude** tests require

students to perform a number of tasks, each of which is designed to tap a specific ability or aptitude. The results of such tests are generally considered to predict a student's success or failure on a language learning programme and they can be used as screening instruments. More recently, aptitude tests are being used to diagnose language learning disabilities, to evaluate language learning programmes, and in second language acquisition research.

While research into what general language aptitude might entail is inconclusive, it is generally assumed to include the following abilities:

- the knowledge of words and verbal reasoning;
- a short-term memory for the way words sound and look;
- the ability to distinguish between sounds, associate them to their spelling and to remember these connections;
- the ability to recognise grammatical regularities.

An example of an aptitude test is the **modern language aptitude test** (MLAT) which comprises five audio-recorded **exercises** in either **English** or **French** and covers number learning, phonetic script, spelling clues, structural understanding of sentences and memorisation of new words in an exotic language. Further research on the MLAT has indicated that it is not possible to train test-takers to perform well on the test. Indeed, research into aptitude testing in general has revealed that language aptitude cannot be learned or trained.

**See also:** Assessment and testing

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## Arabic

Arabic has been taught in the Islamic world since the early centuries of Islam; the central impetus for both the development of Arabic **grammar** and the teaching of Arabic was the desire to preserve the purity of the language of the Qur'an following the Islamic conquests and the subsequent mixing of Arabs with other peoples. Arabic is currently taught as a university subject in most Western countries, and as a religious language throughout the Islamic world (Versteegh, 2006). This article covers the historical development of Arabic, phonology, script and grammar, **vocabulary**, **stylistics**, diglossia and trends in Arabic teaching.

### Historical development

The most widely held view among modern scholars is that in pre-Islamic Arabia there existed alongside a number of different tribal-based dialects a pan-Arabic *koiné* (cf. Holes, 2004: 9–18). This was used mainly for the composition of **poetry**, which had a central place in pre-Islamic culture. The *koiné* is believed to have differed from the dialects in a number of ways. The most striking of these were its retention of ancient Arabic case endings for nouns and adjectives and mood endings for verbs.

With the emergence of Islam, Qur'anic Arabic became the exemplar for formal written Arabic (hereafter referred to as Standard Arabic). The language of the Qur'an is essentially that of the poetic *koiné* with its case and mood endings. Throughout the Arab world, however, local dialects continued to develop, based largely on ancient Arabic dialects, and apparently lacking case and mood endings from the outset (Holes, 2004: 18–35).

During the Ottoman period, Standard Arabic underwent an eclipse, Turkish being used as the

language of administration and much non-religious culture in the Arab world. In the nineteenth century, however, Standard Arabic was revived. Today, it is the language of almost all formal communication – novels, poetry, formal **drama**, newspapers, news broadcasts, academic **writing**, formal debates, etc. The colloquial dialects are used in informal contexts – everyday conversation, informal drama, some poetry, and sometimes for dialogue in novels (Holes, 2004: 36–45).

Everyone in the Arab world speaks a local dialect as their **mother tongue**. Standard Arabic is taught in schools, and different speakers have differing degrees of command of it depending on their level of education.

### Phonology and script

The phonology of Arabic may present problems for some learners. From the perspective of the English-speaking learner the best known among these are the emphatic pronouns. These are a series of pharyngealised phonemes (i.e. sounds involving a constriction of the pharynx, in the throat), contrasting with a series of non-pharyngealised phonemes.

Arabic script is not difficult to learn, and is well fitted to the phonology of Standard Arabic. There are twenty-eight letters. The script is cursive, and most letters have variant forms, depending on their position in the word. Short vowels are not normally written, although they may be added as diacritics.

### Grammar

The morphology of Arabic is extremely rich. Words are derived from a combination of what are known as roots and patterns. This can be illustrated by the examples *kitaab* ‘book’, *katab* ‘he wrote’, and *kitaaba* ‘writing’ (noun). These share the root *k-t-b*, which has a general sense ‘to write/writing’. Affixed into and around this is a pattern; thus the pattern *i-aa* is combined with the root *k-t-b* to give the word *kitaab* ‘book’. This type of morphology is called non-contatenative (Watson, 2002) or transfixing (Bauer, 2004). Arabic also has a large amount of inflectional morphology, mainly involving affixes.

Parts of speech are not problematic. For pedagogical purposes, it is possible to use traditional Western notions such as verb, noun, adjective, adverb, preposition and conjunction. Arabic has a high degree of agreement and complex agreement patterns. Other syntactic features, however, are relatively straightforward, and standard Western notions such as subject and object fit the language relatively easily.

### Vocabulary

Standard Arabic has an extremely large vocabulary, with a large number of synonyms and near-synonyms. Historically, this is partly due to the incorporation of words from different ancient Arabic dialects or from other languages into Standard Arabic. In the modern era, however, Standard Arabic (unlike the colloquial dialects) shows a strong and officially sanctioned tendency to avoid loan words. Where such words have come into the language, an attempt is often made to replace them by neologisms formed from existing roots and patterns, or by existing Arabic words which are given an extended sense to cover the new meaning.

### Stylistics

Standard Arabic exhibits a number of stylistic features which differ markedly from those of **English**. In particular, there is a tendency towards repetition of various kinds, such as the repetition of near-synonyms to provide emphasis. One frequently comes across phrases such as *taḥallul al-qiyam wal-axlaaḡiyaat*, literally ‘the dissolution of morals and values’, where in English it would be more normal to restructure the doublet ‘morals and values’ into a noun–adjective phrase, perhaps adding an element such as ‘all’ for additional emphasis, to give something like ‘the dissolution of all moral values’ (Dickins et al., 2002: 60).

### Diglossia

Diglossia, i.e. the co-existence of Standard Arabic and dialect throughout the Arab world, presents learners with a number of choices. If they require limited oral communication **skills** for a particular

area, they need only learn the dialect of that area. If they want to deal with official written communication, it is sufficient for them to learn Standard Arabic. Anyone who wants a general command of Arabic, however, needs to learn both Standard Arabic and at least one Arabic dialect. Here two general teaching strategies can be identified. The first involves teaching Standard Arabic and the chosen dialect separately. Students typically learn to read, write, and listen and speak in Standard Arabic, and to listen and speak in a dialect. This engenders a number of register anomalies. For example, students learn to engage in everyday conversation in Standard Arabic – something which even highly-educated Arabic speakers may not be able to do. This approach, does, however, allow the four basic skills to reinforce one another, and gives students a sense of confidence in using Standard Arabic.

The alternative strategy of teaching Standard Arabic and a dialect together has the advantage of allowing teachers and learners to reproduce register norms in Arabic directly. Students read written material in Standard Arabic, but discuss it in a dialect. They also learn to develop a proficiency in mixing dialect and **standard language** when appropriate. The potential disadvantages are two-fold. First, students may fail to get sufficient oral reinforcement in Standard Arabic, leaving them with a command of the language which is over-oriented towards the written form. Second, they are required to learn two languages at once, with a correspondingly greater likelihood of confusion. The ‘integrated’ Standard Arabic *plus* colloquial approach has been used in both the United States (Younes, 2006: 157–68) and Britain, notably at B.A. level at the University of Cambridge, and M.A. level at the University of Edinburgh.

### Trends in Arabic teaching

It is possible distinguish three main phases in the development of **materials** for teaching Arabic of the last 30 or 40 years (Alosh, 1997: 88–90; Versteegh, 2006: 9–12). During the first phase, Arabic teaching was based around the **grammar-translation method**. A good example of this approach is *A New Arabic Grammar of the Written Language* (Haywood and Nahmad, 1962). Each

chapter in this book deals with one or more grammatical points, for which written practice is provided by translation sentences from and into Arabic. The second phase begins with the publication of *Elementary Modern Standard Arabic* (Abboud et al., 1968). Here chapters are organised around a basic text, and a wide variety of **exercises** are provided, including oral and aural exercises. The prevalence of substitution drills of various kinds strongly reflects the influence of the **audio-lingual method**. More recently, there has been a shift to a more **communicative** approach to the teaching of Arabic. One of the first books of this type was *Mastering Arabic* (Whightwick and Gaafar, 1990). A more recent book, adopting the same approach, is *Al-Kitaab fii Ta'allum Al-'Arabiyya: Part 1* (Brustad et al., 2004). It is striking that both *Elementary Modern Standard Arabic* and the more recent communicatively-oriented works maintain a strong formal grammatical element. Given the complexity of Arabic morphology in particular, it is difficult to see how this could be avoided.

The first attempt at a non-elementary comprehensive Arabic course was *Modern Standard Arabic: Intermediate Level* (Abboud et al., 1971), which was designed to follow on from *Elementary Modern Standard Arabic*, but was not nearly as widely used. This was followed by *Standard Arabic: An Advanced Course* (Dickins and Watson, 1999), which adopts a topic-based structure. Currently, the most widely used intermediate and advanced coursebooks are *Al-Kitaab fii Ta'allum Al-'Arabiyya: Part 2* (Brustad et al., 2005) and *Part 3* (Brustad et al., 2007), which are fully integrated with *Part 1*.

Courses in colloquial Arabic dialects have been produced for many decades, initially mainly by academic publishers for colonial authorities. Since the 1980s in particular, mainstream publishers have begun to publish colloquial courses.

**See also:** African languages; Area studies; Chinese; Japanese

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JAMES DICKINS

## Area studies

Area studies is one of the terms for a complex domain of study also called **cultural studies**, *Landeskunde* (German), *Civilisation* (French), and has been defined from various perspectives. It has its origin(s) in the developmental context of the national philologies of the nineteenth century and is part of the present state of affairs in which modern foreign languages are regarded as academic subjects in their own rights.

The field of area studies has been one of the most contentious ones in the debates around foreign language learning and teaching, because many (perhaps too many) prospectors have staked their claim to it: representatives of academic disciplines (first and foremost modern languages, but also political science, geography and sociology), specific courses of study (concerned with the training of teachers, businessmen, diplomats, etc.), educational institutions (at almost all levels with different

types of learners) and, last but not least, politicians, administrators, bureaucrats and journalists. Moreover, the always implicit – but most often also explicit – political nature of this field has added to its controversial status.

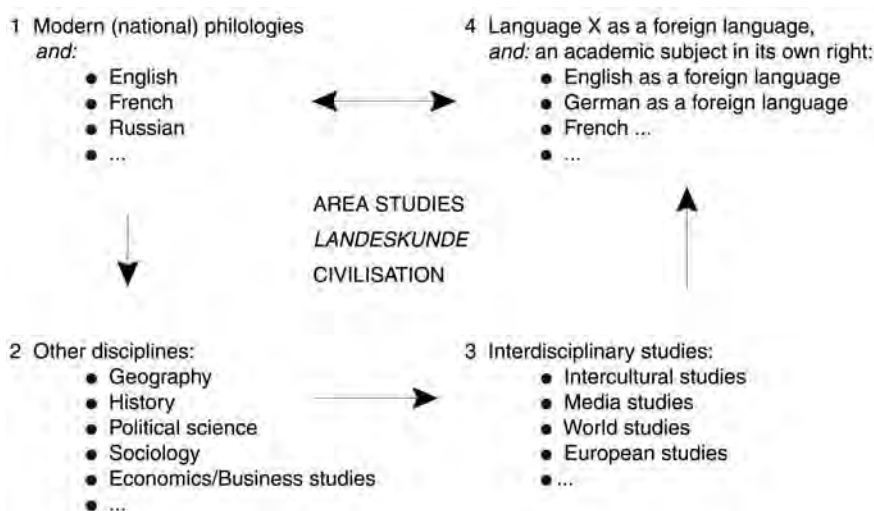
In systematic terms, area studies has been a part or a dimension of four different groups of disciplines/subjects/studies (see Figure 2).

### Modern (national) philologies and European languages

In the European context (Figure 2: 1), an interest in the study of modern languages and literatures and their establishment as academic disciplines developed more or less concomitantly with the rise of the nation states, the consolidation of their centralised political power structures and their production of nationally unified cultures in the nineteenth century. In most of the cases, the subjects of study, the theoretical and methodological frameworks and the human/social interests of these *modern (national) philologies* were modelled on those of the classics which set the standards of this part of the scientific community: historical linguistics, the editing of early **literary texts** and philological analysis were given precedence over the attainment of practical language **competence**, the discussion of more

recent (or even contemporary) texts and a comparative approach to the different cultures in question. Although the university departments of modern (foreign) languages were primarily set up to meet the growing need for professionally trained foreign language teachers, the actual training was more suitable for philologists concentrating on **linguistics** and/or literary criticism. Paradoxically, language practice and foreign language teaching methodology were regarded as secondary; and area studies came last, if it was taught at all.

Despite a number of educationally and politically motivated debates foregrounding the relevance of the study of culture, particularly towards the end of the nineteenth century and between the two World Wars, above all in Germany (see *Landeskunde*), but also in France (see *civilisation*) and other countries, this situation remained essentially unchanged until after World War Two, when, first for the USA (because of the conflicts arising from their military and political engagements in many parts of the world), and then in Europe (because of the beginning process of European integration, the growing influx of migrants, and the problems arising from these developments), the social, political and educational relevance of cultural differences could not be ignored any longer. They demanded a certain space and specific place in the training of



those who had to deal with them for professional reasons: psychologists, social workers, teachers and, first and foremost, teachers of the indigenous and foreign languages. The slow and uneven but irreversible development of, for example, **cultural studies** in Britain, regarded first as a critique and later as a necessary enhancement of English studies, and *Interkulturelle Germanistik* in Germany, testifies to this transformation which soon spread to and included the respective foreign modern philologies. In Germany, for example, until the late 1980s *Landeskunde* (which was also called *Kulturkunde* or, more specifically, *Englandkunde* or *Frankreichkunde*) had either occupied a more (English studies) or less (Romance studies) marginal place in the university departments (of the Federal Republic of Germany) or been, at least to a certain extent, instrumentalised by party politics (in the German Democratic Republic). Since the early 1990s a discernible change of attitude in favour of area studies within the philologies has taken place: the cultural dimension of the modern national philologies has been given the same status as the linguistic and literary ones (see Kramer and Lenz, 1994; Nünning and Jucker, 1999: 135–69; Klein and Kramer, 2003). As a consequence, these philologies are being transformed into studies of particular cultures. Similar developments can be observed in many other countries (cf. Byram, 1994; *Journal for the Study of British Cultures*, 1999).

The central objective of area studies in its modernised or reformed version (see Kramer, 1997) is to understand (to study, learn about, do research into) a particular culture and society and, by doing so, to learn to understand cultures in general. At the same time, it is intended that the process of understanding a culture which differs from one's own should also lead to a better understanding of one's own culture. In this context, a culture is understood as a 'particular way of life' (Williams, 1965: 57) in a society which is usually composed of a number of different ones. A culture includes elements of a society's relations of production (and, by implication, distribution and consumption), power and communication, as well as one or more of its ways of experiencing, structuring and making sense of them: a culture is socially produced and symbolically made sense of.

Although such an understanding of 'culture' as outlined above need not imply that this particular culture or way of life is (or is regarded as) homogenous, more recent contributions have emphasised that, for many people, their (and other) cultures have become fragmented, dehistoricised, deterritorialised and denationalised (Kramersch, 2008: 6): 'For many people around the world, the equation one native language = one national culture has become obsolete. The typical language learner is no longer [...] a monolingual native speaker of English learning German as a foreign language at an American college in the U.S., but a Yoruba-speaking Nigerian raised in French schools in Montreal learning German in Texas, or a Czech with a school knowledge of English, French and German, now an immigrant to the U.S. and learning Japanese in California.' While Kramersch here certainly has a point in her characterisation of a growing number of foreign language learners (whose complex cultural background constitutes a challenge to traditional methodology) one can question whether what she describes can be reasonably regarded as 'typical'. Moreover, if she were right – what would this imply? If one did not grow up in a homogenous culture (if ever there was one) but in a more complexly structured cultural environment and if one, then, wanted to learn a foreign language, embedded in an equally complex cultural network, wouldn't one have to undergo the same sense-making processes as outlined above? This would also apply, I should like to argue, to Holliday who argues that we need "descriptions of culture" which "should not be in terms of behavioural traits which confine people as though they are occupants" but "should instead concern the societal and personal forces that bring about cultural realities as ideas that *occupy people* (in the sense of being on their minds, rather than colonising them)" (2009: 148).

If a culture that differs from one's own, particularly a *foreign* culture, is to be understood, it has to be reconstructed: its social reality and its symbolical interpretation have to be represented in one's own language (as do its concepts). Thus, from the very start, understanding a foreign culture implies making use of and, thereby, exposing and reflecting one's own culture while studying the other. This

process entails comparing both cultures and, by doing so, transforming them and oneself.

### Other disciplines

In other academic disciplines (Figure 2: 2), which are not related to foreign language learning, the term 'area studies' has been used to characterise either primarily descriptive accounts of specific cultures and societies with an almost encyclopedic claim to completeness (as, for example, in geography or the political sciences), particular fields of specialisation within the discipline (as, for example, in history or sociology), or optional rather than constitutive elements of a discipline (as, for example, in economics or business studies). In most of these contexts, the chosen term has been 'area studies' (or, in German-speaking contexts, 'Landeskunde'), while 'civilisation' (or 'Kulturkunde') has been associated with foreign language studies.

In recent years, a particular 'linguistic paradox of culture studies' (Seeba, 1996: 404) has developed in the United States and, to a certain extent, in Canada: 'the more academic programs in the humanities' have embraced 'the cultural turn of their disciplines, with special emphasis on multicultural paradigms and intercultural approaches, the more they [have] tend[ed] to move away from the particular language whose instruction was their original *raison d'être*' (Seeba, 1996: 404). It is not clear if this trend can be reversed (cf. Seeba, 1996: 405–6; Prokop, 1996), if the loss in foreign language competence can be offset against the relative gain in culture studies, or if a new theoretical integration of language practice and culture studies may prove to be a viable alternative (Michel, 1996).

### Interdisciplinary studies

Various kinds of interdisciplinary studies (Figure 2: 3), which may or may not be related to foreign language learning (European, Asian, African Studies, Jewish Studies, etc.), have defined their particular forms and functions of area studies by drawing on the concepts of either philologies or other disciplines depending on the nature and direction of their **objectives**, theories and methods.

### Academic subjects in their own right

Over the past three or four decades three interdependent developments have led to the conceptualisation and institutionalisation of modern languages as foreign languages *and* academic subjects in their own right, whose objectives, theories and methods decisively differ from those of the related philologies and, consequently, entail a transformation of the traditional form of foreign-language teacher training. The three developments are as follows:

1. Increasing international cooperation and communication have made the expansion of foreign language learning at all levels a socially desirable goal: foreign language competence may not be able to guarantee a job, but in most contexts it is certainly regarded as an asset.
2. The expansion of foreign language learning at all levels has entailed a (related) transformation of the learner population. This has not only been a quantitative problem, but also a question of methodology and curriculum development: formulating attainable learning goals for groups of learners which may widely differ with respect to their **age**, ability and **motivation**, the fact that this particular foreign language is the first, second or third they are learning, and the context in which the language is learned and/or used, etc.
3. As the qualifications of foreign language learners left much to be desired and were in urgent need of improvement if learners were to be enabled to meet their most urgent communicative **needs**, two paradigmatic shifts have taken place in the attempts at theorising foreign language learning and teaching since the 1960s.

The first shift was away from producing *linguistic competence* only, towards developing what was then called *communicative competence*. While the former was thought to be attained through the traditional teaching of **grammar**, syntax and semantics, the acquisition of the latter required that a great deal of attention be paid to either developing model phrases which then could be learned through imitation (as in the **audiolingual method**) and/

or establishing (and learning) certain utterances serving specific functions in particular situations/contexts (as in the **notional–functional approach**). The model to which the learners were supposed to orientate themselves, before and after this shift, was the **native speaker**.

The second shift was away from concentrating on speech patterns and/or situations in which the utterances of a foreign language are used, towards the people who use them as means of communication, negotiation and interaction. These latter terms already indicate the nature of the shift: instead of being seen as the relatively passive ‘victims’ of determining situations to which they have to adapt themselves (either through mimicking and memorising patterns or conforming to alien situations), the learners were envisaged as people who actively negotiate the meanings of their utterances within certain situations of which they and their interlocutors are in fact constitutive parts. The new focus was on the negotiation of meaning between speakers of different cultures. Moreover, rather than regarding these three accentuations of the linguistic, communicative and interactive/intercultural dimensions of the foreign language learning process as excluding each other, they have come to be seen as complementary: the need to develop the learners’ **intercultural communicative competence** which enables them to understand what they need to understand and to say what they want to say (to each other and to their foreign interlocutors) in certain situations in relation to specific topics has become the central tenet of the foreign language learning process. As a consequence, the native speaker is no longer regarded as a model.

If foreign language learners have intercultural communicative competence, they should be regarded as ‘heteroglossic language user[s]’ (Nolden and Kramersch, 1996: 64), or as intercultural speakers who are able ‘to interact with people from another country and culture in a foreign language’ and ‘to negotiate a mode of communication and interaction which is satisfactory to themselves and the other’ and ‘to act as mediator between people of different

cultural origins. Their knowledge of another culture is linked to their language competence through their ability to use language appropriately ... and their awareness of the specific meanings, values and connotations of the language’ (Byram, 1997: 71).

These developments resulted in the necessary transformation of the traditional, philologically oriented form of foreign language teacher training. Put simply, the central (and transformative) insight was that the qualifications of philologists differ from those of foreign language teachers. Where the former focus on the critical analysis and balanced interpretation of texts, images, etc. of a foreign culture (which include, but do not necessarily foreground, the foreign language), the latter primarily concentrate on the initiation, implementation and **evaluation** of language learning processes of which the cultures involved form an indispensable part.

But what exactly *is* the character and function of area studies in the training of foreign language teachers and, by extension, in foreign language education? The following two models mirror the current state of affairs: one was developed in the context of **German** as a Foreign Language (GFL), emphasising the communicative aspect of language learning and the exemplary role of the native speaker; the other is a combination of ideas developed in the context of **English** as a Foreign Language (EFL), stressing the intercultural dimension of language learning and introducing the intercultural speaker.

In the first model, the core of the discipline is defined as the theory and practice of teaching and learning GFL (see Henrici, 1994, 1996): the function of research is to steadily advance our knowledge and understanding of language learning processes, while that of teaching is to make what we already know as transparent as possible to future teachers so that they can build on it in their teaching practice. Of the many qualifications future teachers need, the most important ones are:

1. general and specific didactic (i.e. educational and methodological) know-how concerning the initiation, implementation and evaluation (observation, analysis/diagnosis and therapy) of language learning processes, media and **materials**;

2. the ability to apply this know-how in various contexts, taking into account their diverse (pre) conditions (cognitive, affective, social and other variables; institutional, medial factors, etc.) and thereby to teach, always in relation to particular contents (or subject matters), linguistic competence, **communicative strategies**, knowledge about – and certain **attitudes** towards – the foreign culture;
3. knowledge of the history of the discipline and the development of its particular profile.

In order to acquire these qualifications, students have to study and make interdisciplinary use of certain disciplines: basic; contents-related; and neighbouring. In this model, **second language acquisition** research, **L2-classroom research** and **applied linguistics** are regarded as the basic disciplines whose interests and results determine, at least to a certain extent, the ways and forms in which the contents-related disciplines (**linguistics**, literary criticism, *Landeskunde*) and the neighbouring disciplines (sociology, **psychology**, education, etc.) are being made use of: the latter two are functionally related (i.e., more or less subordinated) to the former.

In this model of GFL, area studies is present as one of the (three) component parts of the (modernised version of the) related philology (*Germanistik*), but in the language learning processes it is mainly reduced to the role of providing the contents of and information or subject matters for these processes. Although this function is not negligible (and is certainly more pertinent than simply supplying 'contextual' knowledge), it does

not extend to the (inter)cultural character of the language learning processes themselves.

This problematic is foregrounded in a second model (Figure 3) which is here (re)constructed from suggestions for teaching EFL and, by implication, the training of professional teachers (cf. Vielau, 1997: 208–14; Zydariß, 1998: 1–16), and complemented by ideas on **intercultural competence** (IC) and intercultural communicative competence (ICC) (see Byram, 1997). Although this model also subscribes to the relevance of Second language acquisition and L2-classroom research as well as Applied Linguistics, it strikes a different balance between these three on the one hand, and linguistic and cultural competence on the other. Rather than letting the former functionalise the latter (as in the GFL model), it regards the former, together with the textual domain, as necessary links between linguistic and intercultural competence.

In this context, intercultural competence (IC) has to be understood as a complex combination of knowledge, **skills** and attitudes held together by a critical engagement with the foreign culture under consideration and one's own (as sketched in Figure 4).

In this understanding, IC does not determine the contributions of the other factors but, rather, pervades or informs them. In doing so, IC selects and combines linguistic competence and communicative strategies as well as knowledge about the foreign language and culture, in such a way as to enable the learners to confront their communicative practice. In this practice, i.e. in their interaction with speakers of another culture, they have to negotiate the necessary communicative processes and their

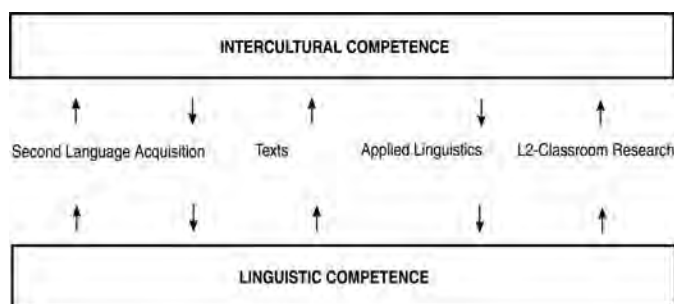


Figure 3 Intercultural competence in foreign language education

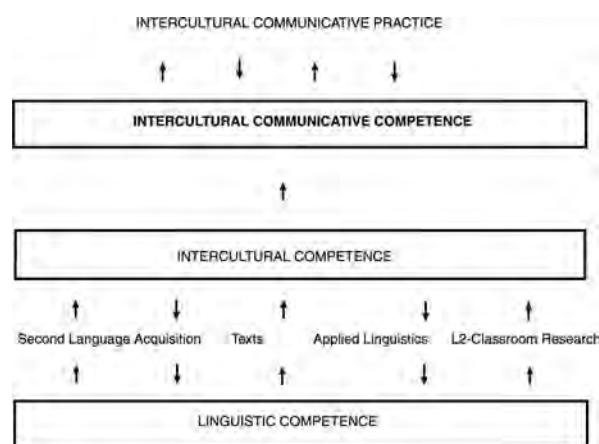


Figure 4 Factors of intercultural competence (IC) interacting in intercultural communication. Source: Byram 1997: 34.

contexts and, thereby, become intercultural speakers, developing intercultural communicative competence (see Figure 5).

Area studies forms but a part, though an indispensable part, of IC. Its role cannot be reduced to providing the contents of, and information or subject matters for, language learning processes or knowledge about the foreign language and culture, but has to be understood in a more comprehensive way: as a complex, but flexible structure (or network) of culturally specific knowledge, skills and

attitudes which enables learners of a foreign language to begin (and continue) to communicate with native or other non-native speakers of that language, mediate and negotiate between the two (or more) cultures in question (which always more or less ‘interfere with’ the area studies part of the learners’ IC) and reflect these various processes in relation to their own culture(s). The nature of area studies in this model can be compared to a twine, i.e. a ‘strong thread or string composed of two or more strands twisted together’ (*Webster’s Dictionary*,

|                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                  |                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                          | <b>Skills</b><br><br>interpret and relate<br><i>(savoir comprendre)</i>                                          |                                                                                             |
| <b>Knowledge</b><br><br>of self and other;<br><br>of interaction:<br><br>individual and<br><br>societal <i>(savoirs)</i> | <b>Education</b><br><br>political education;<br><br>critical cultural awareness<br><br><i>(savoir s'engager)</i> | <b>Attitudes</b><br><br>relativising self;<br><br>valuing other<br><br><i>(savoir être)</i> |
|                                                                                                                          | <b>Skills</b><br><br>discover and/or interact<br><br><i>(savoir apprendre/faire)</i>                             |                                                                                             |

Figure 5 The development of intercultural communicative competence

1989: 1530). Culturally specific knowledge, skills at negotiating or mediating communicative processes (geared to the cultures in question), and a mixture of attitudes including transcultural ones (e.g. interest in and tolerance of foreign cultures and their people) and culturally specific ones (e.g. preference of certain cultures or cultural traits) in their indivisible interaction are the components which together produce this twine.

**See also:** *Civilisation*; Cultural studies; Higher education; *Interkulturelle Didaktik*; *Landeskunde*/*Kulturkunde*; Study abroad

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JÜRGEN KRAMER

## Assessment and testing

The term 'assessment' is generally used to cover all methods of testing and assessment, although some teachers and testers apply the term 'testing' to formal or standardised tests such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), and 'assessment' to more informal methods. In this

entry, however, the terms 'assessment' and 'test' are used interchangeably.

### Recent history

In Britain, assessment of foreign languages was mostly conducted by means of traditional examinations until well into the twentieth century (Spolsky, 1995). However, in the USA, influences from the field of **psychology**, together with concerns about the fairness of subjective **evaluations**, led to the wide use from the 1920s onwards of objectively marked tests. Such tests were ideally suited to the structural language **syllabuses** of the 1950s and 1960s with their emphasis on the teaching of separate elements of language, and discrete point multiple choice questions became common in many parts of the world (Lado, 1961). Objective tests had many advantages: apart from being easy to mark, the internal **reliability** of the tests could be calculated, and item analysis could tell test constructors not only how difficult individual items had been for their examinees, but also how well these items discriminated between the strong and the weak students. (See Alderson, Clapham and Wall, 1995, for information about item analysis and reliability indices.)

In the 1970s, however, concerns that the answers to these discrete point items provided no evidence of students' more global linguistic **skills** led to Oller's unitary competence hypothesis, and the wide use of integrative tests such as **cloze** and **dictation** to assess general linguistic proficiency (see Oller, 1979). However, Oller later concluded that language proficiency consisted of more than one underlying factor (Oller, 1983) and cloze tests were shown to be less valid and reliable than had originally been thought (Cohen, 1998).

Since the late 1980s the move towards the **communicative** approach to teaching has encouraged testers to make their test items more integrated (less discrete), and the tasks more **authentic** in both content and purpose. Interest has swung from reliability to validity, and more researchers have turned their attention to direct tests of **speaking** and **writing** (see McNamara, 1996). Differing test philosophies have since moved closer together: American test constructors are more concerned

with test content than they were, while British and other examination boards use statistical procedures to analyse the validity and reliability of their tests.

A more recent development is the situating of language testing and test use in its social context, concentrating on issues such as social implications of testing and ethics in testing. (See Spolsky, 2008, for a brief overview of language testing history.)

### Theories of language testing

Test content is linked to theories of language learning and testing, and at present such theories relate to communicative principles. Canale and Swain (1980) included **sociolinguistic** and **strategic competence** in their description of the domains of language knowledge, and Bachman (1990) added psychophysiological mechanisms. Bachman and Palmer (1996) elaborated on this model further to include both affective and metacognitive factors. This model of communicative language ability has been used as the theoretical basis for several tests and provided the theoretical basis for many research projects. Rather than being based on a theoretical model of language ability, tests are sometimes related to a set of standards for different language attainment levels (specifications of what a student needs to know and should be able to do at each level of ability). The **Common European Framework of Reference** (CEFR – Council of Europe, 2001) is an example of a currently influential taxonomy, and many tests have established links (valid or otherwise) to the CEFR. (See Purpura, 2008, for a discussion of communicative language ability models).

### Test purpose

The overall purpose of a test inevitably affects its contents. Tests should be based on a set of specifications (see Alderson, Clapham and Wall, 1995) which set out the main features of the test, and describe the test's aims, as well as describing its potential candidature, its content and the theory of language teaching and learning on which it is based. The specifications vary according to whether they are designed to be read by students, teachers, item writers, or administrators, but in all

cases these specifications state the test's overall purpose (whether it is to assess the students' linguistic **aptitude**, progress, achievement or proficiency, or whether it is to be used for placement or diagnostic purposes). The specifications also list other reasons for taking the test, such as the ability to use a language for a specific purpose (see, for example, aviation English tests or business language tests). Such **Language for Specific Purposes** (LSP) tests contain language and tasks similar to those the students will encounter in their future career (see Douglas, 1997, 2000; O'Loughlin, 2008).

### Test types

Test types, too, are affected by the test's purpose, and any detailed set of test specifications will describe the methods of assessment to be used (Alderson, Clapham and Wall, 1995). Since it is now accepted that students differ in the types of task in which they excel (Wood, 1991), test batteries generally include a range of test types, so that a test is not biased according to test method effect. Similarly, test constructors attempt to prevent their tests being biased against students according to factors such as **gender**, first language or background knowledge (Wood, 1991).

Examples of test methods are multiple choice questions, information transfer, gap filling, short-answer questions, and learner-interlocutor controlled 'interviews'. Discussions of different test types are given in Alderson, 2000 (for assessing reading), Buck, 2001 (for assessing listening), Luoma, 2004 (for assessing speaking), Purpura, 2004 (for assessing grammar), Read, 2000 (for assessing vocabulary), Weigle, 2002 (for assessing writing), Hughes, 2003, and Weir, 2005.

### Rating scales

With the more widespread use of subjectively marked writing and speaking tests, rating scales have been devised to help raters assess students' performances. Several examples of rating scales used by different testing organisations can be found in Weigle, 2002 (for writing) and Luoma, 2004 (for speaking). Such scales may be 'holistic', where the

assessor judges the student's performance as a whole, or 'analytic', where the performance is marked according to a range of separate criteria such as content, organisation, **grammar** and **vocabulary** (Alderson, Clapham and Wall, 1995). The validity of such marking scales may be questionable, since their design is often intuitive. In some cases, however, scale development is informed by samples of actual performance (see Fulcher, 2003 and 2008), and the use of language corpora leads to new possibilities (Taylor and Barker, 2008). In addition, the accessibility of computer programs such as FACETS (Linacre, 1989, 2006) have made it possible to assess how such scales work in practice (see Weigle, 1998; Bond and Fox, 2007). Reliable marking, however, remains an issue. In spite of the all important rater training, raters do not always mark consistently and sometimes give marks that are not in line with those of other markers (Brindley, 1998). Recent studies specifically focused on individual raters' use of scales (Lumley, 2005), the nature of rater training (Elder et al., 2007), and the impact of scale types on rater reliability (Knoch, 2009), but more research is needed.

### **Methods of test validation**

Messick's (1989) views of a unitary concept of construct validity, including test use and consequences, have had a profound effect on language testing.

His 1989 article is long and complex, but authors such as Bachman and Palmer (1996) sought to make Messick's work more accessible through the concept of test usefulness. As a consequence, test validation approaches have changed, with an argument-based validation approach being used more recently (see Bachman, 2005; Chapelle, Enright, and Jamieson, 2008). Due to developments in statistical analyses, the increasing use of qualitative research methods such as verbal protocols, and insights from cognitive psychology a wide variety of research methods is now employed in validation research (see Xi, 2008 for an overview of methods in test validation). (For a more traditional view of test validity, see Alderson, Clapham and Wall, 1995.)

### **Technology and language testing**

In the past decade, we saw a great increase in the use of modern technology in language testing for a wide variety of purposes. A growing number of tests are delivered on personal computers or other electronic devices, offline or online.

The use of multimedia has broadened the possibilities of recording spoken task input from a broad range of sources and delivering the input in a consistent manner across test administrations in order to assess listening. Technology also lends itself to integrated forms of assessment in which, for instance, audio input is complemented with visual input whilst at the same time the students complete a written test task. In addition, first and second language electronic corpora (mainly of written language, but also a few of spoken language) are a potential source for item development. Such developments (new tasks and delivery modes), however, may require researchers to revisit the definition of the language ability construct assessed by tests that in some way or other involve the use of modern technology (see Chapelle and Douglas, 2006 for a more extensive discussion of this issue).

A range of multimedia devices are also available for audio and/or visual recording of spoken task performance. Such recordings can be used for examiner and rater training, or for reliability and validation studies. In addition, such recordings are the source material for machine scoring of spoken task performances. Advances in natural language processing and in speech recognition and processing technologies mean that automated scoring is no longer restricted to scoring of selected-response items such as multiple choice items. Constructed-response items such as open-ended writing tasks or speaking tasks are now also machine scoreable. Automated scoring and feedback systems are being used in a number of large-scale, high-stakes tests, but caution on the use of such systems is still called for (Xi, 2010). The Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic) is an example of a computer-based test which makes use of multimedia to deliver and record integrated tasks, and of an automated scoring system to mark performances.

Software developments have resulted in the availability of a wider range of quantitative as well

as qualitative data analysis programs, which have been made more user-friendly. Programs such as NUD\*IST or NVivo are helpful for databasing, data retrieval, or alternative presentations of qualitative data analyses (Séror, 2005). Statistical software packages such as SPSS or R are used for classical test analysis (CTT). Rasch measurement software such as WINSTEPS and FACETS, based on Item Response Theory (see Bond and Fox, 2007), make it theoretically possible to report the difficulty of any test item regardless of the students on whom the item has been trialled, since student ability is taken into account (whereas CTT can only report item difficulty for a particular group of test takers). Items can therefore be banked according to their level of difficulty, which can result in large item banks. This can be helpful for increasing test security. Items in databases can also be used as required in computer-adaptive tests, i.e. tests in which item selection is adapted to each student's level of linguistic proficiency. An example of computer-adaptive tests is the freely available DIALANG language diagnosis system with tests in 14 European languages (see Alderson, 2006).

Finally, the impact of technology can also be found in the fast and large-scale spread of information on language testing in general, on language testing research, and on specific language tests (specifications, research results, administration details, practice tests etc.) that is made possible through the Internet and modern communication media.

### Alternative assessment

'Alternative assessment' usually refers to assessment procedures such as portfolios, learner diaries, self- or peer-assessment, checklists, and learner-teacher 'conferences'. However, it is the way in which such procedures are employed and implemented that determines whether these are 'alternative', and whether they have benefits over more traditional tests.

Alternative assessment procedures may be more time-consuming and costly due to, for example, the amount of student support that is required and the feedback given, or the processing and rating of the multiple performances that are typically part

of a portfolio. One further problem with methods of alternative assessment lies with the reliability of such assessments. Consistency of tasks or types of performances can be more difficult to control for with certain alternative assessment procedures (e.g. portfolios, conferences). Also, their marking schemes may not have been validated, and raters have often not been trained to give consistent marks.

Nevertheless, alternative assessment procedures have many potential advantages. Amongst these are the more active involvement and greater responsibility of the student, and more personalised, individualised and adaptable assessment procedures which can provide information on higher-level cognitive skills. Such procedures also tend to be more directly embedded in the regular classroom activities and are part of the language teaching and learning process, which can thus be assessed instead of only focussing on the language teaching and learning product.

Often, alternative assessment is used as an informal, formative, low-stakes type of assessment, mostly in a classroom context, but examples in high-stakes contexts exist (see, for example, the Vermont Portfolio Assessment Program). A term used more recently is 'alternatives in assessment' (Brown and Hudson, 1998), whereby traditional tests are seen as one of the possible assessment alternatives. Largely, however, teachers, students, administrators, policymakers, and score users are still under-prepared for designing, valuing, implementing, scoring, and interpreting alternative assessment procedures. The current testing culture has not been substituted for an assessment culture, and only the future will tell whether it will (Fox, 2008).

### Impact and washback

Since the early nineties there has been an upsurge of interest in the impact of tests, and in the effect of tests on teaching and learning. Since Alderson and Wall's (1993) ground-breaking empirical study, a large number of studies have looked into 'washback' effects of tests (for a review see Cheng, 2008). These have shown that washback is a complex, difficult-to-predict phenomenon. Washback

can go in different directions (positive or negative), and it can differ in extent for different educational contexts, stakeholders, or individuals. Within the same context, it may also differ with regard to different aspects of teaching and learning, and washback is often more directly visible on teaching content as opposed to teaching methodology. In addition, washback effects do not necessarily remain stable or last over time. (For examples of impact and washback complexity, see Cheng, Watanabe, and Curtis, 2004; Cheng, 2005; Shohamy, 2001; Wall and Alderson, 1993; Wall, 2005).

### Ethics and accountability

Debates on ethics and accountability have become central to the field of language testing and assessment, partly to questions of fairness and equity, and partly to the uses that might be made of test results. Many testing organisations adhere to the AERA standards (American Educational Research Association, 1999) and ILTA (International Language Testing Association) has its own Code of Ethics for language testers (ILTA, 2000). Also, several testing organisations have their own Code of Practice. The European Association for Language Testing and Assessment (EALTA, 2006) and the Association for Language Testers in Europe (ALTE, 1994) have made their guidelines for good practice available in a wide range of languages. (For more about ethics and professionalism in language testing, see Davies, 2008.)

### Current trends

With the shift from mostly norm-referenced testing to criterion-referenced testing (i.e. a shift from comparing a student's scores with the scores of other students to comparing a student's performance to a set of performance objectives or criteria), and the reliance on language frameworks, a precise understanding of language proficiency is paramount. The growing body of cross-disciplinary collaboration such as that with second language acquisition specialists (see for example SLATE, a research network for **Second Language Acquisition and Testing in Europe**), computer corpus experts, and cognitive psychologists is promising. At the

same time, the social and political functions of language tests are brought to the fore due to the increasing use of language tests in, for example, immigration contexts. Current research in different areas of language assessment, as well as outstanding problems, difficulties and directions for future research are discussed in Shohamy and Hornberger (2008).

Since more and more people are in some way or other involved in language testing and make use of test scores, language test professionals recognise the need for assessment literacy. Slowly but surely, effort is put into making language testing more understandable to a wider variety of stakeholders. The *Dictionary of Language Testing* by Davies et al. (1999) and the *Multilingual Glossary of Language Testing Terms* (ALTE, 1998) have concise explanations of most of the concepts related to the field. In addition, short videos have been produced on frequently discussed aspects of language testing, and are made available online (Fulcher and Trasher, n.d.). These videos introduce the novice language tester to the core concepts of validity and reliability, to test specifications, item writing, pre-testing, test-taking strategies, test impact and ethics. Further videos focus on the assessment of the skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and on integrated assessment and testing for specific purposes. The latest additions are videos on item response theory, statistics in language testing, technology in language testing, and automated scoring.

**See also:** Aptitude tests; Cloze test; C-test; Diagnostic tests; Direct/Indirect testing; Discrete point tests; Evaluation; Integrated tests; Integrative tests; Placement tests; Proficiency tests; Progress tests; Reliability; Validity

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TINEKE BRUNFAUT  
CAROLINE CLAPHAM

## Attitudes and language learning

Language does not consist only of forms, patterns and rules but is simultaneously bound up with the social, subjective and objective world, since it also carries the attitudes, habits and cultural characteristics of its speakers. The child already internalises in first language **acquisition** the values of its environment, and identifies with those people who

appear to it to be authorities. If it is confronted with an unknown sign system, this can undermine its ways of perceiving hitherto. As Wilhelm von **Humboldt** says, this may be 'one of the best mental exercises' because 'on account of this, thought becomes more independent of one particular kind of expression, its true inner content appears more clearly, depth and clarity, strength and lightness meet each other in a more harmonious way' (Humboldt, 1907: 193).

The Humboldtian way of thinking has left its traces in the context of the justification and aims of foreign language teaching, as has that of the **sapir-whorf hypothesis**, according to which belonging to a language community determines the mode of human perception (Sapir, 1970: 68).

It is for this reason that foreign language teaching sees its task, for educational, practical and political reasons, as that of leading pupils from primary age onwards out of its tried and tested conventions, with the help of a new language and its contents; of making them conscious of the limits of their own ways of seeing as determined by their **mother tongue**. It aims thereby not only to teach the cultural context of the other language but also to create a certain distance from pupils' own culture. In this way it is hoped to establish an approach to the understanding of Otherness which will contribute to changes in attitudes, to the breaking down of prejudices and **stereotypes**. Concepts such as **acculturation**, **cultural studies** and **intercultural communication** are concerned at a theoretical level with the relationship between understanding of self and understanding of the Other. Empirical research into the connection between attitudes and language learning leads to two viewpoints, which as the resultative hypothesis and the **motivational** hypothesis continue to be discussed in polarised terms, even though the data (here discussed selectively) and current theoretical work suggest a quite different interpretation.

### The resultative hypothesis

The resultative hypothesis is based on the assumption that experience of success influences attitudes to language, country and people. The first



systematically collected data were provided by a study at the beginning of the 1940s of 11–15-year-old boys learning **French** in London (Jordan, 1941: 28–44). A survey of Welsh as a second language a few years later also showed that progress in learning goes hand-in-hand with improvements in attitudes (Jones, 1949: 44–52; 1950: 117–32). However, there was also evidence among all informants of a worsening of attitudes with increased age.

From the different studies it is possible to surmise possible reasons for this. Thus, at the end of an 18-week French course at an American college which had the purpose of evaluating the efficacy of different methods of teaching, it was suggested that ‘it is achievement which influences attitudes towards French study ...’ (Savignon, 1972: 63). However the dissatisfaction of the learners with the exercise in the **language laboratory**, which seemed so bereft of content, i.e. without information about the target language culture, could be an explanation for the fact that their attitudes deteriorated.

Even if the longitudinal study in Great Britain between 1964 and 1974 of approximately 17,000 8–16-year-olds learning French came to similar conclusions (Burstall, 1974: 244), the high number of dropouts among the 13-year-olds is cause for scepticism. The dropouts refer to difficulties in learning as their reasons. Examination of the data shows that boys give up French much more frequently than do girls, that the size of the school, insufficient individual attention and recognition in lessons, no opportunity to travel to France, also contribute to the resistance. Further, poor social environment also leads to a lack in confidence in one’s own potential for achievement. A study of German informants shows how the way in which teachers and learners relate to each other accounts for 25 per cent of the total variance in foreign language achievement (Geisler, 1978: 254–5).

The assumed ‘linear’ relationship between learning success and attitudes seems to become entangled in a number of influence factors. As the comments on the efficacy of the language laboratory show, background knowledge is one of these. Language teaching without a conscious inclusion of information about the target language and its representatives apparently ends just as little in understanding of Otherness as it does in success in

language learning. In a group of 750 German secondary school pupils aged 11–16, those in the top third in the learning of **English** had a number of differing opinions about the speakers of the target language (Hermann, 1978: 211). Either they prefer the English over other nations, or they value them to the same degree, or they even have negative views about them. On the other hand, those of the group who know a lot about English culture are positive towards it. The situation is different among the weakest third of the sample. Here it seems that failure has created such a rejection of everything English that Portuguese or Turks, who in social perceptions have very low status, are favoured much more highly. Lack of knowledge, in comparison, is not as destructive.

Those negative consequences of learning difficulties which are assessed are related statistically to other variables, as the results of a Franco-German study of 975 pupils in the eighth year of schooling show (Candelier and Hermann-Brennecke, 1993). As in other school contexts where data have been gathered, carefully prepared **exchange** programmes or ethnographic studies seem to have a particular significance for attitudes: 75 per cent of pupils in the lower streams of **secondary education** who see no purpose in English say they are disappointed that they cannot go to England at least once in their period of schooling. Their disillusionment transfers not only onto the speakers of the target language but also onto their interest in any other languages. Perhaps the destructive effect of failure in foreign language learning could be countered if those who have to struggle with it received more support from **translation, dictations** and **vocabulary** tests, as they expect from their classes. As is evident from other research (e.g. Heuer, 1976), they would like more explanations in their mother tongue, i.e. less use of the target language only. The importance of comprehensible input, transparency and awareness raising in the process of language learning does not exclude for these same pupils the need for poems, myths, songs, games and ‘interesting things’, and underlines the link between cognitive and affective learning processes.

Despite the multiple variants on the relationship between attitudes and language learning which have become evident here – a summary of

potential factors notes 200 individual variables (Geisler, 1987) – data collection and interpretation continue to be seen in a resultative way, and to be accepted as such in the scientific community (e.g. Crookes and Schmidt, 1991). This seems to be explicable only because of antagonism towards and a strong rejection of the motivational hypothesis.

### The motivational hypothesis

The motivational hypothesis switches the direction of influence. It is based on the belief that attitudes as stable, motive-like constructs decide how successful language learning will take place (Gardner and Lambert, 1972: 3). It is the *integrative* orientation or the interest in the other ethnic group for its own sake which is significant, as with the child who seeks communication with its environment and the assimilation of its ways of behaving. The *instrumental* orientation, or a concern with usefulness of a professional or subject-related kind, is considered to be a lesser motivating force.

Attempts to support this hypothesis empirically have met with problems since the beginning of the 1970s. When, among a group of Canadian pupils in their ninth, tenth and eleventh years of schooling, the integrative orientation increased among successful learners of French (a result which should not really happen, since it should remain the same from the beginning), the change was explained in terms of the reward-giving and strengthening effect of language acquisition. The fall in integrative orientation observed simultaneously among those who want to drop out of French and to reject French-Canadians is, however, not similarly accounted for in terms of unsatisfactory learning experiences (Gardner and Smythe, 1975).

The observation that, in the course of an exchange programme, on the one hand the participants' attitudes towards the French improve to a highly significant degree while on the other hand their integrative orientation lies much below that measured before their intercultural contact, this is described as 'paradoxical'. At the same time, contrary to all expectations, there occurs no significant change in the wish to learn French and in attitudes towards the target language (Gardner, 1974: 270–4). There is a lack of critical **evaluation** of the

affective and cognitive processing of the experience of Otherness, even though there are sufficient indications that visits to the target language community have to be well prepared from a geographic, historical, and contemporary political and everyday culture perspective if they are not to become a source of misunderstandings and disappointments, strengthening or even making worse existing attitudes (cf. Amir, 1969).

It seems to be just as problematic to maintain the priority of integrative over instrumental orientation. Indian Marati-speaking high school students learn English for utilitarian reasons above all, and report no need to identify with English-speaking compatriots (Lukmani, 1972), and Chinese students residing in the USA clearly have no intention to stay in the country longer than necessary, despite their excellent knowledge of English (Oller et al., 1977).

The contradictory data led to a fundamental debate about the interrelation between success and attitudes, verbal intelligence and linguistic **competence**. For the time being it ended in the socio-educational model. Clearly, motivation is still considered to be a central driving force whose social dimension mirrors the reactions of the individual to out-groups in general and to the target language country in particular. However, in the final analysis, it is still the attitudes of the learners to the target language community which count (Gardner, 1985: 146).

In comparison to the position taken by Gardner and Lambert in 1972, which was strongly adhered to (e.g. Crookes and Schmidt, 1991: 469–512), this is more moderate and differentiated in so far as attitudes are no longer an unchangeable constant but can develop within a complex of factors. This emerging interactive view requires a closer look at the concept of attitudes itself.

### The holistic hypothesis

In social **psychology**, two basic positions can be distinguished. One can be traced back to the **behaviourist** approach and sees attitudes as learned stimulus–response relationships which correspond with a person's observed behaviour. The other refers to an intervening variable between stimulus

and response, to a hidden inner psychological process, which cannot be observed and which influences behaviour in the form of a disposition to act. Attitudes as preconditions or readiness for behaviour can exist in all shapes and forms, from the most hidden traces of forgotten habits to the impulse which immediately provokes action.

The still-valid definition of attitude as ‘... a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual’s response to all objects and situations with which it is related’ (Allport, 1971: 13) raises similar issues to those raised by empirical research designs. To what extent are attitudes linked to learned experiences? Do they have a direct-cognitive, or rather a dynamic-motivational, influence? What organisation underpins them? Do they represent readiness to respond, or reactions? Do they belong to the mental or the neural system? Or do they represent a continuous system of motivational, emotional, perceptual and cognitive processes with respect to a quite specific aspect of the perceptual world of the individual? There are no conclusive answers to these, any more than to the question of a reliable measurement of this hypothetical construct.

Thus, existing methods of testing attempt, on the one hand, to measure the direction of attitudes as acceptance or rejection of an object (person, group or institution), and on the other to establish their intensity. Furthermore, those methods attempt to establish the status of attitudes within the personal hierarchy of values, their function within individual perception, their consistency with dominant collective opinions, and their susceptibility to social desirability. Moreover, they are multi-dimensional. They consist of three components: an affective, feeling-based evaluative component; a cognitive, epistemological component affecting beliefs; and a conative component affecting readiness for action. None the less they can only be justified in terms of belief statements and actions. Thus it cannot be said with absolute certainty to what extent they reflect temporary sets, or firmly anchored attitudes, to what extent they are self-determined or Other-determined, represent personal maxims for action or social role expectations, and whether they coincide with actual behaviour. Given

the manifold content and multi-level integration of attitudes, it seems that the processing of them can only be holistic so that:

During a task its states of satisfaction, of disappointment, of enthusiasm, just as feelings of tiredness, exertion, boredom etc. play a role. At the end of a task, there can arise feelings of success or of failure, or even aesthetic feelings. There is no such thing as a purely affective state free of cognitive elements.

(Mandl and Huber, 1983: 17)

In the individual, who functions as a psychological unit, affective and cognitive processes are complementary to each other, as was already noted in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*. Piaget (1953) deals with this idea from a developmental perspective. Taxonomic research takes it over with respect to the debate about learning **objectives** (Krathwohl, Bloom and Masia, 1967). In psychological, linguistic and anthropological research the ‘cognitive turn’ begun in the 1960s has given way to an increased interest in the role of the affective domain in group interactions, and in its place in feats of memory, expectations, self-evaluations and attributions. Meanwhile it has reached its apogee in the thesis of the inseparability of the rational and the emotional mind (Goleman, 1996: 10).

Either/or thinking, such as that which has dominated the research designs concerned with the interrelation between attitudes and language learning for decades, can only lead to a dead end. It should at last make way for an interdependent perspective, as was already suggested in 1980:

A pupil, starting with a foreign language at school, approaches his new subject with certain attitudes. In the course of his language study, his level of achievement and the acquisition process itself can have their repercussions on his attitudinal system, particularly if failure or success is involved. These attitudes, which need not remain affective but may overlap with the cognitive domain and may even become conative – thereby ceasing to be *set* only – could at the same time act as stimuli for certain phases

within the learning process and thus function again as a kind of instantaneous orientation. Accordingly, it seems justifiable to argue that the development of real competence in a second language depends to a certain degree on a dialectic interrelationship between the acquisition process and permanent as well as short-term values.

(Hermann, 1980: 250)

The mutual dependence dynamic of attitudes and language learning requires, in its affective and cognitive synergy, a holistic interpretation. This affects the learner not only with respect to the processing of information and identification with people or groups, but also with respect to motives and the relationship between language and culture, and their place within the existing linguistic and cultural diversity. If the focus is on increasing one's knowledge, then it is to be expected that there will be changes in attitudes as a consequence of the need to understand relationships. If it is a question of adaptation, then it will be the avoidance of punishment and the desire to be rewarded which will be foregrounded. If the issue is self-assertion, then everything which makes the individual's feeling of well-being the centre of interest will tend to modify persuasions. If it is a matter of self-representation, then elements of knowledge which correspond with one's own beliefs, and thereby create a sense of satisfaction, are more likely to be accepted (Triandis, 1975: 254ff).

None of this happens without forms of social influence such as compliance, identification and internalisation (Kelman, 1970). Attitudes only have a chance of becoming permanent if cognitions are experienced as personally relevant and become a part of the personality, instead of getting stuck in the system of social role expectations. This kind of processing takes place at the level of internalisation, where affective and cognitive processes blend together and mark human action. Language and content are similarly inseparably interwoven. **Communicative competence** as the key to the understanding of Otherness presupposes familiarity with linguistic means, but also requires an intimate knowledge of genetic, territorial, linguistic, economic, religious, cultural and political entities.

Each target language community can only be grasped in the context of cultural and linguistic diversity. This serves 'to make systems on the one hand more multifaceted and on the other hand more stable and less prone to disruption' (Huschke-Rhein, 1989: 219). The insight that, in the macrocosm and in the microcosm, everything is intertwined with everything else may help to escape an uncritical linguisticism which falls prey only too easily to the dominant perception of English. It could also, in a multicultural language landscape, contribute to making the ambivalent relationship between attitudes and language learning less disruptive.

**See also:** Acquisition and teaching; Language awareness; Motivation; Motivation theories; Second language acquisition theories

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## Audiolingual method

A method of language teaching developed in the United States and dominant in the 1960s, based on **structural linguistics** and **behaviourist** psychology, audiolingual language teaching emphasised the learning of spoken language (it was initially called the aural–oral method) and the presentation of language in the order 'hearing–speaking–reading–writing'. The A-L method was associated with the introduction of the **language laboratory**.

The procedures of the A-L method typically involve (see Brooks, 1964; Rivers, 1964):

- 1 the presentation of a short text, usually a dialogue, with a parallel text in the learners' language; this text is modelled by the teacher and repeated by the learners until memorised;
- 2 learners are presented with drill **exercises** or 'pattern practice', consisting of a number of sentences with the same grammatical structure but different lexical items, and they are required to repeat and modify these sentences, receiving immediately the correct version against which to compare their suggestion. These drills are often provided in the language laboratory;
- 3 learners are provided with a substitution table where they can see the parallels in the sentences they have drilled and the underlying grammatical structure involved. This may also provide grammatical terminology;
- 4 learners are invited to role-play dialogues similar to the original one, but they are required to modify the language they have memorised according to the circumstances of the role-play;

- 5 exercises in **reading** and **writing** are introduced using the same grammatical constructions and lexis as they have been using in the spoken mode.

The origins of the A-L method are usually traced to the introduction of the 'Army Specialized Training Program' from 1943 in the United States, in response to the need in the armed forces to communicate with the Allies and other foreign peoples. The American school system had provided very little foreign language teaching and had concentrated on introducing learners to written texts rather than spoken language. The ASTP called upon well-known linguists, such as Leonard **bloomfield** (1942), who developed intensive courses in some fifteen languages taught to selected and highly motivated personnel in groups of ten over 9-month periods with fifteen hours of instruction a week. The methods used included, initially, twelve hours of oral work with **native speakers** and three hours of **grammar** work with professional linguists, with use of audio-visual aids. The success of 'the **american army method**', as it came to be known, cannot be attributed only to the methods involved, which were in any case eclectic, but rather to the conditions of learning and the nature of the learners, whose **motivation** was high and who concentrated almost exclusively on language learning during the intensive period.

Interest in changing language teaching in the general education system began to develop in the early 1950s (Rivers, 1964: 3) but was given a major boost by the general response to the launching of the satellite Sputnik by the Soviet Union. This created a fear that the US education system was inadequate with respect to science and language teaching, and led to the National Defense Education Act which included the Language Development Program. The 'Army Method' served as a model with respect to the emphasis on the spoken language, the use of mechanical aids, the analysis of language in structuralist terms, and the reference to behaviourist psychology for a theory of language learning. Language teaching theorists, such as Brooks (1960 and 1964), promoted what became known as the A-L method, arguing that language is behaviour, that learning a language is learning how to behave rather than learning how to explain its

grammar, that behaviour is best learned through the formation of appropriate habits which can be 'overlearned' to the point of becoming automatic by frequent *imitation* of the teacher or a recorded voice and *memorisation* of dialogues or key sentences. This was called the 'mim-mem' method. The language laboratory, being developed in the early 1960s, offered a useful means of providing 'mim-mem' exercises. Dialogues and key sentences were chosen to represent significant syntactic structures of the language, and to anticipate the structures which **contrastive analysis** of the foreign language and the learner's own had shown to be difficult because different.

Criticisms of the A-L method by language teaching theorists focused on its psychological foundations. **Rivers** published a review in 1964 which, whilst not rejecting the A-L method, argued against too much reliance on the behaviourism of B.F. Skinner – her interpretation has since been challenged (Castagno, 2006) – and advocated the introduction of the work of 'neo-behaviourists' such as Osgood and Mowrer, in order both to take account of learners' perceptions of their goals and ensure that language be learned in a rich cultural context, and 'to do justice to "meaning" in the foreign language as well as to manipulative skill' (Rivers, 1964: 139). Rivers also suggested that there was little support for the taboo on the written word in the first stages of the learning process, imposed by the order of 'hearing–speaking–reading–writing'.

A much stronger criticism of behaviourism as represented by Skinner came from Noam **Chomsky** at a large meeting of language teachers in 1965, in which he dismissed the theories of language learning on which the A-L method was founded (Chomsky, 1966). Chomsky argued that behaviourist theory, with its explanation of language acquisition in terms of habit formation through stimulus from children's linguistic environment and reinforcement of correct response, could not possibly account for the ability to generate an infinite number of utterances from a finite grammatical **competence**. Behaviourism could not account for the 'creativity' of human language.

Other criticisms of a more pragmatic nature were put forward: learners became bored with drills and pattern practice; the move from repetition and

closely guided re-use of learned structures to spontaneous re-use of those same structures was not clearly specified; contrastive analysis did not anticipate and eradicate all the errors learners made; **materials** and the method itself appeared to provide only for the first few years of learning, and not for intermediate and advanced learners.

The influence of the A-L method beyond the United States was felt in Western European countries to differing degrees, and was modified by the parallel development in France of the **audio-visual** method, and the combination of the tenets of audiolingualism with other techniques and principles. In Britain, for example, the two methods are often treated as similar and related in procedures, whatever differences there might be in origins and theories of language and language learning (Bennett, 1974; Hawkins, 1987). The decline of the A-L method and of A-L **textbooks** can be traced to the attacks on its psychological base in the mid-1960s, and the development of **communicative language teaching** from the 1970s. The lasting influence of the A-L method can be traced, like that of other methods, in the rules-of-thumb handed down in the teaching profession, such as the order of presentation of new language, but no systematic use of the method is to be found any longer.

**See also:** Audio-visual language teaching; Behaviourism; Bilingual methods; Direct method; History: after 1945; Intercultural competence;

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## Audio-visual language teaching

A language teaching method which is based on the co-ordinated use of visual and auditory technical media. It exists in 'strong' versions in which the simultaneous use of pictorial and auditory material is dominant, and in 'weak' versions in which pictorial and auditory materials are used only as a component within language instruction or, more frequently, with both elements dissociated from each other. The best known implementation of the 'strong' variant is the Méthode Structuro-Globale Audio-Visuelle (SGAV) which was developed in the 1950s simultaneously at the University of Zagreb (under the direction of Petar Guberina) and at the École Normale Supérieure in Saint Cloud (in the

institution which was predecessor to the **CRÉDIF**, under the direction of Paul Rivenc). The prototype is the audio-visual course *Voix et images de France* (1961). This classical form of the audio-visual method is strictly monolingual and puts great emphasis on basic oral skills, whereas reading and writing are only introduced after a considerable time delay. The choice of vocabulary and grammatical structures is based on **le français fondamental**.

The audio-visual method is often linked to the audio-lingual method because both methods use sound recorders, work mainly with dialogue and were presented as scientifically based methods during the 1960s. This affinity exists, however, only in a certain number of courses. Most SGAV methodologists reject pattern practice and some even have a sceptical attitude towards the **language laboratory**. The AV method not only has a close relationship to the **direct method**, but can even be seen as an offshoot of this approach. The common ground between the direct method and the AV method consists not only in the use of visual media together with the monolingual principle, but also in similarities in the typical procedure of a teaching unit. There are nonetheless some differences. The direct method is above all descriptive whilst the AV method is orientated towards dialogue. The direct method frequently uses complex single images, whereas the AV method uses sequences of images in which a single image corresponds to only one sentence or even to part of a sentence. Furthermore the direct method, dependent on images, is a relatively open methodological variant which can be complemented by real or artificial objects and by the reading of lesson texts, whereas the classic AV method represents a closed method with precisely stipulated teaching techniques (Besse, 1985; Puren, 1988; Reinfried, 1992).

The typical procedures of the 'strong' version of the AV method can be traced back to the AV course *Voix et images de France* (CRÉDIF, 1961):

Each teaching unit is introduced by a *presentation phase*, in which dialogue with approximately 30 images is presented to the learners twice. The images are projected onto a screen as slides for about one second before the corresponding verbal text. Then there can be a first repetition of parts of the text by the learners.



In the following *explanatory phase* the pupils' general and incomplete understanding is deepened and improved by the teacher using monolingual semanticisation techniques (for example pointing at details of the image, the use of mime and gesture, paraphrase). This should not be given just in the form of a presentation by the teacher but should be as interactive as possible by taking the form of a classroom conversation. The lexical understanding of learners was made more difficult in the 1960s and 1970s because many audio-visual methodologists refused to give not only translations but even *analytical* monolingual explanation procedures.

Then the sound recorder is used again in an *imitation phase*. The learners repeat the passages of dialogue (singly or in chorus), and their pronunciation is corrected.

During the *exploitation phase* the learners continue to absorb the dialogue. The teacher asks questions about individual images or the learners ask each other questions. Finally, the learners attempt to present the dialogue in role-play, during which the images are at first still used as stimuli.

At the end of the teaching unit there is a *transposition phase*. The learners are supposed as far as possible to use the language material in new situations. This can be, for example, the creation of a new dialogue or free conversation.

Shorter image sequences with familiar vocabulary can be added for grammatical or pronunciation exercises (Renard and Van Vlasselaer, 1976; Schiffler, 1973). The discoveries of the 1950s in the domain of acoustic phonetics are taken into account and the Suvag Lingua, a new technical apparatus for filtering frequency ranges, is sometimes used (Billières, 2005).

The linguist P. Guberina (1964, 1984) developed approaches which were directed towards a structural-global learning theory. He starts with a concept of structure as developed in the first half of the twentieth century (especially in Germany and France) within the context of a holistic theory of language. The act of linguistic understanding is for him primarily a holistic process, from which the *valeur* of the individual structure is interpreted in its *valeur*. At the level of expression, suprasegmental factors (intonation, prosody, intensity) become superimposed onto the phonological information,

and, at the level of content, lexical meanings and sentence meanings are both complemented and modified by the context (speech situation, interpersonal relationships, mime, gesture). It is for this reason that the presentation of language should always have its starting point in the whole situation (including affective components) whereby the external speech context is conveyed by an illustration. This emphasis on globality applies to both the reception and production of all the structures: linguistic units (whether sound, lexeme or grammatical structure) should be presented to learners only in a situational or textual context, i.e. they should neither be isolated nor analysed in the classroom.

The principle of globality together with the monolingual approach can, however, hinder the processing of language. Empirical investigations of AV courses have shown that a holistic, situation-related semanticisation is not sufficient to explain linguistic statements clearly. A correct understanding of the meaning was attained for only about a third of the foreign language sentences, and elements which were missing or provided by the learners themselves were demonstrated in a further third, whereas gross distortions of meaning were found in the final third (Germain, 1976: 53ff.; Guénou, 1964: 133ff.). These results demonstrate the limitations of image sequences as means of semantic transmission. In order to increase the semanticisation potential in the images, 'images within images' like speech bubbles were used in almost every second image even during the early period of AV methods. Then, at the beginning of the 1970s, several language courses appeared with numerous coded images which were enriched with symbols or even took the form of picture puzzles. The AV French course *Le français et la vie* (Mauger and Bruézière, 1971) represents the apex of this development. Thus in the image presented here, Henri on the left, who as the speaker is highlighted with a darker silhouette, asks Michel in the middle whether his wife works at the JAL company. The hammer is used here as a general symbol for work (in fact Michel's wife is a typist), the schematic representation of the house symbolises the firm, and the rectangular shape of the 'speech bubble' symbolises the reference to the present in the verbal

statement (there are other speech bubble shapes in the course for future and past). However, attempts of this kind to change pictures to ideograms were not successful in the longer term because they failed to improve on the comprehensibility of the verbal statements (Reinfried, 1990).

SGAV methods reached the peak of their international recognition in the 1970s. Empirical investigations of the CRÉDIF courses and other AV courses were carried out in several countries to study their feasibility in state schools. The school experiments carried out in the Federal Republic of Germany came overwhelmingly to the conclusion that, despite some advantages in AV methods, there were major disadvantages caused by the following four factors: the inadequate support of oral teaching because of the lack of written materials, the exclusive limitation to dialogues in beginner classes, the neglect of writing skills, and in part also the failure to develop grammatical awareness in learners. Furthermore, there were a number of critical voices raised against the rigidity of the sequencing of the courses, which left no room for creativity in learners and teachers (Firges and Pelz, 1976; Schiffler, 1976).

Some AV methodologists reacted to this criticism by varying the sequencing and no longer beginning the lesson with the AV presentation phase but with pupils expressing hypotheses about the contents of the images. Moreover the **communicative language teaching** revolution of the 1970s led to a structured progression based on communicative functions in AV courses and to a stronger emphasis on free expression. Role-plays

with physical actions were now introduced more often into AV courses; **writing** as an independent skill was given greater value; the purely oral phase of the course was reduced. In the 1980s, American alternative methods became an important influence on some AV courses. The pressure on learners to express themselves from the very beginning of the first teaching units was rejected on the basis of the concept of delayed oral practice, and grammatical progression was made more flexible. Some AV courses now recommended that the imitation phase should be abandoned and suggested instead the introduction of group activities, games and **total physical response**. Some methodologists also redefined SGAV methods, in the context of these reorientations, in constructivist and interactionist terms.

Despite all these efforts at reform, AV methods did not manage, on the whole, to maintain their foothold in state schools. There is no doubt that in the 1970s they contributed significantly to dialogue being given priority over descriptive and narrative texts in newly published text books. Furthermore, many text book publishers made an effort at the time to produce visual and audio media as additional and optional materials for foreign language teaching. However, on the whole, AV methods in their 'strong' version were limited to intensive courses for all age groups and adult education. Courses following SGAV methods appeared in thirteen languages.

In 1978, Paul Rivenc founded an international SGAV association which still organises seminars and methodology publications (for example Rivenc, 2003). Most of its members are in France or Belgium. Although the AV method has disappeared from the top of the methodology agenda, it persisted at the beginning of the twenty-first century – in a more or less 'weakened' form in textbooks and courses. But the semanticising function of the image has lost its importance whereas the diversification of visual media has increased, as have the pictorial functions in the teaching and learning processes.

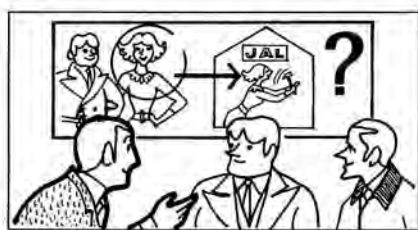


Figure 6 *Le français et la vie*  
Source: Mauger and Bruézière, 1971: 88, ill. 19.

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MARCUS REINFRIED

## Authenticity

The interest in the use of authentic **materials** for language teaching developed during the late 1970s and the early 1980s under the influence of applied linguists such as **Widdowson** (1978), Candlin and Edelhoff (1982) and Breen (1985). The most prominent feature of authenticity is the quality of the language data which is studied or which is used as the core of an activity. Most often this is interpreted to imply the selection for teaching purposes of a text (written or spoken) which was first conceived as a way of communicating amongst **native speakers** of a particular language, with no intention on the part of its originators for it to be used as an instrument for teaching that language to learners. The advantage of this approach is felt to lie in the fact that, in authentic texts, the language data is genuine and may be expected to embody characteristics that specially-devised teaching materials often fail to capture or which they distort. This is particularly marked in the area of **listening** comprehension in which the phonological phenomena of natural speech are a factor to be considered along with the choice of words of the speaker or speakers. Where the use of authentic written texts is concerned, a related dimension is the visual means that were originally employed to present the text, so that layout, typeface and headings are considered an integral part of the message as well as any accompanying pictorial or diagrammatic material. Discourse

structure is felt to be another important aspect of communication that can best be studied through the use of authentic texts, both spoken and written.

From the outset it was emphasised by innovators in this area that authenticity lay not only in the genuine nature of the texts selected, but also in the relationship of the learner with the text. Thus, using an authentic newspaper article for a purpose far removed from its original intention – which might have been to amuse, inform or shock – by, for example, requiring learners to underline and analyse all the noun-phrases would by many be thought to render the experience inauthentic. Others would say that, provided the first contact with the text had reflected its real-life purpose, it would be legitimate then to use it as an object of study so that the learner could consciously discover the linguistic as well as other means by which the intended effects were conveyed. The analysis of the linguistic features of texts has been much facilitated by the growth of corpus-based computer studies, and a methodological dimension has been opened by the incorporation into **CALL (computer assisted language learning)** of corpus-based investigations of authentic texts by learners themselves.

A fundamental issue with the use of authentic texts lies in the quantity of unfamiliar language that they can put before the learner, which is often seen as a measure of difficulty. This has led in some cases to a reluctance to use authentic texts with learners below a certain level of language attainment. An opposite view has been that learners can benefit from contact with texts that are considerably above their attainment level, and that the teacher should grade the task rather than the text, so that a relatively impenetrable text can be given an extremely easy task. Swan (1985a, 1995b) satirised the extremes to which this view has occasionally been taken by both coursebook writers and classroom teachers.

Authenticity is an area in which it is necessary to distinguish the considered contributions of **applied linguists** and the more thoughtful methodologists from the often diluted or crude interpretations that have been used as the idea has become widely diffused. Publishers of teaching materials have often been accused of distortions of the term, possibly because, for a period in the 1980s, the notion of

authenticity became very closely associated with the central tenets of **communicative** approaches. ‘Authentic’ became a desirable term to see in the publicity material for new materials, and hybrid and – to many people – self-contradictory terms such as ‘semi-authentic’ or ‘near-authentic’ were often used in the descriptions of teaching materials, especially where listening comprehension was concerned. These loose terms often obscured the respectable aims of recording techniques, such as the use of semi-scripted stimuli for speakers, which aims to elicit a stream of speech that reproduces or closely approximates the phenomena of spontaneous speech even though the content and the language of the recording are to a considerable extent pre-planned and controlled. A related issue is whether an authentic **reading** text remains authentic if it is slightly adapted to lessen expected barriers to comprehension. The issue of the quantity and nature of realism in language data is thus a lively one when communicatively-based language learning is under discussion.

A possible resolution to the debate over how to render authentic materials accessible to learners lies in the recognition that not all authentic texts are of equal difficulty, in that there is often a balance between linguistic or discourse unfamiliarity and sources of comprehension support to be found within the same text. It could be legitimate to put major effort into the selection of texts so that the level of challenge they present to a particular class is at a reasonable rather than an unfeasible level. Criteria for judging the level of challenge in relation to particular learners are therefore an issue for teachers and teacher trainers, as well as for applied linguists.

**See also:** Corpus linguistic and language teaching; Native speaker; Non-native speaker teacher; Study abroad; Teacher thinking

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SHELAGH RIXON

## Autonomy and autonomous learners

Autonomy in language learning depends on the development and exercise of a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision making and independent action (see Little, 1991: 4); autonomous learners assume Responsibility For Determining The Purpose, Content, Rhythm And Method Of Their Learning, Monitoring Its Progress And Evaluating Its Outcomes (see Holec, 1981: 3). In **self-access** language learning this may entail learners devising their own learning programmes to suit their particular **needs**; in classrooms it is likely to be a matter of teachers helping learners to become reflective managers of their own learning within the constraints imposed by official curricula and public examinations. Pedagogical measures calculated to foster the development of learner autonomy have much in common with those adopted by collaborative learning and **humanistic** methods.

Autonomy is the means by which learners in any domain transcend the limitations and constraints of their immediate learning environment. In the case of foreign language learning, this means that

autonomous learners are able to apply their learning **skills** in contexts beyond the classroom or other environment in which learning has taken place, but also that they are able to deploy their target language knowledge and skills in autonomous target language use. In other words, the development of autonomy entails the development of a capacity for independence in language use as well as in language learning. In principle these two capacities should interact with one another in a mutually enhancing way.

Learner autonomy engages the metacognitive but also the affective domain. The pedagogical procedures by which its development is fostered give sustained attention to the metacognitive processes of planning, monitoring and evaluating the performance of individual learning tasks and the progress of learning overall. Yet at the same time the learner is engaged affectively, since learning is repeatedly reflected upon and evaluated in terms of individual needs, interests and capacities. Positive **motivation** is thus central to the development of learner autonomy.

As a general pedagogical concept, learner autonomy accommodates a wide range of teaching and learning techniques. Nevertheless, language pedagogies that are intent on fostering the development of learner autonomy tend to have certain practices in common. For example, to the extent that they recognise the importance of autonomy in language use as well as language learning, they use the target language as the principal channel of teaching and learning. Similarly, their concern with reflection and critical evaluation means that they tend to assign a central role to learner journals and group discussion.

The ideas that cluster around the concept of learner autonomy have also been promoted under other banners – for example, 'humanistic language teaching', 'collaborative learning', 'experiential learning', 'the learning-centred classroom'. What distinguishes 'learner autonomy' from these terms is the fact that it necessarily implies a holistic view of the learner as an individual. It thus reminds teachers that learners bring to the classroom a personal history and personal needs that may have little in common with the assumed background and implied needs on which the curriculum is based. It

also reminds them that the ultimate measure of success in second or foreign language learning is the extent to which the target language becomes a fully integrated part of the learner's **identity**.

Learner autonomy is never absolute. The freedom it entails is always constrained by the interdependence that in part defines the human social condition and thus the nature of human learning. Learners can only ever be autonomous to the extent that their achieved knowledge and skills permit. The capacity for autonomous learning behaviour inevitably varies according to context and task, and learners exercise their autonomy with varying degrees of conscious awareness.

Autonomy was first introduced into discussion about language teaching and learning by Henri Holec's *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning*, published by the **Council of Europe** in 1979 (cited as Holec, 1981). Holec took his immediate inspiration from the Council of Europe's work in **adult** education, which emphasised the importance of equipping adult learners with the knowledge and confidence to participate in the democratic process: 'From the idea of man "product of his society", one moves to the idea of man "producer of his society"' (Janne, 1977; cited in Holec, 1981: 1). The general educational arguments that lie behind Holec's treatment of autonomy in foreign language learning have much in common with radical theories of education current in the 1970s (e.g., Illich, 1971; Freire, 1972).

A second source of ideas important for the development of thinking about learner autonomy is work on language and communication in the classroom undertaken in the UK in the 1970s. Douglas Barnes's *From Communication to Curriculum* (1976) is representative of this movement. Although it fits into the same general political picture as Holec's Council of Europe report, the immediate sources for Barnes's book are psychological. Essentially, he argues that if schooling is to have long-term benefits, pupils must be fully engaged in the learning process; this can happen only if they can make connections between the knowledge presented to them in the classroom ('school knowledge') and the knowledge by which they lead their lives outside the classroom ('action knowledge').

A closely similar concern with the relation between learning and forms of discourse arises in

studies of child language **acquisition**, especially those that emphasise the social-interactive dimension (see Tizard and Hughes, 1984; Wells, 1985). This encourages the thought that autonomy is central to the process and the outcome of developmental learning; it also provides support for the argument that autonomy develops out of social interaction and interdependence. The exploration of the socio-cultural psychology of Vygotsky by educational psychologists is another rich source of insight into the processes that underlie the development of learner autonomy (see, e.g., Tharp and Gallimore, 1988; Moll, 1990).

The concept of learner autonomy is subject to two widespread misinterpretations. First, it is often taken to be a synonym for self-instruction or self-access learning. This is due partly to the historical conjunction of self-access and autonomy in discussion about language learning, and partly to the common-sense assumption that autonomy means independence and independence means learning without a teacher. The second misinterpretation is that autonomy requires learners to work in isolation from one another; this arises in discussion of autonomy in relation to both classroom and self-access language learning.

Perhaps the most frequently voiced criticism of learner autonomy as a general goal in foreign language learning is that it derives from liberal traditions in Western education and thus may be inappropriate in non-Western educational cultures. Attempts to respond to this criticism appeal at once to the universal and the relative in human culture and society, arguing that autonomy is a hallmark of all truly successful learning, but that the discursive practices by which it is developed are culturally conditioned and thus endlessly variable.

As a general educational ideal, learner autonomy has a long history that has rarely moved far from the liberal mainstream. Perhaps under the impact of radical educational theories, the 1980s saw an increasing tendency for national and regional curricula to include the development of learner autonomy among their core goals, though terms like 'independent learning' and 'critical thinking' are more often used than 'autonomy' itself. In 2001 learner autonomy received a fresh impetus from the Council of Europe when it launched the

European Language Portfolio. Yet the development of learner autonomy remains one of the most acute challenges that teachers can face, and its thorough-going pursuit is likely always to remain a minority interest.

**See also:** Attitudes and language learning; Authenticity; Learning to learn; Motivation; Psychology; Self-access

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## Further reading

DAVID LITTLE

# B

## Beginner language learners

A term applied to language learners of any **age** in the initial stages of acquisition of a language other than their **mother tongue**. A distinction can be made between ‘absolute or real’ beginners, who exhibit no knowledge of the language (what Stevick, 1986, terms ‘pre-beginners’) and ‘false beginners’, who may have experienced previous instruction, incidental exposure to the language, or be self-taught. Their knowledge is ‘dormant’.

Beginner learners are by no means a homogeneous group but bring to the classroom diverse backgrounds and highly varied personal characteristics and learning factors. These include:

- the extent of previous experience of second/foreign language learning;
- age at the time of learning;
- cognitive development;
- existing abilities and knowledge in first and second languages;
- **speaking** and literacy;
- familiarity with the script of the language;
- **attitudes** and expectations about the language and its culture;
- understandings about the ‘distance’ of the first from the second language;
- affective factors;
- existing **learning styles** and **strategies**.

The learning context may also vary according to time, intensity and duration of the learning

experience; location (in the home country or overseas, in second or foreign language settings); the requirement to follow prescribed **syllabus** guidelines; and the demands for internal and external **assessment** and examination.

Significant work in identifying the communicative needs of **adult** beginner learners was conducted through the **Council of Europe** from 1971, resulting in **threshold level** (T-Level) specifications for **English** (van Ek, 1975), French (1976), Spanish (1979), German (1980) and Italian (1981). T-level referred to the ‘common core’ of language items and functions which beginner learners would need to acquire before moving on to more advanced courses related to professional or personal goals.

**See also:** Age factors; Attitudes and language learning; Council of Europe Modern Languages Projects; Gender and language learning; Learning styles; Mother tongue; Psychology; Second language acquisition theories; Threshold Level

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ANNE BURNS

## Behaviourism

Behaviourism as a psychological theory can be traced back to the early twentieth century, and a basic premise is that most human behaviour is learned through a continual process of responding to stimuli. Reinforcement of stimulus and response patterns leads to repetitious behaviour or habits, which are to some extent predictable, based upon previous experience. Behaviourism's central notions were linked to a positivist view of the scientific method, which accepts only phenomena that are observable and measurable as worthy of serious attention. Empirical methods were the only creditable means of conducting research. This rather unequivocal view of science was a characteristic feature of behaviourism and, initially, an appealing one. Behaviourism became the dominant theory in American **psychology** immediately before and after World War Two, and its influence extended into

many academic fields, including **applied linguistics**. Through the works of psychologists and linguists such as Watson, **Bloomfield** and Skinner, the behavioural approach to the teaching of languages developed which then dominated American linguistics in the 1950s and 1960s.

Behaviourism developed a 'broad and diverse character' (Mann, 1983: 19) but this article will focus on the general notions and applications, its views on the nature of human behaviour, its scientific method and the application of behaviourist principles to language teaching theory and methodology. Behaviourism, often associated with **audiolingualism**, was subsequently heavily criticised, notably by **Chomsky** (1959). Other theories and related methods have since come to the fore, but behaviourism can be viewed as a key stage in the development of language learning and teaching methodology.

Behaviourism claimed to have found the key to human behaviour, which is viewed as no different to that of other, simpler, living organisms. Behaviour results from stimuli presented to us in our environment, including internal ones such as hunger, and can be observed as responses to these stimuli. If the result is positive, such as obtaining food to satisfy our hunger in a particular manner, it is reinforced and is likely to be repeated, eventually becoming a habit which is carried out unconsciously.

In behaviourism, we see the search for the understanding of stimuli and related responses and how reinforcement and the potential for controlled learning occurs. The early theorists built on the work of Pavlov, the Russian physiologist who looked at the process of stimuli and response in experiments on dogs. He focused on reflex mechanisms and how these can be turned into learned or conditioned behaviour. The result of the dogs being conditioned to salivate (response) to the ringing of a bell (stimulus) is a classic example of this early stimulus-response (S-R) psychology.

Behaviourism concentrated on the S-R in human behaviour and, at its most extreme, adherents claimed that any stated type of behaviour could be produced in an individual through the conscious manipulation of the process of stimulus, response and reinforcement or conditioning.

The work of J.B. Watson, the ‘founder of the so-called “behaviourist” approach in psychology’ (Lyons, 1991: 30) was central, and he and his followers did not feel the need to concern themselves with anything that fell outside the positivist, empirical framework. Objectivity was to be the key rather than subjective hypothesising about unobservable phenomena. The existence of the mind, for example, or the subconscious was not important, because these were considered as postulates which may or may not exist and were not directly observable. In this sense, behaviourism was a reaction against Freudian psychology and its notions of a submerged subconscious affecting, even controlling, our behaviour. Stimuli, responses and habits, on the other hand, were open to the empirical method. Speech could be observed directly, with thought being, in Watson’s view, inaudible speech.

Watson’s writings on behaviourism from 1913 onwards influenced the work of Bloomfield (who subsequently set up the “Bloomfieldian” tradition of “autonomous” **linguistics**) and his book *Language* (1935) contributed significantly to behavioural linguistics. Bloomfield ‘explicitly adopted behaviourism as a framework for linguistic description’ (Lyons, 1991: 30–1). He believed we could predict or hypothesise what might cause a person to speak and what they might say in certain circumstances. The more detail we obtain about a given situation, the more specific will be our prediction of the speech behaviour based upon knowledge about the stimuli and the previously observed patterns of language habits or behaviour.

The work of Skinner was also pivotal in this field. His influential and controversial *Verbal Behaviour* (1957) made the claim that language is no different to any other type of non-verbal behaviour and there is no need, therefore, for any new principles or theories to explain it. Behaviourism could be applied just as well to language learning as anything else.

It was accepted that second language (L2) learning had many similarities to first language (L1) learning, with foreign language instruction largely viewed as a process of ‘imitation and reinforcement’ (Crystal, 1987: 372). Just as suitable habits of speech have to be encouraged in children,

so too is the case with second language learners. Listening to patterns and drills and repeating these, as with the audiolingual method, with correction when necessary, assists the development of good L2 habits. It was accepted that properties from L1 might lead to interference or **transfer** from L2, but these would have to be dealt with in order to promote the correct patterns. According to Crystal, ‘the main aim of behaviourist teaching is thus to form new, correct linguistic habits through intensive practice, eliminating interference errors in the process’ (1987: 372).

Language behaviour, therefore, can be seen as a response to many stimuli, including communication **needs**. Conversations may be based on this premise, or different stimuli may be seen, such as one person talking to another in a particular way. Ideas of positive and negative reinforcement enter the equation with certain behaviour more likely to be deterred by the latter, as with punishment. Reinforcement is central as it increases the chances of behaviour recurring and becoming a habit. Manipulation of stimuli can lead to different patterns of response and certain language habits can be produced with others changed. Drilling and repetition is considered as a key method for instilling L2 language behaviour patterns.

Behaviourism’s dominance seemed to be appropriate for the post-war period, but it declined as its limitations became increasingly hard to suppress and new theories and methods were developed. Its restricted applicability was seen in language learning, which cannot always be reduced to drilling and patterned behaviour. It was also seen as failing to predict patterns of linguistic behaviour with other factors involved outside the S–R equation.

Its theoretical basis was criticised as it reduced human behaviour to a series of learned habits and had a problem in explaining creativity. It was also attacked for offering an extremely mechanistic and atomistic view of human behaviour with its implications of passivity and manipulation. Various refinements were made in order to counter the main criticisms, but these could not save the paradigm. The relegation of disputed phenomena such as the mind and the subconscious to the category of ‘unscientific’ was always problematic and became increasingly the subject of critical focus.

**Chomsky** provided both direct and indirect critiques, claiming that language is not a habit and that it may be free from stimulus–control. Differences between linguistic and other behaviour were recognised, with the implication that language learning and teaching required special consideration. Chomsky’s theory of transformational **grammar** and the related view of innate cognitive and not just physiological abilities contributed to behaviourism’s final demise. Human beings do not just react, but think, reflect and draw upon abilities that may not be learned but innate. These are difficult to account for within the empirical method. ‘Sentences are not learned by imitation and repetition but “generated” from the learner’s underlying “competence”’ (Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 59). Such views gained favour from the 1960s onwards and, although behaviourism retained some importance in language theory and practice, its reign was over.

**See also:** Acquisition and teaching; Audio-lingual method; Chomsky; Transfer; Universal grammar

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RUTH CHERRINGTON

## Beliefs about other countries

During the course of childhood and adolescence, individuals build up an extensive set of beliefs about other countries. They acquire beliefs about the natural and man-made features of other countries and about the people who live in those countries, especially beliefs about their physical features, personalities and lifestyles. School education is a major influence on these beliefs, but there are also many other sources of influence including television, films, magazines, books, parents, peers and visits to other countries. These beliefs have been investigated extensively over the past half-century.

## Beliefs about the physical geographies of other countries

Studies exploring children’s physical-geographical beliefs have revealed that children typically begin to acquire beliefs about the physical geography of their own country from about 5 years of age (Barrett, 2007). Their beliefs about the physical geographies of other countries start to emerge slightly later, and undergo considerable elaboration at approximately 7–8 years of age. Piaget and Weil (1951) originally argued that young children had some difficulty in conceptualising the spatial geographies of countries, and proposed that their understanding develops in a systematic stage-like manner between 4 and 15 years of age and is tied to the development of their more general cognitive abilities. However, subsequent studies (e.g. Gould and White, 1986; Jahoda, 1964; Wiegand, 1995) have revealed that their understanding is constructed in a much more haphazard and piecemeal manner than Piaget and Weil suggested, being heavily dependent on the information about other countries which is made available to them through

school education, television, films and foreign travel (Axia et al., 1998; Barrett and Farroni, 1996; Bouchier et al., 2002; Holloway and Valentine, 2000; Wiegand, 1991a, 1991b).

Despite this piecemeal acquisition process, systematic social group differences in children's beliefs about other countries emerge at an early age. Boys tend to construct more accurate geographical representations of other countries than girls, especially concerning the spatial relationships which exist between different geographical landmarks such as mountains, lakes, rivers and cities (Barrett and Farroni, 1996; Bouchier et al., 2002). Social class differences are also pronounced, with middle-class children typically acquiring more accurate representations of other countries than working-class children (Bouchier et al., 2002; Wiegand, 1991a). Ethnic group differences have also been found: for example, British children of Indian and Pakistani heritage have more accurate geographical representations of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East than white British children, who instead have more accurate representations of Western European countries (Wiegand, 1991a). Finally, there are also national group differences with, for example, Italian children acquiring much more accurate geographical representations of other countries than British children (Axia et al., 1998; Barrett and Farroni, 1996).

These group differences have been traced to several sources. The gender difference appears to be linked to gender differences in spatial cognition which begin to emerge at 7–8 years of age, largely as a consequence of the different opportunities which are afforded to boys and girls to exercise their spatial skills (Barrett, 2007; Matthews, 1992). The social class and ethnic group differences are linked to different patterns of exposure to information about other countries and to the different travel experiences of the groups of children involved (Wiegand, 1991b), while the national group differences have been traced to the different school curricula in geography which are followed within different countries (Axia et al., 1998; Barrett and Farroni, 1996).

As far as children's attitudes and feelings towards other countries are concerned, they often feel less positive about countries which have been

the traditional enemy of their own country in the historic past. These feelings appear to be a consequence of exposure to negative media representations of that country, negative parental and peer discourse about the country, and the avoidance of travel to that country (Bar-Tal and Teichman, 2005; Johnson, 1966; Wiegand, 1991b). Although travel to other countries does sometimes enhance the positivity of children's feelings towards those countries (Bouchier et al., 2002), it is noteworthy that children's feelings are not usually related to their levels of factual knowledge about the country concerned. Indeed, in one study it was found that providing additional factual information about one particular target country actually made the children feel more negatively towards that country (Stillwell and Spencer, 1973).

### **Beliefs about the people who live in other countries**

Children and adolescents also acquire extensive systems of beliefs about the people who live in other countries. Rudimentary stereotypes of some national groups are already acquired by the age of 5 or 6 (Barrett and Short, 1992; Barrett et al., 2003; Bar-Tal, 1996; Lambert and Klineberg, 1967). These stereotypes are subsequently elaborated over the next few years, so that by 10 or 11 years of age, children have constructed elaborate beliefs about the typical physical features, clothing, habits, psychological and personality traits of a large number of different national groups. For example, Barrett and Short (1992) found that more than 50 per cent of their sample of 8- to 10-year-old English children believed that Italian people were suntanned, strong, spoke Italian, wore smart clothes, ate lots of spaghetti and pasta, and were happy and peaceful but poor, while German people were white, tall, spoke German, and were happy and hardworking but aggressive. However, with increasing age, there is a growing acknowledgment that there is variability within national populations and that not everyone conforms to these national stereotypes. Children's information about other national groups is typically drawn from a wide range of different sources, including television, films, advertisements, books, school work and the discourse of parents,

peers and teachers (Barrett, 2007; Barrett and Short, 1992; Bar-Tal, 1997; Holloway and Valentine, 2000; Lambert and Klineberg, 1967).

Children's attitudes to and feelings about the people who live in other countries are often idiosyncratic before 7 years of age. For example, Piaget and Weil (1951) found that one young Swiss child believed that American people were stupid because they did not know where Rue de Mont Blanc was, while another believed that English people were nicer than Swiss people because they do not quarrel so much. However, from about 7 years, many children do start to express a systematic preference for people from their own country over people from other countries, justifying these feelings using patriotic arguments drawing on the traditional values of their own country; furthermore, this bias towards people from their own country sometimes strengthens still further between 7 and 11 years of age (Barrett and Short, 1992; Hess and Torney, 1967; Jaspers et al., 1972; Johnson et al., 1970). However, the people from some other countries may still be very positively liked and, in a few cases, may even be preferred over people from the child's own country. This occurs particularly in cases where the child's own country has a comparatively low international standing (Tajfel et al., 1972).

Children's and adolescents' **attitudes** towards the people living in other countries display considerable developmental variability (Barrett, 2007; Byram et al., 1991; Lambert and Klineberg, 1967). For example, with increasing age, these attitudes sometimes become more positive, sometimes more negative, sometimes more positive before becoming more negative again, sometimes more negative before becoming more positive again, and sometimes these attitudes do not show any changes at all in their valence between 6 and 15 years of age. Furthermore, different developmental patterns may be exhibited depending on the country in which the child lives and the particular foreign group which is involved. These different patterns are related to a number of factors, including the perceived characteristics and **stereotypes** of the foreign groups concerned, and the child's specific geographical, ethnic and linguistic position within their own country (Barrett, 2007).

However, people from countries which have been the traditional enemy of the child's own country in the historic past are often disliked from an early age (Barrett, 2007; Jahoda, 1962; Piaget and Weil, 1951; Teichman, 2001). Indeed, in countries which have experienced recent warfare (such as Israel and Croatia), extreme negativity may be displayed towards the enemy people as early as 2 or 3 years of age (Bar-Tal, 1996; Povrzanović, 1997). In such settings, this extreme negativity not only sets in at a very early age, but typically does not moderate with age, and usually strengthens still further during early adolescence (Bar-Tal and Teichman, 2005; Oppenheimer and Barrett, 2011).

Influences on children's attitudes and feelings are the same as those which were noted earlier as influences on the contents of children's national stereotypes: they include television, films, books, parental and peer discourse and practices, direct personal contact with people from other countries, school work, school textbooks and teacher discourse and practices (Barrett, 2007; Lambert and Klineberg, 1967).

### **Influences associated with education and with language use**

Education is a notable influence on children's beliefs about other countries. This is because schools usually provide a great deal of input to students concerning both the physical geographies of other countries and the people who live in them. This typically occurs through the curricula, the **textbooks** and the teaching which is delivered in subjects such as geography, history, literature and foreign languages.

Educational input, however, can be skewed by ethnocentric biases. These biases typically involve either: (i) the provision of what is supposedly objective factual information about the people living in other countries but using terminology carrying negative connotations; (ii) the omission of positive information about the people being described; or (iii) setting up implicit comparisons between people in other countries and people in the child's own country using comparative dimensions on which the latter are clearly superior. All three types of bias have been found to be widespread in

school curricula, textbooks and teaching (Anyon, 1979; Apple, 1993; Barrett, 2007; Doyle, 2002; Kallis, 1999; Kwang, 1985; Loewen, 1996; Maw, 1991; Schleicher and Kozma, 1992; Wills, 1994; Winter, 1997). These biases are problematic given the evidence that children and adolescents do indeed draw on both teaching and textbooks, as well as posters, maps and wall charts displayed on classroom walls, as sources of information about foreign countries and foreign peoples (Axia et al., 1998; Barrett and Short, 1992; Byram et al., 1991; Lambert and Klineberg, 1967; Stillwell and Spencer, 1973).

Evidence has also been found that the **medium of instruction** can be systematically related to beliefs about the people who live in other countries. For example, research conducted in Ukraine, Georgia and Azerbaijan has revealed differences in children's beliefs depending on whether they attend Russian language schools or national language (i.e. Ukrainian, Georgian or Azeri language) schools (Barrett, 2007; Barrett et al., 2001). It is noteworthy that different curricula and textbooks (in which foreign people – especially Russian people – are represented in very different ways) are used in national language vs. Russian language schools in these three countries.

Finally, there is also evidence that, within plurilingual contexts, parents' choices concerning the use of language within the family home are related to their children's beliefs about the people who live in other countries. For example, within the Basque Country, children's and adolescents' beliefs vary depending on whether only the Basque language, only the Spanish language or both languages are used within the family home (Reizábal et al., 2004). In the Basque Country, decisions concerning language use in the home tend to be driven by the national-ideological values of parents in relationship to issues of identity, with language choice being used intentionally to encode attitudes towards the relationship between the Basque Country and Spain (Azurmendi et al, 1998; Valencia et al., 2003). It therefore seems plausible that these same parental attitudes not only determine language use within the family but also impact on the beliefs about foreign people which are acquired by their children.

**See also:** Age factors; Cultural studies; Early language learning in formal education; Gender and language learning; Primary education; Secondary education

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MARTYN BARRETT

## BICS and CALP

The acronyms BICS and CALP refer to a distinction introduced by Cummins (1979) between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). The distinction draws attention to the very different time periods typically required by immigrant children to acquire conversational fluency in their second language as compared to grade-appropriate academic proficiency in that language. Conversational fluency is often acquired to a functional level within about two years of initial exposure to the second language, whereas at least five years is usually required to catch up to **native speakers** in academic aspects of the second language (Collier, 1987; Klesmer, 1994; Cummins, 1981a). Failure to take account of the BICS/CALP (conversational/academic) distinction has resulted in discriminatory psychological assessment of bilingual students and premature exit from language support programmes, such as **bilingual education** in the United States, into mainstream classes (Cummins, 1984).

Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa (1976) brought attention to the fact that Finnish immigrant children in Sweden often appeared to educators to be fluent in both Finnish and Swedish but still showed levels of verbal academic performance in both languages considerably below grade/age expectations. Similarly, analysis of psychological assessments administered to minority students showed that teachers and psychologists often assumed that children

## Further reading

- Barrett, M. (2007) *Children's Knowledge, Beliefs and Feelings about Nations and National Groups*, Hove: Psychology Press.



who had attained fluency in **English** had overcome all difficulties with the language (Cummins, 1984). Yet these children frequently performed poorly on English academic tasks as well as in psychological assessment situations. Cummins (1981a) provided further evidence for the BICS/CALP distinction in a reanalysis of data from the Toronto Board of Education. Despite teacher observation that peer-appropriate conversational fluency in English developed rapidly, a period of 5–7 years was required, on average, for immigrant students to approach grade norms in academic aspects of English.

The distinction was elaborated into two intersecting continua (Cummins, 1981b) which highlighted the range of cognitive demands and contextual support involved in particular language tasks or activities (context-embedded/context-reduced, cognitively undemanding/cognitively demanding). The BICS/CALP distinction was maintained within this elaboration and related to the theoretical distinctions of several other theorists, e.g. Bruner's (1975) communicative and analytic competence, Donaldson's (1978) embedded and disembedded language and Olson's (1977) utterance and text. The terms used by different investigators vary, but the essential distinction refers to the extent to which the meaning being communicated is supported by contextual or interpersonal cues, such as gestures, facial expressions, and intonation present in face-to-face interaction, or is dependent on linguistic cues that are largely independent of the immediate communicative context.

The BICS/CALP distinction also served to qualify Oller's (1979) claim that all individual differences in language proficiency could be accounted for by just one underlying factor, which he termed *global language proficiency*. Oller synthesised a considerable amount of data showing strong correlations between performance on **cloze tests** of **reading**, standardised reading tests, and measures of oral verbal ability, such as **vocabulary** measures. Cummins (1979, 1981b) pointed out that not all aspects of language use or performance could be incorporated into one dimension of global language proficiency. For example, if we take two monolingual English-speaking siblings, a 12-year-old child and a 6-year-old, there are enormous

differences in these children's ability to read and write English and in their knowledge of vocabulary, but minimal differences in their phonology or basic fluency. The 6-year-old can understand virtually everything that is likely to be said to her in everyday social contexts and she can use language very effectively in these contexts, just as can the 12-year-old. Similarly, as noted above, in second language **acquisition** contexts, immigrant children typically manifest very different time periods required to catch up to their peers in everyday face-to-face aspects of proficiency as compared to academic aspects.

Early critiques of the conversational/academic distinction were advanced by Edelsky and colleagues (Edelsky et al., 1983) and in a volume edited by Rivera (1984). Edelsky (1990, 2006) later reiterated and reformulated her critique, and others were advanced by Martin-Jones and Romaine (1986) and Wiley (1996).

The major criticisms are as follows:

- The conversational/academic language distinction reflects an autonomous perspective on language that ignores its location in social practices and power relations (Edelsky et al., 1983; Wiley, 1996).
- CALP or academic language proficiency represents little more than 'test-wiseness' – it is an artefact of the inappropriate way in which it has been measured (Edelsky et al., 1983).
- The notion of CALP promotes a 'deficit theory' in so far as it attributes the academic failure of bilingual/minority students to low cognitive/academic proficiency rather than to inappropriate schooling (Edelsky, 1990, 2006; Edelsky et al., 1983; Martin-Jones and Romaine, 1986).

In response to these critiques, Cummins (Cummins, 2000) pointed to the elaborated socio-political framework within which the BICS/CALP distinction was placed (Cummins, 1986, 1996). Underachievement among subordinated students was attributed to coercive relations of power operating in the society at large which are reflected in schooling practices. He also invoked the work of Biber (1986) and Corson (1995) as evidence of the

linguistic reality of the distinction. Corson highlighted the enormous lexical differences between typical conversational interactions in English as compared to academic or literacy-related uses of English. Similarly, Biber's analysis of more than one million words of English speech and written text revealed underlying dimensions very consistent with the distinction between conversational and academic aspects of language proficiency. Cummins also pointed out that the construct of academic language proficiency does not in any way depend on test scores as support for either its construct **validity** or its relevance to education, as illustrated by the analyses of Corson and Biber.

The distinction between BICS and CALP has exerted a significant impact on a variety of educational policies and practices in both North America and the United Kingdom (e.g., Cline and Frederickson, 1996). Specific ways in which educators' misunderstanding of the nature of language proficiency have contributed to the creation of academic difficulties among bilingual students have been highlighted by the distinction. At a theoretical level, however, the distinction is likely to remain controversial, reflecting the fact that there is no cross-disciplinary consensus regarding the nature of language proficiency and its relationship to academic achievement.

**See also:** Age factors; Bilingualism; Cross-cultural psychology; Gender and language learning; Mother tongue

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JIM CUMMINS

## Bilingual education

Bilingual education has a wide range of meanings but is generally used where two languages are used to transmit the curriculum. 'Weak' bilingual education occurs when children are only allowed to use their home language in the curriculum for a short period, with a transition to education solely through the majority language. 'Strong' bilingual education occurs when both languages are used in school to promote **bilingualism** and biliteracy. Language methodology in bilingual education concerns the way in which languages are kept separate (e.g. by subject, person and time allocations) or are

integrated (e.g. concurrent use of both languages in a lesson).

Bilingual education would seem to describe a situation where two languages are used in a school. However, 'bilingual education' is a simple label for a diverse phenomenon. One important distinction is between a school where there are bilingual children and a school that promotes bilingualism. In many schools of the world, there are bilingual and multilingual children. Yet the aim of the school may be to ensure that children develop in one language only. For example, a child may come to school speaking a minority language fluently but not the majority language. The school may aim to make that child fluent and literate in the majority language only, with integration and assimilation of that child into mainstream society. Such 'weak' forms of bilingual education aim for a transition from the home culture and language to the majority culture and language.

In other types of schools, the aim may be to teach the children two languages, and through the **medium of instruction** of two languages, so that they develop full bilingualism and biliteracy. For example, in heritage language schools, children may receive much of their instruction in the home language, with the majority language being used to transmit 20–90 per cent of the curriculum.

Alternatively, a child from a majority language background may go to an immersion school or a mainstream bilingual school and learn through a second majority (or minority) language. For example, in Canada, an English-speaking child may go to a French immersion school where much of the curriculum will be taught through the medium of **French**. Such 'strong' forms of bilingual education aim for children to maintain their **mother tongues**, their minority languages, and become culturally pluralist. The maintenance and enhancement of language, literacy and cultural **skills** are a key part of the school's mission.

Bilingual education is a term that includes not only 'weak' and 'strong' forms but also trilingual or multilingual schools, where three or more languages are used (e.g. in the European Schools Movement, or Luxembourgish/German/French education in Luxembourg, or Hebrew/English/French in Canada).

Second language-medium teaching is different from second language teaching. In the former, a child may be taught curriculum areas through the medium of that second language. For example, in the European Schools, children in the middle years of **secondary education** may learn history, geography and social sciences through a second language. If there is a useful demarcation, then bilingual education may be said to start when more than one language is used to teach curriculum content (e.g. science, mathematics, social sciences or humanities).

### Language methodology in bilingual education

A teaching and learning methodology, separate from second language teaching methodology, has arisen in schools where both languages are used to transmit the curriculum. There are different dimensions of 'how' and 'when' two languages can be either separated and/or integrated in bilingual methodology, and these will be considered in turn.

In the allocation of two languages in the classroom and in the curriculum, the need for distinct separation and clear boundaries between the two languages has traditionally been advocated. The separation of languages can occur in school settings by reference to eight overlapping dimensions.

#### *Subject or topic*

In elementary schools and high schools, different curriculum areas may be taught in different languages. For example, social studies, religious education, art, music and physical education may be taught through the minority language (e.g. **Spanish** in the USA). Mathematics, science, technology and computer studies may be taught through the majority language (e.g. **English**). In **primary education**, the allocation may be by topic rather than by subject. A danger is that the minority language becomes associated with tradition and history rather than with technology and science. The minority language is thereby allocated a lower status and is seen as much less relevant to modern existence.

#### *Person*

The use of two languages in a school may be separated according to person. For example, there may be two teachers working in a team-teaching situation. One teacher communicates with the children through the majority language, the other teacher through the children's minority language. There is a clear language boundary established by person. Alternatively, teachers' assistants, parents helping in the classroom, auxiliaries and paraprofessionals may function in the classroom as an alternative but separate language source for the children.

#### *Time*

A frequently-used strategy in language allocation in schools is for classes to operate at different times in different languages. For example, in some US dual language schools, one day may be taught in Spanish, the next day in English. Other schools alternate by half-days. The separation of time need not be solely in terms of days, half-days or lessons. It may also valuably include a policy that varies by grade and age. For example, children may be taught through the minority language for the first 2 or 3 years of elementary education for 100 per cent of the time. In primary school, an increasing amount of time may be allocated to the majority language inside the school.

#### *Medium of activity*

Another form of separation focuses on distinguishing between **listening, speaking, reading and writing** in the classroom. For example, the teacher may give an oral explanation of a concept in one language, with a follow-up discussion with the class in that same language. Then the teacher may ask the children to complete their written work in a second language. This sequence may be deliberately reversed in a second lesson. The aim of such a teaching strategy is to reinforce and strengthen the learning by children. What is initially assimilated in one language is transferred and reinterpreted in a second language. By reprocessing the information in a different language, greater understanding may be achieved. One danger of 'different medium' separation is that one language may be used for

oracy and another language for literacy. Where a minority language does not have a written script this may be a necessary boundary.

A 'medium of activity' separation strategy tends to be used when and only when both the child's languages are relatively well developed. When this has occurred, the argument is that a child has to think more deeply about the material when moving between languages, comparing and contrasting, developing the theme of the material, assimilating and accommodating, transferring and sometimes translating in order to secure a concept and understanding.

### ***Function***

In schools and classes where there are bilingual children, teaching may be in the majority language while the management of the classroom occurs in the minority language. When the teacher is organising students, disciplining, informally talking with individual students or small groups, giving additional explanations, the minority language is used. Otherwise, the curriculum is delivered in the majority language.

### ***Student***

Students themselves partly or mostly define the language that is being used in a classroom. For example, if a pupil addresses the teacher, it may not be in the language that the teacher has used to deliver the curriculum. Students influence when and where languages are used, and affect boundary making.

### ***Language integration***

In many bilingual classrooms, the frequent switching between two or more languages is customary. On occasions, the integrated use of both languages rather than language separation can be of value in a lesson (García, 2009). Five concurrent uses will now be considered.

### ***Switching languages***

Bilingual children often switch languages. In many minority language groups, this is frequent both in

the home and on the street as it is in the classroom and school playground. Such children are maximally using their linguistic resources to make sense of learning and to communicate. García (2009) calls this 'translanguaging', which is different from code-switching in that it is a sense-making practice seen from the speaker's perspective, not from a linguistic perspective; and from the bilingual speaker's viewpoint, not from a monolingual outlook.

### ***Translating***

In some bilingual classrooms, teachers will repeat in another language what they have previously said. For example, the teacher may explain a concept in French, and then repeat the same explanation in English. The danger is that children will opt out of listening when the teacher is transmitting in their weaker language.

### ***Previewing and reviewing***

One strategy in a classroom is to give the preview in the minority language and then the fuller review in the majority language. That is, a topic is introduced in the child's minority language, for example, to give an initial understanding. Then the subject matter is considered in depth in the majority language. This may be reversed. While an extension and reinforcement of ideas occurs by moving from one language to another, there is sometimes also unnecessary duplication and a slow momentum.

### ***Concurrent usage***

Equal amounts of time are allocated to two languages, and teachers consciously initiate movement from one language to another. This may strengthen and develop both languages, and reinforce taught concepts by being considered and processed in both languages. A use of both languages, it is suggested, contributes to a deeper understanding of the subject matter being studied.

### ***Translanguaging***

A curriculum-focused approach to translanguaging, used in schools in North Wales, is for input to be in

one language and output in another. For example, the children may listen to the teacher in Welsh, and then complete their written work in English. Or, the children may read in English and then make a presentation to the rest of the class in Welsh. The aim is to strengthen both languages and to deepen understanding of the content.

**See also:** Bilingual method; Medium of instruction; Mental lexicon; Mother tongue; Mother-tongue teaching; Primary education

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COLIN R. BAKER

# Bilingual method

Bilingual method is a method of language teaching developed by C.J. Dodson (1967/1972) to improve the **audio-visual** method as advocated in the 1960s. Its architecture is best understood as a traditional three-phase structure of presentation – practice – production. A lesson cycle starts out with the reproduction/performance of a basic dialogue, moves on to the variation and recombination of the basic sentences (semi-free use of language), and ends up with an extended application stage characterised by the free, communicative exploitation of the previous work. Well-ordered activities take the students up to a conversational level in the shortest possible time. Examples given here are from the teaching of English to German students, but the method has been applied in a variety of bilingual concepts, including Welsh/English, Gaelic/

English, English/Swedish, English/Polish, German/Japanese, etc.

In audio-visual courses, basic dialogues are presented and practised over several months on a purely oral basis. Dodson, however, proposed a well-tested procedure where the printed sentence is presented simultaneously to the oral utterance from the beginning. Teachers may read out the dialogue to the class just once with books closed, but as soon as they get the class to say the lines after them, books should be open and the class is allowed to glance at the text in between imitation responses as they listen to others, and look up when they speak themselves. Dodson showed that, provided the class is instructed to make the spoken sentence the primary stimulus, the imitation of sentences could be speeded up, without degradation of intonation and undue interference from the printed text. Having the printed word to glance at (whilst at the same time relying on the auditory image of the sentence just heard), pupils find it easier to segment the amorphous sound stream and retain the fleeting sound image. The mutual support of script and sound outweighs possible interference effects (e.g. where ‘knife’ would be pronounced with an initial ‘k’ sound by German learners of English).

Audio-visual **textbooks** present dialogues with a picture strip on the left. The pictures (also available on slides) are designed to match closely the meaning of the dialogue sentences. It was claimed that at long last the necessary media (slides and audio tapes) had been made available to do justice to **direct method** principles and allow teaching without relying on the **mother tongue**. Pictures and slides, along with the teacher’s drawings and realia, should clarify the meaning of new words and structures.

Dodson, however, used oral mother-tongue equivalents at sentence level to convey the meaning of unknown words or structures. Interference from the mother tongue is avoided because the teacher says each dialogue sentence twice, with the mother tongue version sandwiched between:

*Teacher (or tape):* What’s the matter?

*Teacher:* Was ist denn los?

*Teacher:* What’s the matter?

*Teacher points to pupil(s) to repeat the sentence after him.*

It is the direct succession of the (second) foreign language stimulus and the imitation response which prevents interference.

Not word, but utterance, equivalents are given – either whole utterances or meaningful parts of an utterance. The teacher chooses the closest natural equivalent which accomplishes what probably no other method of semanticising can do so directly and so sensitively, i.e. convey the precise communicative value of the utterance. Whereas an isolated word equivalent is neutral in terms of intonation, teachers can now show how the utterance is meant by using their voice and body (intonation, stress, gestures), both for the original sentence and for the equivalent. Moreover, natural, idiomatic translations include, for instance, typical German modal particles ('*denn*', '*doch*', '*schon*', '*ja*') which contribute to the full meaning of an utterance.

All in all, through these synergistic effects the teacher is able to create a total language event that immediately brings home to the pupils what and how an utterance is meant. This is very different from traditional bilingual word lists as well as from **audiolingual** parallel texts. The mother tongue thus proves to be the ideal (and most direct) means of getting the meaning across as completely and as quickly as possible. Bringing the differences to light, contrasting and comparing, seems to be the most effective antidote to interference errors. Pupils who, on hearing the **French** '*anniversaire*' without *at first* linking it to 'birthday' would simply not understand. Dodson was able to show by controlled experiments that a combination of printed word, mother tongue equivalents and picture strip (for retention of meaning, not for meaning conveyance), can bring a class more quickly to a point where they can act out a basic situation as freely and naturally as possible.

Due to this sandwich technique of meaning-conveyance, authentic **literary texts** become available even to beginners – quite an important side-effect. Children can enjoy fairy tales even if they contain many new words.

*Teacher:* And Goldilocks tasted that, and that was neither too hot nor too cold – weder zu heiß noch zu kalt – neither too hot nor too cold, but just right.

The bilingual method proceeds step-by-step under careful guidance with continual feedback, ensuring that prerequisite sub- or part **skills** are acquired (within a lesson cycle) before a final stage of free and spontaneous language use. Learners are led from knowing nothing about a language situation to complete mastery of this situation, from a mastery of one situation to a mastery of sentence variations and combinations, and from a mastery of known situation combinations to forays into new, unknown and unforeseeable communication situations. It is argued that free, message-oriented use of new language when attempted too early in the lesson cycle, and on too flimsy a basis, would only undermine the pupils' confidence.

### The Generative principle and communication

Learners create new sentences by interchanging words and structures already previously consolidated: **Humboldt's** idea that language is a way of 'making infinite use of finite means'. The teacher's cues for possible substitutions and extensions are given in the native language. This bilingual technique prevents pupils from giving 'empty' responses, and sentence variations become concept variations which exploit the communicative potential of a given structure. This is an important improvement on conventional pattern practice, whose sole focus was the automatising of structures. It is syntactic *and* semantic manipulation at the same time, which prevents the process from becoming mechanical. Again, the teacher can use voice and body language to support meaning. Paradoxically, the new foreign language pattern is pressed home by using the familiar first language pattern. A literal and often ungrammatical **translation** – called *Spiegelung*/mirroring – may be added just once if the new structure is not transparent to the learner:

*Teacher:* Ich will ja nur eine Tasse Tee. (Alles ich will ist eine Tasse Tee.)

*Pupil:* All I want is a cup of tea

*Teacher:* Ich will ja nur eine Tasse Kaffee

*Pupil:* All I want is a cup of coffee

*Teacher:* Ich will ja nur eine ruhige Klasse

*Pupil:* All I want is a quiet class

Pupils are trained to take these linguistic leaps which are at the same time concept leaps. With the right type of substitutions, the teacher can help the students to perceive the structure as valid and relevant to their communicative **needs**. Finally, students take over, make up their own sentences or chain sentences together, and may thus venture into new situations. The native language (and to some extent the teacher) is no longer needed, and the exercise becomes monolingual.

Dodson concentrates on a careful sequence of steps so that a growing command of words and structures gradually leads to **message-oriented communication**, where people exchange messages and mean what they say. If the practice stopped before that point, the students would be cheated. About one-third of the whole teaching time should be allocated to genuine communicative activities and tasks. For every lesson cycle, the transition must be made from role-taking to role-making, from bilingual **exercises** to foreign-language-only activities, from guided use to free use, from studying the language to studying topics meaningful in their own way. Bilingual method techniques fit well into a modern communicative approach.

Dodson's seminal work dealt the death blow to the short-sighted notion of the mother tongue as nothing but a source of interference. It is, above all, a scaffold on which to build further languages. Teachers can banish the native language from the classroom, but cannot banish it from the students' minds. It would even be counterproductive, since it would mean trying to stop them thinking altogether. However, in spite of Dodson's experiments and subsequent confirmation by other researchers (see especially Meijer, 1974, a book-length study of a year-long experimental comparison of methods with Dutch pupils of French), in many countries orthodoxy still says that the mother tongue should be avoided except for occasional glosses of difficult words. The problem lies not in the new ideas, but in escaping from the old ones.

**See also:** Audio-visual language teaching; Direct method; Generative principle; Medium-oriented and message-oriented communication; Teaching methods; Textbooks

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WOLFGANG BUTZKAMM

## Bilingualism

Who is bilingual or not is difficult to define and requires consideration of a person's ability in and use of two (or more) languages. Few bilinguals are equally proficient in both languages and tend to use their languages for different purposes in different



domains or areas of language use. Thus, balanced bilinguals are rare. Bilinguals have been described as ‘double semilinguals’, but this is usually a function of social and economic circumstances and not of limits to a bilingual’s linguistic or cognitive potential. Negative characterisations of bilinguals (the fractional view) are compared with holistic characterisations, of which codeswitching is one example.

### Individual bilingualism

Bilingualism and multilingualism are frequent phenomena in almost every country of the world. Estimates are that between 50 and 70 per cent of the world’s population are bilingual or multilingual – depending partly on how ‘bilingual’ is defined and the complex relationship between a language and a dialect. However, there is no simple definition of bilingualism (the term bilingualism is often used to include trilingualism and multilingualism) or classification of bilinguals; but the following central issues clarify the concept.

- There is a difference between ability in language and use of language, usually referred to as the difference between degree (proficiency or **competence** in a language) and function (use of two languages). An individual’s proficiency in each language may vary across the four language competencies of **speaking, listening, reading** and **writing**. A person may use one language for conversation but switch to another language for reading and writing. Another person may understand a second language well, in its spoken and written form, but may not be able to speak or write it well. Such a person is said to have a passive or receptive competence in a second language.
- Few bilinguals are equally proficient in both languages. One language tends to be stronger than the other. This is described as the dominant language but it is not always the first or native language of the bilingual. Defining bilinguals as those who have native-like competence in both languages (**bloomfield**, 1933) is too restrictive and fails to reflect the reality of language life in bilinguals. The vast majority

of bilinguals do not have native-like competence in both languages but still regularly use both languages.

- Few bilinguals possess the same competence as monolingual speakers in either of their languages. This is partly because bilinguals use their languages for different functions and purposes and with different people. Levels of proficiency in a language may depend on in which domains (e.g. street and home) and how often that language is used. Communicative competence in one of a bilingual’s two languages is usually stronger in some domains than in others. For example, some bilinguals use one language at home, in religion and in the local community. They use another language at work and in meetings to do with their trade or profession. This explains why some bilinguals are not effective at **interpretation** and **translation**. Bilinguals rarely have identical lexical knowledge in both languages.
- A particular case of a bilingual is a deaf person who uses **sign language** (e.g. British Sign Language, American Sign Language) and has oracy and/or literacy competence in a spoken majority or minority language (e.g. **English**).
- A bilingual’s competence in a language may vary over time and according to changing circumstances. Over time, the second language may become the stronger or dominant language. If a person loses contact with those who speak it, he or she may lose fluency in that language.
- Bilinguals are often expected to be balanced in their language competencies. This is rarely the case. A balanced bilingual is often regarded as someone who possesses **age-appropriate** competence in two languages. The term ‘balanced bilinguals’ is more of an idealised concept, as dominance in languages varies according to the contexts in which those languages are used.
- Another proposed (but much contested) category of bilinguals is ‘semilinguals’ or ‘double semilinguals’, regarded as having ‘insufficient’ competence in either language. A ‘semilingual’ is seen as someone with deficiencies in both languages when compared with monolinguals. Such a person is considered to possess a small

**vocabulary** and incorrect **grammar**, to consciously think about language production, to be stilted and uncreative with both languages, and to find it difficult to think and express emotions in either language. The notion of semilingualism, or double semilingualism, has received much criticism. For example, if languages are relatively undeveloped, the origins may not be in bilingualism per se, but in the economic, educational, political and social conditions that constrain development. The danger of the term 'semilingualism' is that it locates the origins of underdevelopment in the individual rather than in external, societal factors that co-exist with bilingualism. Thus linguistic underdevelopment in bilinguals is typically a function of social and economic circumstances and not of limits to a bilingual's linguistic or cognitive potential. Indeed, there are many cognitive advantages for bilingualism (e.g. creative thinking; see Baker, 2010).

Until recently, bilinguals have often been wrongly portrayed negatively (e.g. split identity, cognitive deficits, double semilingualism, divided loyalties). While part of this is political (e.g. assimilating immigrants, majority language groups asserting their greater power and status), a misjudgment of bilinguals is often based on a failure to understand that bilinguals typically use their languages for different purposes, with different people and in different contexts. Bilinguals are increasingly understood in terms of their 'wholeness', their total language repertoire and language use.

Grosjean (1985) suggests two contrasting views for bilinguals. First, there is a fractional view of bilinguals, which perceives the bilingual as 'two monolinguals in one person'. For example, a bilingual's English language competence is typically measured against that of a native monolingual English speaker. Many bilinguals themselves feel they are not sufficiently competent in one or both of their languages compared with monolinguals, thus accepting and reinforcing the monolingual view of bilinguals. A second, holistic view argues that the bilingual is not the sum of two incomplete monolinguals, but has a unique linguistic profile. Thus any **assessment** of a bilingual's language

proficiency should be based on a totality of the bilingual's language usage in all domains. In this viewpoint, the bilingual is a complete linguistic entity, an integrated whole.

Some children acquire two languages from birth. This is often called simultaneous bilingualism or 'bilingualism as a first language' as distinct from consecutive, sequential or successive bilingualism which result from informal or formal language learning in later years. Three years of age is generally considered as an approximate borderline between simultaneous and consecutive bilingualism.

'Codeswitching' is the term used to describe the purposeful way in which bilinguals move between their two languages. Bilinguals codeswitch, for example, because they do not know a word or a phrase in one language or because they can express an idea more adequately or effectively in a second language. Codeswitching can also be used to mark relationships, signalling status and situation, deference and intimacy. Bilinguals often operate along a dimension from monolingual dealings to frequent codeswitching with similar bilinguals, with many possibilities between these two.

The issues raised indicate that a distinction between a second language learner and a bilingual will be arbitrary and artificial. There is a multiple series of dimensions such that classification is dependent on self-categorisation and other people's categorisation as much as ability in languages. That is, labels are dependent on perception as much as on proficiency. Any language learner is an incipient bilingual. Any bilingual is or was a language learner.

**See also:** Attitudes and language learning; Bilingual education; Migrant and heritage languages; Mother tongue; Native speaker; Sign languages

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COLIN R. BAKER

## Bloomfield, Leonhard

b. 1887, Chicago, IL, USA; d. 1949, New Haven, CT, USA

Bloomfield devoted his scholarly work to Germanic philology, indigenous American languages, and general methodology of **linguistics** which would later be called ‘Bloomfieldian structuralism’. He was involved in practical language teaching during World War Two as (co-)author of **textbooks** written after the **american army method**, whose basic concepts linked Bloomfield’s ideas about syntactic analysis together with ideas of psychological **behaviourism** about learning.

Bloomfield influenced foreign language teaching indirectly, but strongly, by the method of linguistic analysis as explained in *Language* (published 1934, still in print). It is a strictly empirical and inductive approach, isolating phonemes, then moving on to morphemes, to immediate constituents (i.e. to syntactic groups below the phrase-level), phrases, clauses and sentences. Each higher level contains the lower ones as units and sub-units. The analysis of this structural framework, the so-called discovery procedure, was to be done bottom-up simply by observation of morphological (grammatical) markers (i.e. third person -s, plural -s, comparative -er, tense -ed, etc.) and the distribution of units. ‘Distribution’ pertains to the possible position(s) of units within the predetermined word order in sentences (e.g. front position of subject, position of indirect object between verb and direct object, etc.). Contrary to the opinion frequently mentioned in the secondary literature, Bloomfield did not exclude semantics altogether from his linguistic deliberations. The ‘discovery procedure’, however, which was mainly meant as a guideline for the exploration of hitherto unscripted American languages, was indeed solely based on the observation of formal

data, thus, as Bloomfield thought, ensuring strictness of scientific method for linguistics.

‘Bloomfieldianism’ made a great impact on the development of phonology, word-based morphology and structuralist syntax, which was later called ‘taxonomic’. Together with the behaviourist psychology which looked at learning as responses automatically triggered by stimuli if there was enough supporting reinforcement, it was made the base of teaching syntax in foreign language classes. The popular procedure was pattern practice, i.e., the manipulation of clauses (sentences) mainly by lexical variation (substitution tables). Its aim was to show the identity of syntactical structures while neglecting meaning. The technical devices of the **language laboratory** enhanced this technique of structure drills. A whole generation of textbooks, including those in **contrastive** linguistics which compared the structures of two languages, appeared on the market. From today’s point of view they exploited the ideas of Bloomfieldian structuralism and of behaviourism in rather a coarse way.

The impact of Bloomfieldian structuralism on foreign language teaching was particularly strong in the USA, and from there transferred to other areas of the world. The appearance of transformational **grammar** with its corollary, psychological mentalism, and of the concepts of **communicative competence**, occasioned what is called the communicative (or pragmatic) turn in language teaching methodology. Learning syntax lost its central importance for classroom teaching. Yet we thank Bloomfield for an unprecedented promotion of investigations in particular into **English** syntax to which his distributionalism is much more easily applicable than to other languages. Almost all grammars, theoretical as well as applied to teaching, owe their present-day standard to the precision of Bloomfield’s work.

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WERNER HÜLLEN

## Braille

Braille is the name of a special code devised to provide a means of communication (reading and writing) for the visually impaired. The name also designates musical and scientific (mathematical, chemical) notation as well as a shorthand for those who have limited visual access to their perception of the world. The term braille has also acquired other references and is used as a brand name for a number of devices and computer applications which enable the visually impaired to read conventional printed texts and communicate with each other and the sighted.

The Braille code is grounded in tactile sensibility, an important sensory channel of information for the visually impaired. It is based on raised dots grouped into patterns representing alphabet letters and other signs. Visually impaired people read in Braille by running their fingers along the raised dots. They write Braille by hand with the help of a slate and stylus, placing a sheet of paper on the slate and making indentations with the stylus. They can also use a Braille typewriter or a Braille embosser attached to a computer.

## History

The code is named after the French educator Louis Braille (1809–52), who invented the system in 1824. Originally, Braille's code was developed to read and write French. Later, it was adapted to many other languages, and since the end of the nineteenth century it has become the leading method of reading and writing for the visually impaired.

However, for the sake of historical accuracy, it is worth pointing out that Braille's code was not a new undertaking. The idea of developing a writing system for visually handicapped people does not belong to him. Its origin is, probably, part of unrecorded history; it is a centuries-long process. The earliest recorded information of a writing system for the blind goes back to the fourteenth century. The socialization needs of the visually impaired and the emergence of formal education challenged many researchers in different countries to go beyond the existing methods of teaching literacy to the sighted.

In Europe, the first system of writing for the blind was produced by the Spanish Fr. Lucas in 1580. Another attempt was made in the first half of the seventeenth century by the Italian Jesuit, Fr. Lana, who came up with a specific way of relief printing as the basis for a writing system for the visually impaired. The method spread all over Europe, and in 1784 the French educator Valentin Haüy invented the first tactile printing system (Roman Line Letter Type). Another major contribution to the development of the system of writing was made by the French army officer Charles Barbier in the nineteenth century. Following Napoleon's orders, Barbier devised a code for night-time communication of soldiers in battle ('night writing'). In his code Barbier relied on the reflection of French phonemes by means of twelve dots. In practice, the system was found to be rather complex, too slow, and difficult for soldiers to work with. Although Barbier's invention was not an effective solution to the problem and never became accepted by the military, it laid the groundwork for Braille's encoding scheme.

Louis Braille was born sighted and lost vision when he was 3 years old. At school he acquainted himself with Barbier's writing system, and taking it as his point of departure and bringing in his own experience, Braille introduced a number of substantial changes. He gave up the shaping of phonemes, and, using the normal alphabet of letters and characters, correlated these with a six-dot code. The idea of mapping letters (or characters) to dot patterns proved to be a valuable alternative to Barbier's system. Braille first used the substantially modified version for himself, and in the years following his invention he tested it on the visually impaired. The performance of the system, demonstrated by Braille on himself and other sightless people, presented evidence that the new code could operate quite efficiently as it was relatively easier, faster, and more convenient. It was a considerable achievement for his time, and by extension the name of Braille came to be used as a term to refer to the elaborated method and the code itself for the sightless.

## The Braille system

In Braille's code a message is written in raised dots. The code consists in replacing each letter or

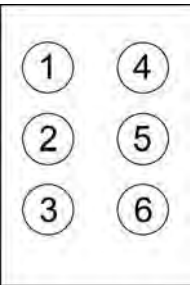


Figure 7 Braille cell

character with one or several dots combined in patterns and arranged in a rectangular block (the Braille cell) (see Figure 7). Each letter is given its own place and pattern in the cell. The cell contains six dot positions in two columns of three dots.

A dot may be raised at any of the six positions to form sixty-four possible subsets (the non-raised positions included). Each cell represents a letter, a frequently used combination of letters, a numeral or a punctuation mark. The mapping scheme follows

the order of the letters in the Latin alphabet. The first ten letters of the alphabet (A–J) are formed with the help of the top four dots of the cells (1, 2, 4 and 5), dot 3 is added to the next ten letters, and the last six letters are produced by adding dot 6 (Figure 8).

Over the years there have emerged several versions of the six-dot code bearing on the general model of Braille’s encoding system.

Grade 1 inherits Braille’s original six-dot code of one-to-one transliteration. As Braille characters are much larger than their printed equivalents, the standard Braille page allows for 25 lines of 43 characters. Consequently, Braille texts take up a lot of space, and Grade 1 has a relatively limited application. It is mostly used by beginners.

Grade 2, by contrast, has wide usage. This grade was developed by linguists, who introduced contractions into the code, taking account of word linguistic structure and conventional abbreviations that exist in the language. Grade 2 saves space and reduces reading time. Many Braille books, publications and public signs are printed in Grade 2.

|             |                     |                      |                     |                      |                      |                       |                       |                      |                       |                        |
|-------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1st<br>LINE | A<br>•-<br>—<br>—   | B<br>•-<br>•-<br>—   | C<br>••<br>—<br>—   | D<br>••<br>-•<br>—   | E<br>•-<br>-•<br>—   | F<br>••<br>•-<br>—    | G<br>••<br>••<br>—    | H<br>•-<br>••<br>—   | I<br>-•<br>-•<br>—    | J<br>-•<br>••<br>—     |
| 2nd<br>LINE | K<br>•-<br>—<br>•-  | L<br>•-<br>•-<br>•-  | M<br>••<br>—<br>•-  | N<br>••<br>-•<br>•-  | O<br>•-<br>-•<br>•-  | P<br>••<br>•-<br>•-   | Q<br>••<br>••<br>•-   | R<br>•-<br>••<br>•-  | S<br>-•<br>-•<br>•-   | T<br>-•<br>••<br>•-    |
| 3rd<br>LINE | U<br>•-<br>—<br>••  | V<br>•-<br>•-<br>••  | X<br>••<br>—<br>••  | Y<br>••<br>-•<br>••  | Z<br>•-<br>-•<br>••  | and<br>••<br>•-<br>•• | for<br>••<br>••<br>•• | of<br>•-<br>••<br>•• | the<br>-•<br>-•<br>•• | with<br>-•<br>••<br>•• |
| 4th<br>LINE | ch<br>•-<br>—<br>-• | gh<br>•-<br>•-<br>-• | sh<br>••<br>—<br>-• | th<br>••<br>-•<br>-• | wh<br>•-<br>-•<br>-• | ed<br>••<br>•-<br>-•  | er<br>••<br>••<br>-•  | ou<br>•-<br>••<br>-• | ow<br>-•<br>-•<br>-•  | W<br>-•<br>••<br>-•    |

Figure 8 Standard Braille English chart

Grade 3 follows the same strategy of contractions but uses them far more. Grade 3 may be described as shorthand. It is mainly used in personal letters and notes. Sometimes it is found in literature.

Grade 4 is yet another version of Braille. It also relies on the strategy of contracted forms but employs them much more extensively. The focus on further reducing the reading time brings about an eight-dot code which is put into use with a Braille embosser attached to a computer.

As new technologies have moved in the direction of computers, Braille has taken on new life that has resulted in greater access for the visually impaired to each other and the world at large. There have appeared:

- the Piezo-electric Braille display that can display computer text;
- the Kurzweil Reading Machine (this converts print into synthesized speech);
- a calculator that outputs tactile numbers on a refreshable Braille display;
- JAWS, a screen-reading software that converts text on a computer screen into speech signals;
- Top Braille: the first portable reading assistant.

Despite the emergence of new technologies, experts recommend the original Braille model especially in the initial stage.

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## British Council

The British Council was established in 1934, and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1940 (revised in

1993). It is the UK's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. It works in over 100 countries in the arts, education and English and has 6,800 staff worldwide.

English language teaching is a major British export and the Council provides information about and access to the best of British expertise in all sectors (higher education, schools, teacher training, language schools, publishing, examination boards). The British Council runs the 'English in Britain' accreditation scheme, which inspects and accredits ELT provision in school, colleges and universities.

The British Council works in partnership with ministries of education, teachers, teacher trainers, and publishers. For instance it supports collaborative textbook development projects, and works with the BBC to encourage the use of broadcast materials on radio and television (including cable and satellite TV). The Council encourages the development of approaches which focus on learners and promote motivation. These include comparative cultural studies (and British Studies programmes), English for specific/special purposes (ESP), and 'English plus' courses, where the language is taught with another subject or activity. It encourages supported learning approaches, including distance learning, self-access programmes and centres, and has developed CD-ROM and web-based online materials.

The British Council supports professional development by running many projects and courses for in-service and pre-service education and training. It encourages the development of more practical approaches to pedagogy in higher education (for university teachers as well as those in schools) including postgraduate programmes in applied linguistics, pedagogy, and cultural studies. The Council encourages strong self-sustaining networks of professionals. It helped build an English Language Teaching Contacts Scheme (ELTECS) in East and Central Europe which was then developed further in Western Europe, Central Asia, China and Latin America.

The head office of the British Council is at Spring Gardens in London.

### Website

[www.britishcouncil.org/](http://www.britishcouncil.org/)



## **CAL – Center for Applied Linguistics**

The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), a private, nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, DC, works to improve communication through better understanding of language and culture. To advance this mission, CAL seeks to promote and improve the teaching and learning of languages, identify and solve problems related to language and culture, and serve as a resource for information about language and culture. CAL has made contributions to the fields of bilingual, English as a second language, literacy, and foreign language education; workforce development; dialect studies; language assessment; language policy; refugee orientation; international development; and the education of linguistically and culturally diverse children and adults around the world.

CAL was founded in 1959, initially via a grant from the Ford Foundation to the Modern Language Association, to meet the need for a national center that could serve as a clearinghouse for research and practice related to languages and language education. Charles Ferguson, a leader in the fields of applied linguistics and sociolinguistics, was the founding director. CAL became an independent, unaffiliated organization in 1964 and celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 2009.

Over its history, CAL's activities have extended its original mission through research, policy analysis, professional development, technical assistance, information collection and dissemination, curriculum

and materials development, language testing, and other services. The organization provides its services to government agencies, schools, school districts, states, institutions of higher education, and businesses in the United States and around the world. Information and resources are widely disseminated through a comprehensive website.

### **Website**

[www.cal.org](http://www.cal.org)

## **CALL – Computer Assisted Language Learning**

CALL is an approach to language teaching and learning in which computer technology is used as an aid to the presentation, reinforcement and assessment of material to be learned, usually including a substantial interactive element. Early CALL favoured an approach that drew heavily on practices associated with programmed instruction. This was reflected in the term Computer Assisted Language Instruction (CALI), which originated in the USA and was in common use until the early 1980s, when CALL became the dominant term. Throughout the 1980s CALL widened its scope, embracing the communicative approach and a range of new technologies, especially multimedia and communications technology. An alternative term to CALL emerged in the late 1980s, namely Technology Enhanced Language

Learning (TELL), but it was not adopted on a wide scale.

Typical CALL programmes present a stimulus to which the learner must respond. The stimulus may be presented in any combination of text, still images, sound and motion video. The learner responds by typing at the keyboard, pointing and clicking with the mouse, touching the screen, or speaking into a microphone. The computer offers feedback, indicating whether the learner's response is right or wrong and, in the more sophisticated CALL programmes, attempting to analyse the learner's response and to pinpoint errors. Branching to help and remedial activities is a common feature of CALL programmes.

The extent to which the computer is capable of analysing learners' errors has been a matter of controversy since CALL began. Practitioners who come into CALL via the disciplines of computational **linguistics**, natural language processing and language engineering – mainly computer scientists – tend to be more optimistic about the potential of **error analysis** by computer than those who come into CALL via language teaching. Computer scientists have made enormous advances in the development of parsers and speech analysis software, but language teachers continue to be sceptical about the use of such tools. The controversy hinges on those who favour the use of artificial intelligence (AI) techniques to develop 'intelligent CALL' (ICALL) programs (Matthews, 1994) and, at the other extreme, those who perceive this approach as a threat to humanity (Last, 1989: 153).

Within the language teaching profession itself, there has been some degree of controversy about the teacher-centred, drill-based approach to CALL, as opposed to the learner-centred, explorative approach. The explorative approach is strongly favoured by teachers who advocate the use of corpora and computer-generated concordances in the language classroom – described as 'data-driven learning' (DDL) by Johns (Johns and King, 1991; see also Tribble and Jones, 1997; Sinclair, 2004).

CALL's origins can be traced back to the 1960s. Up until the late 1970s CALL projects were confined mainly to universities, where computer programmes were developed on large mainframe computers. The PLATO project, initiated at the

University of Illinois in 1960, is an important landmark in the early development of CALL (Marty, 1981).

The advent of microcomputers in the late 1970s brought computing within the range of a wider audience, resulting in a boom in the development of CALL programmes and a flurry of publications in the early 1980s (Davies and Higgins, 1982, 1985; Kenning and Kenning, 1984; Last, 1984; Ahmad et al., 1985). Many of the CALL programs that were produced in the early 1980s consisted of a series of drills, multiple-choice **exercises** and **cloze tests**, focusing on **grammar** and **vocabulary**. This was out of tune with orthodox language teaching methodology, which by this time had embraced **communicative language teaching**. There was initially a lack of imagination and skill on the part of programmers, a situation that was rectified to a considerable extent by the publication of an influential seminal work by Higgins and Johns (1984), which contained numerous examples of alternative approaches to CALL.

Early microcomputers were incapable of presenting **authentic** recordings of the human voice and easily recognisable images, but this limitation was overcome by combining a 12-inch videodisc player and a microcomputer to create an interactive videodisc system, which made it possible to combine sound, photographic-quality still images and video recordings in attractive presentations. The result was the development of interactive videodiscs such as *Montevidisco* (Schneider and Bennion, 1984) and *Expodisc* (Davies, 1991), both of which were designed as simulations in which the learner played a key role. Inappropriate responses by the learner could result in failure to communicate the right message to the characters in the video recordings with, in *Montevidisco*, disastrous consequences.

The techniques learned in the 1980s by the developers of interactive videodiscs were adapted for multimedia personal computers (MPCs), which were in widespread use by the early 1990s. CD-ROM was established as the standard storage medium for MPCs, having been used initially in the 1980s to store large quantities of text and later to store sound, still images and video. By the mid-1990s a wide range of multimedia CD-ROMs for



language learners was available, including imaginative simulations such as *Who is Oscar Lake?* (produced by Language Publications Interactive, New York). MPCs are more compact and cheaper than the interactive videodisc systems of the 1980s and, in combination with CD-ROM technology, they are capable of presenting photographic quality images and hi-fi audio recordings. The quality of video recordings offered by CD-ROM technology was initially slow to catch up with that offered by the older interactive videodiscs, but this was a short-lived setback; CD-ROMs soon matched and then outperformed videodiscs in terms of quality and flexibility of use. CD-ROMs were followed by Digital Video Discs (DVDs), which offer exceptionally high-quality video recordings and are widely used in language teaching and learning.

In 1992 the World Wide Web was launched, reaching the general public in 1993. Initially, the quality of audio and video materials on the Web was poor compared to that offered by CD-ROMs and DVDs, which was a major drawback for developers of CALL materials, but by the beginning of the 2000s major improvements had taken place and the Web had become the main focus of activity in CALL.

Web 2.0 applications (Thomas, 2008) began to appear in the early 2000s, embracing podcasting, blogs, wikis and social networking, all of which are now used in language teaching and learning. At the same time there was an expansion in the use of Interactive Whiteboards (IWBs) for whole-class teaching (Thomas and Schmid, 2010) and the use of Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) such as Moodle for online learning. More recent trends include the use of hand-held portable devices for Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) (Shield and Kukulska-Hulme, 2008) and teaching in virtual worlds such as Second Life (Molka-Danielsen and Deutschmann, 2009).

As for the extent to which language teachers make use of CALL, an ongoing debate has focused on the issue of 'normalisation', namely the extent to which CALL is fully integrated into everyday teaching in such a way that the technology becomes invisible and is not even recognised as technology (Bax, 2003; Bax and Chambers, 2006 –

referring to Warschauer, 1996, and to Warschauer and Healey, 1998).

CALL's influence extends into a wide range of language teaching and learning activities. A language **media centre** is almost certain to contain a number of multimedia computers and to offer access to the Internet. CALL also plays an important role in **autonomous learning**, **distance learning** and **tandem learning**.

CALL figures prominently in the activities of the Association for Language Learning (ALL) in Britain, the **British Council**, the **Council of Europe**, the **Goethe-Institut**, **FIPLV** and **IATEFL**.

An increasing number of professional associations are devoted to CALL, most publishing a regular journal (in brackets here). The three longest-established associations are CALICO, USA (*CALICO Journal*); EUROCALL, Europe (*ReCALL*) and IALLT, USA (*IALLT Journal of Language Learning Technologies*). More recent associations include APACALL, Asia-Pacific (*APACALL Newsletter*); AsiaCALL (*AsiaCALL Online Journal*); IndiaCALL; JALTCALL, Japan (*JALTCALL Journal*); PacCALL, Pacific. The main CALL associations are grouped together under WorldCALL, based at Griffith University, Australia.

**See also:** Internet and language learning; Learning styles; Materials development; Self-access; Teaching methods

## Websites

*Information and Communications Technology for language teachers (ICT4LT)*: [www.ict4lt.org/en/en\\_home.htm](http://www.ict4lt.org/en/en_home.htm)

*Language Learning Technology Journal (LLTJ)*: <http://llt.msu.edu>

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## Camões Institute

The Camões Institute was set up in 1992 to replace the Institute for **Portuguese** Language and Culture (ICALP – *Instituto de Cultura e Língua Portuguesa*), which had itself succeeded the Institute for High Culture (IAC – *Instituto de Alta Cultura*). Along the lines of the **British Council** and the **Cervantes Institute**, the role of the Camões Institute is to promote the Portuguese language and culture both at home, in lusophone countries (through the Portuguese Schools in cities such as Luanda and Maputo), and abroad (through language courses and cultural centres). At first under the jurisdiction of the Portuguese Ministry of Education, in 1994 the Institute became a branch of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In a European context, the Camões Institute is an active member of EUNIC (European Union National Institutes for Culture) and EFNIL (European Federation of National Institutions for Language).

The aims of the Institute include promoting Portuguese as a language for international communication, developing projects and programmes for the dissemination of Portuguese language and culture (such as **dictionaries** and multimedia packages), coordinating the network of *leitores* (language lecturers/assistants) in schools and universities abroad, supporting cultural activities in conjunction with the Ministry of Culture, contributing to the organisation of international conferences, supporting the establishment of language courses for foreign students, and training both *leitores* and teachers of Portuguese as a Foreign Language (PLE – *Português como Língua Estrangeira*). It was closely involved in the development of examinations to recognise proficiency and award certification in Portuguese as a foreign language. Courses have been running since 1999, run by the Centre for the Evaluation of Portuguese as a Foreign Language (CAPLE – *Centro de Avaliação de Português Língua Estrangeira*), based at the University of Lisbon. There are five levels of proficiency and courses can be studied online and examined at designated locations around the world.

The Institute has its own website with links to its cultural centres around the world and information

about its activities, projects and publications. The website incorporates a Virtual Interactive Centre where *leitores* and teachers of Portuguese can access didactic material, a digital library of great works of literature (*Biblioteca Digital Camões*) and other ongoing projects, such as an Ethno-Musical Map (*Mapa Etno-Musical*).

### Website

<http://www.instituto-camoes.pt>

## CercleS – Confédération Européenne des Centres de Langues dans l'Enseignement Supérieur

CercleS (European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education) was founded in Strasbourg in 1981. Its members are independent associations in twenty-two countries, and through them it brings together some 290 higher education language centres, departments, institutes, faculties and schools whose main responsibility is the teaching of languages.

CercleS aims to support the provision of language training at university level backed up by appropriate technological and pedagogical resources; to promote research in foreign language learning; and to encourage cooperation between language centres in order to enable them to co-ordinate the pursuit of their objectives. It organises conferences, distributes a regular printed bulletin to all its members, runs electronic bulletin boards, and publishes its conference proceedings. It also facilitates staff training, staff exchanges between centres, and observatories on technological developments.

### Website

[www.cercles.org](http://www.cercles.org)

## Cervantes Institute

In 1991 the Spanish parliament founded the Cervantes Institute (*Instituto Cervantes*). This institution has as its main purpose to promote the **Spanish** language and culture in Spanish throughout the world. This purpose includes support for the teachers of Spanish and for international Hispanism and it is achieved in conjunction with other official state organisations, from Spain and from other countries. So it was a similar institution to those of other countries which had been operating for some time, such as the **British Council** for the English language and the **Goethe-Institut** for German.

The Cervantes Institute was established by the law as an official public body (and therefore with independent legal status), attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain. It has an administrative council presided over by the secretary of state for international co-operation, and has representatives from the ministries for education, culture, and the treasury. The official patron of the governing body is the king of Spain. Among its members, as well as the prime minister and various other ministers, are prestigious representatives of the cultural life of Spain and Latin America.

The Institute's director-general is appointed by the government of Spain. There are two main areas of activity, each under separate directors: the Academic Department (responsible for all activities connected with teaching Spanish as a second and foreign language) and the Cultural Department (responsible for the dissemination of Culture and Science in Spanish). The Academic Department also organises research activities connected with the present state of the language and with the use and application of new technologies, and co-ordinates projects developed by universities and research bodies. In 1994 the Cervantes Institute published its first curriculum which was open, centred on the student, and laid down a communicative syllabus based on tasks. The second edition of *Plan curricular del Instituto Cervantes* came out in 2006, including the main lines proposed by the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages** (Council of Europe, 2001).

The Institute also has a training programme for teachers of Spanish as a foreign language (*Español como Lengua Extranjera*, ELE), and it manages the administration and organisation of the DELE Diplomas (*Diplomas de Español como Lengua Extranjera*) for the Ministry of Education and Science.

In 1997 the *Centro Virtual Cervantes* website was created, accessible on the Internet (<http://cvc.cervantes.es>) and by 2010 it was the most visited website in Spanish for language learning and cultural purposes. Among its contents are teaching materials, discussion forums, cultural reports, proceedings, and links to academic projects (*Archivo Gramatical de la Lengua Española*, *Catálogo de voces hispánicas*, etc.). Furthermore, by the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Cervantes Institute created the AVE (*Aula Virtual de Español*), a digital platform whose main goal is to offer Spanish online courses via the Internet. The AVE Spanish course includes all levels of language learning according to the **Common European Framework** and it consists of modules and units. The material includes a statement of learning objectives for each section, text and audio samples, and some interactive activities.

By 2010, the Instituto Cervantes consisted of a network of seventy-eight centres in forty-four countries. In these centres there were 15,000 language courses with a total number of 210,000 registrations, and more than 6,000 cultural activities. At the same time, the libraries of the Institute are connected as a network and they have more than 1 million volumes.

### Website

[www.cervantes.es](http://www.cervantes.es)

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## Chinese

Chinese is believed to belong to the Sino-Tibetan language family. It is the language spoken by the majority of the Chinese population, who are known as the Han. Chinese is therefore also referred to, especially by the Chinese themselves, as *Hanyu*, ‘the language of the Han’. *Hanyu*, spoken presently by over a billion **native speakers** in a vast country covering an area of nearly 3,700,000 square miles, has a history of at least 4,500 years.

### The language

Chinese has gradually developed from its prototypical form into today’s eight major dialects: the northern, central, and western parts of the country are dominated by the dialect known in the Western world as Mandarin (a word originally used to refer to the Manchu officials of the Qing Dynasty and their officialese), and in the south-eastern regions of the country one encounters the other dialects – generally speaking, *Wu* in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, *Gan* in Jiangxi, *Xiang* in Hunan, Northern and Southern *Min* in Fujian, *Hakka* (i.e. Kejia) in the north-east of Guangdong, and *Cantonese* (i.e. Yue) in Guangzhou and Hong Kong.

The principal differences between these eight dialects (each of which may, of course, be further divided into subdialects or local accents) lie in pronunciation and everyday **vocabulary**, which makes oral communication extremely difficult or sometimes impossible. Mandarin, for example, has only four tones, and two consonantal endings -n and -ng. Cantonese, on the other hand, may employ more than six tones, with consonantal endings like -m, -p, -t, -k, in addition to -n and -ng; and young speakers of Cantonese simply do not differentiate between initials n- and l- (for them, if they are not careful when they speak **English**, ‘nice’ will always be ‘lice’). The use of different vocabulary also presents difficulty in mutual understanding: for a Mandarin speaker, a fridge is *bingxiang* (literally ‘ice-box’), while for a Cantonese speaker from Guangzhou or Hong Kong, where in fact snow never falls, it is *xutguai* (literally ‘snow-cabinet’). However, despite such phonological and lexical differences, these dialects miraculously keep to a

uniform script (e.g. *rén* ‘person’, *kǒu* ‘mouth’, etc., each being a combination of strokes confined to a squarish writing space and based on a monosyllable in speech), follow a similar disyllabification tendency in word-formation (e.g. *rénkǒu* ‘population’, *guójiā* ‘country’, etc.) to offset endless homophonic clashes inherent in monosyllables, and adopt more or less the same grammatical rules (e.g. *wǒ ài tā* ‘I love him’ as opposed to *tā ài wǒ* ‘he loves me’) with comparable word order and few morphological features. It sounds almost legendary to say that, wherever immediate oral transmission fails, writing (either on paper with a pen or on the palm of one’s hand with a finger) has always come in to rescue the situation and effect communication among the literate.

Nevertheless, to find a more permanent solution to such communication problems between different dialect speakers, endeavours have been made to unify the country’s speech (as the first emperor of China did to the country’s writing over 2,000 years ago). In 1958 the Chinese government promulgated a new system of romanisation called *pinyin*, based on the version of Mandarin spoken in the Beijing area, and people all over the country were encouraged to learn to speak this standard dialect which is nationally referred to as *Putonghua* ‘the common language’. *Putonghua* is variously called Mandarin in the West, *guoyu* ‘national language’ in Taiwan, and *huayu* ‘the Chinese language’ in Singapore. With its standardised pronunciation regulated in *pinyin* and essential grammatical features and conventions derived from **literary texts** of the twentieth century after the 1919 intellectual movement, *putonghua* is what is now commonly known as Modern Standard Chinese. It is one of the official languages of the United Nations and the principal form of Chinese taught or learned outside China. However, Cantonese, for historical reasons, is still very much the **lingua franca** of Chinese-speaking communities in Europe and elsewhere in the world. Cantonese, as mentioned earlier, shares a similar script and writing practice with Mandarin. None the less, it is not surprising to find writings in the vernacular carried in popular journals and tabloids in Hong Kong, using *ad hoc* or established coinages of written characters representing part of the spoken dialect not found in the shared tradition.

## The study of Chinese as a Foreign Language

The earliest recorded contact with China made by Westerners seems to start with Marco Polo, a Venetian merchant and traveller in the late thirteenth century, but the account of his experience in China served as no more than an eye-opener at the time. What really brought Europe to an intimate knowledge of Chinese thought and society were the seventeenth and early eighteenth century writings of Jesuit missionaries, such as Matteo Ricci, Adam Schall von Bell and Ferdinand Verbiest. Most of them, despite their sometimes difficult lives in China, were one-time favourites of Chinese emperors and held important offices. Though Jesuit and other Catholic missionaries travelled to China from virtually every part of Europe (including Russia), it was the French missionaries who, under the auspices of Louis XIV, collectively laid the foundation for sinological studies in the West.

However, the major breakthrough in the demand for learning Chinese had to wait till the latter half of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the Industrial Revolution with its rapid advances in commercial production and scientific knowledge pushed Britain to the fore. All at once China found herself confronted not only by missionaries (now Protestant as well as Catholic) but also by merchants and traders from the West, first from Iberian countries and Holland and then from Britain, particularly through the East India Company. In this unprecedented period of imperialist expansion, diplomats were seen to follow in the footsteps of missionaries and traders and the Portuguese and the British were soon followed by the French, the Germans, the Americans and the Russians, vying for a foothold in China in order to exploit and divide up its vast potential market. Necessity certainly infused **motivation** into all branches of learning. By the time of the two Opium Wars, serious attempts were already being made to establish the discipline of sinology in Europe and America, as a better understanding of China was important in coercing her to open her closed doors. All over Europe and America, colleges and universities set up Chinese courses and, at the same time, appointed professors to teach them. In 1876, both America and Britain set up university chairs

of Chinese, with Samuel Wells Williams at Yale and James Legge at Oxford, while similar appointments were being made at Paris, Leiden, Munich and Berlin from the 1830s onwards. On the other hand, many missionary- or diplomat-turned-scholars like Robert Morrison (who translated the Bible into Chinese), James Legge (who translated Confucian classics into English), and Thomas Wade and Herbert Giles (who invented the Wade-Giles system of Chinese romanisation) were beginning to make their names known to the rest of the world in the field of sinology. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, sinology with its emphasis on the study of Chinese classics was a well-accepted discipline in the West.

It was, however, at the turn of the twentieth century, particularly during the years leading up to and following World War Two, that the study of Chinese saw its greatest advance in Europe and America, as the emerging political situation compelled these countries to see the need for training not only missionaries, **interpreters** for trade missions, diplomats, public servants and academics, but also large numbers of military personnel, and for orientating the study of Chinese towards more immediate and contemporary goals. As a result, text-based and classics-oriented sinology metamorphosed into or, to be more exact, gave way to so-called Modern Chinese Studies, with its emphasis on area studies relating to China as well as on the Chinese language itself. Very soon, motivated by these new orientations, America took over the lead from Europe.

With China gradually throwing open its doors to the rest of the world, the study of the Chinese language and disciplines related to China is gaining greater momentum, not only in Europe and America but also in Australia and Japan. Japan has actually produced many distinguished sinologists, and boasts the best Chinese library holdings outside China. At present, the world is readier than ever to pursue the study of Chinese, and the Association of Asian Studies is an important umbrella organisation for Chinese and Asian Studies while the Association of Chinese Language Teachers likewise sponsors annual academic **exchanges** among college and university teachers from America and publishes in its official journal contributions

from its members. To add to the global effort for Chinese Studies, the International Society for Chinese Language Teaching was set up in Beijing in 1987 through Chinese initiative. The Society, which has committee members from countries all over the world where Chinese is taught, organises a conference to discuss Chinese language teaching every three years in Beijing (or elsewhere in the world, as the latest Committee suggested) and publishes a quarterly journal called *Chinese Teaching in the World*. In 1989, HSK (*Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi* – Chinese Standard Examinations) was established by China's Leading Group for the Teaching of Chinese to Non-Native Speakers. HSK assesses different levels of achievement in Chinese and is for learners who are non-native speakers of the language.

Throughout the twentieth century, numerous **dictionaries** and **textbooks** have been produced by Western scholars to help students of Chinese master the language. The way these textbooks were written or compiled clearly reflects the pedagogical stance of their authors. The textbooks compiled by those who had themselves originally been missionaries and diplomats in China had two characteristics which stood out. First, they mostly seem to cater for the practical **needs** of the would-be student, a potential diplomat or merchant who would want to be able to read official documents, civil contracts, or even shop signs so as to enable him to get around during his stay in China, and who would also want to be able to engage in everyday dialogue with his Chinese associates. Second, these textbooks, readers and **grammars** have an ample provision of **reading** passages or illustrative sentences, invariably with corresponding English translations, which, according to some of the authors, if learned by heart with their meaning fully understood, were supposed to save the student time and help him to think in ready-made idioms and quotations and thus achieve fluency in the language.

In contrast, the textbooks compiled by more academically-minded authors, who advocate more in-depth study of the language and its culture, insist on the reading of classics and good modern or contemporary literature and a thorough appreciation of the workings of the language.

The two different orientations have persisted till this day, and the future seems to be more of a compromise than a split. With the advent of computer facilities and more sophisticated aids to learning, methodology is bound to change. Given the increasing involvement of Chinese nationals in Chinese Studies at universities throughout the world, there is little chance that teaching and learning Chinese will prove to be an exception.

## Recent developments

A most recent development in the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language is the setting up of **Confucius Institutes** and Confucius Classrooms all over the world. This can be seen as the Chinese government's effort, following the country's economic boom, to promote Chinese as a world language to further cultural and commercial exchanges between China and the rest of the world. Under the direct sponsorship of the Office of Chinese Language Council International (*Hanban*, in short) and in partnership with universities, colleges, and private institutions in over ninety countries so far, there have emerged over six hundred such institutes and classrooms in a short span of six years from 2004 to 2010. This is not without controversy: the arguments against being China's 'soft power', its 'overseas propaganda set-up', and 'a Trojan horse for the loss of academic freedom' in schools and universities where these institutes or classrooms have been established. Apart from Confucius Institutes and Classrooms, China's official paper *The People's Daily* (overseas edition) also carries regularly articles, texts, and columns that discuss and teach the Chinese language.

With more and closer contacts with the world at large, the Chinese language is not immune to changes itself. It is clearly visible (as well as conceivable) that more and more foreign words, particularly English abbreviations such as CD, DVD, DNA, WTO, GDP, etc., begin to appear in toto in Chinese newspapers and other publications. This has caused alarm amongst language puritans and has made the country's official censorship body The General Administration of Press and Publication (GAPP) issue regulations to ban foreign words in print without any accompanying Chinese translations.

The general public seem to think otherwise: for a language to develop into a globalized language, the current practice might be a healthy trend after all.

**See also:** Arabic; Japanese; Confucius Institute

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YIP PO-CHING

## Chomsky, Noam

### b. 1928, Philadelphia, PA, USA

As the instigator of transformational-generative linguistics and **universal grammar**, he is certainly the most debated and influential linguist of the second half of the twentieth century. Between *Syntactic Structures* (1957), his first publication, and *The Minimalist Program* (1995), he published 70 books and some 1,000 articles on linguistics, philosophy, cognitive science, **psychology** and also politics. Indeed, with books like *American Power and New Mandarins* (1969), many people, above all in the USA, to know him better as a left-leaning political author rather than as a linguist.

Chomsky never reflected on the problems of any type of language teaching, and, on seeing the impact which his ideas made in this field, he even stressed that they were too abstract to be applied in a classroom. It was only in his influential review of B.F. Skinner's book *Verbal Behavior* (1959) that he came anywhere near the problems. Yet he influenced language **acquisition** studies and language teaching programmes by the axiomatic principles of his linguistic views.

For Chomsky, language is located in a human-specific **competence** of the mind which works according to abstract rules. These rules are the same for all languages extant, although they appear in different phonetic interpretations. In various grammatical models, he described this **generative** process, giving syntax the leading part in it. At first, he assumed a 'deep' structure, i.e. an abstract syntactical framework of each sentence, which, by and large, consisted of the regularities of constituent structures, as for example **Bloomfield** had explained them. By exactly defined transformations, which included lexical and phonetic concretisation, this 'deep' structure was made a 'surface' structure, i.e. a concrete act of performance. In various steps which dealt with problems arising out of these assumptions, Chomsky finally gave up the difference between 'deep' (abstract, syntactic) and 'surface' (concrete, semantic and phonetic) structure and spoke of universal principles organising all human languages. All this is meant to explain the working of the human mind as a genetically determined cognitive apparatus.

It is this anthropological background that stimulated scholars of linguistics to understand the data of language acquisition and of second/foreign language learning as signs of the working of the human mind whose processing is triggered, but not essentially influenced, by experience or by teaching. The general aim is to gear the methods of teaching to the predetermined order of learning and, by doing so, make them more effective. Many detailed investigations appeared in which the general rules of language acquisition were thought to be much stronger than, for example, the differences which are observable in the classroom between first language and second/foreign language lessons.



There are many language pedagogues who doubt that these analyses will lead to applicable results, in particular because Chomsky has always the 'ideal' speaker in mind, whereas teachers deal with concrete learners. But even where such doubts prevail, language learning and language competence is nowadays generally understood as the outcome of mental cognitive processes with their own strong, but not omnipotent, dynamism. It is the teacher's task to set this dynamism going. If their work is at all to be described in Chomskyan terms, teachers must accept the principles and try to influence the parameters of language learning, in addition to the behavioural conditions on much lower levels of human nature. Chomsky's general legacy is the cognitive mentalism of present-day language learning theories.

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[www.chomsky.info](http://www.chomsky.info)

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WERNER HÜLLEN

## CIEP – Centre international d'études pédagogiques

The CIEP is a benchmark public operator responsible for international educational cooperation and at the heart of French and foreign partnerships. It has two focuses of activity: education (general, higher and vocational, and recognition of qualifications) and languages (French, assessment and

certification in French, foreign languages and mobility).

With regard to languages, the CIEP offers support for the promotion of the French language abroad, for foreign languages in France, and for mobility.

The institution provides both on-site and distance professional training for teacher trainers, teachers, supervisory staff, quality auditors, course directors, educational advisers, etc. In this regard, it organises winter and summer universities in French-language professions – "BELC" – with university recognition and a degree course (master's II). It also meets ad-hoc requests from French and foreign sponsors, and runs a distance training system (PRO FLE).

It also designs quality systems, manages certification of FLE (French as a Foreign Language) centres in France and participates in quality approach experimentation for French cultural network courses abroad.

It oversees the implementation of a French language course on the Internet. It organises seminars and colloquiums, and provides programmes for teachers of French throughout the world ([www.francparler.info/accueil/](http://www.francparler.info/accueil/) and <http://lefildubilingue.org/>).

The CIEP is responsible for the educational and administrative management of national qualifications for non-francophone foreigners: DILF (Initial Diploma in French language), DELF (Diploma in French Language Studies and its versions for primary and secondary schools and for vocational education), and DALF (Advanced Level) as well as the TCF (Test of Knowledge of the French Language).

The CIEP works towards implementation of the foreign language teaching policy in France in its international aspect, and contributes to the promotion of multilingualism and mobility. It manages a variety of mobility programmes (language-assistant exchanges, professional stays abroad, etc.) and organises training seminars. Along with French and European bodies, it responds to European calls for tenders.

### Website

<http://www.ciep.fr/en/index.php>

## CILT – Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research

CILT (Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research) was established in 1966 with the purpose of collecting and disseminating information on foreign language teaching and learning. Since 1986 this has been specifically interpreted to mean the promotion of greater national capability in languages throughout the United Kingdom.

In 1991 The Scottish Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (Scottish CILT) was established as a partnership between CILT and the University of Stirling, and in 1994 Northern Ireland CILT was established at Queens University, Belfast.

CILT was registered as an independent educational charity in 2003 but continued to receive an annual government grant to carry out its work with schools across the country. A partnership with the large educational charity, CfBT Education Trust, was formed in 2010 to encourage alternative and additional funding, and in April 2011 the two organisations formally merged with most of CILT's core activities transferring to CfBT.

### Websites

[www.cilt.org.uk](http://www.cilt.org.uk)  
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## Civilisation

The concept of the French word *civilisation* has its roots in a post-Enlightenment discourse that developed into the ideology of colonialism in the nineteenth century. The French (and British) imperial project was promoted on the basis that it brought a superior civilisation to peoples considered

as less developed. This perspective was challenged in the twentieth century by anthropologists who promoted cultural relativism and by postcolonialist scholars in history, literature and applied linguistics. Nonetheless, the concept of *civilisation* has persisted well into the twenty-first century in language teaching. It is commonly used and readily understood in the context of teaching and learning French as a foreign language (FLE). In spite of its connotations of cultural superiority the word is often used to designate that part of a language course that includes sociocultural knowledge intended to complement and give context to the linguistic content.

We here explore the development of the teaching of *civilisation*, noting its institutional link with the French state. It explores the difficulties in conceptualising the term adequately and in finding an appropriate pedagogy. Together these help to explain why the term has been gradually replaced since the 1980s by concepts incorporating the word 'culture', such as **cultural studies**, cultural anthropology, **intercultural communication**, and cultures.

The purposes of language teaching developed as part of French foreign policy in the colonial era have persisted to the present day. The presentation of French *civilisation*, in a broadly positive, uncritical light was the mission given to the **alliance française**, set up in 1884 to spread the use of the French language in the colonies and elsewhere overseas. Another colonial era institution flourishing in the twenty-first century is the prestigious *Cours de Civilisation Française de la Sorbonne*, founded in 1919. Its policy is steered by a board that includes representatives of the ministries of the Interior, Education and Foreign Affairs. The *Alliance* continues to recruit and train teachers to run classes or provide tuition and it organises conferences and supports the production of teaching material. It thus has a strong institutional position in the teaching of French as a foreign language and has been influential in helping to define the cultural content of language courses.

For many years and in many places one of the main vehicles for the promotion of French, explicitly linked to the Alliance française, was the *Cours de langue et de civilisation françaises* (Mauger,

1953) which combines the teaching of French grammar with a story line based on a foreign family visiting France and discovering its everyday life and institutions. The France presented by Mauger is a single social entity, with a single, neutral or standard form of expression. French *civilisation* is presented as if it were the culmination of the Jules Ferry educational reforms of the 1870s, namely as a single nation with a single language. Regional and social variations are invisible. The institutions and monuments presented are largely in Paris and chosen to prepare students for an encounter with literary texts in the fourth volume. Thus one persistent tradition within French *civilisation*, strongly challenged since the advent of communicative methodology, was a monolithic view of language, culture and society aligned with a nation and a state.

Leading French language teaching specialists Galisson and Coste (1988) propose three definitions of *civilisation*, namely:

- the act of civilising
- the characteristics of civilised societies
- the characteristic features of a given society.

The first of these refers to the colonial ideology, based on a hierarchy of cultures, whereby the colonising power embarked on a mission to bring less developed cultures into modernity through imposing new institutional structures, including schools. The second definition, whilst potentially referring to any society, tends, in a French language context, to take France as the model. French Republican principles are considered by their proponents to be universal as well as national. *Civilisation* therefore has connotations of Frenchness.

The third definition is the one most closely associated with language teaching. Whereas education in general can be seen as a civilising process and an understanding of the nature of civilisation is likely to be acquired through the study of history and the humanities, language learners need a knowledge of a range of cultural references in order to have a full understanding of texts in the target language. In this sense *civilisation* can also be applied to the features of societies whose languages are studied by French learners, as in *civilisation britannique*.

Technical developments in sound recording and the availability of photographic images for classroom use led to the development of **audio-visual** courses, initially, as in *Voix et images de France* (CREDIF, 1960) still based on a specially written standard language. The course content was dominated by linguistic necessities rather than by a real desire to transmit cultural knowledge. By the time of *C'est le printemps* (CLE, 1976) course writers had introduced a wider spectrum of characters and situations as well as a **functional** rather than grammatical syllabus. However, further technical advances together with the development of educational television and video and the availability of photocopying enabled teachers to have access to a greater range of representations of France and the French language. The move to **communicative language teaching**, with its stress on authentic materials as in *Archipel* (CREDIF, 1992) paved the way for a reconsideration of what might be considered to be *civilisation*.

Whereas language learning in the tradition of the Alliance française aimed to initiate learners into a high and very literary culture, from the 1960s the purposes were increasingly instrumental and to do with tourism and commerce. Alongside the high culture, courses started to contain elements of popular culture as in *La France d'aujourd'hui* (CLE, 1991) and *Les Français, mentalités et comportements* (CLE, 1995) which widened the definition of *civilisation*. One reason for this is that communicative language teaching requires learners to respond and react and so texts are chosen with this in mind. Another is that universal access to secondary education and foreign languages was thought to necessitate engaging with learners at their level, rather than inducting them directly into a high culture which might be doubly alienating as both foreign and socially unfamiliar.

During the 1980s *civilisation* was the term for teaching about French and Francophone culture in French as a foreign language (FLE) courses in France. The field developed rapidly together with specialist teachers, conferences and journals such as *Le Français dans le monde*.

Whereas coherent methodologies for teaching language have been developed, following theoretical and empirical research on language

acquisition, no single approach to teaching *civilisation* has emerged. Beacco (1996) and Chalançon (1996) describe teachers lecturing to classes, enlivening them with personal anecdotes or, in an attempt to promote discussion, introducing themes around which there is public or media interest and often political controversy: youth culture including drugs, the development of multicultural societies, unemployment, the media. Given that the emphasis within foreign language classes has tended to be primarily on the linguistic potential of a stimulus document, students are likely to be asked comprehension questions in the foreign language or to translate or to summarise part of the text, however controversial the topic. There may be discussion, but this is likely to be constrained by the learners' linguistic competence and thus may not lead to an improved understanding of the topic. Stereotypes and unsustainable generalisations may even be reinforced during this process.

Two developments within the field of language learning have provided a framework for the development of a pedagogy able to integrate *civilisation* into a unified programme of language-and-culture teaching (Byram et al., 1994). The first is a concern for autonomous learning, which emphasises investigation and research or *savoir-faire*. Students may learn to decode implicit assumptions in language material. The second is **intercultural education**, which uses insights from **cultural studies** and **anthropology** and stresses a reflexive process involving making comparisons between cultural forms in an attempt to achieve a non-ethnocentric perspective. Le Berre (1998) maintains that *civilisation* in the 1980s effectively became *anthropologie culturelle*. Its aims and techniques included *objectivation*, constructing provisional knowledge through observing difference and oppositions, and contextualisation.

By the twenty-first century, the colonial connotations of *civilisation*, together with the development of increasingly multicultural nation-states and the lowering of national boundaries, made it a term that was increasingly perceived as anachronistic, as language teachers saw their mission as teaching language and cultures rather than a single culture.

**See also:** Area studies; Cultural studies; Culture; *Landeskunde/Kulturkunde*

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XAVIÈRE HASSAN AND HUGH STARKEY

## Classroom language

Classroom language refers to teachers' and learners' verbal behaviour in L2 classrooms. Language in this context is both the means for and the goal of instruction. Classroom language tends to be modified in form and function compared to language

used in interactions between **native** and **non-native speakers** outside the classroom.

### Development of studies of classroom language

Early studies of classroom language were conducted by means of interaction analysis. Based on this approach, **classroom observation** schemes were employed to record and quantify participants' verbal behaviour in predetermined sets of categories (e.g. Moskowitz, 1971). Although observation schemes have become quite sophisticated over their years of implementation, they still reduce complex interactions to rigid categories and fail to fully account for the co-constructions accomplished by conversational interactants.

Initially, studies on classroom language were mainly concerned with describing **teacher talk** (see Allwright and Bailey, 1991). An increasing interest in the role of comprehensible input (Krashen, 1981), interaction (Long and Sato, 1983) and the production of comprehensible output (Swain, 1985) for successful **second language acquisition** led researchers to take into account the interactional contributions of all classroom participants. Ethnographic (e.g. Van Lier, 1988) and discourse analytic studies (e.g. Ellis, 1984; see also Long, 1980 for a discussion of methodological issues) have sought to provide more elaborate descriptions of classroom language based on observations and the analysis of transcripts of verbal interactions between learners and teachers.

### The special nature of classroom language

Kasper (1986), in the introduction to her book, stresses that the classroom environment entails a particular set of participant rights and obligations, as well as role relationships. Numerous studies have investigated the differences between language use in the classroom and language use in naturalistic conversations among native and non-native speakers. Some have commented on the range of conversational moves teachers and students perform, such as asking questions, responding, or requesting (e.g. Long and Sato, 1983; Ellis, 1997). Others have investigated turn-taking procedures as

well as openings and closings of conversational interactions (e.g. Löscher, 1986; Van Lier, 1988). Work describing turn-taking procedures in language classrooms is heavily based on studies completed in the field of ethnomethodology (Sacks et al., 1974). These studies explored turn-taking in naturalistic conversations and thus provided a baseline of comparison for analyses of talk in other contexts.

Discourse analytic studies of classroom interactions in general identified a specific sequence of moves to be basic to most teacher-fronted classroom contexts (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975): Initiation (teacher)–Response (student)–Feedback (teacher) (IRF). This structure was found to apply to the language classroom as well, with the possible addition of another response move by the student (IRF–R), such as for instance the repetition of the teacher's feedback (McTear, 1975). As Ellis (1994) states: 'Although IRF(R) exchanges tend to dominate [in the classroom], other kinds can be found' (1994: 575). Several approaches have aimed at providing more detailed descriptions of patterns of language use and interaction in the classroom. Ellis (1984), for example, proposes to identify the 'goal', i.e. the purpose, of an interaction, as well as the 'address', i.e. the interlocutor. Van Lier (1988) suggests identifying the relative amount of control which teachers hold over both topic (i.e. 'what the talk is *about*', p. 149) and type of activity (i.e. 'what is being *done* and *how* it is done', p. 149). Whether focusing on goals and address or on topic and activity, both Ellis (1984) and Van Lier (1988) aim at analysing how language in the classroom is used, when and by whom.

### Related factors

A number of studies have explored the relationship between classroom organization and teachers' as well as learners' use of language. In particular, they compared teacher-fronted and group activities in terms of participant contributions and negotiated modifications of the input, such as clarification requests, comprehension checks, or rephrasings (Pica and Doughty, 1985; House, 1986). Pica and Doughty (1985) also suggest that, in addition to group structure, the nature of the task will influence the negotiation work which can be observed in the

classroom. In the context of their study, they stipulate that the kinds of information exchange required among participants influences their use of language.

Some researchers have also studied classroom discourse based on a sociocultural framework. Antón (1999), for instance, explored how teachers within learner-centred classrooms used language to foster in learners the responsibility for their own learning. Language use from a sociocultural perspective is considered an important tool for learners' cognitive development.

Still other aspects of language use studied include the role of cultural background (e.g. Sato, 1982), learners' socialization in discourse competence in language classrooms (Duff, 1995; 1996), learners' willingness to communicate (Clément et al., 2003), as well as learners' motivation (Dörnyei, 2002). Findings are difficult to generalize due to the different approaches used as well as the different groups studied.

Despite these differences, most researchers seem to assign a central role to linguistic production and interaction for classroom second language acquisition. Although the exact relationship between learners' use of language or kinds of interaction and actual language acquisition remains unclear (see, e.g. Gass and Varonis, 1994; Long, 1996), an empirically supported link between the two has been shown (see, e.g. Keck et al., 2006; Mackey and Goo, 2007). Following the theory behind **communicative language teaching**, this interaction should happen in task-based activities which 'make use of real-life situations that necessitate communication' (Brandl, 2008: 5).

Finally, another aspect of classroom language researchers have investigated is the role of the students' native language (L1) within the foreign language classroom. While one expressed goal of Communicative Language Teaching is to maximize the use of the target language (TL) in meaningful contexts (Brandl, 2008), this does not mandate exclusively TL, immersion-style classrooms. As a matter of fact, L1 support seems to be crucial for the development of metacognitive learning strategies (Valdés, 2001) and has been shown to be beneficial for L2 acquisition in numerous studies (Jarvis, 2002; Ringbom, 2007; Wayland and Guion, 2004).

**See also:** Classroom observation schemes; Classroom research; Communicative language teaching; Discourse analysis; Mother tongue use in the foreign language classroom; Research methods; Teacher talk

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## Classroom observation schemes

A classroom observation scheme is an instrument for recording aspects of teaching and learning events in the classroom. Observation schemes generally consist of a number of specific categories, and are employed in **teacher education**/development as well as for research purposes.

### Development

Classroom observation schemes or schedules (Allwright, 1988) started to gain acceptance in research on language learning in the mid-1960s. Researchers at the time were particularly interested in identifying the method most effective for language teaching. Based on their findings they intended to prescribe to teachers the principal elements of good teaching. The main focus of these early observation schemes was on the language teachers' behaviour. Over the years, and with a change in research emphases and questions asked, the design of observation schemes has changed to include aspects of learner behaviours and learning processes.

One of the first observation schemes applied to language teaching was Flanders' (1970) 'Interaction Analysis'. This instrument consisted of ten categories (Accepts Feeling, Praises or Encourages, Accepts or Uses Ideas of Student, Asks Questions, Lecturing, Giving Directions, Criticizing or Justifying Authority, Student Talk-Response, Student Talk-Initiation, and Silence or Confusion), and was originally developed for classroom research in general. Moskowitz (1971) further modified Flanders' categorization to fit the context of the language classroom. Her instrument, termed FLint (Foreign Language interaction), was intended for use in research as well as in teacher development. Beyond designing a tool for teacher trainers, Moskowitz was also interested in providing the teachers themselves with a tool to observe and reflect on their own teaching. Another frequently cited observation scheme is FOCUS (Foci for Observing Communications Used in Settings), developed by Fanselow (1977) in the mid-1970s. Since Fanselow intended the scheme's application to go beyond the immediate language teaching context, FOCUS did not include separate categories for teacher and



learner behaviour. Rather, it consisted of five general categories (source, medium, use, content, and pedagogical purpose of a move) which could be adapted to a variety of settings and participants.

COLT (Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching) is another well developed and complex scheme intended to rate classroom activities on their communicative potential (Allwright et al., 1984; Spada and Fröhlich, 1995). COLT consists of two parts, the first of which is designed to record information on activity type and content, participant organization, **skills** involved, and **materials** required. The second part, part B, addresses the communicative features (e.g. use of the target language, discourse initiation, etc.) employed by all classroom participants. Reflecting the emphasis on the importance of interaction in foreign language acquisition theory, COLT continues to be an influential observation scheme utilized in a variety of research areas (student motivation: Taguchi, 2006; L1 vs. TL use: Kim and Elder, 2008; teaching sociolinguistic skills: Yu, 2008).

### Issues of objectivity and reliability

Since they were first introduced in classroom research, observation schemes have become quite sophisticated (Nunan, 1994). Two major issues in designing schemes are operationalization and **reliability**. Constructing valid observation schemes depends on the operationalization of fuzzy theoretical concepts into observable phenomena, or categories of behaviour. Reliability, 'the extent to which what is recorded is what actually occurred in the setting', 'is enhanced by using detailed field notes, audio and video recording, and teams of researchers' (McMillan and Wergin, 2006: 96). Methodological advances such as momentary time sampling and partial-interval recording (see Meany-Daboul et al., 2007) and technological advances in recording software (see e.g. EBASS software: Greenwood et al., 1994) continue to improve the use of classroom observation schemes.

Despite the growing sophistication of observation instruments, their respective degree of objectivity and reliability is still at issue. Allwright and Bailey state that '[ ... ] the value of an observational schedule depends directly and exclusively on the

reliability and validity of its categories' (1991: 13). As Chaudron (1988) claims, the reliability of most instruments has not been sufficiently proved (see also Allwright and Bailey, 1991). Since researchers tend to develop their own instruments rather than use pre-existing ones, and since they frequently use different categories to record similar aspects of behaviour, instruments as well as findings are hard to compare. Items assessing similar aspects also frequently differ on the degree of inference (see Long, 1980) required for their rating. Furthermore, as Nunan (1994) claims, researchers will always be informed by specific theories on language learning as well as on research. Nunan states that 'there is no such thing as "objective" observation, [ ... ] what we see will be determined, at least in part, by what we expect to see' (1994: 98). Observation schemes, from this point of view then, are bound to be subjective. Another point of criticism addresses the kind of rigid classification which observation schemes demand. Classroom situations contain complex events which might not be accounted for in a prefabricated list of categories. Comparing a selection of observation schemes, Chaudron states that 'no one scheme in fact includes all the potentially relevant dimensions of information about classroom interaction' (1988: 21). Researchers might therefore miss events crucial to the research question but not encoded in the scheme.

While there is considerable debate on the objectivity and reliability of observation schemes for research purposes, most researchers actually agree that the instruments can be beneficial for teacher training and development. Lightbown and Spada (1999), for instance, point out that observations can help teachers reflect on their teaching practices and the pedagogical assumptions informing these. Following Genesee and Upshur, 'classroom observations consist of a set of observational categories that directs teachers in their search for information, inferences, and explanations of teaching and learning' (1996: 95). Observation is thus considered a valuable tool which can assist teachers in their everyday classroom practice.

### Selection and design of schemes

When selecting an observation scheme, several design features have to be taken into account in

order to ensure a fit between the instrument and the purpose of the observation (Chaudron, 1988): Recording procedure, item type (high vs. low inference items; see Long, 1980), possibilities of multiple coding for one event, real-time coding or post-event coding on a recording, as well as units of analysis employed (temporal, linguistic or pedagogical) have to be examined. It is, of course, also crucial to consider whether a particular scheme was developed with research or teacher education purposes in mind (Nunan, 1994).

Genesee and Upshur (1996) provide guidelines for the design of original observation schemes. Similar to Moskowitz (1971), they envision teachers observing themselves and making use of their observations for those everyday decision-making processes required of them in the classroom. The design guidelines they suggest address the following issues: (a) identify the *what*, i.e. those aspects of the teaching and learning process intended for observation; (b) identify the *whom*, i.e. decide whether to focus on individual students or on group/whole class interaction; (c) decide *how often* and *when exactly* to observe; and (d) decide on the *how*, i.e. the form of record keeping (anecdotal records, checklists or rating scales). Since rating scales and checklists consist of predetermined categories, Genesee and Upshur advise beginning teachers / teacher researchers to use anecdotal records to develop appropriate categories.

**See also:** Action research; Classroom language; Classroom research; Research methods

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## Classroom research

Classroom research looks into the classroom itself for an understanding of what happens there. It was already established in teacher training in the 1960s, with systematic **classroom observation** being used as a feedback tool in teacher training when the failure of comparative method research to take classroom events sufficiently into account prompted the rapid development of academic classroom research on classroom processes. Classroom research studies learner behaviour and teacher behaviour, observable behaviour and unobservable behaviour (thoughts, **attitudes** and opinions). For some time mainly associated with second language **acquisition** studies as an academic research tool, it is now even more strongly associated with teacher-based research for teacher development, often in the form of **action research**, whereby teachers use classroom research procedures to investigate their own classrooms.

Classroom research can involve direct classroom observation, or less direct, and more obviously subjective, data collection procedures such as participant diaries, questionnaires and interviews. Classroom research thus lends itself to qualitative as well as to quantitative approaches to research design. Classroom observation is central to the tradition, however, with lessons recorded via audio- and/or videotape, and transcribed for analysis, typically via an observation schedule or category system that reduces data to quantifiable categories of classroom behaviour. Inferences are then made from the patterns of behaviour so revealed.

### Fifty years of classroom research: origins and developments

Classroom observation has a long history in education, with teacher performance typically being evaluated this way, and a long history in initial teacher training, with observed classroom performance crucial to professional qualifications.

When 'interaction analysis' arrived (Flanders, 1960), both a research tool and a practical tool for teacher training with only ten categories and requiring only twelve hours of training, interest in classroom observation grew rapidly. In the USA (Moskowitz, 1968) and Europe (Wragg, 1970; Krumm, 1973) interaction analysis was adopted and adapted to represent the characteristics of language classrooms. Objective descriptions of classroom behaviour had arrived to replace subjective and prescriptive evaluations.

Also during the 1960s, US educational researchers (Smith, 1970) tried, by making direct comparisons between classes taught audiolingually and classes taught more traditionally, to establish the **audiolingual method** as the one best method. The results were inconclusive, but one of the first critics (Clark, 1969) noted that they were uninterpretable, rather than inconclusive, since the study's classroom observation element was unable to demonstrate that the designated methods had been used systematically and exclusively. The 'inconclusive' results were most probably due to insufficiently different classroom practices. This prompted teacher trainers wishing to broaden their research, and people

interested in classroom processes but not involved in teacher training, to move away from observation as a feedback tool and to focus instead upon what the ‘objective’ description of language classroom processes offered academic research (Allwright, 1975).

It was now possible to develop research techniques following academic research criteria, rather than according to training requirements, and so category systems could hope to represent the complexities of language classrooms. ‘FOCUS’ (Fanselow, 1977) was designed to get the best of both worlds with a system that, for academic research purposes, exhaustively categorised classroom language teaching and learning, but which could be used highly selectively by teachers in training for their more restricted purposes. Early in the 1980s, working outside teacher training, and more interested in investigating **communicative language teaching**, researchers at OISE (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education) developed the extensive category system COLT (Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching – Allen, Fröhlich and Spada, 1984). Researchers could now also develop non-observational techniques, and make productive links with **second language acquisition** studies (SLA). SLA offered motivated research questions in a coherent theoretical framework (Long, 1981).

‘Mentalistic’ research techniques were also developed (Cohen and Hosenfeld, 1981) using diary studies (Bailey, 1980) or think-aloud procedures (Hosenfeld, 1979), for example, to elicit talk from teachers (and learners) about their experiences. This represented a major break with tradition. Participants’ subjective experiences were now potentially as important as anything which could be captured by observers (or audio/video-recording machines).

Academic classroom research had largely broken away from teacher training, then, and no longer saw direct observation as central (Allwright, 1987). It gained increasingly wide acceptance as a valid academic pursuit, drawing mainly on SLA for its research questions, and contributing to a growing body of published research. However, the link with SLA began to weaken, as teacher development via in-service (rather than pre-service) work developed

fast as a rival source of ideas, influenced by overtly ideological concerns. The notion of the teacher as ‘intellectual’ was proposed (Giroux, 1988), replacing the teacher as mere ‘delivery system’ for other people’s thinking. Teachers could now be expected to develop their own theories of teaching and learning, from experience and reflection.

At the same time, in spite of its obvious concern for the classroom, academic classroom research had further eroded relations between teachers and researchers. SLA-inspired research agendas appeared largely irrelevant to teachers, and the research procedures themselves were intrusive and time-consuming. **Action research** arrived (Carr and Kemmis, 1986; Nunan, 1989), proposing that the people to undertake classroom research were teachers, who would do research by taking action for change – research aimed at solving teachers’ own immediate classroom problems, unhindered by abstract theoretical agendas. Action researchers, working for their own development, in their own classrooms, would keep on taking adaptive action until their problem had been solved. No control group was needed, nor was it necessary to hold everything else constant while an experimental action was tried out – major requirements of traditional experimental research. Otherwise, however, action research followed the academic repertoire of classroom research procedures.

### Some current problems and unresolved issues

None the less, the relationship between academic classroom research and its counterpart in teacher development is problematic. Can teacher-based research contribute to theory, or can it only contribute, at best, to practical problem-solving? Should teacher-researchers follow academic research practices, or should they re-invent classroom research, and find their own criteria for validity (see Nunan, 1997 and Allwright, 1997)?

Using action research to solve classroom problems is also problematic in practice, because of the heavy burden the procedures can place on teachers. ‘Exploratory practice’ (Allwright and Hanks, 2009) is designed to minimise such problems.

Academic acceptance of classroom research has countered the simplistic assumptions behind large-scale methodological comparisons. Also, classroom research has largely succeeded in finding a place on teacher training and **teacher education** courses, and in teacher development work. On academic courses in **applied linguistics** the full academic model typically predominates, whereas action research (and, more rarely, exploratory practice) is more common elsewhere.

However, one influential commentator has regretted that many published 'classroom' studies are really 'classroom-oriented' rather than 'classroom-based'. They do not involve 'investigating real behaviour in real classrooms' (Nunan, 1991: 260). It would be ironic if a too-broad interpretation of 'classroom research' brought about a neglect (Breen, 1985) of what was originally its central concern – what actually happens in classrooms.

**See also:** Action research; Classroom observation schemes; Evaluation; Research methods; Second language acquisition theories; Teacher education; Teacher talk

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## Cloze test

The cloze test was invented by W. Taylor in 1953, who also coined the term 'cloze', linking it explicitly to the Gestalt **psychology** term 'closure'. In its original form, a cloze test consists of a single passage of (**authentic**) prose in which, after a short unmutated lead-in, every  $n$ th word ( $n$  being usually a number between 5 and 10) is deleted leaving blanks. The candidate is requested to supply the missing words. The mechanical deletion principle is intended to approximate random sampling of the language and to result in a content-valid test. As a rule, classical cloze tests are viewed as integrative or holistic tests of global proficiency in a first, second or foreign language. The cloze procedure is based on the theory of reduced redundancy testing. The number of correct restorations is seen as a

measure of the efficiency of a global language processing **competence** underlying both the receptive and productive use of language.

For a long time, cloze tests were viewed by many language testers as a particularly suitable instrument for measuring general language proficiency. However, there has been severe criticism, including the following:

1. Since cloze tests usually consist of only one longer text, there may be a bias due to text specificity.
2. The factors 'text', 'deletion rate' and 'starting point' affect **reliability** and **validity** coefficients.
3. If the exact method of scoring is used (only the original word present is viewed as correct), then cloze tests are often too difficult even for adult educated **native speakers**. If acceptable scoring is used, a large subjective component enters the scoring, and the tests are less reliable and marking more time-consuming.
4. The difficulty of cloze tests depends on the proportion of structure and content words deleted (different starting points and deletion rates result in different proportions).
5. Many of the cloze tests reported in the literature are much less reliable than was originally assumed.
6. Cloze tests measure primarily micro-linguistic **skills** on the sentence level.

There have been several variations on the classical cloze procedure. In the multiple-choice cloze, options are provided for each blank on the basis of an empirical item analysis. The multiple-choice cloze does not assume **writing** competence on the part of the examinee, and it is easier than its classical counterpart. In the rational deletion cloze, specific words such as cohesive ties or 'important' grammatical structures are deleted. As a consequence, the rational deletion cloze is neither a test of reduced redundancy nor a measure of general language competence. Therefore, some authors consider it to be a specific gap-filling technique rather than a cloze test. A further, more recent variant of the cloze procedure is the **c-test**.

**See also:** Assessment and testing

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## Cognitive code theory

This theory can best be seen as a merger of two main areas. The first lies within the work of **Chomsky** on transformational grammar, while the second emanates from Carroll's application of cognitive psychology. Carroll's interest in foreign language teaching led him to assess the appropriateness of the prevailing methods in the USA during the early 1960s. He concluded that the predominant **audiolingual method**, associated with the **behaviourist** branch of psychology and learning theory, was 'ripe for major revision' (Carroll, 1966b: 105; and in Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 60). He suggested putting this method together with elements of the cognitive code learning theory which was gaining a great deal of attention at that time, as part of the Chomskyan 'revolution' (Lyons, 1991: 154). The resulting theory never replaced **audiolingualism**, however, in terms of 'prominence or pervasiveness' (Nunan, 1991: 232).

The term is also used to refer to teaching practice where a grammatical **syllabus** is accompanied by learner activities, which allow for a degree of exploration and investigations, rather than didactic **teacher methods**. Wilkins writes that the label cognitive code 'captures both the nature of the mental operations involved and the focus on the language system' (1990: 521).

Cognitive code theory placed an emphasis on the mental processes involved in learning, and this was a departure from **behaviourist** views which outlined learning in terms of passive habit formation through drills and repetition. Chomsky posited that

there are universal, innate abilities, which enable us, first as children, to learn a language long before any formal instruction takes place. The means by which children formulate rules, test them out and reformulate them, after being given limited numbers of examples, was evidence in Chomsky's view of innate cognitive abilities. It is not the case that we learn everything by example and practice or, in behaviourist terms, as response to stimuli. In this case, we would need many lifetimes 'to learn all the sentences of a language through a process of stimulus-response' (Nunan, 1991: 233). Instead, we work things out, basing new utterances upon examples and extrapolating the rules of **grammar**. We only formally learn the rules of grammar later on, if at all, during language education. Thus, cognitive code theory was another part of the rejection of behaviourism occurring in the 1960s, which was a watershed period in linguistics and language teaching. Cognitive code influenced many involved in the field, including Carroll.

Krashen, for example, writes of when he was a student of TESL and his acceptance as 'penetrating insight' Carroll's 'characterization of how language learning proceeds from the point of view of the then new "cognitive-code" school of thought' (1987: 83). He later went on to produce his own second language learning theory (**monitor model**) which was also influential, and incorporated elements of cognitive code. Krashen emphasised the conclusion drawn from a number of studies and observations that not everything a second language learner knows is the result of conscious teaching. Language can be acquired through other means and sometimes appears as intuitive, before any structures or rules have been formally presented.

In practice, this implied the encouragement of learners to draw upon their innate abilities, even though involved in second language (L2) and no longer first language (L1) learning in the classroom. Language learning is viewed as active and rule seeking rather than rule remembering, and also as problem-solving with many **task-based** activities. Drilling and repetition were no longer emphasised but instead activities which necessitated active learning. It was believed that if teaching activities were planned appropriately, students would work out for themselves the underlying language rules of

L2 and then practise them. Nunan points out that some cognitive courses, in fact, have language drills, but they have 'a different rationale and use from behaviourist drills' (1991: 233).

Rules are also important, but, with cognitive code, careful selection of rules will facilitate learners in working out many others. Not all rules have to be presented and learned in a rote manner. At the start of a typical cognitive code lesson, learners are encouraged to consider their previous knowledge with the assumption that new knowledge should always be linked to what has gone before, rather than being taught in a vacuum. This drawing upon previous knowledge would be considered a necessary preliminary. Active reflection and discussion about the target language is also to be encouraged.

New language items to be learned can be presented either deductively or inductively, with the former meaning that the item is 'embedded in a meaningful context' (Nunan, 1991: 233). With inductive learning, examples are given and then students have to work out the rule through guided learning and discovery. These techniques differ from audiolingualism, which it criticised on the ground that learners were not expected to use their cognitive abilities to work out rules. Again, there is the emphasis on the learner and what they can do for themselves, with the teacher becoming more of a facilitator and guide rather than a 'giver of knowledge'.

The status of **errors** in cognitive code learning is different to more behaviourist methods, with the suggestion the errors are part of the process of second language **acquisition**. New rules are hypothesised from the information given and then tested out. Errors are not just to be corrected but can be indicative of cognitive processes in action.

Cognitive code theory attracted interest from language teaching theorists and practitioners, but 'no clear-cut methodological guidelines emerged, nor did any particular method incorporating this view of learning' (Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 60). It is probably the general view of the learner proposed by the theory that became important, together with its links with the general rejection of behaviourist models. Cognitive code can be viewed as influencing the communicative approach, which does make use of some of the principles of that approach (Richards, Platt and Platt, 1992).

**See also:** Behaviourism; Chomsky; Communicative language teaching; Error analysis; Learning styles; Psychology; Second language acquisition theories

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## Cognitive linguistics

Cognitive linguistics (CL) embraces a group of *functional* or meaning based approaches to language. Croft and Cruse subdivide these into cognitive grammar (Langacker, 1987), construction grammar (Goldberg, 1995) and radical construction grammar (Croft and Cruse, 2004). These schools all recognize language's social nature and treat lexical and grammatical form as *motivated* by meaning. Unlike other functional approaches, however, CL treats language as structured by how our broader cognition structures reality. Cognition itself is seen as *enactive* and *embodied*. Take the apparently simple meaning of the English word 'bowl'. A formal view would see this meaning as derived from our ability to objectively find the fixed common features of bowls. CL sees the meaning as built from our embodied nature and might consider the weight and texture of the bowls we encounter and how we manipulate these. CL also acknowledges how a society may build a store of encyclopedic knowledge about the object's likely use giving this cultural significance. For example, a bowl in Anglophone cultures suggests something to contain dessert, cereal or soup but once used for begging. In Chinese the association is with eating rice, and keeping one's rice bowl can mean having a job that pays the bills. CL considers how we build these complicated category meanings from how our minds, bodies and collective lives structure the world.

Abstract meanings such as anger, friendship and joy, require greater conceptual effort than concrete meanings but are still built by the structures of bodily experience (Johnson, 1987). *Metaphor* and *metonymy* were once viewed as devices with a largely decorative linguistic purpose. In CL these devices reveal how we build abstract category meanings (e.g. Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Metonymy proposes intrinsic part-whole relationships where, for example, a sail comes to represent a ship, or a place the activity it hosts, as in 'the White House announced ...'. We can see metonymy's role in the development of linguistic meaning in how 'office', a place for administrative work, has come to mean the position of a person occupying that space, as in 'high office'. Metaphor traditionally

created meaning from a comparison of two unlike meanings, for example, 'Knowledge is light'. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) pointed out that this meaning cannot, as traditionally thought, derive from the similarity of the two terms as there is no sense in which 'knowledge' and 'light' are similar. In CL metaphor is a cognitive process of *mapping* one meaning onto another. Often we use the more concrete meaning (light) to grasp or *conceptualise* the more abstract (knowledge). For example, 'time', an abstract concept, is conceptualized as space or a thing in space. This builds a time-is-space metaphor that builds much discourse. Thus we speak of 'a short/long time', see the future as 'in front of' us and the past as 'behind'. A metaphor such as 'time is space' is called a *conceptual metaphor* because it is crucial to how we conceptualize a topic. Conceptual metaphors can be traced back to how infants first structure experience. For example, infants experience anger as bodily heat when seized by tantrums, or time as lapsed moments when crawling across a room. Equally, when infants stand upright for the first time they feel a sense of positive achievement and experience hurt when they fall. Such experiences build what are called *image schemas* or mental patterns from the actions with which they are associated. We associate the image schemas with other meanings creating the conceptual metaphors with which we extend and interpret many abstract meanings. For example, the infant enjoys being upright and treats balance as an achievement. This creates the conceptual metaphor, 'balance is positive'. The conceptual metaphor later helps us build and decode meanings that share its conceptualization as when we talk about 'a balanced view' or express honesty as 'uprightness'.

Cognitive grammarians explore how abstract grammatical meanings also derive from image schemas. CL treats grammar as itself symbolic and analyses grammatical meaning as residing in constructions. A construction can be a word assembled from morphemes as in the past tense 'demolish +ed', a phrase from words as in the nominal or noun phrase 'the old house' and a clause from a phrase as in the transitive clause 'they demolished the old house'. The construction itself is an assemblage of words or morphemes rather than an

abstract structure used to assemble them. Take a hypothetical language learner and imagine they encounter and memorize a transitive construction, 'I broke the window'. They then reproduce exactly this form. We can say that the construction's produced *token* is more or less the same as the stored *type*. Now imagine that the learner encounters further examples of transitive clauses built around 'break'; 'She broke the glass/cup/etc.' From this exposure they start to build the construction's type not just as fixed forms of words but as a relational pattern that we could describe as 'Agent+break+(breakable) Patient'.

In the original Greek, a *schema* meant 'shadow'. We call the meanings of the 'agent' and 'patient' schematic because they must be completed or *instantiated* by other more precise meanings. In the 'break' construction the patient can only be instantiated by breakable items. It could be instantiated by 'glass' or 'cup' but not 'book'. Now imagine that the learner encounters tokens of the transitive clause with other verbs than 'break'. They may start to build a schematic model and meaning for the transitive itself as Agent+Verb+Patient. This construction is highly schematic and can be instantiated by many different verbs. But not all verbs fit. Thus 'go' as in 'she goes the car' is impossible. It is the construction's meaning, therefore, and not just the verb's which accepts some instantiations and not others.

The concept just described differs from that of traditional grammars in two fundamental ways. First, traditional grammars recognize that a verb governs the meanings of its clause in the way that 'break' allows 'glass' but not 'book'. However, they do not recognize a construction meaning which would make some *verbs* possible and others impossible. Second, CL sees constructions as using the imagery of experience to build construction meanings and transform those of the words that are combined. For example, a transitive construction reflects the basic experience of things transferring energy to other things, or from Agent to Patient. However, infants experience some forms of movement as arising from their own agency alone; they therefore come to recognize movement as sometimes intransitive, or as arising without transferred energy.

Cognitive grammarians such as Talmy (e.g. 1978), Langacker (e.g. 1987) and Goldberg (1995) have used this imagistic and meaning based approach to understand how our perceptual processes structure language. Gestalt psychologists have long recognized that cognition *construes* the same scene in different ways. We treat one part of a scene as a *figure*, or what is prominent and a focus of attention, and the other as the *ground*. Equally, we exist in a world where things do not float free in isolation. A major function of grammar is therefore to ground meanings or make them part of a scene. Consider the active and passive clauses in examples 1 and 2:

John had stolen a book from the library.  
A book had been stolen from the library.

In the active example (1), John is the 'figure' and is grounded onto 'a book from the library'. In the second, 'the book' is the figure grounded onto its previous location. Grammar, here the choice between active and passive constructions, allows us to construe different items as figure and ground, giving different representations of the the same scene.

Cognitive linguists recognize that CL's insights about meaning could offer more to language teachers than formal approaches. Applied linguists are now exploring how CL impacts language teaching in all of its major domains of interest. Broadly one can categorize these as:

- Embodied cognition
- Meaning develops from conceptualization
- Grammatical meaning is symbolic and derives from the lexical along a continuum
- Language learning is about learning lexis and the constructions that lexis builds.

### Constructions are learnt through usage

Although work in these areas has most often been focused on English, other languages and most particularly German and Spanish have also become an interest.

An embodied cognition suggests learning through physical experience. Thus teachers can look again at the many Enactment and Movement (E&M)

movement routines that have been developed to help students remember new language by acting out or miming meanings. Students can remember new meanings by acting them with the gestures and movements by which they were first fashioned. This means looking again at some earlier E&M methods such as TPR (**Total Physical Response**) where learners dramatize and learn meanings through physical activity. Renewed emphasis is also placed on learning meanings by feeling or grasping the textures and forms of real objects and substances and perhaps using this experience to develop metaphorical meanings. Thus learners can try to lift water from a bowl with a hand to re-experience its substantive and hence uncountable nature. They may next consider why a situation can be called 'fluid' or 'stable'.

CL thus helps teachers explain difficult grammatical meanings by looking at how they have been conceptualized. English prepositions present particular difficulties to learners and have also been a topic of quite intense interest in CL because they use the imagery of spatial relations to develop larger sets of relational meanings. Thus one can see how we conceptualize cause and effect through metaphors of spatial relations in expressions such as 'lead to', 'turn into' or 'result from'. These types of intervention find common cause with studies that show how exploring the metaphorical origins of expressions helps learners understand, use and remember them. Thus a semi-technical term like (economic) 'bail-out' is more memorable if taken back to its literal meaning of stopping a boat sinking by scooping out water.

Conceptualization processes also expose how learners carry over different meanings and forms of construal from L1 to L2. Continuing to use an L2 with L1 meanings and conceptualizations causes error (Slobin, 1996). Cultures are seen to shape and be shaped by how their languages conceptualize reality somewhat in the manner predicted by earlier linguistic relativists such as Whorf (1956). Language learning thus requires learning new meanings and hence some understanding of the cultures these meanings shape or express.

Corpus linguists showed how much language unfolds as lexical patterns or as what cognitive linguists would call semi-substantive constructions.

CL can help make these forms more memorable and more productive. CL based explanations about meaning and conceptualization can help learners fit such constructions successfully into a text. CL framed language acquisition studies see semi-substantive chunks as the basis of a larger grammar. The speech of infants is constructed around chunks built from specific verbs with slots for a limited range of nouns, for example 'I wanna - '. CL researchers also show that learners find it quite easy to generalize a construction as a pattern if they have first acquired a few lexically filled examples. For example, the construction 'type', 'I gave them a book' can become a *prototype* from which to process 'tokens' such as 'He bought them life' provided the first form is grasped as a meaningful pattern. Thus to make a form productive, learners need to start with a few lexically filled examples.

In CL we learn a grammatical construction or word by *usage* or through the *frequency* of our exposure to it. Clearly, this only happens when the nature of the form is grasped and the meaning understood from context, instruction or both. Further, some pairings of form and meaning may be easy to understand but others will be hard. When a form's meaning has not been fully understood then a frequent exposure to it can result in incorrect learning. The pedagogical implication is that instruction without practice and hence usage achieves little, but practice without an understanding of the nature of a form and its meaning is also likely to fail. Teachers must therefore try to ensure that taught forms are constantly recycled.

**See also:** Corpus linguistics and language teaching; Linguistics; Teaching methods; Text and corpus linguistics

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## Comenius, Johannes Amos (popular Latin form of Komenský, Jan Amos)

b. 1592, Nivnice, Moravia (today Czech Republic); d. 1670, Amsterdam

Comenius was a priest of the Bohemian Brethren (a Hussite denomination), a theologian, philosopher, pedagogue and teacher. After studies in Germany followed by a short stay in his home country, the Thirty Years' War and the Counter-Reformation exiled him and forced him to live in various European countries (Poland, England, Sweden, Hungary, the Netherlands), all the time writing theological and pedagogical books, teaching at schools according to his own didactic programme, and exchanging letters with the great of his time.

For Comenius the sole aim of education was to make people pious and to show them their place in a world which exists after God's will and order. This is why he demanded that everybody should be made knowledgeable about everything, irrespective of his or her social standing. In his *Didactica magna* (1657), Comenius drew the guidelines for teaching: selection of realistic topics to be taken from the life-experience of learners, in particular inclusion of encyclopedic and scientific subjects; differentiation of teaching according to learning ability and age of children; using pictures for the sake of easy memorisation; preferring the useful to the traditional. These guidelines have been the stock of general pedagogy since then. Most of the *Didactica magna* is devoted to language teaching because, for Comenius, language teaching was the centre of education, language being the link between individuals in a society and between human beings and their God.

In accordance with the tradition of his polyglot home country, Comenius took it for granted that people learn more than one language. He distinguished between teaching the **mother tongue** (more important than any other), the language of the neighbour (for Moravians, e.g., Hungarian or Polish), the nearest language of regional importance (for Moravians **German**), and a universal tongue (Latin, as long as no true

universal language was available for mankind). Among other writings, he wrote two **textbooks** for learning languages which, in the course of time, appeared in hundreds of editions in many languages all over Europe and even in the newly-discovered America. The first, *Janua linguarum reserata* (1631), is a collection of exactly 1,000 Latin sentences, broken down into a hundred sections. These follow the order of the world as it was commonly given in the traditional encyclopedias of Comenius's time: from God and the universe to the kingdoms of nature, to man and man-made reality, the sciences, and the arts. Each Latin sentence provides the definition of a word-meaning, so the whole is actually a topically ordered dictionary of definitions. In this book, Comenius adapted a similar project titled *Janua linguarum*, which had been published by the Irishman William Bathius (William Bathe, 1564–1614) as early as 1611. The second of Comenius's textbooks, *Orbis sensualium pictus* (1658), is a similar collection on a more modest scale and aimed at much younger learners, originally published in Latin and German. There are 150 sections in the traditional encyclopedic order of varying length (between five and twenty-five sentences). Its extraordinary success was stimulated by the ingenious woodcut illustrations that accompany each section and semanticise the words to be taught. With the combination of lexemes (sentences) and pictures referring to each other by numbers, the *Orbis sensualium pictus* became the archetype of a learning dictionary still in use today. Both textbooks are examples of Comenius's didactic principles that teaching must be meaningful and that language, in particular a foreign language, can only be meaningful if it refers to reality. Consequently, language teaching must go together with the teaching of reality.

In its tragic as well as its successful aspects, Comenius's life was a truly European one. Apart from details whose relevance even for present-day language teaching is evident, it is this European dimension that makes the Moravian bishop a most interesting historical figure.

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WERNER HÜLLEN

## Common European Framework of Reference

The 'Common European Framework of Reference for languages: learning, teaching and assessment' (CEFR) was developed as part of the **Council of Europe** (CE) Project 'Language learning for European citizenship' between 1991 and 1997, and was published in 2001 (Council of Europe, 2001). Its aims are:

- to promote and facilitate cooperation and mutual information among educational institutions in different countries;
- to provide a sound basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications;
- to assist learners, teachers, course designers, examining bodies and educational administrators to reflect on their current practice and to situate and co-ordinate their efforts.

To realise these aims, the CEFR needs to be *comprehensive*, specifying the full range of language use as well as the many kinds of knowledge and skill necessary to proficient use, so as to enable any of its users to describe their **objectives** and achievements. It does not set out to be exhaustive – an impossible ideal – but rather to identify the major parameters and higher-level categories, with examples of their exponents. CEFR must also be *transparent*, giving explicit and clearly formulated information in a way comprehensible to its users; *coherent*, with all its parts harmoniously interconnected and free from internal contradiction; *flexible, open, dynamic* and *non-dogmatic*. The aim is not to prescribe how languages should be learnt, taught and assessed, but to raise awareness, stimulate reflection and improve communication among practitioners of all kinds and persuasions as to what they actually do.

## Structure of the CEFR

To this end, the CEFR provides:

- a descriptive scheme, presenting and exemplifying the parameters and categories needed to describe, first, what a language user has to *do* in order to communicate in its situational context, then the role of the *texts*, which carry the message from producer to receiver, then the underlying *competences* which enable a language user to perform acts of communication, and finally the *strategies* which enable the language user to bring those competences to bear in action;
- a survey of approaches to language learning and teaching, providing options for users to consider in relation to their existing practice;
- a set of *scales* for describing proficiency in language use, both globally and in relation to the categories of the descriptive scheme at a series of *levels*;
- a discussion of the issues raised for *curricular design* in different educational contexts, with particular reference to the development of *plurilingualism* in the learner.

## The descriptive scheme

The CEFR provides descriptive categories for:

- the *context* of language use in terms of the locations, institutions, personal roles, objects, events, operations and texts which characterise situations which arise in the domains (personal, public, occupational and educational) in which social life is organised; the external conditions and constraints under which users communicate; and the mental context of the communicating parties;
- *communicative tasks and purposes*, not only practical transactions but also playful and aesthetic uses;
- *themes*, the topics which provide the content of particular acts of communication;
- *language activities*, classified as productive, oral or written; receptive, oral or written; interactive (e.g. conversation), in which the participants

alternate as producer(s) and receiver(s); and mediating, in which the user acts simply as a channel of communication between two or more persons who for one reason or another cannot communicate directly;

- *language processes*, the actual sequence of skilled activities carried out by language users in planning, executing and monitoring their **speaking, listening, reading and writing**. This section also covers concomitant practical actions and paralinguistic actions (gesture, etc.);
- *texts*: This section deals with media and text-types, as well as with the nature and role of texts in relation to use;
- *the user/learner's competences*. The ability of human beings to communicate depends upon their having developed the necessary competences (knowledge, **skills**, etc.). Whilst all human competences may be drawn upon in one way or another in the course of communication, the CEFR distinguishes between those of a general character and those more closely related to language.
- *General competences* include: 'declarative' knowledge of the physical world, society and culture; practical and intercultural skills and knowhow; personality factors such as **attitudes, motivations**, values, beliefs, cognitive styles and psychological type; general linguistic and **cultural awareness**, together with learning skills and heuristics.
- *Communicative language competences* include: *linguistic competence*, i.e. knowledge of and skill in using the formal resources from which well-formed meaningful texts may be assembled and formulated, embracing lexical, phonological, morphological and syntactic elements, categories, classes, structures, processes and relations, and the relation of form and meaning (semantics); *sociolinguistic competence*, covering markers of social relations, **politeness** conventions, popular sayings, register differences, dialect and accent as social markers; and *pragmatic competences*, including knowledge and control of discourse structure, language functions (as in **threshold level**) and interactional schemata.
- *strategies*, the means exploited by language users to mobilise and balance their resources,

to activate skills and procedures in order to maximise the effectiveness of the language activities: reception, production, interaction and mediation.

### Scaling and levels

This chapter of the CEFR discusses the issues involved in adding a 'vertical' dimension to the Framework, and proposes descriptors for language proficiency at an ascending series of levels. A branching system is presented, allowing planners to subdivide learners into more homogeneous groups according to need. For general purposes a system of six levels is presented (see Figure 9).

Descriptors for each level were selected from 30 existing scales in a Swiss national Science Research Council project (1995–1996) by a process using the Rasch rating scale model to analyse the interpretation of descriptors by 3000 teachers, so as to ensure that they met the criteria of positiveness, definiteness, clarity, brevity and independence, and were reliable indicators of the proficiency level to which they were ascribed (North, 2000). Scales are provided for overall proficiency and also, so far as is practicable, for those particular activities, processes and competences set out in the descriptive scheme.

### The processes of language learning and teaching

Following the presentation of the descriptive scheme, this chapter of the CEFR asks in what ways the learner comes to be able to carry out the tasks, activities and processes and build up the competences required for language communication; and how teachers, assisted by the various

support services, can facilitate the process. After considering issues of principle, the chapter sets out methodological options for learning and teaching in relation to the descriptive scheme, dealing also with the role of teachers, including questions of the management of learning and attitudes to errors and mistakes.

### Linguistic diversification and the curriculum

This section of the CEFR reflects the move away from 'all-or-nothing' approaches to language learning and explores the implications of accepting *plurilingualism* (an overall communicative competence within which varying degrees and directions of competence in a number of languages interact) as the overarching objective of language learning. The detailed description of the many components of language makes it easier to plan for *partial competences* rather than all-round proficiency, in the light of the **needs, motivations**, characteristics and prior experience of learners and of the available resources. A number of possible scenarios for language teaching in different educational environments is suggested. The **European Language Portfolio** provides a means of stimulating, recording and giving recognition to the development of plurilingual competences.

### Assessment

This chapter of the CEFR defines and discusses different types of assessment in terms of thirteen polarities (e.g., achievement/proficiency, formative/summative, etc.) and the relation of assessment to scales of language proficiency. The use of the descriptive scheme as a resource for the development and/or description of assessment tools is

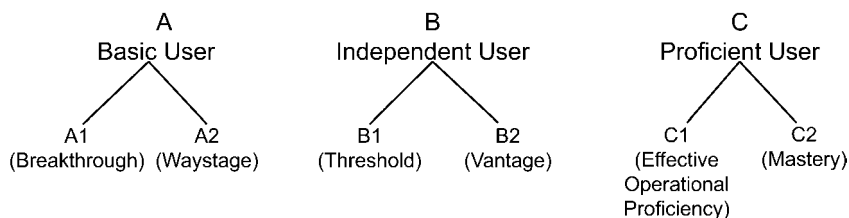


Figure 9 System of six levels diagram © Council of Europe

briefly discussed. Finally, questions of feasibility are raised – a workable system cannot be too complicated – and alternative metasystems are presented.

### User guides

A user guide is available, designed to facilitate the use of the CEFR by both general and specialised users (e.g., educational administrators, adult education providers, inspectors, examiners, **textbook** writers, teacher trainers, teachers and learners).

The CEFR's user guides are publicly accessible on the CE website: [www.coe.int/lang](http://www.coe.int/lang).

### Reception and follow-up

The impact and influence of CEFR has been considerable, not only in Europe but world-wide. It is now in widespread use as a basis for reflection, curricular planning and information exchange, e.g. in teacher education (Mezzadri, 2004). In particular, the six-level scaling of language proficiency, with user-friendly descriptors backed by research validation, met a perceived need for internationally accepted standards for the calibration of examined qualifications to give them portability in a globalising world with increasing educational and vocational mobility. CEFR has been translated, in whole or in part, into some 40 languages. In its Recommendation R(98)6 to member governments, the Committee of Ministers advocated the use of CEFR 'to plan or review language teaching in a coherent and transparent manner in the interests of better international coordination and more diversified language learning'. In 2008, it followed this up in Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)7, with an appendix and commentary giving advice on the use of CEFR in textbook and course construction, teacher training, testing and assessment. Most publishers, examining bodies and educational authorities now give a CEFR grading (A1-C2) to their products.

Experience has shown, however, that further development is necessary to make CEFR operationally adequate. As a general framework, CEFR is not directed to specific users or languages. A manual for relating examinations to CEFR has been developed, accompanied by recorded learner

performances at successive levels and Reference Level Descriptions (RLD) are being produced for individual languages, specifying for each level lexical and grammatical as well as functional/notational descriptors specific to the language concerned. The first of these was *Profil Deutsch* (Glaboniat et al., 2005). Similar projects are under way for French, Italian and Spanish, while for English a major long-term multifaceted programme *English Profile* is now well advanced.

**See also:** Assessment and testing; European Language Portfolio; Threshold Level; Untutored language acquisition; Vantage Level; Waystage

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JOHN L.M. TRIM

## Communication strategies

A *strategy* is a step or action taken to achieve a goal. This entry focuses on *communication strategies*,



which can be defined narrowly or broadly, as will be shown. The entry also answers the question of whether a communication strategy can foster second and foreign language (L2) learning. Such learning consists of constructing, internalizing, storing, retrieving, and using L2 information in various sociocultural contexts.

### Communication strategies under the narrow definition

The narrower, psycholinguistic definition of communication strategy is any lexical-compensatory strategy that allows the L2 learner to continue to communicate despite gaps in vocabulary knowledge (Nakatani and Goh, 2007). Defined in this way, communication strategies have several possible forms. Tarone's (1977, 1980, 1981) system of communication strategies included paraphrase, borrowing, and avoidance strategies. *Paraphrasing* includes approximating the message, coining a new word, or 'talking around' the word (circumlocution). *Borrowing* includes translating literally, switching languages temporarily (code switching), asking for assistance, and miming/gesture. *Avoidance* does not mean avoiding L2 communication and is therefore a rather unfortunate and confusing term; instead, it refers to substituting an easier or more familiar topic for a more difficult or less familiar one, so as not to be challenged by unknown or unfamiliar words. Avoidance allows the learner to stay in the flow of communication. Paraphrasing, borrowing, and using avoidance are collectively called *communication strategies* because they allow continued communication despite gaps in knowledge.

Bialystok (1990) studied communication strategies of young learners of French. Poullisse (1987) used retrospective verbal (think-aloud) techniques for examining repair strategies used to compensate for L2 communication impasse situations. The area of L2 speaking strategies has produced additional important research on communication strategies (Dörnyei and Scott, 1997; Færch and Kasper, 1983). Cohen (2011) and others (Færch and Kasper, 1983; Selinker, 1972) include communication strategies in a category called *language use strategies*, on the assumption that such strategies are, as

Cohen (1996: 3) stated, for 'employing the language that learners have in their current interlanguage'.

### Communication strategies under a proposed broader definition

In a proposed broader definition, a *communication strategy* is a strategy that helps the L2 learner communicate and negotiate meaning in a variety of circumstances. Nakatani and Goh (2007) called for the narrow, psycholinguistic perspective to be expanded based on an *interactional* view, which focuses on interactional processes between learners and their interlocutors, especially the way meaning is negotiated. In this view, communication strategies are viewed not just as devices to compensate for communication breakdowns but also as tools for enhancing the message and improving communication effectiveness (see, e.g., Clennel, 1995).

Under the broader definition, *speech act strategies* might be considered a form of communication strategies. Olshtain and Cohen (1989) studied speech act strategies of learners of Hebrew and considered linguistic and cultural standards for acceptable performance. Cohen and Olshtain (1993) applied retrospective think-aloud protocols to ask learners to report strategies used during role-plays for apologies, complaints, and requests. Based on results, the researchers labeled participants as different types of learners: *metacognizers*, *avoiders*, and *pragmatists*. Participants used four main strategies: planning (to use specific forms and expressions), thinking in both languages, searching for language forms in different ways, and ignoring grammar or pronunciation. Cohen and Ishihara (2005) developed a web-based approach to strategic learning of speech acts.

Oxford (2011) presented a learning strategy typology that includes a major category of three *sociocultural-interaction (SI) strategies*, which contribute to both communication and learning. The strategy of *interacting to learn and communicate* enables learners develop language capability through collaboration, interaction, and help-seeking. The strategy of *dealing with sociocultural contexts and identities* helps learners cope with a range of sociocultural issues, such as identity, power,

investment, resistance, opposition, accommodation, and cultural differences in speech acts. The strategy of *overcoming knowledge gaps in communicating* reflects the narrower, psycholinguistic definition of communication strategies. In addition, Oxford (2011) presented the category of meta-socio-cultural-interactive strategies, which help learners plan, organize, monitor, and evaluate their use of sociocultural-interactive strategies. Strategies such as those in Cohen and Olshtain's (1993) and Oxford's (2011) typologies are crucial for developing communicative competence in complex cultural contexts, and such competence is essential in today's world.

### Can communication strategies aid learning?

The assumption that communication strategies do not aid learning is false for a number of reasons. First, communication influences learning of L2 word meanings and grammatical knowledge (Ellis, 1999), as well as fluency development (Ellis, 2005), so strategies that allow greater communication – even under the narrow definition of communication strategies – often foster learning. Every communication opportunity offers chances for greater learning (Little, 2003). The ‘talking to learn’ technique (MacIntyre et al., 2003) illustrates this. Second, learners improve their accuracy, fluency, and pragmatic abilities through noticing and understanding what happens when they communicate (see Schmidt, 1995 on learner awareness). Third, active use of new information strengthens schemata in long-term memory (Oxford, 2011), and unless new information is used, it will be lost (Leaver et al., 2005). Fourth, it is often impossible to tell whether a given strategy is for learning or for communication, and the purpose often changes midstream (Bialystok and Sharwood Smith, 1985; Tarone, 1981, 1983). Thus, strategies for L2 communication should be viewed as not merely aiding language use but also as frequently encouraging language learning.

**See also:** Communicative language teaching; Pragmatics; Strategic competence; Successful full language learners

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REBECCA L. OXFORD

## Communicative language teaching

Communicative language teaching (CLT) refers to both processes *and* goals in classroom learning. A central theoretical concept in communicative language teaching is *communicative competence*, a term introduced into discussions of language use and second/foreign language learning in the early 1970s (Habermas, 1970; Hymes, 1971; Jakobovits, 1970). Competence is defined in terms of the expression, **interpretation** and negotiation of meaning, and looks to **second language acquisition** research to account for its development (Savignon, 1972, 1997). Identification of learner communicative **needs** provides a basis for curriculum design (van Ek, 1975).

### Origins and development

The origins of CLT can be traced to concurrent developments in both Europe and North America. In Europe, the language needs of a rapidly increasing group of immigrants and guest workers, and a rich British linguistic tradition that included social as well as linguistic context in description of language behaviour, led to the **Council of Europe** development of a **syllabus** for learners based on functional–notional concepts of language use. Derived from neo-Firthian systemic or functional linguistics that views language as meaning potential and maintains the centrality of context of situation in understanding language systems and how they work, a **threshold level** of language ability was described in terms of what learners should be able to *do* with the language (van Ek, 1975). Functions were based on assessment of learner **needs** and specified the end result, the goal of an instructional programme. The term 'communicative' attached itself to programmes that used a functional–notional syllabus based on needs assessment, and the **language for specific purposes** (LSP) movement was launched.

Concurrent development in Europe focused on the *process* of communicative **classroom language** learning. In Germany, for example, against a backdrop of social democratic concerns for individual empowerment articulated in the writings of

contemporary philosopher Jürgen Habermas (1970), language teaching methodologists took the lead in the development of classroom **materials** that encouraged learner choice (Candlin, 1978). Their systematic collection of **exercise** types for communicatively oriented **English** language teaching was used in teacher in-service courses and workshops to guide curriculum change. Exercises were designed to exploit the variety of social meanings contained within particular grammatical structures. A system of 'chains' encouraged teachers and learners to define their own learning path through principled selection of relevant exercises (Piepho, 1974; Piepho and Bredella, 1976). Similar exploratory projects were also initiated by Candlin at his academic home, the University of Lancaster, and by Holec (1979) and his colleagues at the University of Nancy (**CRAPEL**). Supplementary teacher resource materials promoting classroom CLT became increasingly popular in the 1970s (e.g., Maley and Duff, 1978), and there was new interest in learner **vocabulary** building.

Meanwhile, in the United States, Hymes (1971) had reacted to **Chomsky's** characterisation of the linguistic competence of the ideal **native speaker** and proposed the term 'communicative competence' to represent the use of language in social context, the observance of sociolinguistic norms of appropriacy. His concern with speech communities and the integration of language, communication and culture was not unlike that of Firth and **Halliday** in the British linguistic tradition (see Halliday, 1978). Hyme's communicative competence may be seen as the equivalent of Halliday's meaning potential. Similarly, his focus was not language learning but language as social behaviour. In subsequent interpretations of the significance of Hymes's views for learners, methodologists working in the USA tended to focus on native speaker cultural norms and the difficulty, if not impossibility, of **authentically** representing them in a classroom of non-native speakers. In light of this difficulty, the appropriateness of communicative competence as an instructional goal was questioned (see, e.g., Paulston, 1974).

At the same time, in a research project at the University of Illinois, Savignon (1972) used the term communicative competence to characterise

the ability of classroom language learners to interact with other speakers, to make meaning, as distinct from their ability to recite dialogues or perform on discrete-point tests of grammatical knowledge. At a time when pattern practice and **error** avoidance were the rule in language teaching, this study of **adult** classroom acquisition of **French** looked at the effect of practice in the use of coping **strategies** as part of an instructional programme. By encouraging them to ask for information, to seek clarification, to use circumlocution and whatever other linguistic and non-linguistic resources they could muster to negotiate meaning, to stick to the communicative task at hand, teachers were invariably leading learners to take **risks**, to speak in other than memorised patterns. The coping strategies identified in this study became the basis for subsequent identification by Canale and Swain (1980) of '**strategic competence**' in their three-component framework for communicative competence, along with grammatical competence and **sociolinguistic competence**. Test results at the end of the instructional period showed conclusively that learners who had practised communication instead of laboratory pattern drills performed with no less accuracy on discrete-point tests of grammatical structure. On the other hand, their communicative competence as measured in terms of fluency, comprehensibility, effort and amount of communication in unrehearsed communicative tasks significantly surpassed that of learners who had had no such practice. Learner reactions to the test formats lent further support to the view that even **beginners** respond well to activities that let them focus on meaning as opposed to formal features.

A collection of role plays, games and other communicative classroom activities was developed subsequently for inclusion in the adaptation of the French **CRÉDIF** materials, *Voix et visages de la France*. The accompanying guide (Savignon, 1974) described their purpose as that of involving learners in the experience of communication. Teachers were encouraged to provide learners with the French equivalent of expressions like 'What's the word for ...?', 'Please repeat ...', 'I don't understand', expressions that would help them to participate in the negotiation of meaning. Not unlike the efforts of Candlin and his colleagues

working in a European EFL context, the focus was on classroom process and learner **autonomy**. The use of games, role play, pair and other small group activities has gained acceptance and is now widely recommended for inclusion in language teaching programmes.

CLT thus can be seen to derive from a multi-disciplinary perspective that includes, at least, **linguistics, psychology**, philosophy, sociology and educational research. The focus has been the elaboration and implementation of programmes and methodologies that promote the development of functional language ability through learner participation in communicative events. Central to CLT is the understanding of language learning as both an educational and a political issue. Language teaching is inextricably tied to language policy. Viewed from a multicultural intranational as well as international perspective, diverse sociopolitical contexts mandate not only a diverse set of language learning goals, but a diverse set of teaching strategies. Programme design and implementation depend on negotiation between policymakers, linguists, researchers and teachers. And **evaluation** of programme success requires a similar collaborative effort. The selection of methods and materials appropriate to both the goals *and* the context of teaching begins with an analysis of socially defined learner needs *and* styles of learning.

### Focus on the learner

By definition, CLT puts the focus on the learner. Learner communicative needs provide a framework for elaborating programme goals in terms of functional competence. This implies global, qualitative evaluation of learner achievement as opposed to quantitative **assessment** of discrete linguistic features. Controversy over appropriate language testing persists, and many a curricular innovation has been undone by failure to make corresponding changes in evaluation. Current efforts at educational reform favour essay writing, in-class presentations, and other more holistic assessments of learner competence. Some programmes have initiated portfolio assessment, the collection and evaluation of learner poems, reports, stories, videotapes and similar projects, in an effort to better represent and encourage learner achievement.

Depending upon their own preparation and experience, teachers themselves differ in their reactions to CLT. Some feel understandable frustration at the seeming ambiguity in discussions of communicative ability. Negotiation of meaning may be a lofty goal, but this view of language behaviour lacks precision and does not provide a universal scale for assessment of individual learners. Ability is viewed, rather, as variable and highly dependent upon context and purpose as well as the roles and attitudes of all involved. Other teachers welcome the opportunity to select and/or develop their own materials, providing learners with a range of communicative tasks. And they are comfortable relying on more global, integrative judgements of learner progress.

An additional source of frustration for some teachers are **second language acquisition research** findings that show the route, if not the rate, of language acquisition to be largely unaffected by classroom instruction. First language cross-linguistic studies of developmental universals initiated in the 1970s were soon followed by second language studies. Acquisition, assessed on the basis of expression in unrehearsed, oral communicative contexts, seemed to follow a similar morpho-syntactic sequence regardless of learner age or context of learning. Although they served to bear out the informal observations of teachers, namely that **textbook** presentation and drill do not ensure learner use of these same structures in their own spontaneous expression, the findings were none the less disconcerting. They contradicted both **grammar-translation** and **audiolingual** precepts that placed the burden of acquisition on teacher explanation of **grammar** and controlled practice with insistence on learner accuracy. They were further at odds with textbooks that promise 'mastery' of 'basic' **French, English, Spanish**, etc. Teacher rejection of research findings, renewed insistence on tests of discrete grammatical structures, and even exclusive reliance in the classroom on the learners' native or first language, where possible, to be sure they 'get the grammar', have been in some cases reactions to the frustration of teaching for communication.

Moreover, the language acquisition research paradigm itself, with its emphasis on sentence-level grammatical features, has served to bolster a structural

focus, obscuring pragmatic and sociolinguistic issues in language acquisition. In her discussion of the contexts of competence, Berns (1990) stresses that the definition of a communicative competence appropriate for learners requires an understanding of the sociocultural contexts of language use. In addition, the selection of a methodology appropriate to the attainment of communicative competence requires an understanding of sociocultural differences in styles of learning. Curricular innovation is best advanced by the development of local materials, which, in turn, rests on the involvement of classroom teachers.

### What about grammar?

Discussions of CLT not infrequently lead to questions of grammatical or formal accuracy. The perceived displacement of attention to morphosyntactic features in learner expression in favour of a focus on meaning has led in some cases to the impression that grammar is not important, or that proponents of CLT favour learner self-expression without regard to form.

While involvement in communicative events is seen as central to language development, this involvement necessarily requires attention to form. Communication cannot take place in the absence of structure, or grammar – a set of shared assumptions about how language works – along with a willingness of participants to cooperate in the negotiation of meaning. In their carefully researched and widely cited paper proposing components of communicative competence, Canale and Swain (1980) did not suggest that grammar was unimportant. They sought, rather, to situate grammatical competence within a more broadly defined communicative competence. Similarly, the findings of the Savignon (1972) study did not suggest that teachers forsake the teaching of grammar. Rather, the replacement of **language laboratory** structure drills with meaning-focused self-expression was found to be a more effective way to develop communicative ability with no loss of morphosyntactic accuracy. And learner performance on tests of discrete morphosyntactic features was not a good predictor of their performance on a series of integrative communicative tasks.

The nature of the contribution to language development of both form-focused and meaning-focused classroom activity remains a question in ongoing research. The optimum combination of these activities in any given instructional setting depends no doubt on learner age, nature and length of instructional sequence, opportunities for language contact outside the classroom, teacher preparation and other factors. However, for the development of communicative ability, research findings overwhelmingly support the integration of form-focused exercises with meaning-focused experience. Grammar is important; and learners seem to focus best on grammar when it relates to their communicative needs and experiences (Lightbown and Spada, 1993). Nor should explicit attention to form be perceived as limited to sentence-level morphosyntactic features. Broader features of discourse, sociolinguistic rules of appropriacy, and communication strategies themselves may be included.

### Sociolinguistic issues

Numerous sociolinguistic issues await attention. Variation in the speech community and its relationship to language change are central to sociolinguistic inquiry. Sociolinguistic perspectives on variability and change highlight the folly of describing **native speaker** competence, let alone **non-native speaker** competence, in terms of 'mastery' or 'command' of a system. All language systems show instability and variation. Learner language systems show even greater instability and variability in terms of both the amount and the rate of change. Sociolinguistic concerns with **identity** and accommodation help to explain the construction by bilinguals of a 'variation space' which is different from that of a native speaker. It may include retention of any number of features of a previously acquired system of phonology, syntax, discourse, communication strategies, etc. The phenomenon may be individual or, in those settings where there is a community of learners, general.

Sociolinguistic perspectives have been important in understanding the implications of norm, appropriacy and variability for CLT, and continue to suggest avenues of inquiry for further research and

materials development. Use of authentic language data has underscored the importance of context – setting, roles, **genre**, etc. – in **interpreting** the meaning of a text. A range of both oral and written texts in context provides learners with a variety of language experiences, experiences they need to construct their own ‘variation space’, to make determinations of appropriacy in their own expression of meaning. ‘Competent’ in this instance is not necessarily synonymous with ‘native-like’. Negotiation in CLT highlights the need for interlinguistic, i.e. intercultural, awareness on the part of all involved (Byram, 1997). Better understanding of the strategies used in the negotiation of meaning offers a potential for improving classroom practice of the needed **skills**.

Along with other sociolinguistic issues in language acquisition, the classroom itself as a social context has been neglected. Classroom language learning was the focus of a number of research studies in the 1960s and early 1970s. However, language classrooms were not a major interest of the second language acquisition (SLA) research that rapidly gathered momentum in the years that followed. The full range of variables present in educational settings was an obvious deterrent. Other difficulties included the lack of well-defined classroom processes to serve as variables and lack of agreement as to what constituted learning success. Confusion of form-focused drill with meaning-focused communication persisted in many of the textbook exercises and language test prototypes that influenced curricula. Not surprisingly, researchers eager to establish SLA as a worthy field of inquiry turned their attention to more narrow, quantitative studies of the acquisition of selected morphosyntactic features.

### What CLT is not

Disappointment with both **grammar-translation** and **audiolingual** methods for their inability to prepare learners for the interpretation, expression, and negotiation of meaning, along with enthusiasm for an array of alternative methods increasingly labeled ‘communicative’, has resulted in no small amount of uncertainty as to what are and are not essential features of CLT. Thus, a summary

description would be incomplete without brief mention of what CLT is not.

CLT is not concerned exclusively with face to face oral communication. The principles of CLT apply equally to reading and writing activities that involve readers and writers engaged in the interpretation, expression and negotiation of meaning; the specific goals of CLT depend on learner needs in a given context. CLT does not require small group or pair work. Group tasks have been found helpful in many contexts as a way of providing increased opportunity and motivation for communication, but classroom group or pair work should not be considered an essential feature and may well be difficult or inappropriate in some settings. Finally, CLT does not exclude a focus on meta-linguistic awareness or knowledge of rules of syntax, discourse, and social appropriateness.

### From theory to classroom practice

The essence of CLT is the engagement of learners in communication to allow them to develop their intercultural communicative competence. CLT is not simply another “method” added to the many which have flourished only to disappear in the recent history of language teaching. Rather, it represents an approach to language teaching with “a change in purpose and emphasis,” a change in the very definition of the linguistic and cultural goals of instruction (Byram and Mendez Garcia, 2009). CLT cannot be found in any one textbook or set of curricular materials inasmuch as strict adherence to a given text is not likely to be true to the processes and goals of CLT. In keeping with the notion of context of situation, CLT reflects a theory of intercultural communicative competence to be used in developing materials and methods appropriate to a given context of learning. Terms sometimes used to refer to features of CLT include ‘task-based’, and ‘process’, ‘inductive’, or ‘discovery’ oriented. Immersion programs for children and **content-based instruction** of the kind sometimes found in professional courses for adults offer fuller and often privileged examples of CLT. In mainstream public education, communicative teaching methods as well as the means and norms of communication they are designed to reflect continue to be explored and adapted.

Longitudinal research on CLT implementation is scant. However, a major initial hurdle in the widespread adoption of a more communicative approach has proven to be the beliefs, training and practices of classroom teachers. Considerable resources, both human and monetary, are currently being used around the world to respond to the need for language teaching to meet the communicative needs of learners in an increasingly global society. Whether in Europe, Asia or the US, there are reports of reform efforts repeatedly confronting issues of coordination among language teachers and teacher educators over language policy and curricular and methodological innovation (Sato and Kleinsasser, 1999; Cheng, 1999; Schalkwijk, van Esch, Elsen and Setz, 2002; Savignon and Wang, 2003; Sato and Takahashi, 2008). Some scholars who have observed difficulties in implementation in non-Western contexts have asserted that CLT is best suited for those Western contexts in which it originated. However, a closer examination of the difficulties themselves show similar patterns in both contexts. Sato and Kleinsasser (1999, 2004), for example, reported that teachers in both Australia and Japan faced similar difficulties with the most notable being that of changing teachers' beliefs. And individual teacher beliefs and practices were strongly influenced or reinforced by the school culture.

The findings of a study of US teacher practice reported by Burke (2011) echo those observations. Language teachers remain adamant about explicit attention to form through practice drills, completion of textbook activities and grammar practice worksheets. Burke identifies long held professional values and beliefs (conventional wisdom) and specific instructional rituals (deep structure) that often reflect how teachers themselves have been taught. For CLT to represent true change not only in theory but in classroom practice, a reform of goals, materials and assessment is insufficient. Attention needs to focus on increased opportunities for both preservice and inservice teachers to experience and practice ways of integrating CLT into their lessons, lessons for beginning-level and advanced learners alike. And as has been found in studies of workplaces in general, teacher collaboration with institutional support is essential for the develop-

ment of communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) that promote and sustain collaboration, change and innovation.

**See also:** Council of Europe Modern Languages Projects; History: after 1945; Secondary education; Sociolinguistics; Teaching methods

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## Community language learning

Community language learning (CLL) is a method of second and foreign language teaching developed from the theory of psychological counselling where the teacher performs the role of the supporting counsellor and the learners learn through consultation with the teacher and help from other learners in the group or community.

As an application of counselling learning to second and foreign language teaching and learning, it uses techniques developed in group counselling to help people with psychological and emotional problems. The method makes use of small or large groups. These groups are the 'community'. The method places emphasis on the learners' personal feelings and their reactions to language learning. Learners say things which they want to talk about, in their native language. The teacher (known as 'Counsellor') translates the learner's sentences into the foreign language, and the learner then repeats this to other members of the group.

### Theoretical background

CLL, as a '**humanistic**' method with strong elements of Rogerian counselling theory, is associated with Charles Curran (1972, 1976), a professor of psychology and counselling specialist, and was further developed by one of his students, La Forge.

In counselling learning, the teacher assumes the role of 'counsellor' and learners are 'clients' in the classroom rather than consultation room. As counselling is about giving advice, support and encouragement to those with problems, there is a clear distinction from the notion of the teacher as imparting knowledge to learner recipients. The 'problem' in this case is that of language and the teacher has to involve the learners, drawing upon their senses as well as experience, in 'resolving' the problem.

Sharing ideas and feelings can be viewed as a learner-centred approach although the teacher needs ultimate control in directing the learning process. There has to be empathy with the learners and communication of this whenever possible. It is also part of the teacher's role to provide a secure

learning environment in which students can develop and grow in relation to the language being acquired.

Curran wanted to broaden the use of psychological methods, including that of taking a 'whole-person learning' approach. This recognises the multiplicity of factors that make up an individual, both affective as well as cognitive, with the idea that feelings and emotions are not necessarily put to one side upon entering the classroom. Humanistic techniques can 'blend what the student feels, thinks and knows with what he is learning in the target language' and also 'help to foster a climate of caring and sharing in the foreign language classroom' (Moskowitz, 1978: 2).

Curran's emphasis on the holistic approach was part of the break with previous views of the learner, particularly in **behaviourism**, as passive and largely responding to stimuli. This atomistic view paid insufficient attention, in his view, to creative abilities, with the intellect treated as a separate rather than integral part of the whole person. By creating a supportive 'community', learners can move from dependence on the teacher to autonomy.

Nunan writes of the anxiety a second language learner may have, and one of CLL's aims is to reduce this in order to maximise learning. CLL is 'the method which focuses most assiduously on building trust' (Nunan, 1991: 236). First, the form of the class, where learners sit in a conversation circle, provides security. Second, understanding between the teacher and learners produces a sense of security, which reduces anxiety. Finally, a sense of security is woven into each activity of a typical CLL cycle (Koba et al., 2000).

### Developmental theory in CLL

Learning in CLL is conceived as a number of developmental stages. Stage one (birth stage) compares the learner to an infant, totally dependent on the knower of the new language, and the learner has to ask for everything. In the next stage, there is degree of independence gained with learners beginning to find their own 'self' in the new language by employing the phrases and words they have heard and used. Stage three is described as the 'separate-existence stage' with more comprehension of the

target language and less assistance required. There may even be some resentfulness when unsolicited help is given.

‘Adolescence’ follows, with a degree of learner independence, although the language level may still be fairly basic. The new role for the learner is to know how to gain the advanced level of linguistic knowledge from the knower. The final stage is that of independence, where the learners are refining their knowledge and can operate on their own. They may even act as counsellors to less advanced students.

At each stage of development there is not only linguistic input and skills but also cognitive and emotional tasks. These stages will involve crises for the learner, which need to be handled in co-operation with the teacher. There is also collaboration with other learners, as each goes through these sequential stages and they can support each other, and discuss their feelings and frustrations as well as achievements. Without the feedback, the frustration can deepen and this may serve as a block to development as well as creating an atmosphere not conducive to learning.

### Practice of CLL

CLL utilises small groups or large groups as the ‘community’. It generally assumes a group of homogeneous language learners although it has been developed to teach more heterogeneous ones. In the basic form of CLL, students (8–12 maximum) sit in a circle. There is a small portable recorder inside the circle. The teacher (who is termed the ‘Knower’) stands outside the circle. When a student has decided on something they want to say in the foreign language, they call the Knower over and whisper what they want to say, in their mother tongue. The teacher, also in a whisper, then offers the equivalent utterance in the target language. The student attempts to repeat the utterance, with encouragement and shaping from the Knower, with the rest of the group eavesdropping. When the Knower is satisfied, the utterance is recorded by the student. Another student then repeats the process, until there is a kind of dialogue recorded. The Knower then replays the recording, and transcribes it on the board. This is followed by

analysis, and questions from students. In a subsequent session, the Knower may suggest activities springing from the dialogue. Gradually, the students spin a web of language.

The use of audio recordings is an important part of CLL methodology. Unlike **audiolingualism**, practitioners do not normally use pre-recorded material but that produced by the learners themselves. It is also to some extent spontaneous, depending on what the learners wish to know and use during the session.

La Forge (1983) believed that all members of the group should be able to understand what the others are trying to communicate as they are in a relationship with all other learners and not just with the teacher.

After the learning activities, participants reflect on their feelings and this feedback is central. The whole process is a group interaction as well as a total person one, and how people feel is important information to be shared. This assists the ‘organic’ growth of the learner and ‘a new self of the learner is generated or born in the target language’ (La Forge, 1983: 5).

For Johnson (2001: 189) CLL is one of the so-called ‘designer’ methods which arose in the flurry of methodological experimentation in the 1970s (along with **the silent way**, **suggestopedia**, **Total Physical Response** and others) and is often cited as an example of the humanistic approach to language learning, as is the work of Stevick and Moskowitz. The key features of all these innovative methodologies are that they all in some way flouted the current language teaching orthodoxy, that they all had a guru who was regarded by devotees of the method with something approaching religious awe, they all developed from outside language teaching, they were all fairly rigidly prescriptive, and they all emphasised the learners’ responsibility for their own learning.

A new wave of Community Language Learning began with the Internet and the boom in social networking technologies. These online CLLs are social network services that take advantage of the Web 2.0 concept of information sharing and collaboration tools, for which users can help other users to learn languages by direct communication or mutual correction of proposed exercises.

## Limitations

Some critics question the usefulness of the counselling metaphor and whether this is suitable in language training, and there are some limitations with CLL. First, it is only suitable for adult learners, not for children.

It can only be done with small numbers of learners (8–12). The learners have to share a single mother tongue. It is not suitable for learners with some personality types unable to benefit from the sharing environment CLL attempts to promote. Richards and Rodgers point out that ‘security is a culturally relative concept’ (1986: 123). Methods accepted in some countries may cause anxiety and confusion elsewhere. CLL could provoke hostility with some learners wishing to have language training in a more familiar, traditional manner.

In the teaching process of CLL, teachers can find it strange to give students so much freedom and tend to intervene too much. Moreover, CLL makes high demands of teachers (Knowers) who have to be highly proficient in the target language and in the language of the students. They have to be in control of a learning situation. They also have to show empathy and assist learners through their successive stages and crises to ensure the required amount of learning achieved as well as the sharing of feelings and feedback. These demands probably require a particular type of personality as well as some skills in social psychology.

There is little place in CLL for a conventional syllabus since what takes place emerges from teacher–learner interaction; there is therefore a problem of **assessment**, since aims and **objectives** are not set. The emergent syllabus is often compared to a learning contract. Similarly, there is minimal usage of set textbooks. This would impose an order on the sessions that could impede the growth and interaction. Teaching materials often develop as the sessions evolve.

Some of the techniques have, however, influenced other methods, and CLL illustrated very clearly how non-directive, communicative learning could occur in the language classroom.

**See also:** Emotions and language learning; Humanistic language teaching; Risk-taking and foreign language learning

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## Competence and performance

The use of ‘competence’ and ‘performance’ as technical terms originates with **Chomsky** (1965: 4). ‘Competence’ refers to ‘the speaker-hearer’s knowledge of his language’ and ‘Performance’ to ‘the actual use of language in concrete situations’. In Chomsky’s later work (e.g. 1986), the term, competence, is replaced with the term, I-language, the latter neologism referring to ‘an internal property of an individual (Smith, 2000: vii, italics in the original), and the term, performance, with the term, E-language, referring to external language, ‘which is not a domain about which one can construct coherent scientific theories’ (*ibid*). Chomsky’s primary goal has always been to provide a description of competence and the innate mechanism underlying it. Competence is minimally defined in so far as the notion covers only that knowledge which every normal adult **native speaker** of a language has of it. From this perspective, ‘The real difference between child L1 and adult L2 acquisition is that in the former everybody ends up in the same place; in the latter... this is far from being the case’ (Schachter, 1996: 86). Most of the extensive L2 learning literature which results from attempts to demonstrate and explain this difference agrees that L1 competence is achieved largely on the basis of innate properties of the language faculty. There is, however, considerable disagreement about the role of these properties in the learning of a second language after the so-called ‘critical period’.

The mature competence of a native speaker is the ‘steady state’ of their language faculty, reached, on the basis of its initial state which is genetically determined, after passing through a series of states in early childhood. The rate and route of this development is partially determined by the innate properties of the language faculty and partly by the typology of the language to which the person is exposed. The theory of the initial state is called ‘**universal grammar**’ (UG), and the theory of the steady state is called ‘**grammar**’ (Chomsky, 1995: 14).

Each state is a state of knowledge, a mental phenomenon, unavailable for direct inspection. In formulating both UG and grammar, the linguist is therefore forced to rely on speaker-hearer performance. However, competence would only be

directly reflected in performance in the case of ‘an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech-community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance’ (Chomsky, 1965: 3). In reality, what both a theorising linguist and a language acquiring child need to do is to extract from the varied examples of natural language use that they hear around them just those aspects that are relevant to the formulation of competence.

In this, the child is helped by the language faculty; UG determines the ‘principles’, or possible forms of human language, and also the ‘parameters’ within which it is possible for them to vary (Chomsky, 1986). In other words, UG restricts grammars powerfully, and ‘the theory of language acquisition will be concerned with acquisition of lexical items, fixing of parameters, and perhaps maturation of principles’ (Chomsky, 1995: 28). The linguist may be helped by various forms of experimentation, particularly native speaker judgements of the grammaticality of sentences.

From the point of view of the theory of second or foreign language (L2) teaching and learning, the interesting question raised by this view of first language (L1) acquisition is whether and to what extent **adult language learners** are able to access UG and use it in the development of a competence for L2. The answer might have implications for teaching methodology. UG might, for example, predispose a certain rate and route of learning of a second language, in which case it would make sense to structure teaching accordingly.

There are, as Mitchell and Myles (1998: 61) say, four major views on this issue. According to the ‘No Access’ or ‘Fundamental Difference’ hypothesis (Clahsen and Muysken, 1986; Bley-Vroman, 1989), adult language learners have no access to UG. In favour of this hypothesis, Bley-Vroman (1989: 43–9) points out that adult learners differ from child acquirers in failing to various degrees to become native-like; following different routes; using different strategies; having different goals; having unclear intuitions about grammaticality;

benefiting considerably from instruction; and being susceptible to influence from affective factors. He argues that adults learn a foreign language, to the extent that they do, in reliance on the first language, which 'fills the role which Universal Grammar has in child language acquisition' (Bley-Vroman, 1989: 42), and on their general problem solving abilities.

According to the 'Strong Continuity' (Epstein, Flynn and Martohardjono, 1998) or 'Full Availability' (Gair, 1998) hypotheses, in contrast, L2 learners have and use the same type of access to UG as L1 learners do (Krashen, 1981). Adherents claim that this hypothesis offers the best explanation for the ability of learners to reset parameters to suit an L2 which has different parameter settings than L1 (Al-Kasey and Pérez-Leroux, 1998).

According to the hypothesis of 'Indirect Access', L2 learners access UG via their L1 knowledge. There are two versions of this hypothesis (White, 1989: 48). According to one, only those aspects of UG which are instantiated in L1 can be accessed, so parameter re-setting is impossible. According to the other, learners begin by assuming that L2 is like L1, but when they discover that this is wrong they can access UG to reset the parameters (White, 1986; Schwartz and Sprouse, 1994).

Finally, according to 'The Weak Continuity' (Vainikka and Young-Scholten, 1991, 1998), or 'Partial Access' hypothesis, only some aspects of UG are available to L2 learners. This position might help reconcile some of the conflicting data procured by studies seeking confirmation or falsification of the remaining positions. However, as Mitchell and Myles remark (1998: 68), these data themselves tend to form the subject matter of the continuing debate concerning access to UG in L2 learning (see, e.g., Schachter, 1996), and the jury remains out on the question of the exact role of UG in second language learning.

**See also:** Age factors; Communicative language teaching; *Langue* and *parole*; Second language acquisition theories; Universal grammar

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## Confucius Institute

The Confucius Institute (simplified Chinese: 孔子学院; traditional Chinese: 孔子學院; Pinyin: Kǒngzǐ xuéyuàn) is a non-profit public institution with its headquarters in Beijing under the office of Chinese Language Council International (or *Hanban* for short), which is affiliated to China's Ministry of Education.

Aiming to promote Chinese language and culture and support Chinese teaching and learning internationally, the Confucius Institute (CI) is committed to contributing to global cultural diversity and harmony. It develops language and culture teaching resources and makes its services available worldwide, meeting the demands of overseas Chinese learners. The services of the CI include:

- providing Chinese language teaching and teacher resources;
- training Chinese language instructors;
- administering HSK (Chinese Proficiency Test) and tests for Chinese Language Teacher Certification;
- providing consultative services concerning China's education, Chinese culture, etc.;
- conducting language and cultural exchange activities between China and other countries.

The Confucius Classroom is an extension of the Confucius Institute and is also a non-profit educational organization, whose activities focus on:

- organizing Chinese teaching and cultural activities as well as contests relevant to Chinese language and culture, such as the 'Chinese Bridge – Chinese Proficiency Competition';
- providing overseas primary and secondary school teachers with training programmes;

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- organizing summer/winter camp programmes in China for international primary and secondary school students;
- compiling Chinese language and culture teaching materials.

The world's first full-fledged Confucius Institute officially opened in Seoul, South Korea, in November 2004 (though a pilot institute had previously opened in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, in June 2004). By the end of 2010, 322 Confucius Institutes and 369 Confucius Classrooms were set up in 96 countries and regions, and some 250 further institutions from over 50 countries had applied to establish Confucius Institutes/Classrooms. In view of the fact that 100 million people outside China may be learning Chinese, 1,000 Confucius Institutes are expected to be established by 2020.

Confucius Institutes/Classrooms are encouraged to adopt flexible teaching patterns to cater to the local needs of primary, secondary schools, communities and enterprises in other countries and nonetheless develop their own unique styles in teaching Chinese language. By the end of 2010, Confucius Institutes/Classrooms around the world were offering 9,000 Chinese courses in a multitude of styles, the number of registered students totaling 360,000. Some nine collections of Chinese language teaching materials and reference books in forty-five languages had been published, and more than 400,000 books donated to Confucius Institutes. Furthermore, 104 Confucius Institutes had developed and published 77 local Chinese language teaching materials. With 100,000 registered users, the *Confucius Institute Online* ([www.chinese.cn](http://www.chinese.cn)) provides overseas Chinese learners with an interactive platform for learning Chinese language and culture. About 12,000 courses and nearly 1,000 hours of multimedia video content has been released free online.

Teachers, part-time and full-time, are recruited from China and locally, approximately half from each category. Chinese teachers and volunteer teachers participate in the training programmes organized by the CI Headquarters, and the Headquarters provides scholarships for overseas Chinese language teachers and students to study in China.

Confucius Institutes also organize cultural events, such as art performances, textbook exhibitions and cultural lectures. They offer local communities information and exhibitions on Chinese traditional medicine, taijiquan, Kongfu, Qigong, calligraphy, Chinese painting, Chinese songs and dances, and Chinese cuisine.

### Website

<http://English.hanban.org>

## Content and Language Integrated Learning

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is the technical term for an educational approach and set of methodologies which optimize learning in specific educational linguistic contexts. These contexts usually involve learners who are studying subjects through a second or otherwise additional language. In some cases learners may be in an environment where there is no possibility to study in their first language or they may be in a school or stream which purposefully values and offers education in two or more languages (Coyle et al., 2010).

The term was adopted in Europe in 1994 through a range of initiatives supported by the European Commission (Marsh, 2002). This was in response to transnational identification of the need both to improve levels of language learning and to enable educators to respond effectively to the inclusion of learners in classrooms who were not proficient in the majority language of the environment (Council of the European Union, 1995, 1996).

During the 1990s CLIL was defined as a generic term referring to an 'educational situation in which an additional language, and therefore not the most widely used language of the environment, is used for the teaching and learning of subjects other than the language itself' (Marsh and Langé, 2000: 3).

At this time CLIL practice was influenced by research from other major educational approaches such as immersion, bilingual education and content-based instruction, much of it derived from North America. In this respect, implementation of European CLIL often preceded localized research.



But after a decade, Europe-bound research increasingly enabled the development of not only evidence bases, but also greater insight into establishing good practice. CLIL became increasingly used to describe specific language-supportive methodologies leading to authentic content learning where attention is given to both topic and language of instruction.

At the European level, ‘achieving this twofold aim call[ed] for the development of a special approach to teaching in that the non-language subject is not taught *in* a foreign language but *with* and *through* a foreign language’ (Eurydice, 2006: 8). This led to another largely research-driven development phase, which moved beyond the content and language of instruction axis. A third dimension, cognition (students’ thinking and learning skills), became a major focus of attention. This soon became an integral descriptor of the CLIL definition (Mehisto et al., 2008).

This focus on cognition was partly supported by research within the neurosciences (see, for example, OECD, 2007; Marsh and Hill, 2009), and continues to act as a major means by which to further articulate and develop good methodological practice, particularly with respect to emerging technologies. The triple focus on the fusion of content, language, and cognition encouraged greater focus on learning, as opposed to predominant focus on teaching, and led to an understanding that CLIL is a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of content and language with the objective of promoting both content and language mastery to pre-defined levels and competences.

CLIL now represents a holistic approach to learning which is heavily cognitive-based, and which draws on an interplay of the theoretical foundations of constructivism and **second language acquisition**. It is found at all levels of compulsory education in Europe. Although it is most commonly in secondary education, it is increasingly becoming widespread in the primary and vocational sectors. There is little CLIL implementation reported in higher education, although there is widespread change in the language of instruction in many countries.

Often carried out through interdisciplinary modules led by content and language teachers, or primary-level class teachers, the amount of time given to CLIL within the curriculum tends to be low. Globally, the most common vehicular language is **English**, and in Europe there are increasing signs that CLIL is being adopted for the teaching of other languages (see Anderson, 2008, 2009). There is a strong link between the introduction of CLIL and the political move towards establishing competence-based education (European Commission, 2006 and 2008).

Since the 1990s, the development of CLIL has faced a major challenge due to its integrative nature in that it involves teaching two subjects in one – a content subject and a language. To achieve both content and language mastery to pre-defined levels involves a distinct set of teaching and learning skills, which have recently been developed in relation to initial and in-service **teacher education** (Marsh et al., 2010). These skills move CLIL practice away from the domain of either language or other subject teaching, towards a fusion of both, which leads to the introduction of innovative educational practice.

One of the outcomes resulting from successful synergies between different disciplines has been to shift the responsibility for languages and literacies (for example, the digital literacies) away from being the sole domain of language educators. Another has been to articulate ‘learning in an additional language’ to a range of stakeholders who, themselves, may not be language specialists, but who may be in gate-keeping positions, fundamental in enabling the types of systemic change needed to make such education succeed.

This issue of ‘articulating CLIL’ has been very important in the socio-political and educational contexts. One possible reason for the success of CLIL is how it has acted as an inclusive generic term that crystallizes and defines the pedagogical concepts identified for achieving best practice in a range of educational environments.

**See also:** Bilingual education; Bilingual method; Content-based instruction; Teaching methods

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DAVID MARSH AND GISELLA LANGÉ

## Content-based instruction

This term describes a range of approaches to the integration of language and content. These approaches lie on a continuum, ranging from those which emphasise content learning through the medium of a second/foreign language, to those in which content is used as a vehicle for promoting language learning. In many respects, the term content-based instruction overlaps with the European term **CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning)**.

*Content-driven* approaches give primary emphasis to the learning of content. Language learning is important, but it is often viewed as an incidental by-product of content instruction. Similarly, subject matter courses taught through the medium of a

second/foreign language are content-driven, in that learning content is a primary course outcome. These courses are commonly taught by content specialists, not language teachers.

At the centre of the continuum lie approaches with equal emphasis on both content and language. In these approaches students frequently learn the second/foreign language as a subject, often in a specific class or course. In addition, content is taught through the medium of the second/foreign language. Students are expected to demonstrate achievement of course outcomes in both language and content, and may be instructed by both content and language specialists.

At the other end of the continuum are *language-driven* approaches. In these, language learning is the primary course objective. Content is used by language instructors to make language learning more motivating, and to provide meaningful, **authentic** topics about which to communicate. Language-driven approaches may or may not use content drawn from the school curriculum. Content may be a specific topic or theme related to the school curriculum, be multidisciplinary, or be drawn solely from learners' expressed interests.

### Content-driven approaches

One form of content-based instruction that lies at the content-driven end of the continuum is immersion. In immersion programmes, the second/foreign language serves as the **medium of instruction** for half or more of the school curriculum, with emphasis on content outcomes. In North America, immersion programmes are frequently deemed successful when students demonstrate content achievement at or above expected levels. Immersion programmes are also considered successful even when students demonstrate less than native-like productive **skills**. Indeed, some North American programmes assess students regularly for content learning but only sporadically, if at all, for language learning.

Another form of content-driven instruction are 'sheltered' courses – content classes taught through the medium of a second/foreign language using linguistically sensitive instructional strategies that help make content accessible to learners with less

than native-like proficiency. Frequently, all the students in a sheltered class are learners of the second/foreign language, distinguishing sheltered instruction from approaches in which language learners are instructed in content alongside students learning it in their **mother tongue**. In the USA, sheltered content classes are commonly found in schools that help minority language students make academic progress while they are acquiring **English**. Sheltered courses at the university level in the US serve a similar purpose. In contrast, sheltered courses in Canada have pioneered this approach for teaching **French** and psychology to speakers of the majority language, English.

Another content-driven approach found in a growing number of US universities are language enriched courses (Allen, Anderson and Narvaez, 1992; Krueger and Ryan, 1993; Snow and Brinton, 1997; Straight, 1994). Students enrol in a regular university course taught in their mother tongue. Students may elect to take special modules or complete designated readings in their language of choice. While most students in the course will read course assignments in English, others will supplement course readings and experiences with **materials** from the target language or meet with native-speaking graduate students who assign readings and lead discussions in the target language. These graduate students are specialists in the discipline, and not in language instruction.

At the elementary school level, some US schools have chosen to introduce foreign languages by substituting second/foreign language instruction in one content area for instruction in the mother tongue. There are programmes, for example, in which mathematics is taught in **japanese** or science in **Spanish**.

### Shared emphasis: content and language

At the centre of the continuum of content-based instruction are programmes in which both language and content are of equal importance. In these, language classes or courses accompany subject matter courses taught through the medium of the second/foreign language. In school settings, these are most often found in US elementary schools or at the post-secondary level.

At the post-secondary level, several institutions report approaches that use the adjunct model (Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989; Snow and Brinton, 1997). Content and language instructors work collaboratively to ensure that students learn content and gain the language skills necessary for successful content learning. Another approach to integrating language and content are language courses for special purposes. Examples include courses with self-explanatory titles such as 'English for Academic Purposes', 'Business French' or 'Spanish for Hospital Workers'.

### Language-driven approaches

In language-driven approaches to content-based instruction, content is the vehicle for language learning (in contrast to content-driven approaches in which language is the vehicle for content learning). Theme-based courses at the university level have been reported in the US by Brinton, Snow and Wesche (1989) and Lafayette and Buscaglia (1985), and in Japan by Murphey (1997). Stoller and Grabe (1997: 83) suggest a theme-based approach to content-based instruction in which themes may be drawn from the academic content of the school or university ('Insects'; 'The solar system'; 'Demography'). Themes in language-driven approaches may be drawn from a single discipline, such as science, or may cross disciplines ('Our Roman Heritage'). Themes may be drawn from the culture of the language studied, such as its history, its geography, or its economic, social and political institutions. Themes may also be drawn from topics of interest to the students ('The Circus', 'How can we prevent violence?', 'Who are today's youth?').

At the far end of the content-based continuum are language-driven approaches that use content-based tasks and activities to serve the goals of **communicative language teaching**. That is, if communicative language teaching strives to give learners authentic, meaningful and purposeful tasks for language use, then content can provide a rich source of such tasks. Here, content learning is not a course focus; neither teachers nor students are held accountable for content outcomes. Rather, language learning is the course goal, and content is an effective means for attaining it. Language practice

activities and tasks are drawn from many disciplines, selected by the language teacher based on the degree to which they can help further the **objectives** of the language curriculum (Met, 1991).

In the USA, making connections from language to other disciplines as a means of reinforcing language learning is one of the five major goals of the new National Standards for Foreign Language Learning (1996). Students not only have opportunities to connect to other disciplines in language courses, they are also expected to use their language skills to acquire information that may not be available to them in English.

### Rationales for content-based instruction

The diverse approaches to content-based instruction reflect varying priorities for language learning.

Content-driven programmes are frequently found in settings where students are regularly schooled in a language other than their mother tongue. These may be settings where students speak a minority language in the home, or where knowing languages in addition to the national language is an economic or political imperative. Content-driven programmes are also common where there is a perceived need for high levels of language proficiency and **intensive language learning** is most likely to yield the desired results. Content-driven programmes, such as immersion, or programmes in which language and content courses are linked, are also time-efficient: students gain high levels of content and language skill more or less simultaneously, rather than separately.

Language-driven approaches reflect language learning priorities. Theme-based courses are likely to reflect students' vocational or leisure interests, preparing them to use their new language in the situations or contexts they are likely to encounter in their work or personal lives. Language-driven courses that draw tasks and activities from many disciplines are most likely to be found in standalone language courses where teachers are looking to engage students in meaningful, motivating and engaging language practice.

Research suggests that content-based approaches are likely to result in more successful language learning (Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989; Genesee,

1994; Snow, 1998; Wesche, 1993). Among the reasons for the success of such approaches may be the increased time spent in the target language, increased learner **motivation** that comes from meaningful communicative language use, increased learner attention to tasks that are cognitively engaging and demanding, increased learner motivation due to topics related to their personal interests, and increased learning due to the links between knowledge acquired in other disciplines and its connections to tasks in the language classroom.

**See also:** Bilingual education; Content and Language Integrated Learning; Generative principle; Medium of instruction; Monolingual principle; Mother-tongue teaching; Teaching methods; US Standards for Foreign Language Learning

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## Contrastive analysis

Narrowly defined, contrastive analysis investigates the differences between pairs (or small sets) of languages against the background of similarities and with the purpose of providing input to applied disciplines such as foreign language teaching and translation studies. With its largely descriptive focus, contrastive linguistics provides an interface between theory and application. It makes use of theoretical findings and models of language description but is driven by the objective of applicability. Contrastive studies mostly deal with the comparison of languages that are 'socio-culturally linked', i.e. languages whose speech communities overlap in some way, typically through (natural or instructed) **bilingualism**.

### Contrastive analysis and foreign language teaching

Comparison of pairs of languages has been used in the description of foreign languages at least since the nineteenth century in Europe (cf. Fisiak, 1981). A contrastive perspective is also implicitly taken in traditional grammar writing based on the blueprint of Latin, whose linguistic system has often been superimposed on modern languages, thus implying an (asymmetrical) comparison. A contrastive methodology was explicitly formulated after the Second World War, when the importance of foreign language learning was recognized in the USA, and when research on immigrant bilingualism emerged (Weinreich, 1953; Haugen, 1956). Fries, in his monograph on *Teaching and Learning English as a Second Language* (1945), contended that '[t]he

most efficient materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner' (1946: 9). The programme sketched by Fries was comprehensively realized a few years later by Lado (1957) in a comparison of **English** and **Spanish**. In the preface, Lado claimed that 'we can predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty in learning, and those that will not cause difficulty, by comparing systematically the language and culture to be learned with the native language and culture of the student'. This assumption has come to be known as the 'contrastive hypothesis' in its 'strong' or 'predictive' form (e.g. Wardhaugh, 1970).

The contrastive programme was extensively put into practice in the 1960s, most notably with the publication of the *Contrastive Structure Series* edited by Ferguson and published by the University of Chicago Press (e.g. Moulton, 1962; Kufner, 1962 on English/German; Stockwell et al., 1965; and Stockwell and Bowen, 1965 on English/Spanish). Explicit recommendations concerning the design of teaching materials and syllabi were often made, e.g. in the form of 'hierarchies of difficulty' (Stockwell et al., 1965; Stockwell and Bowen, 1965). The rapid ascent of contrastive linguistics in the USA culminated in the 1968 Georgetown Roundtable (Alatis, 1968). While the following years witnessed a certain stagnation and even decline of contrastive analysis in the USA, the discipline gathered speed in Europe, and several contrastive projects were launched, e.g. in Jyväskylä, Mannheim, Poznań, Stuttgart and Zagreb, most of them comparing English to the native languages of the investigators (Fisiak, 1981).

Given that the programme of contrastive linguistics lacked a solid foundation in learning psychology, it met with empirical problems and was severely criticized before long (Newmark and Reibel, 1968 for a prominent critique, and James, 1971 for an 'exculpation'). Originally based on a behaviourist view of language acquisition, its very foundations were called into question when **behaviourism** went out of fashion (James, 1980). One central point of criticism was that contrastive linguistics at that stage overemphasized the role of interference as a source of errors and was too

undifferentiated with respect to various parameters of language acquisition such as the question of **age**, the difference between mediated and natural acquisition, between the acquisition of a second or **third language**, etc. Even from a practical point of view, contrastive studies turned out to be of little use to language teachers, as its predictions were unreliable. Many (especially American) proponents of early contrastive analysis therefore shifted their attention to empirical studies of learners' behaviour, e.g. **error analysis** (Corder, 1967 and subsequent work) and the study of learners' varieties, which were regarded as 'approximative systems' (e.g. Nemser, 1971) or '**interlanguages**' (e.g. Selinker, 1972).

As the expectations of early contrastive linguistics were soon dampened, an alternative and more modest, 'weak' or 'diagnostic' form of the contrastive hypothesis was formulated (Stockwell, 1968; Wardhaugh, 1970). It says that contrastive analyses can explain (independently) observed errors: '[T]he starting point in the contrast is provided by actual evidence from such phenomena as faulty translation, learning difficulties, residual foreign accents, and so on ...' (Wardhaugh, 1970: 7–8). Accordingly, contrastive analysis and error analysis are often regarded as being complementary (James, 1980). Proponents of contrastive linguistics have pointed out, however, that certain discrepancies between learner varieties and the relevant target languages are not directly observable, e.g. 'covert errors' and under-representation or over-representation (Rohdenburg, 1974; James, 1980; Kortmann, 1996), and that the identification of learning difficulties thus cannot rely on error analysis alone.

While contrastive analysis in its earlier stages focused on the linguistic system, i.e. grammar and the lexicon ('microlinguistics', in James' 1980 terms), in the 1980s and 1990s matters of language use and discourse structure ('macrolinguistics') came to the fore and new fields such as contrastive sociolinguistics (Hellinger and Ammon, 1996), cross-cultural **pragmatics** (Wierzbicka, 1985, 1992) and contrastive rhetoric (Connor, 1996) emerged. For example, languages or perhaps speech communities differ in their degrees of directness, explicitness, etc., which may lead to intercultural

misunderstandings (House, 1996). Similarly, conventions of text structuring may vary from one language or culture to another. For instance, there are well-known differences between the ways in which scientific texts are structured in the Continental European as opposed to the Anglo-Saxon tradition. Clyne's (1987) comparison of **German** and English, for example, brought to light a number of general differences which advanced learners should be aware of when writing an academic text.

Even though the early didactic aspirations of contrastive analysis were too ambitious, in its 'modest' form contrastive linguistics constitutes one building block of research into second language acquisition among others. The problem of interference transfer, while certainly not being the only reason for learning difficulties, can hardly be denied (Weinreich, 1953; Gass and Selinker, 1983; Odlin, 1989, 1996), and systematic and general descriptions of interference phenomena are best provided on the basis of contrastive analyses. Moreover, contrastive linguistics plays an important role in the creation of **language awareness** (Kortmann, 1996; James, 2005; Mair, 2005). In particular, advanced learners can profit from a direct comparison of their native language with the language to be learned, thus making their implicit knowledge of the differences explicit. Contrastive linguistics has therefore been integrated into teacher training programmes at many universities, and course materials have been designed specifically for university level teaching (König and Gast, 2009).

### **Contrastive linguistics, linguistic theory and language typology**

While most of the early contrastive studies such as the grammars of the *Contrastive Structure Series* were concerned with major areas of 'core grammar', in particular phonology and syntax, a number of more specific studies were published in the 1970s and 1980s (e.g. König, 1971; Rohdenburg, 1974; Plank, 1984). These studies were characterized by more specific topics and a high level of granularity as well as an increasingly theoretical orientation. Applicability in **second language acquisition** was a desirable, yet secondary aim, and the focus was shifted to the more abstract question

of why languages differ in the way they do. This epistemological objective was closely related to the programme of linguistic typology, and contrastive linguistics came to be regarded as a 'limiting case of typological comparison' (König, 1992, 1996, forthcoming), or a 'junior partner' of linguistic typology (Kortmann, 1996). While in linguistic typology many languages are compared with respect to a single variant property, contrastive studies compare only two (or very few) languages, but take a broad range of phenomena into account, ideally all areas of grammar. Even though the distinction made by Fisiak (1971, 1981), among others, between 'theoretical' and 'applied' contrastive analysis is probably not categorical, it provides a useful dichotomy for the characterization of the main objectives pursued by contrastive linguists. The typologically inspired research as sketched above is certainly located towards the theoretical pole of the continuum, but it has been shown to be not entirely irrelevant to language teaching (Mair, 2005 on 'spin-offs for language teachers'). For example, the typological notion of 'markedness' has played an important role in research on language acquisition (Kortmann, 1996; James, 2005), and 'typological distance' has been claimed to correlate with difficulty of learning (cf. Kortmann, 1996, referring to Schachter, 1974 on the acquisition of relative clauses).

One of the central observations made by typologically oriented contrastive linguists is that 'certain differences between two languages are connected with or even a consequence of other differences' (König, 1971: 13–14). The research programme emanating from this observation culminated in Hawkins' monograph on *A Comparative Typology of English and German: Unifying the Contrasts*, published in 1986. Hawkins made an 'attempt to consider two whole languages from a typological-universal point of view', searching 'for unifying generalisations that underlie the variation between the major portions of the whole languages' (1986: 3–4). In other words, he envisaged a holistic approach to pairwise language comparison, reducing the manifold contrasts between two languages to one core difference. The generalization that Hawkins arrived at is summarized as follows: 'Where the grammars of English and German contrast, the surface forms (morphological and

syntactic) of German are in closer correspondence with their associated meanings' Hawkins (1986: 121).

Given the overarching nature of Hawkins' (1986) generalization, it comes as no surprise that counter-examples were soon pointed out, and some of the more specific claims made by Hawkins were relativized (e.g. Mair, 1990; Kortmann and Meyer, 1992; Rohdenburg, 1992). In fact, the very idea of a holistic approach to language comparison was not seriously pursued after Hawkins (1986). Nevertheless, Hawkins' study has had a great impact on the field of contrastive linguistics up to the present day. One reason is that many of the individual generalizations made by Hawkins are still valid. Moreover, Hawkins' contrastive work in the 1980s gave rise to one of the most comprehensive and most widely accepted theories of language processing (Hawkins, 1992, 1994, 2004). What this shows is that contrastive linguistics with a strongly theoretical orientation can function as a 'laboratory' for the development of new theories and paradigms by combining the fine-grained analysis of language-particular data with findings from cross-linguistic work (cf. also van der Auwera, forthcoming, on contrastive studies as 'pilot studies in typology').

### **Towards a corpus-based contrastive linguistics**

Given that contrastive linguistics has increasingly focused on matters of performance, thus requiring attested and, ideally, quantitative data, the use of multilingual corpora has become an integral part of this discipline.

However, while a substantial amount of multilingual corpus resources is now available, the methods of statistical analysis in this domain are still under development. In order to obtain interesting results from corpus studies, a canon of methods and procedures is needed, just as in language-particular studies (e.g. Gries, 2009). Contrastive corpus studies – if they want to go beyond a simple comparison of frequencies in a pair or set of corpora – require an elaborate research design, and the problems addressed are typically multi-factorial. In the simpler cases, the methods used in language-particular analysis – e.g. cross-tabulation and significance testing – can be transferred to contrastive linguistics (e.g. Gast and



Wiechmann, 2011 on cleft sentences in English and German). More specific research questions, however, require a more sophisticated methodology using up-to-date statistical machinery (e.g. Wiechmann, 2011). Empirically oriented contrastive linguists will thus face two challenges in the near future: developing this methodology further, and making it accessible to a broad community of researchers that is not so far familiar with quantitative methods of analysis.

**See also:** Applied linguistics; Error analysis; Linguistics; Pragmatics; Structural linguistics; Textbooks; Translation; Transfer

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VOLKER GAST

## Conversation analysis

Conversation analysis (CA) emerged in 1960s and 1970s from within the branch of sociology pioneered by Garfinkel (1967) and known as ethnomethodology. Its assumptions and methods also owe much to Goffman's (1955, 1967, 1983) work on the 'interaction order' and face work. CA is concerned with investigating discourse, or more specifically, 'talk in interaction' (Schegloff, 1987) with a view to uncovering how interaction in everyday settings is organised and maintained by the interlocutors with reference to shared social knowledge. It aims to reveal through inductive study the structures of naturally occurring interaction on the basis of detailed transcripts of audio or video-recordings. CA moves away from the single utterance as a focus of attention, characteristic of **speech act theory**, and explores the sequential organisation of interaction and its basis in the turn-taking system. The influence of CA on other areas of study, most notably linguistics, psychology and

**intercultural communication** scholarship, continues to grow. Its value to language teaching and learning lies in the manner in which it can reveal how meaning is mutually constructed and negotiated by interlocutors in both intra- and intercultural settings.

### Development from ethnomethodology

Ethnomethodology explores the notion that members of a society use common-sense knowledge, which is based on a 'background of common understandings' (Garfinkel, 1967: 49), to interpret events and behaviour encountered in everyday social settings and thereby to organise their interaction on an ongoing basis. Central to the theory is the role of the so-called actors in constructing social meaning. In the 1950s and 1960s this represented a new departure in sociological scholarship in its move away from deductively-based approaches.

CA builds on these assumptions and adopts a micro-analytic approach to the study of 'talk in interaction' in real-life, everyday social activities. The focus is on the individual nature of the situations studied, their uniqueness being attributable to the role played by the actors in determining how events unfold. It attempts through extensive field study of naturally occurring interaction to learn about such activities from within, and eschews the establishment of general theories which detach interaction from its locally produced context. Experimental and other laboratory-generated data favoured by social-psychological research are rejected. Reliance on field notes as a record of observation, characteristic of ethnographic research, is questioned due to the inadequacies of memory. Thus, transcribed recordings of face-to-face and non face-to-face, e.g. telephone interaction, constitute the basis for analysis. They permit ongoing review of the data in the light of other research questions and as a means of comparison. A detailed transcription scheme developed by Jefferson (see Schenkein, 1978) incorporates aspects such as overlaps, pauses, voice volume and stress. It permits exploration of the sequential organisation of conversation in greater depth, including features such as repair, and results in a richer understanding of interactional behaviour as it emerges from what is locally produced by the participants. Essentially, CA interprets interaction from the

perspective of the participants by using the same sources of information available to the interlocutors.

Central to CA is the research carried out by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974, 1977) into the organisation of conversation on a formal level which defined turn-taking mechanisms used by interactants to regulate and coordinate their interaction. It is claimed that the turn-taking system is 'context-free' and functions independently of the participants; yet to understand the contribution of a participant to a particular sequence requires reference to the local context, specifically the preceding utterance/s and, potentially, to the external context of the interaction, but only in so far as this is manifestly integrated into the interaction by the interlocutor. Similarly, interaction is 'context-renewing' (Heritage, 1989: 22); in other words, each contribution constitutes the context for the next or subsequent contributions to the sequence. The claim that the turn-taking system is 'context-free' suggests that it can be applied to intercultural settings with the proviso that there may be some variation in the sequential organisation of the discourse (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, 1974: 700).

CA researchers have focused almost exclusively on conversation and on institutional settings where the principles of turn-taking are constrained by the situation; for example, job or news interviews, courtroom settings, doctor–patient consultations, and classroom interaction (Heritage, 1984; Firth, 1995; Clayman and Heritage, 2002; Seedhouse, 2004; Heritage and Maynard, 2006). Recognition of the value of the methodology as a means of analysing institutional talk, for example, in health-care settings (Heritage and Maynard, 2006), has continued to grow; specifically, its ability to reveal how particular institutional contexts are reproduced in the talk of the interactants (Heritage and Atkinson, 1984: 15). However, importantly, institutional interaction is not defined by the setting, but rather by whether the interlocutors make aspects of their professional or institutional identities relevant in their interaction (Drew and Heritage, 1992: 25).

### Implications for teaching

CA has much to offer to the development of language pedagogy, although its potential remains

underexploited. It has been used in the analysis of classroom talk, specifically learner and **teacher talk**, to investigate how negotiation of meaning might be optimised in the language classroom, in the context of growing interest in interaction and teacher research (van Lier, 1996; Seedhouse, 2004). Applied to foreign language teaching and learning, CA can function as a diagnostic tool to reveal problems of discourse management and critical incidents encountered by learners through its emphasis on how interlocutors make sense of each other's contribution. This notion of intersubjectivity diverges from the dominant concentration on speaker intention evident in speech act theory. An appreciation of CA can promote interactively-based learning which moves away from the teaching of isolated language functions as product to focus on the process of interaction. Thus, it can help to reveal how understanding is negotiated and how misunderstandings in interaction are locally managed by the participants, how repair sequences are accomplished, including preferences for self as opposed to other correction, acceptability of simultaneous talk and cultural expectations in respect of **politeness**. Critically, it also reinforces the notion of interaction and **identity** management as dynamic rather than static phenomena. Through attention to the micro details of interaction and inclusion of paraverbal and non-verbal features, the methodology allows access to a wider range of potential sources of critical incidents and pragmatic failure. However, whilst CA's contribution to **second language acquisition** is to reinforce the notion of language learning as socially situated, thereby shifting the perspective to the learner as a language user, and to challenge the idea of the learner as a deficient communicator (Firth and Wagner, 1997, 2007; Mori, 2007), there continues to be a dislocation between such insights and the development of appropriate teaching and learning resources.

### Criticisms

Critics of CA argue that its focus on the cooperative basis of interaction is not sufficient to explain the linguistic basis of interaction (Gumperz, 1982). Linguistic knowledge affects interpretation of the various signalling mechanisms used by interlocutors;

successful turn-taking relies on the participants knowing, *inter alia*, how to anticipate the end of an utterance and to differentiate between rhetorical and turn-relinquishing pauses (Gumperz, 1982: 160). Discourse analysts claim that CA is inexplicit and that its adherents are confused about the conceptual categories which they use in analysis (Levinson, 1983: 287). Moreover, the focus on participant categories means that features of the institutional context or other situational factors may be overlooked and that the analyst needs to be 'a competent member of the community under study' (Sarangi and Roberts, 1999: 33), which, in turn, may have implications for analysis of intercultural communication (Wagner, 1996: 232). In the context of SLA, the absence of longitudinal studies means that CA does not provide insights into how learners acquire a second language over time (Mori, 2007: 856). More generally, CA has been criticised for being atheoretical on account of its narrowly empirical focus and rejection of 'premature theorising' (Wooffitt, 2005: 74). A further question relates to the claim that the principles of conversational organisation are universal in the absence of sufficient comparative research in non-European language settings (Levinson, 1983: 369f.), although more recent work has sought to address this (Siddell, 2009). Whilst the methodology continues to grow in popularity, such questions represent continuing challenges to conversation analysts.

**See also:** Cross-cultural psychology; Discourse analysis; Non-verbal communication; Pragmatics; Sociolinguistics; Speech act theory; Text and corpus linguistics

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## Corpus linguistics and language teaching

Corpus linguistics is the investigation of extensive databases of language using computer-assisted methods of storing, retrieving and analysing the data. The design and assembly of language corpora in the latter part of the twentieth century have been defining moments in the description of language, and in this respect the work of the Survey of English Unit at University College London and the Bank of English teams at the University of Birmingham were foundational. Fundamentally, corpora have provided evidence for our intuitions about language and they have shown that these can often be inaccurate when it comes to issues such as semantics, grammar and more extended language patterns. The first main applications in the domain of language teaching were in the field of lexicography (for example, the COBUILD dictionary (Sinclair, 1987, 2004) and all major learners' dictionaries of English, and increasingly dictionaries in other languages are now based on constantly updated multi-million word databases of language. This practice has been extended to grammars of English (Biber et al, 1999; Carter and McCarthy, 2006), increasingly based on corpus-informed examples of language in use and, as indicated below, extended to the development of course book and related classroom language at all levels, including university **English for academic purposes** preparatory materials (Coxhead, 2010).

Debates about the use of corpus-informed language teaching materials mainly address issues of **authenticity**. Numerous studies have shown us that the language presented in **textbooks** is frequently still based on intuitions about how we use language, rather than on actual evidence of use; for example, conversational exchanges that are based on structures made up by **materials** writers rather

than on the evidence of the most frequent dialogic patterns. Burns (2001) notes that scripted dialogues rarely reflect the reality of conversation and argues that students who encounter only scripted spoken language have less opportunity to extend their linguistic repertoires in ways that prepare them for unforeseeable interactions outside the classroom. Gilmore (2004) finds that textbook dialogues differ considerably from their naturally-occurring equivalents across a range of discourse features including turn length and patterns, lexical density, number of false starts and repetitions, pausing, frequency of terminal overlap or latching, and the use of hesitation devices and response tokens. The *Touchstone* series (McCarthy et al., 2005 – for one example in the series) is, however, an attempt to show how course book dialogues, and even entire syllabi, can be informed by corpus data. In addition to the conventional four-skills syllabus strands of **speaking, listening, reading** and **writing**, the *Touchstone* authors provide a **syllabus** of conversational strategies, based on the most common words and phrases in the North American spoken segment of the Cambridge International Corpus developed by Cambridge University Press (McCarten, 2010).

Course materials are also now increasingly informed by corpora of learner language. For example, the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE, see Granger et al., 2002), currently contains about 3.7 million words of writing by learners of English from sixteen different mother tongue backgrounds ([www.i6doc.com/en/livre/?GCOI=28001100049310](http://www.i6doc.com/en/livre/?GCOI=28001100049310)). This corpus is error-coded, which allows for research into typical learner error patterns (see De Cock et al., 1998). Learner spoken data have also been collected, a notable example being the Louvain International Database of Spoken English **interlanguage** (LINDSEI) set up in 1995 (see De Cock, 2000). Findings from research into learner corpora can be addressed in materials design, including the development of CALL applications. For example, Altenberg and Granger (2001) suggest that, through a *data-driven learning* (DDL) approach, concordance-based classroom exercises can help raise awareness of the complexity of high-frequency verbs such as *make* and *do*, an attested error-prone factor for many learners of English. Debate over

the extent to which authentic language should form the basis of language courses has been taking place for several decades but it has been re-energised by the availability of corpus data.

Advocates of corpus linguistics in language teaching argue that corpus sources should form the basis for the material used to exemplify the language for the simple reason that language teaching should aim to produce learners who can communicate effectively and competently. In order for this to happen, it is argued further, learners need to experience authentic rather than contrived examples of data. Others argue that authenticity should preferably be defined as a relationship between a text and the response that it triggers in its immediate audience (Lee, 1995; Owen, 1996; Widdowson, 2001). Consequently, there is among many a preference for contrivance and the deliberate use of culturally 'neutral' examples as a more solid basis for a pedagogy that is sensitive to learners' needs, especially in the case of lower-level learners. Such contrived texts allow for material to be more easily graded for learners at different levels of competence. Another non-corpus-based option is to use texts suggested or provided by the learners themselves, which will, by definition, be potentially maximally authentic.

Supporters of the view that there should be more corpus-informed real language in evidence in classrooms argue, on the other hand, that naturally-occurring data can be carefully chosen and mediated, that it can be contextualised for the learner, that learners are no different from other human beings, who are able to contextualise language data for themselves, and that the use of such data in the classroom can actually facilitate discussion of cultural background, as well as provide more grounded **motivation** because the text is so obviously a 'real' example of the target language (Peacock, 1997). Others advance a related argument that tasks can be graded according to the nature of the authentic material (Willis, 2003). The latter position would also seem to be an argument for a more careful pedagogic selection of materials from authentic sources. Corpora, both spoken and written, do indeed contain many texts that are not culturally transparent, but they also contain numerous texts that are clear, easily contextualised

and interpretable. It is simply a matter of how carefully one selects the material, who the end-users are and what they want and expect from a language programme. For most pedagogic purposes in most contexts of teaching and learning a language, it is preferable to have naturally-occurring, corpus-based examples than contrived or unreal examples, but always in the context of freedom of choice and careful mediation by teachers and/or materials writers who know their own local contexts. For further reading on this debate and a range of associated topics see O'Keeffe et al. (2007); O'Keeffe and McCarthy (2010).

Some have argued that learners themselves should be taught how to use corpora in order to gain direct access to the language data they need (Johns, 1991). This has become known as data-driven learning. Growing out of Tim Johns' work, researchers and teachers have made use of corpora in a wide variety of educational settings from the native-speaker primary classroom (Sealey and Thompson, 2004) to applying the idea of learners providing texts themselves by building their own corpora (Charles, 2010).

Improvements in technology have meant that more corpora are available online and that search engine results can be displayed as concordance lines (see Renouf et al., 2006) driving the 'democratisation' of corpus linguistics.

Corpus-informed authentic language invariably invokes the idea of language drawn from sources supplied by **native speakers**, and recent research has shown that language learners often regard the approximation to native speaker English as a main goal in the language learning process (Timmis, 2002). While the notion of the native speaker of English tends to be used to refer to those whose first language is English, the concept is a complex one, as there are, as Rampton (1990) and others have demonstrated, non-native speakers who have great affiliation to a language and are more competent in that language than native speakers. The vast number of different varieties of 'native speaker' **English** (e.g. American, British, Australian, Singaporean) means that this notion cannot easily be translated, or modelled, into one particular standard for the language classroom, although international publishers have tended to prioritise

either American or British English as a model. At the same time this raises the further question whether native-speaker models are the most appropriate basis for language learners, who may predominantly use their L2 to operate in an international, rather than a 'native' context. This state of affairs has led some to propose that English as a **lingua franca** (ELF) is more significant internationally than English as a first or second language and that consequently, corpora of non-native Englishes are needed in order to help us identify the kinds of English crucial to communication in such contexts and to use such evidence as a preferred basis for classroom teaching and learning. Consequently, there has been a development of ELF corpora (for example, the VOICE project at the University of Vienna) and increasing discussion of their relevance for classroom language teaching contexts (Jenkins, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2001).

Debates and discussions continue, but as more and more corpora are being developed in a variety of different Englishes and for a variety of purposes, it is significant that discussions are now not about *whether* but about *how* corpora are to be used in language teaching.

**See also:** Error analysis; Materials development; Native speaker; Non-native speaker teacher; Text and corpus linguistics

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Daniel Coste studied at the École Normale d'Instituteurs de Paris-Auteuil, at the Lycée Henri IV in Paris and at the École Normale Supérieure de Saint-Cloud.

Coste's career began in the 1960s in the USA as an instructor, first at the Pennsylvania State University, then at two summer institutes in Iowa and in Minnesota (1961–63). He studied in Britain and in France, where he obtained a Diplôme d'Études Supérieures in 1963 and the Agrégation de Lettres Modernes in 1964 at the École Normale Supérieure de Saint-Cloud. He was first appointed vice-director (1966–73), then acting director (1973–74), of the **CRÉDIF** (*Centre de Recherche et d'Étude pour la Diffusion du Français*) before his nomination as maître de conférences (1974–88). Coste then became professor at the University of Geneva (1988–92) and director of the École de Langue et de Civilisation Françaises. Upon his return to France, he became responsible for the direction of the CRÉDIF until 1996. He supervised until 2003, at the École Normale Supérieure Lettres et Sciences Humaines, the work of the research group *Plurilinguisme et Apprentissages*, and one of his most important contributions has been the development of the concept of 'plurilingualism', which became fundamental to the work of the Council of Europe and the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages**, of which he was one of the authors. He remained a director of research at the Sorbonne until 2009.

Since his first publication, *La langue française au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (1966), his work has addressed fundamental theories of plurilingual education and highlighted core issues in the history of language teaching. He has devoted his work to the dissemination of French outside France, and the title of his *Thèse d'Etat* indicates this particular area of

interest: *Institution du français langue étrangère et implications de la linguistique appliquée*. Commissioned by the Council of Europe, Coste worked with a group of experts in the 1970s on the development of the *Niveau-seuil*, which was conceived as a set of principles describing the communicative abilities of a learner in a foreign language who would be able to adequately establish and maintain social contacts in everyday life. At the same time he edited, with R. Galisson, the *Dictionnaire de didactique des langues* (1976).

Throughout his career, Coste has been actively involved in numerous teacher training colleges as well as projects with the Council of Europe, the AUPELF (*Association des Universités Partiellement ou Entièrement de Langue Française*), and the FIPF (*Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Français*). He was co-editor of *LAL (Langues et Apprentissage des Langues)* and has served on the editorial boards of numerous scientific journals.

Daniel Coste is known for his academic work, but also for his commitment and contributions to diverse associations and initiatives promoting language learning and intercultural education, such as the *Société Internationale pour l'Histoire du Français Langue Étrangère ou Seconde* (SIHFLES), the *Association des Sciences du Langage* or the *Association pour le Développement de l'Éducation Bi-plurilingue* (ADEB). As a linguist, he has shed light on the development and application of pedagogical skills in coordinating the work of teachers and researchers throughout Europe, for example in his contribution to the bilingual education programme in the Valle d'Aosta. As a remarkable teacher, he has cheerfully and patiently shared his knowledge with a new generation of scholars, including his original vision: to provide a varied and comprehensive portrayal of the relationship between plurilingualism and language learning, firmly grounded in diverse communities of practice and informed by contemporary social interaction(s).

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SOFIA STRATILAKI

## Council of Europe Modern Languages Projects

The Council of Europe (CE) is an intergovernmental organisation which brings together forty-seven pluralist democratic European states with the object of creating a united, free and democratic Europe based on **human rights** and cooperating in the treatment of common social issues. Its work in education, culture, youth and sport is conducted in the framework of the European Cultural Convention signed since 1954 by fifty states. Since 1961, CE has organised a continuous series of medium term projects concerning modern languages.

1. 1963–73. A ten-year Major Project covering all educational sectors and concentrating on the modernisation of teacher training and pioneering modes of inter-sector and international cooperation. The application of the findings of linguistic research to language teaching was promoted. **AILA** was set up and the **audio-visual** method developed by **CRÉDIF** was promoted.
2. 1971–76. A working group investigated the feasibility of a European unit-credit scheme for foreign language learning by adults. In its early work it laid down the basic aims and principles based on the educational and political aims of the Council of Europe which have guided successive projects:
  - to facilitate the free movement of people, information and ideas in Europe with access for all and to encourage closer cooperation by providing the linguistic means of direct interpersonal communication;
  - to build up mutual understanding and acceptance of cultural and linguistic diversity in a multilingual and multicultural Europe, with respect for individual, local, regional and national identities, freely developing a common European **identity** based on shared values;

- to promote the personal development of individuals, with growing self-awareness and self-confidence, so that they may play an active role as socially responsible citizens in a pluralist democratic society
- to make the process of language teaching and learning itself more democratic, transparent and coherent by developing the necessary conceptual tools for the planning, conduct and **evaluation** of courses closely geared to the **needs, motivations** and characteristics of learners and facilitating decision-making as close as possible to the point of learning.

These were elaborated in a series of studies (Trim et al., 1980) on: **needs analysis**; the 'functional/notional' approach to the specification of **objectives**; the 'Threshold' concept; an integrative view of language education as a lifelong process requiring the close cooperation of learners, teachers and other providers and users. The concepts were exemplified in **threshold level** descriptions for **English, French, German, Spanish** (and many other national and regional languages). A draft unit-credit scheme was produced (Trim, 1980) but never implemented.

3. 1977–81. In 'Project 4' (CDCC, 1981), the approach was applied in a series of experiments in lower secondary schools coordinated in a 'schools interaction network', in **adult** education, in provision for the learning of the host language and mother-tongue maintenance by migrants and their families, and in the use of mass media (especially the Anglo-German multimedia broadcast-led English course *Follow Me*). Following the positive evaluation of Project 4, the CE Committee of Ministers adopted Recommendation R(82) 18 to all member governments. Eighteen specific measures were recommended. In particular, governments were called upon:
  1. To ensure, as far as possible, that all sections of their populations have access to effective means of acquiring a knowledge of the languages of other member states (or of other communities within their own country) as well as the **skills** in the use of

- those languages that will enable them to satisfy their communicative needs, and in particular:
- 1.1. to deal with the business of everyday life in another country, and to help foreigners staying in their own country to do so;
  - 1.2. to exchange information and ideas with young people and adults who speak a different language and to communicate their thoughts and feelings to them;
  - 1.3. to achieve a wider and deeper understanding of the way of life and forms of thought of other peoples and of their cultural heritage.
2. To promote, encourage and support the efforts of teachers and learners at all levels to apply in their own situation the principles of the construction of language learning systems (as these are progressively developed within the Council of Europe 'Modern languages' programmes:
    - 2.1. by basing language teaching and learning on the needs, motivations and characteristics and resources of learners;
    - 2.2. by defining worthwhile and realistic objectives as explicitly as possible;
    - 2.3. by developing appropriate methods and **materials**;
    - 2.4. by developing suitable forms and instruments for the evaluation of learning programmes.
  3. To promote research and development programmes leading to the introduction, at all educational levels, of methods and materials best suited to enabling different categories and types of student to acquire a communicative proficiency appropriate to their specific needs.
  4. 1982–87. Project 12 (Girard and Trim, 1988) was devoted to supporting the general implementation of R(82)18 in national reforms of curricula and examinations, in which the schools interaction network and the further development of threshold level descriptions played a part. Teacher trainers were identified as key personnel and a series of thirty-seven interactional workshops was held in fifteen countries, attended by 1,500 participants from twenty countries in which over 200 themes were introduced by 230 animators. The series played a significant part in developing a sense of common purpose in the language teaching profession across the continent.
  5. 1988–96. By this time national programmes for the reform of language teaching in the 11–16 age group were well advanced, and CDCC launched a Project 'Language Learning for European Citizenship' (Trim, 1997) directed towards other educational sectors: upper secondary, **vocationally** oriented language learning (VOLL), advanced adult education, **primary education**, and initial **teacher education** and training. In each, as well as in lower secondary, new themes of growing interest and importance were taken up:
    1. the enrichment of the specification of objectives. This led both to the updating of threshold level and **waystage** and to the addition of a higher 'Vantage Level' specification. Furthermore, a **Common European Framework of Reference** (CEFR) for languages: learning, teaching and **assessment** was drafted, with a view to the introduction of a **European Language Portfolio** (ELP) (Council of Europe, 1997);
    2. use of new technologies;
    3. the use of a second language as a medium of instruction in other curricular subjects, both in bilingual areas and in 'mainstream' education;
    4. the integration of school links, visits and **exchanges** into the Modern Languages curriculum in a whole-school perspective;
    5. '**learning to learn**' and the promotion of learner independence;
    6. the further development of modes of assessment.
- These sectors and themes were treated in a further series of thirty-one workshops, twenty-six of which were conducted as pairs linked by a two-year research and development programme.
- Over this period, political changes in Central and Eastern Europe led to an increase in CDCC membership from twenty-four to forty-four states, and support was given to new member states in reorienting and modernising language

teaching in accordance with Recommendation R(82)18. Following the endorsement of the Project's findings by an Intergovernmental Conference held in Strasbourg in 1997, a new Recommendation R(98)6 was adopted by the Committee of Ministers.

## Recent developments

Following the permanent establishment of the **European Centre for Modern Languages** (ECML) in Graz, Austria, in 1998, it has assumed responsibility for the organisation of workshops on innovation in language teaching methodology and the implementation of reform at classroom level, whilst the Language Policy Division in Strasbourg has dealt principally with language policy issues at European and national level, including the development of planning instruments and the provision of expert assistance to support member states in the improvement of language provision in their education systems. Projects so far undertaken have included:

- The organisation, in cooperation with the European Union, of the European Year of Languages 2001 and the subsequent annual European Languages Days on 26 September.
- The publication of and follow-up to the phenomenally successful *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001). Follow-up has included the production of a manual and further material for relating examinations to the CEFR, illustrative support material for the 6 proficiency levels and a series of Reference Level Descriptions (RLD) for individual languages.
- Launching of the European Language Portfolio (ELP) in 2001 and validation of over 100 models for its use in different educational contexts by 2010, when validation was replaced by a simpler registration process.
- The development of tools and guidelines to support the right to quality education, including an evolving platform of resources and references for plurilingual and intercultural education.
- Reference tools to analyse and construct curricula for the languages of schooling which are taught as subjects in their own right and used for the teaching of other subjects, taking into account the needs of migrant children.
- Expert assistance to member states with policy analysis and planning (Language Education Policy Profiles).
- Guidelines and tools to support the linguistic integration of adult migrants.

For the past fifty years, the CE projects have provided a central focus for the transformation of modern languages in education from an aspect of the cultural formation of a social and intellectual élite to the provision of necessary international communication skills for all Europeans. The strength of the conceptual framework, the clarity of its formulation and the practical usefulness of its products, together with the determination and energy with which a long-term strategy was conceived and pursued, achieved a lasting consensus uniting the many independent agents in the language teaching profession, with understanding and support from their ministries, to produce a sense of enthusiasm, common purpose and at times excitement in carrying through the educational reforms demanded by the rapid evolution of European society in the late twentieth century.

**See also:** European Centre for Modern Languages; Notions and functions; Pedagogical grammar; Vantage Level

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JOHN L.M. TRIM

## Council of Europe Platform for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education

The Platform for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education, as its full title runs ([www.coe.int/lang](http://www.coe.int/lang)), is the presentation of the project on 'Languages in Education, Languages for Education' of the Council of Europe. It develops the principles of the **Common European Framework**, which is essentially focused upon the teaching of foreign languages within the context of plurilingualism, and, second, the proposals of the *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe* which introduces the notion of plurilingual education.

### Values

Like the **Common European Framework** which it encompasses, the platform is an instrument offered to decision-makers and other professionals in language education to aid in the planning and organisation of language teaching in such a way that it develops the repertoire of languages of individuals (their plurilingual competence), and maintains the diversity of languages in Europe (multilingualism). It intends to make possible the implementation of an educational project – a more complex concept than 'teaching' – which is plurilingual in that all the languages used or present in a school – whether taught or not – are considered as contributing to the development of the individual as a person and as a citizen. In this view, languages are not only instrumental disciplines which enable efficient communication. The platform is also intercultural with the same concern to prepare young people for the complexity of contemporary societies, which are even more openly and fundamentally multilingual and pluricultural than in the past, and to prepare them to manage freely and consciously the multiplicity of belongings which constitute their identity. The platform emphasises the importance of paying attention to the most vulnerable among young people because they are limited in their everyday usage of the language of schooling whose specific uses – for example of a metalinguistic nature – they are not familiar with, or because they simply do not have the mastery of the language of schooling when it is not their first language. The difficulties of access to the language of schooling are one of the principal causes of educational failure.

### Structure

The platform has been constructed as a digital support, access to which is in the form of 'boxes' – in fact these are disciplinary fields or school subjects – and in the form of 'arrows' which are in fact relationships among the disciplines/school subjects (Figure 10). The purpose of the platform is to make available documents of diverse kinds which allow users to identify the means and the scenarios of innovation which will bring together the teaching of these different disciplines/subjects, all of these

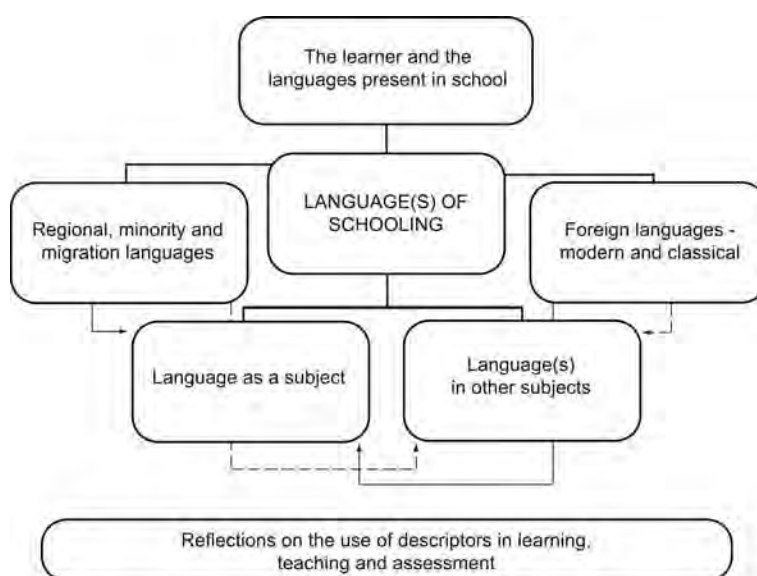


Figure 10 Access to the Platform for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education

being based upon a unitary linguistic competence which is broken down by the school disciplines with little relationship among them.

The platform has been conceived as an open space where conceptual and operational tools of diverse kinds (framing texts, technical texts, contributions from member states of the Council of Europe, links to other sites such as the **European Centre for Modern Languages** in Graz) are made available. It is the responsibility of users to establish relationships among these documents, following different pathways which simulate the many forms of links which can be established within each domain (for example between the teaching of the languages of schooling and foreign languages) and among the domains (for example between the teaching of languages of schooling used in ‘other subjects’ and foreign languages also used for this purpose (**content and language integrated learning**), or between the languages of schooling taught as a specific subject (for example Danish in Denmark, Greek in Greece) and these same languages used in the rest of the curriculum).

This mode of digital presentation is also intended to reduce the effects of normalisation and standardisation which may be produced by inventories of descriptors or hierarchical descriptions. The choice

of a digital format will also allow this to become an evolving instrument, reactive and open, for example by adding new studies, descriptions of specific cases or innovative practices.

### Principal concepts and directions

On the basis of these different documents, located within the same overall structure, the platform is innovative in a number of ways:

- it is concerned with *all* the languages of the school: those which are used in the school but which are not taught (the linguistic repertoire of learners who are often plurilingual), the languages of schooling (which are not necessarily the first languages of all learners), regional, minority and migration languages, foreign languages, irrespective of whether they are taught as such (language as a subject) or whether they are used in the transmission of knowledge (the language of subjects), and classical languages;
- it emphasises that the school is a location in which there are rights and duties: learners have the duty to learn but also the right to a plurilingual and intercultural education. The

responsibility of the school is to extend the repertoire of the learner through a growing mastery of the genres of discourse in the languages which are taught, and through multiple language experiences such as being exposed to a variety of formats of communication;

- it stresses the linguistic and semiotic dimensions of school subjects (such as mathematics, biology, geography) in which language is not simply a carrier of knowledge, since in such subjects different forms of scientific discourse exist (for example the discourse of transfer as in textbooks or in explanations by the teacher) which are unfamiliar to all learners in that they are not anchored in their immediate experience of the 'I, here, now';
- it re-examines the problem of the languages of schooling as a subject by reconsidering the question of teaching **objectives** beyond the traditional national or regional objectives implicit in the construction of **identities**, with respect to the domains of reception and written production and in the teaching of literature;
- it postulates that all teaching is a place to discover otherness (social and anthropological variation in time, space and the communities of practice) which requires an education for open, reflective and critical attitudes;
- it focuses upon the notion of discourse genre as one of the means of establishing transversality across the domains of languages and subjects. Discursive genres are more or less signalled by their structure or linguistic character which vary from one community of communication or from one community of practice to another. They are also based upon transversal functions such as narration, description, argumentation, explanation, exemplification, definition, and so on;
- it emphasises that for all vulnerable learners the absolute transparency of objectives is a *sine qua non* if the discrimination produced by hidden agendas is to be avoided.

## Implementation

Plurilingual and intercultural education is an idea which it is often difficult to accept because it tends to remodel existing school subjects, and because it

is often considered demanding for learners, in that it is often thought that the learning of more than one language is an additional burden for learners and not seen as a context facilitating the use of resources and strategies already acquired in other languages. In order to make this perspective more credible a *Guide for the Development and Implementation of Curricula for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education* has been produced which describes the principles for curriculum planning and presents some prototypical cases.

Some domains of the platform need to be explored further, such as the teaching of and in the language of schooling in the early stages of learning, or the teaching of regional languages as a subject and as a bearer of knowledge. In the first instance the most easily envisaged convergences are those among foreign languages which are based on a shared didactic and professional culture.

**See also:** Common European Framework of Reference; Council of Europe Modern Language Projects

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JEAN-CLAUDE BÉACCO

## CRAPEL – Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pédagogiques en Langues

The *Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pédagogiques en Langues* (Nancy Université, France) was founded by Yves Châlon in 1969. Originally a relatively informal group of language teaching enthusiasts, it soon acquired full status as a research and teaching institution of 'laboratory' working within the French system of higher education. After Yves Châlon's tragically early death in a car crash in 1972, Henri Holec was elected director, and he was regularly re-elected until his retirement in 1998. In 2006, as a consequence of governmental reforms aiming at economies of scale, the Centre was integrated with the ATILF (*Analyse et Traitement Informatique de la Langue Française*) which is itself part of the CNRS (*Centre National de Recherche Scientifique*).

For the twelve or so members of the Centre, it is axiomatic that learners vary, as do the teaching/learning situations in which they find themselves. There can, therefore, be no question of an ideal or uniform methodology, so that the aim of research is to establish the principles and criteria on which specific language learning **syllabi** will be constructed. Research is carried out in sub-groups of three to five members. However, since any individual member may belong to more than one group,

there are usually several projects under way at any one time. As none of the members of the Centre are full-time researchers, there is a strong preference for relatively short-term, **action-research** projects rather than longitudinal or 'pure' studies. Research topics are identified and prioritised on the basis of problems and **needs** encountered in actual teaching/learning situations, rather than as ways of testing or developing theory. Certain problems, though, tend to recur, and experience and reflection are, to some extent at least, cumulative, which gives an overall consistency of approach to the Centre's work. The principal languages concerned are **French** as a second or foreign language, **English**, and, to a lesser degree, **Spanish** and **German**.

From its inception, two of the Centre's main areas of interest have been the communicative approach and **autonomous** or self-directed learning. Both Yves Châlon and Henri Holec were members of the **Council of Europe's** panel of experts on modern languages, and this relationship continues to the present day. Members of the Centre work as consultants and trainers in language didactics and have contributed to the establishment of resource centres and self-directed learning systems in many countries, including Egypt, Finland, Hong Kong, Italy, Madagascar, Mexico, Russia, Spain and New Zealand. Other research projects have dealt with **intercultural communication**, **learning styles**, the development of specific approaches to and materials for the separate language **skills**, **languages for special purposes** (such as French for academic purposes and tourism), multilingual education, the new technologies and language learning, **corpus linguistics** and language in the workplace.

The Centre publishes language learning **materials** and its own journal, *Les Mélanges Pédagogiques*, the complete series of which can be consulted free of charge at: <http://revue.univnancy2.fr/melanges> Crapel

### Website

[www.univ-nancy2.fr/RECHERCHE](http://www.univ-nancy2.fr/RECHERCHE)

PHILIP RILEY

## CRÉDIF – Centre de Recherche et d'Étude pour la Diffusion du Français

The CRÉDIF (1951–96) was one of the main university institutions specialising in French as a Foreign Language. Being closely linked to the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the CRÉDIF's main purpose was to contribute to the dissemination of **French** outside France.

The activities of the CRÉDIF fall into three categories: fundamental and applied research, the main object of research being the description of contemporary French; pedagogic research focused on contexts, **needs**, teaching **objectives** and the learning of French in France and abroad; training for people in the education system (students, researchers, teachers, teacher trainers, inspectors, experts in educational development) involved in French as a Foreign or Second Language, and more generally in foreign language didactics. Throughout its history, the CRÉDIF published reference works and edited several series on the teaching of French and of languages in general, such as *Cahiers du Français contemporain*, *Essais*, *LAL – Langues et Apprentissage des Langues*. This was done in co-operation with various publishers in France, in particular Didier, and abroad. Then, in the 1990s, there were publications in partnership with other institutions: *Notions en Question – Rencontres en didactique des langues*, and *Triangle* (in co-operation with the **British Council** and the **Goethe-Institut**).

From 1959, the year of its official foundation, until 1996, the year of its administrative closure, the CRÉDIF was attached to the École Normale Supérieure de Saint Cloud (today the École Normale Supérieure de Lyon, in which the Centre d'Étude du Français Élémentaire had been founded in 1951 with the support of the French Commission at UNESCO and under the patronage of eminent linguists and intellectuals). The purpose of this first institution was to analyse spoken French statistically in order to be able to identify the 'basic' elements, i.e. the most frequent vocabulary and grammatical forms. Following the

example of 'basic English', 'elementary French' was intended to make the learning of French, with its reputation of being a difficult language, easier in order to promote international dissemination. In this simplified form, the French language was initially to be used for programmes of education and schooling, especially in African countries.

In 1959, the designation 'elementary French' was replaced by the term **français fondamental**, and the CRÉDIF took over from the *Centre d'Étude du Français Élémentaire*. It continued the research on the vocabulary and grammar of French and then diversified its activities by turning to the production of learning materials and by introducing training programmes intended above all for future teachers of French abroad. CRÉDIF's courses and support services (a library specialising in the teaching of French, and an **audio-visual** centre) were to become a renowned location for training and dissemination of publications, methods and practices in French as a Foreign Language.

The history of the CRÉDIF thus broadly coincides with the evolution of the teaching of French as a modern language. The early days of the Centre were notable for the development, in co-operation with the University of Zagreb, of the *méthode structuro-globale audio-visuelle* (SGAV) (the structural-global **audio-visual method**). This work was based on the theory of structural linguistics and led to two exemplary courses of the period: *Voix et images de France* (1961) and *Bonjour Line* (1963). Parallel to this there were publications of the results of work on 'languages for specific purposes', i.e. on scientific and technical vocabularies (*Vocabulaire Général d'Orientation Scientifique*). Then, from the beginning of the 1970s, the teachers and researchers of the CRÉDIF turned their attention to the learning of French by 'migrants' in France and the education of the children of migrants.

In 1973, there came the publication of the English **threshold level** at the Council of Europe and a team from CRÉDIF was commissioned to develop the equivalent for French, published in 1976, entitled *Niveau Seuil*. The description of French was based on pragmatic theories of language and emphasised communication and its functions, rather than grammar and vocabulary. The aim of language

teaching was the acquisition of ‘communicative competence’. The publications and courses produced by the CRÉDIF throughout the 1980s followed the so-called ‘**communicative**’ **approach**, including the course called *Archipel* (1982–87).

The final period was marked by new issues which reflected in teaching and research the recognition of internationalisation as a consequence of the increase in exchanges and partnerships, above all in the European context. The research and the products of the Centre thus widened to include bi- and plurilingualism, the early learning of foreign languages, **language awareness**, the use of new information and communication technologies, and the cultural and intercultural dimension in language learning.

The last publications by teachers and researchers at the CRÉDIF before its closure focused on the acquisition of ‘plurilingual and pluricultural competence’ in the context of the **Common European Framework of Reference**. The primary purpose of the Centre, the dissemination of French abroad, was deemed to be complete.

**See also:** Africa; *Didactique des langues*; Early language learning; French

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GLORIA PAGANINI

## Creoles

A creole is a language that has developed from a **pidgin**. Creoles are found in multilingual areas of the world, such as parts of West Africa or the South Pacific, or in communities where a pidgin language has served as a useful **lingua franca**. Because their speakers tend to have other languages at their

disposal, pidgins can survive for lengthy periods with small vocabularies and simple **grammars**. Creoles, however, are often the sole language of a community and so they must be capable of fulfilling all their speakers’ linguistic **needs**. Thus, in being transformed into a creole, a pidgin’s vocabulary is expanded and its structures made more subtle, more flexible and more precise.

Creoles always involve a language shift and are often brought about by the disruption of normal speech communities. The best-known examples came into being as a result of the Slave Trade. Between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, an estimated ten million Africans, speaking over 500 different **mother tongues**, were sold into slavery. The Africans were obliged to relinquish their ancestral African languages and to communicate in a pidginised form of a European language, usually Dutch, **English**, **French**, **Portuguese** or **Spanish**. Children born into slave communities learnt to use the pidgin for all their needs and, in doing so, they transformed it into a creole.

Over the second half of the twentieth century, creoles have developed in urban communities in countries like Cameroon, Nigeria and Papua New Guinea. In such areas, many people have found that the pidgin lingua franca facilitates inter-group contact, and so it is employed for more and more purposes. Often, parents of different linguistic backgrounds use the pidgin as a home language and their children acquire it as a mother tongue.

The name ‘creole’ comes from either Spanish *criollo* or Portuguese *criolou*, originally meaning ‘bred, brought up, domestic’. In the sixteenth century, when the term was first used in a colonial context, a ‘creole’ was a person of European ancestry born in the New World. Gradually over the next two centuries it was applied to children of mixed race and then to Africans who were born in the Americas. By the early 1800s, the word ‘creole’ could be applied to a language. Lady Nugent, the wife of the Governor of Jamaica at the beginning of the nineteenth century, has a diary entry in which she records that ‘... the Creole language is not confined to the negroes’ (Nunn, 1966).

Creoles tend to develop differently depending on whether or not they co-exist in society with their lexical source language. The creole Englishes of

Suriname are mother tongues in a country where Dutch is the **standard language**. Since they have not been directly influenced by Standard English for over three centuries, they differ from the creole English in neighbouring anglophone Guyana in three main ways:

1. they have borrowed vocabulary from Dutch, e.g. *bromki*, *fro*, *nai* (*blommetje* 'flower', *vrou* 'woman', *naai* 'sew');
2. they often preserve archaic features, e.g. they often preserve the CVCV phonological patterning found in many West African languages. Thus, we find *bigi*, *koru* and *winti* from 'big', 'cold' and 'wind';
3. there is a clear linguistic cut-off between the creoles and Dutch.

In parts of the world where the creoles coexist with their lexical source languages, we tend to find the following features:

- continued borrowing from a source language such as English, so that dyads may exist, e.g. *fingafut*, but also 'toe', *man pikin*, but also 'boy', *wuman han*, but also 'left';
- newly borrowed prepositions – whereas a pidgin might have only two prepositions, one to indicate location and the other possession, creoles may gradually incorporate 'at', 'by', 'in', 'on', 'over' and 'under';
- grammatical nuances may be introduced, such as overt plural marking, some inflection and an extended range of pronouns, e.g. 'she come, take she two bags and she gone';
- the existence of a post-creole continuum. This means that there is a range of forms from the basilectal (i.e. deep creole) through mesolectal to the acrolectal standard. Most speakers are adept at using different varieties depending on such factors as the occasion (a wake or a wedding), the degree of intimacy between speakers (sisters or a minister and a member of the congregation), the region of origin (rural or urban), or the level of education.

The following examples give a simplified idea of the continuum:

|                   |                 |                |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Basilectal</i> | A mi buk dat.   | Na hu dei dei? |
| <i>Mesolectal</i> | Iz mi buk.      | Hu dei?        |
|                   | Dat mi buk.     | Hu dere?       |
| <i>Acrolectal</i> | That's my book. | Who is there?  |

The features described are found in creoles generally and not just in creole Englishes.

The local idioms, metaphors and proverbs that characterised the original pidgin are often preserved in the creole. Thus, many Atlantic creoles continue to use African calques such as *ai wata*, 'tears', *corn stick*, 'cob', and *day clean*, 'dawn'. They also often show a strong preference for active structures, though passives can occur.

Whereas pidgins may be short-lived, and die if the conditions that brought them into being are removed, creoles are **mother tongues** and are thus less linguistically vulnerable. They can, like any language, be given an orthography and they can be used for any purpose whatsoever. A good example of this is Afrikaans. This creole language developed in South Africa and is one of the official languages of a highly complex and technologically advanced society. If Afrikaans dies, it will not be because of any linguistic inadequacy, but rather because of its past political associations.

The study of contemporary creoles has indicated that the lifecycle of pidgin to creole may well be a feature of languages in contact. The Latin of the Roman Empire was probably pidginised as the legions moved throughout the known world. Some pidginised versions of Latin undoubtedly died out, but others were creolised into the related languages of French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian and Spanish.

There is evidence, too, that today's Standard English may have undergone a process of pidginisation and creolisation because of the linguistic contacts, first with the Vikings and then with the Normans. Certainly, when compared with Old English, the English of Chaucer shows many features of pidginisation, including:

- a dramatic simplification of grammar. Nouns no longer have six cases; adjectives do not have to agree with nouns; verb endings have been reduced.
- the loss of grammatical gender. Old English had an illogical system where, for example, *wif*, 'wife or woman', was neuter, *wifmann*,

'woman', was masculine, and *hlaefdige*, 'lady', was feminine; or where the 'sun' and the 'earth' were feminine; where 'moon' and 'ground' were masculine; 'star' and 'land' were neuter. By about 1400, all inanimate nouns were neuter, and the sex of an animate noun determined whether it was referred to as 'he' or 'she'.

- the vocabulary shows a massive influx of words from both Norse and French. A modern estimate suggests that, of the 80,000 words in today's *Shorter Oxford Dictionary*, about 22.5 per cent are native Anglo-Saxon, 3.75 per cent are from other Germanic languages, mostly Old Norse, and 55 per cent are from French or Latin.

Creole languages are found in every continent today. Their existence helps us to speculate about linguistic change in the past.

**See also:** Acculturation; Bilingualism; Inter-cultural communication; Interlanguage; Mother tongue; Non-verbal communication; Pidgins

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LORETO TODD

## Cross-cultural psychology

Cross-cultural psychology exists for a variety of reasons. It exists in part to test the generality of psychological processes in different societies to determine to what extent they are universal. For instance at the beginning of this century Malinowski tested Freudian ideas in the South Pacific, a very different society than imperial Vienna, to see if such things as the Oedipal complex was universal. Second it exists to test the relationship between factors not found in one culture. Thus to test whether patriarchal societies have a particular impact on social behaviour one needs to look at comparable behaviours in matriarchal societies. Third cross-cultural psychologists attempt to specify the frequency and intensity of certain behaviours and beliefs in different cultural groups within and between different countries. Typical issues for the cross-cultural psychologists are: Are gender differences constant across cultural groups? What typical misunderstandings occur between people from two different cultures, but speaking the same language? (Berry et al., 1997). Shiraev and Levy (2004: 23) characterise cross-cultural psychology as follows:

- a critical and comparative study of cultural effects on human psychology, drawing its conclusions from at least two cultural groups;
- examining psychological diversity and the reasons underlying it, examining the linkages between cultural norms and behaviours and how human activities are influenced by cultural forces to establish psychological universals, i.e. phenomena common in many, perhaps all, cultures;
- conceptualising cultural features in terms of dichotomies such as high-versus low-power distance, masculinity versus femininity, collectivism versus individualism;
- using several approaches: socio-biology explores how biological factors affect human behaviour and lay a foundation for human culture; a sociological approach focuses on social structure influencing society and individuals since there are social forces which shape the behaviour of groups and individuals adjust their responses to the pressures of groups.

Thus, while cultural psychology asserts that behaviour is powerfully shaped by social cultural influences which are complex and unique, cross-cultural psychology *compares* cultures looking for universals in beliefs and behaviours. Some take an etic approach seeking to explore similarities, while others take an emic approach which emphasises differences.

All cross-cultural psychologists take as axiomatic that culture shapes psychological functioning. That is, cultural values, beliefs and attitudes pre- and proscribe particular behaviours which become normative and are outward signs of cultural differences.

Cross cultural psychology is different from racial, national or cultural psychology. Cross-cultural psychologists typically use empirical methods – observation, interview, questionnaire and experiment – to test specific hypotheses about differences between specific population samples drawn from relevant ethnic groups. Though occasionally interested in racial characteristics or national differences, the focus is on culture and its artefacts. Cross-cultural psychologists use culture-level measures and concepts like individual–collectivism as well as individual-level measures and concepts like tolerance of ambiguity to study behaviour between groups. Cross-cultural psychologists are interested in an impressive array of issues: language and thought, perception and memory, and social behaviour, as well as the applicability of tests in different populations. A major difference between two schools of thought exists, however.

Psychologists have contrasted what they call the *etic* and *emic* approach taken from the words phonetics and phonemics. Pike (1967) made the initial distinction:

- *One or many*: The etic approach treats all cultures or languages (or selected groups of them) at one time. The emic approach is, on the contrary, culturally specific, applied to one language or culture at a time.
- *Units known in advance or discovered*: Etic units and classifications are available in advance rather than determined during the analysis. These advanced etic units can be based on prior broad samplings on surveys. Emic units or categories must be discovered, not predicted and are different for different cultures, which prohibits comparisons.
- *Creation or discovery of a system*: The etic organisation of a world-wide cross cultural system may be created by the researcher. The emic structure of a particular system must be discovered.
- *External or internal view*: Etic descriptions or analyses are in some sense ‘alien’, with criteria external to the system. Emic descriptions provide an internal view, with criteria chosen from within the system, devised by one who knows how to function within it.
- *External or internal plan*: An etic system may be set up by criteria or ‘logical’ plan whose relevance is external to the system being studied. The discovery or setting up of the emic system requires the inclusion of the criteria relevant to the internal functioning of the system itself.
- *Absolute or relative criteria*: The etic criteria may often be considered absolute, and measurable empirically. Emic criteria are relative to the internal characteristics of the system, and can only be described or measured relative to each other.
- *Non-integration or integration*: The etic view does not require that every unit be viewed as part of a larger setting. The emic view, usually, insists that every unit be seen as distributed and functioning within a larger structural unit or setting.
- *Evidence for differences*: Two units are different ‘etically’ when instrumental measurements can show them to be so. Units are different ‘emically’ only when they elicit different responses from people acting within the system.
- *Partial or total data*: Etic data can be obtainable early in analysis with partial information. Emic data require a knowledge of the total system to which they are relative and from which they ultimately draw their significance, hence take much longer to collect.
- *Preliminary or final presentation*: Etic data provide access into the system – the starting point of analysis. They give tentative results and tentative units. The final analysis or presentation,

however, would be in emic units. In total analysis, the initial etic description gradually is refined, and is ultimately – in principle, but probably never in practice – replaced by one which is totally emic.

The etic/emic methodological dichotomy and the respective concepts they use to guide research; the perspectives they advocate researchers to take and the number of cultures they aim to investigate; all these issues reflect the universalist/relativist orientation. Table 1 puts it simply.

The etic approach is clearly the approach of the biological, universalist, positivistic, transcultural psychologists. This approach, assuming the universality of mental disorders, uses concepts, methodologies and research instruments developed primarily in the West. The transcultural psychiatric school of thought has used standardised questionnaires and classification systems for researching distribution of symptoms and syndromes in different cultural settings. Therefore, the etic approach has focused on the collation of empirical comparative data. This contrasts with the emic approach, which is clearly a more anti-positive approach to research, stressing relativity, and using more interpretive methods (based on a hermeneutic philosophy), such as participant observation to focus on context. The new cross-cultural psychiatric school of thought has criticised the use of Western standardised questionnaires across cultures and advocated a more ethnographic or ethnomedical approach to research, which does not assume

disorder categories. Such a methodology is often counter to the scientific rigour the universalists pride themselves in.

The problem with all cross-cultural comparisons, but particularly with the measurement of attitudes, is essentially the problem of *equivalence*. That is, all cross-cultural comparisons made need to ensure that everything is equivalent except the cultural background of the participants so as to rule out alternative explanations or *plausible rival hypotheses*. The major issues are:

- *Translation equivalence*: ensuring that the translation and back translation process has picked up subtle and idiosyncratic differences. Is there conceptual equivalence across cultures?
- *Functional equivalence*: Do the same behaviours (i.e. gift giving, initiation rites) fulfil the same or different behaviours across cultures?
- *Participant equivalence*: ensuring that the two or more groups are not different on all possible salient variables like demographics (age, sex, education, SES) and psychographic (religion, politics, values) variables.
- *Scale equivalence*: ensuring that the scale is used in the same way and that problems of acquiescence, dissimulation and response sets are similar.
- *Test equivalence*: Are test instructions and situations similar (experimenter effect)? What does it mean to be a participant in the study?
- *Interpretational equivalence*: What do cultural differences mean? Can generalisations be made across other groups?

Table 1 Etic/emic methodological dichotomy [Cross-Cultural Psychology]

|                                        | <i>Etic</i>                                                                                                                                | <i>Emic</i>                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Perspective taken by the researcher    | Behaviour of a culture is studied from the outside, by an outsider who is not familiar with that culture.                                  | Behaviour of a culture is studied from within by an insider who is familiar with the culture.                             |
| Number of cultures studied             | As many as possible – for statistical generalisation purposes.                                                                             | Only one at a time – and generalisations not drawn across culture.                                                        |
| Structure of concepts guiding research | Constructs/structures created by the researcher and the theoretical perspective they adopt, and are imposed onto the system being studied. | Constructs/structures are discovered by the researcher, when and if they manifest as important dimensions in one culture. |

One of the most important developments over the past decades has been to attempt to discover, define and describe the psychological dimensions that underlie all cultures. Hofstede (2003) has found evidence for five or six dimensions of (national or corporate) culture in his study of national work-related values: power distance, individualism v. collectivism, masculinity v. femininity, uncertainty avoidance, time orientation, indulgence v. restraint. Other researchers have come up with different dimensions or have used different names for the same dimensions, and this work has electrified cross-cultural psychology and remains much debated (cf. MacSweeney, 2002; Gerhart and Fan, 2005).

Research in this area is very complicated and the only way to ensure full understanding is: (1) use of *multitrait multimethods* to ensure that the methodological errors are ruled out as much as possible; and (2) *extensive and sensitive pilot work* done by bicultural researchers with anthropological sensitivities.

Cross-cultural psychology remains a small but growing field with its own specialist journals such as the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, the *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* and the *International Journal of Psychology*.

**See also:** Acculturation; Culture shock; Disorders of language; Psychology; Research methods; Study abroad; Untutored language acquisition

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## Cross-linguistic analyses

The early psycholinguistic research on both first and **second language acquisition** (SLA) was confined to a limited number of languages, amongst which **English** was predominant. The question soon arose, therefore, to what extent the results obtained were valid for the acquisition of other languages. The **developmental sequence** describing the acquisition of certain morphemes of English (plural, progressive, genitive, etc.) is representative of such early research: whereas the sequence is very robust for English (Brown, 1973), it is irrelevant as such for other languages because the descriptive categories used are specific to English. Subsequent research came more and more to examine the acquisition of many languages (and in the case of SLA, the acquisition of an L2 by speakers of different L1s: cf. the **alternation hypothesis**) in an attempt to distinguish by means of *cross-linguistic comparisons* the general properties (or in Chomskyan terms the universal properties) of language acquisition from features specific to one (group of) language(s). The European Science Foundation's second language project, for example, was able to generalise over ten different L1–L2 pairings (Perdue, 1993).



Such research has to solve the methodological problem of comparability, and the associated problem of the degree of descriptive abstraction necessary to achieve comparability. Different theoretic approaches discover different types of generalisation which can be grouped under three main headings: psycholinguistic, structural and communicational. To give just one structurally-based example, Brown's developmental sequence can be recast more abstractly in terms of the distinction between lexical items (nouns, verbs, etc.), independent grammatical morphemes (or closed-class words: articles, prepositions, etc.) and dependent (derivational or inflexional) morphemes (the adverb suffix *-ly*, plural and past marking, etc.), which is then comparable to sequences from other languages couched in the same terms. One then sees that for at least Germanic and Romance languages, both first language and second language acquirers follow a fixed order of acquisition, starting with lexical items and ending with language-specific inflexional morphology.

**See also:** Research methods; Untutored language acquisition

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## Cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses

To characterise the language **acquisition** process in a fixed amount of research time, a choice often has to be made between following a small number of language learners over time, testing them at frequent intervals ('longitudinal studies'), or testing, once, larger populations of different learners at different stages of development ('cross-sectional studies'). The advantages of longitudinal case

studies is that they better capture the developmental path of the learner, but their results are not necessarily generalisable: how does one distinguish in the individual developmental path between what is specific to the particular learner and what is common to other learners? Cross-sectional studies, on the other hand, give generalisable results because they are designed for and amenable to standard statistical procedures on representative populations. The disadvantage of cross-sectional studies is, conversely, that they analyse the product of acquisition having-taken-place (translated into 'levels', such as 'intermediate' or 'advanced' learner), and cannot guarantee that learners at a homogeneous level of achievement reached that level along a comparable developmental path. Both methods therefore have advantages and disadvantages, and are complementary: ideally, they should be combined (Perdue, 1993: Chapter 5).

**See also:** Research methods; Untutored language acquisition

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## C-test

The C-test was introduced by Klein-Braley and Raatz in 1981 as a reaction to several shortcomings of the **Cloze test**. The C-test is based on the same theoretical assumptions as the cloze, namely the principle of reduced redundancy testing, but has a different format. In order to ensure a greater degree of test fairness, and so that examinees with specialised knowledge will not be privileged, C-tests consist of several short texts, each of around seventy words in length. The texts selected should form one sense unit, should be appropriate for the target group, and should be maximally **authentic**. To minimise problems connected with the choice of deletion rate, starting point and the ratio of

deleted content words to deleted structure words, and to assure a sufficient number of items, not whole words but the second half of every second word is deleted, beginning with the second word of the second sentence of each text. Many proper names, and words which consist of only one letter, are ignored in the deletion process. The missing part of a word is indicated by a single unbroken underline. Sometimes, dashes are used to indicate the number of missing letters. The texts are ordered in increasing levels of difficulty. One point is given for each exact (in some few cases for each acceptable) reconstruction of the original word. Misspelled words are normally counted as wrong. The number of correct restorations is seen as a holistic measure of general language proficiency or, more specifically, of the efficiency of a global language processing **competence** underlying both the receptive and productive use of language. A classic C-test usually consists of four to six texts, each with twenty or twenty-five deletions (items).

The C-test principle has been applied to various languages, and a number of modifications have been proposed. To date, there has been a considerable amount of research into the C-test, especially into its construct **validity**, including investigations into the mental processes involved in C-test solving. C-tests have proved to be objective, highly **reliable** and very economical means for measuring global language proficiency. The time needed to administer a C-test with five texts is less than half an hour, and scoring takes around one to two minutes per text and subject. As a rule, C-tests correlate quite highly with much more time consuming tests of general language proficiency (e.g. the TOEFL). C-test results have been used for various purposes including decision-making, such as selection or placement (for an overview see Eckes and Grotjahn, 2006; Grotjahn, 2006, 2010). Further information including a C-test bibliography (224 entries; December 1995) can also be found on a special C-test website.

**See also:** Assessment and testing; Cloze test

### Website

<http://www.c-test.de>

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RÜDIGER GROTJAHN

## Cultural awareness

Cultural awareness (CA) is a concept which became popular within education in most anglo-phone parts of the world in the 1980s and 1990s, and it has near-synonyms in many languages. It is used especially in connection with languages, but, seen in a wider perspective, it is evident that the concept was born of the 'cultural turn' in the human and social sciences, and in the general social debate of the 1980s. Thus CA is closely linked with the development of post-modern society with its interest in cultural difference and the relationship to 'the Other', no matter whether the latter is different from a national, ethnic, social, regional or institutional point of view. An important dimension of CA is the concept of reflexivity, i.e. the idea that insight into or experience of the practices or systems of meaning of other cultures is of significance for the individual's cultural understanding of self and their own **identity**.

In education the concept is widely used in connection with a number of subjects, for example geography and social studies, which have both seen a prioritisation of the cultural dimension. In the subject history, it is also possible to see a parallel to CA in the concept of historical awareness, i.e. the consciousness of the differences in historical periods and of one's own historical identity. The concept is also sometimes used in connection with **mother tongue** teaching, but it is in foreign and second language teaching that it is used most.

The fact that CA has acquired a relatively major significance in language teaching is related to its

being linked with a wish for a broad and more explicit focus on ordinary language teaching's cultural content at all levels, including **beginner** level. This does not mean that it was without importance in teaching before the 1980s, since language teaching has included work with literature and *realia* since the 1800s in varying degrees (see Buttjes, 1991), and thereby given a certain limited impression of the cultural and social context in target countries. Moreover, in connection with **communicative language teaching**, there has always been an assumption that there has to be a content to communicate about.

However, it was not until the 1970s and especially in the 1980s that attempts were made to make explicit that part of cultural content which goes beyond literature (e.g. Byram, 1989; Zarate, 1986), and only in the 1990s has the question of **assessment** of this dimension of learning come onto the agenda, and this in turn requires a much higher degree of explicitness. In this pedagogical development, CA is a key concept which emphasises both cultural insight and **attitude** and **identity** development.

Among the many other terms in this same semantic field, some of which emphasise the subject content, others the processes, others the outcomes, there are the following: **cultural studies** (English), *Civilisation* (French), *kulturelle Bildung*, *Landeskunde* (German), *stranovedenie* (Russian), *kulturförståelse* (Danish), and 'realia'.

Among the many themes discussed in this field, one can mention the following:

- the reflexive role: How much emphasis should be given to understanding the culture and society of the target country, in relation to understanding one's own country? What role should be given to cultural comparison?
- the cognitive and the affective: How much emphasis should be given to the cognitive dimension (knowledge, insight, understanding) in relation to the affective (attitudes, representations, feelings)?
- the content of the cognitive dimension: Which cultural and social issues is it important to know about? What weight should be given to knowledge of facts in comparison to understanding of relationships?
- the relationship to the historical dimension and the historical awareness mentioned earlier: What emphasis should be given to historical as opposed to contemporary issues?
- the relationship to literature: Does CA also include the **literary** content of a course?
- National versus other communities: Is CA concerned primarily with cultural content and cultural identity at the national/ethnic level, or does it also include multicultural communities and transnational and transcultural relationships and processes?
- the relationship to the linguistic dimension and **language awareness**: In what sense is language awareness a part of cultural awareness, and in what sense not?
- the distance from target countries in foreign language teaching: Is it possible to develop CA at a distance? Some people differentiate between CA, which can primarily be developed in the school or the classroom, and cultural experience which is primarily developed during a stay in the target country (Byram, 1989; several articles in Byram and Fleming, 1998).

Furthermore, the concept CA is on a par with language awareness, which is also used in language teaching. Byram has developed a model for language and culture teaching which includes language learning, language awareness, cultural awareness and cultural experience (Byram, 1989).

In general the pedagogical discussion about culture is much influenced by the American anthropologist Geertz's semiotic interpretative perspective on culture (Geertz, 1973). There are also examples of views inspired by Discourse analysis, hermeneutics and postmodern thinking (Kramsch, 1993), or views inspired by theories of globalisation, transnationalism and transculturalism (Risager, 1998, 2007; Bredella, 2010), or views inspired by theories of critical pedagogy and democratic citizenship (Byram and Risager, 1999; Guilherme, 2002; Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004; Byram, 2008).

As indicated earlier, one important aspect of CA is reflexivity. The development of CA is a development from ethnocentrism to relativity, including among other things an engagement with national **stereotypes** (e.g. Zarate, 1986), or a development

of the realisation that the world can be seen from many different perspectives, e.g. national perspectives (Byram, 1989). In this way two different disciplinary traditions are connected in the interpretation of CA: on the one hand the anthropological discussion of cultural representations and cultural relativism; on the other the social psychological discussion of prejudice, stereotypes and social cognition as a whole (see Tomalin and Stempleski, 1993, a practical handbook inspired by a mainly social psychological approach to cross-cultural interaction and communication).

CA is a concept which describes one of the aims of foreign and second language teaching. It thereby stands in a certain competitive relationship to another concept, **intercultural competence** (Byram, 1997; Hu and Byram, 2009). The latter refers to and supplements the concept of communicative competence, and therefore includes a **skills** dimension. It is also a concept which is theoretically more developed and one which has been preferred in connection with the development of assessment criteria, including at the European level. In comparison to intercultural competence, CA is a more general, non-technical term liable to many different interpretations, which have to exist given the manifold nature of the contexts and interests connected with the content dimension of language teaching.

**See also:** Acculturation; Anthropology; Area studies; *Civilisation*; Cross-cultural psychology; Cultural studies; European Language Portfolio; Intercultural competence; *Interkulturelle Didaktik*; *Landeskunde/Kulturkunde*; Objectives in language learning and teaching

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KAREN RISAGER

## Cultural studies

Cultural Studies is an umbrella term for multi- or interdisciplinary analyses of cultural phenomena (products, processes, problematics) which was first used and developed in Britain and has spread to many parts of the world.

### Origins and development

The term was first used to characterise the works of Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams, who continued the British tradition of cultural criticism (Matthew Arnold, T.S. Eliot, I.A. Richards, F.R. Leavis) and expanded as well as transformed it by democratising its concept of culture. The focus was no longer on a selective and élitist ('high') culture, but on the multiplicity of cultures within British society. This change of perspective was owed to a number of social, political and cultural transformations in post-war Britain. These included the expansion of the welfare state, the *embourgeoisement* of the working classes, the Labour Party in office, the decline of the British Empire, the increasing equality in educational opportunities, the coming into existence of a multicultural British society.

The rise, development and institutionalisation of British Cultural Studies was initiated by a number of foundational texts (such as Hoggart, 1957; Williams, 1958, 1961; Thompson, 1963) which tried to make sense of (some of) these transformations. It

was implemented by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham, founded by Richard Hoggart in 1964 to carry out theoretical and empirical analyses of related problematics. Under Hoggart's directorship (1964–68) the CCCS concentrated on problems of literary and cultural sociology; under Stuart Hall's directorship (1968–79) questions related to the media, popular cultures, youth and working-class cultures, feminism, racism, as well as theory and ideology were added to the agenda. These studies subscribed to more than one particular theoretical approach: French Structuralism (**Saussure**, Levi-Strauss, Barthes), Marxism (Lukács, Althusser, Gramsci), the Frankfurt School and the specific British brand of Cultural Materialism (derived from Williams's work – see Williams, 1977: 5) were particularly influential. Until 1979, the CCCS was associated with the university's English Department. When Hall left to join the Open University, the Centre became an 'independent research and postgraduate unit in the Faculty of Arts' (CCCS, Eleventh Report, 1979–80) under Richard Johnson's directorship. In 1988 the Centre and the Department of Sociology were combined into a 'Department of Cultural Studies ... within the Faculty of Commerce and Social Science' (CCCS, Nineteenth Report, 1987–88). In 2002 the remnant of the Centre was closed by the university administration.

Although other groups and institutions with similar interests came into existence in the 1960s and have produced a substantial output (e.g., the Centre for Television Research, Leeds, the Centre for Mass Communication Research, Leicester, the Glasgow Media Group), it is legitimate to equate the development of Cultural Studies in Britain with that of the CCCS until the late 1970s. Around 1980 the 'moment of autonomy' (Hall) came. Despite massive cuts in the tertiary sector, student demands led to the creation of a great diversity of Cultural Studies programmes and courses, first in the polytechnics and then in the universities. From 1982 to 1987 the Open University offered a course on 'Popular Culture' (U203) which was produced by a number of academics who, together with the graduates of the CCCS, were to decisively influence the further development of Cultural Studies in Britain (see Bassnett, 1997) and elsewhere.

Parallel to these developments, British Cultural Studies was received, assimilated to particular indigenous traditions and re-worked according to the specific **needs** of its users in the United States (see Nelson and Grossberg, 1988; Grossberg, Nelson and Treichler, 1992), Australia (see Turner, 1991, 1992), Taiwan (see Chen, 1992), Italy (see Baransky and Lumley, 1990), Germany (see Kramer, 1983, 1997) and other countries in Europe (see *Journal for the Study of British Cultures*, 1992–; *British Studies Now*, 1992–; *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 1998–). Almost at the same time, Cultural Studies was introduced (in some cases also re-introduced) into the teaching of foreign languages (see Buttjes, 1981; Byram, 1989, 1994; Kramer, 1990; Müller-Hartmann and Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2010) and other subjects (see Aronowitz and Giroux, 1991).

### Definitions and contemporary issues

But what exactly is Cultural Studies? The modern concept of culture (on which Cultural Studies is based) is composed of five different elements which have come into existence one after the other but which still inform our present understanding of the term. First, culture was used in the context of cultivating the land, crops and animals; later, this meaning was extended to the cultivation of the mind. Then, the meanings, values and ways of life of particular, highly regarded groups were seen as setting the cultural standard for society as a whole. Under the influence of J.G. Herder in the late eighteenth century, a process of relativisation set in which made it possible to speak of cultures (in the plural) as different ways of life within a particular society *and* between different societies. This idea led to the formation of the **anthropological** concept of culture. And finally, out of particular interest in the symbolic dimension, i.e. the signs and meanings a particular group shares, the semiotic concept of culture was developed.

This concept itself has undergone significant transformations. While structuralist approaches relied on the relative stability of meaning, post-structuralist approaches have confronted the fundamental instability of the relationship between signifier and signified. More recently, an interest in the production

of knowledge and its relationship to social power structures has superseded the interest in meaning. Parallel to these developments a partial convergence of the anthropological and semiotic concepts of cultures has resulted in the fact that *signifying processes*, by and through which a particular social group represents, experiences and communicates itself, are no longer regarded as derived (as in traditional base–superstructure models) or as reflexive (as in traditional theories of ideology), but as *constitutive elements of the socio-cultural system*.

The central question of Cultural Studies – ‘How, where, when and to what effect are the shared meanings of particular groups produced, circulated and consumed?’ – can be demonstrated by a ‘circuit of culture’ and its five dimensions: representation, production, consumption, identity, regulation.

1. Representation: Meanings can only be produced because human beings possess two interdependent systems of representation. The first enables us to make connections between the ‘things’ of the world and our mental concepts; the second enables us to connect our mental concepts with particular signs or sign sequences. ‘The relation between “things”, concepts and signs lies at the heart of the production of meaning in language. The process which links these three elements together is what we call “representation”’ (Hall, 1997: 19).
2. Production – Consumption: Meanings are produced (and circulated) by individuals, collectives and social institutions; but they are also created in processes of consumption: people listen to a particular kind of music, read certain texts, watch specific films, wear certain clothes, attend particular events – and by doing so, they attach certain meanings to these cultural products which are constitutive of their identities.
3. Identity – Regulation: In and through producing shared meanings the members of a group create a sense of **identity**. These meanings can (and do) serve as a means of regulation: as they ‘work’ by including or excluding others, they regulate the identity of the group.

There is no consensus in Cultural Studies about the theories and methods to be applied in the concrete analyses of these questions; in the best studies a productive kind of eclecticism prevails, combining phenomenology, structuralism, post-structuralism, deconstruction, psychoanalysis, **gender**, feminism, queer theory, Marxism, new historicism, cultural materialism and post-colonial theory.

Although it is by no means clear why Cultural Studies in its diversity has experienced such an upturn and expansion, one may safely point to the truism that the need to debate culture arises when its meaning is no longer self-evident. In this sense the following reasons for the rise of Cultural Studies can be given without claiming to be exhaustive:

1. A growing interest in the social and political implications of the humanities made itself felt when the immediate after-effects of World War Two had worn off and the social and psychological resources had been filled again. This made it possible to reflect on, discuss and possibly transform those norms and values which had not been able to prevent Fascism and the war. In Europe (and other Western countries) these processes surfaced in the 'crisis of the humanities' (of the 1950s) and again in the student unrest and its related political and cultural transformations (of the 1960s). While the first problematic affected mainly the academic discourses, the second changed the political and cultural outlook of a whole generation.
2. The growing number of migrant workers that began to enter first Britain and then other European countries in the 1950s and 1960s at least implicitly influenced the debates around culture and politics, although they were hardly perceived and acknowledged as political or cultural factors in those days. This was to change decisively, when the second and third generations entered the schools and, even more importantly, the process of European integration intensified.
3. Similarly, 'the success of cultural studies in the United States coincided with the historical loss of the ability of that country to control the global economy and the increasing recognition that it can no longer dictate the terms of

the "new world order", which, to a certain extent, has sustained the cohesion of American national identity' (Stratton and Ang, 1996: 376–7).

4. In a more global perspective it seems evident that a number of irreversible and transformative processes in the economy (globalisation, migration), politics (international integration, devolution, 'new' nationalisms) and culture (transnational communication, 'clash of cultures') have rendered *culture* a matter of necessarily constant debate.

Cultural Studies have not escaped the dangers which can occur when an emergent discipline (or a particular branch of it) becomes part of the mainstream. In recent years they have been accused of succumbing to too much specialisation, theorisation and too little innovation and political edge (cf. Bérubé, 2009). Whether this applies only to the USA (where the criticism has been loudest) or whether it will affect the field as a whole remains to be seen.

**See also:** Acculturation; Area studies; *Civilisation*; Cultural awareness; Higher education; *Landeskunde/Kulturkunde*; Objectives in language teaching and learning; Secondary education; Syllabus and curriculum design

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JÜRGEN KRAMER

## Culture shock

Dictionary definitions are straightforward and succinct: culture shock is the psychological and social disorientation caused by confrontation with a new or alien culture. The anthropologist Oberg (1960) is the first to have used the term. In a brief and largely



anecdotal article, he mentions various aspects of culture shock, though this analysis was fairly superficial.

Cleveland et al. (1960) offered a similar analysis relying heavily on the personal experience of travellers, especially those at two extremes of the adaptation continuum: individuals who act as if they had 'never left home' and those who immediately 'go native'. These two extremes are well described, but the various possible 'intermediate' reactions were not considered. The work was typical of early case study approaches.

Researchers since Oberg have seen culture shock as a normal reaction, as part of the routine process of adaptation to cultural stress and the manifestation of a longing for a more predictable, stable and understandable environment (Furnham and Bochner, 1984). More recent research has tended to under-emphasise the clinical problems associated with culture shock and examine how people adapt to, and learn new, cultural repertoires (Furnham et al., 1999).

Others have attempted to improve and extend Oberg's definition and concept of culture shock. Guthrie (1975) has used the term *culture fatigue*, Smalley (1963) *language shock*, Byrnes (1966) *role shock* and Ball-Rokeach (1973) *pervasive ambiguity*. Different researchers have simply placed the emphasis on slightly different problems – language, physical irritability, role ambiguity – rather than actually helping to specify how or why or when different people do or do not experience culture shock.

Culture shock is conceived as a serious, acute and sometimes chronic affective reaction to a new (social) environment. However there are other closely related 'shocking' experiences. These include:

- *invasion shock*: this occurs in places where tourists or other visitors suddenly appear in large numbers in a particular setting and overwhelm the locals who become a minority in their own living space. Because the 'invaders' retain their cultural morals (of dress, social interaction) they can surprise, frustrate and offend locals. In this sense they have culture shock without actually going anywhere. Pyvis and Chapman (2005) noted how home students

can feel culture shock in their own country but at an institution that has accepted many overseas students;

- *reverse culture shock*: this occurs when returning to one's home culture to find it different from that which was recalled. In this sense, you can never go home again because it does not exist. It is about readjusting, re-acculturating and re-assimilating in the home culture (Gaw, 2000);
- *re-professionalisation and re-licensing shock*: this occurs when trained professionals do not have their qualifications accepted by a host country and have to be retrained and accepted (Austin, 2007; Austin et al., 2007);
- *business shock*: this is the realisation that so many subtle business practices vary considerably from one culture to the next (Balls, 2005; Pukthuanthong and Walker, 2007);
- *race culture shock*: this concerns being a racial minority in an institution within one's country. Class and race specific styles of dress, speech, etc., can seriously shock people who do not expect them (Torres, 2009).

Various themes pervade this literature. One is *bewilderment* in which culture shock is primarily an emotional reaction that follows from not being able to understand, control and predict another's behaviour. When customary categories of experience no longer seem relevant or applicable, people's usual behaviour changes to becoming 'unusual'. Lack of familiarity with both the physical setting (design of homes, shops, offices) as well as the social environment (etiquette, ritual) have this effect, as do the experiences with, and use of, time.

Another theme is *alienation*. Researchers have often referred to individuals lacking points of reference, social norms and rules to guide their actions and understand others' behaviour. In addition, ideas associated with *anxiety* pervade the culture-shock literature. Observers have pointed to a continuous general 'free-floating' anxiety, which affects normal behaviour. Lack of self-confidence, distrust of others and mild psychosomatic complaints are also common. Furthermore, people appear to lose their inventiveness and spontaneity and become obsessively concerned with orderliness.

A review of the writers in this field suggests that there are perhaps six facets of culture shock:

- *Strain* due to the effort required to make necessary psychological adaptations.
- *A sense of loss* and feelings of deprivation in regard to friends, status, profession and possessions.
- *Being rejected* by/and or rejecting members of the new culture.
- *Confusion* in role, role expectations, values, feelings and self-identity.
- *Surprise, anxiety, even disgust* and indignation after becoming aware of cultural differences.
- *Feeling of impotence* due to not being able to cope with the new environment.

Central to the concept of shock are questions about how people adapt to it, and how they are changed by it. Hence there exists an extensive literature on the U-curve, the W-curve and the inverted U-curve (Nash, 1991), referring to the adjustment of sojourners over time. Many (e.g. Torbiorn, 1982) are happy to interpret their data in terms of these curves, although there is a debate in the literature about the validity of this approach (Church, 1982). Indeed, Nash (1991) compared a group of students studying abroad and a group who

remained at home looking at their manifest anxiety over the year. He found no evidence of the U curve and even doubted its heuristic usefulness.

Most of the investigations of culture shock have been descriptive, in that they have attempted to list the various difficulties that sojourners experience and their typical reactions. Less attention has been paid to explaining who will find the shock more or less intense (e.g. the old or the less educated); what determines which reaction a person is likely to experience; how long they remain in a period of shock; and so forth. The literature suggests that all people will suffer culture shock to some extent, which is always thought of as being unpleasant and stressful. This assumption needs to be empirically supported. In theory some people need not experience any negative aspects of shock; instead they may seek out these experiences for their enjoyment.

Current thinking has moved away from the rather clinical culture shock concept to ideas of culture learning and adaptation integration which focuses on how, when and why migrants and sojourners learn ways of working in a new cultural environment. (Furnham et al., 2000). Tables 2 and 3, adapted from Zhou et al. (2008), respectively summarise in keyword format traditional and current approaches and their underlying theories.

Table 2 Traditional theoretical approaches to culture shock

| <i>Theory</i>                      | <i>Epistemological origin</i> | <i>Conceptual formulation</i>                                    |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Grief and bereavement              | Psychoanalytic tradition      | Sees migration as experience of and adaptation to loss           |
| Locus of control                   | Applied social psychology     | Control (internal/external) predicts migration adaptation        |
| Selective migration                | Sociobiology                  | Individual fitness and motivation predicts adaptation            |
| Expectations                       | Applied social psychology     | Expectancy values relate to reasons for migration and adjustment |
| Negative life-events               | Clinical psychology           | Migration involves many stressful life changes                   |
| Social support                     | Clinical psychology           | Social and emotional support offers a buffering effect           |
| Value difference                   | Social psychology             | Implicit and explicit value differences lead to poor adaptation  |
| Social skills and culture learning | Social psychology             | Lacking social skills may cause constant communication problems  |

Source: Adapted from Zhou et al., 2008.

Table 3 Contemporary theories of intercultural contact

| <i>Theory</i>                            | <i>Conceptual framework</i>                                                                                   | <i>Theoretical premise</i>                                                        | <i>Factors affecting adjustment</i>                                                                                                                                       | <i>Intervention guidelines</i>                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Stress and coping (affect)               | Cross-cultural travellers need to develop special coping strategies to deal with the stress of migration      | All life changes are constant but inherently stressful                            | Adjustment factors involve the personal (demographic, personality, values) and the situational (e.g. social support)                                                      | Training people to develop robust stress-coping and management skills                                                                          |
| Culture learning (behaviour)             | Cross-cultural travellers need to learn culturally relevant social skills to communicate in their new setting | Social interaction is a skilled performance which has to be learned and practised | Culture specific variables: knowledge about anew culture, language/ communication competence, social intelligence, cultural distance                                      | Preparation, orientation and culture learning, especially behavioural-based social skill training as well as social and emotional intelligence |
| Social identification (social cognition) | Cross-cultural transition necessitates adjusting to changes in cultural identity and inter-group relations    | Sense of personal and group identity is a fundamental issue for all travellers    | Cognitive variables: knowledge of the host culture (history, religion, etiquette), beliefs/attitudes between hosts and sojourners, cultural similarity, cultural identity | Enhancing self-esteem, overcoming barriers to inter-group harmony, emphasising inter-group similarities and identity                           |

Source: Adapted from Zhou et al., 2008.

**See also:** Cross-cultural psychology; Exchanges; Study abroad

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# D

## **DAAD – *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst***

The DAAD is an organisation of the institutions of higher education and student bodies in the Federal Republic of Germany, founded in 1925 and re-founded in 1950. It is an institution for the promotion of international academic exchanges and an intermediary for the implementation of foreign cultural and academic policy as well as for educational co-operation with developing countries.

The DAAD provides information on the system of education and higher education in Germany, on courses of study abroad, and on funding programmes and scholarships.

The DAAD also sponsors students, undergraduate and postgraduate, and academics from Germany and abroad. It funds scholarships for individuals, group programmes of study visits or university seminars, and the exchange of academics, guest lecturers and the placement of *Lektors* for the German language and German studies at universities abroad.

Funding for the DAAD is provided mainly by different ministries, principally by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, but also by the European Union.

### **Website**

[www.daad.de](http://www.daad.de)

## **Developmental sequence**

Developmental sequences represent at first sight a descriptive generalisation to the effect that learners of a particular language (L1 or L2) learn features of that language in a particular order. The ‘morpheme order’ studies of Brown (1973) for L1 English (replicated for L2 by Dulay and Burt, 1974) represent the first such generalisation: Brown found that three young English-speaking children followed a particular order in supplying a set of fourteen morphemes of English in contexts where they are obligatory in adult English. Thus, for example, these children use the noun plural-*s* before the possessive-*s* before the third person singular-*s*. Such results turned out to be ‘amazingly constant’ (Brown, 1973: 272), so that the stronger hypothesis was formulated that acquisition orders are constraining: learners *cannot acquire* certain elements of a language in another order – whatever the reason for this may be. The important criterion for establishing developmental stages is the ordering of acquired features on an implicational scale. Meisel et al. (1981: 33) define such an implicational scale from their work on second language acquisition:

if we find that all learners of L2 who have acquired rule  $R_3$  also possess rules  $R_2$  and  $R_1$ , but those who do not yet have  $R_2$  do not use  $R_3$  either, then we may assume that the three rules are ordered as  $R_3 > R_2 > R_1$ , and we can furthermore hypothesize that each of these rules marks a new developmental stage.

Applying this criterion to Brown's L1 study gives the scale: -s 3rd singular > -s possessive > -s plural.

The pedagogical implications for this type of result from untutored acquisition can be summed up in the question: Is it possible successfully to teach implicationally related elements of a language in a different order? Pienemann and his collaborators have addressed this question (cf. a summary of results in Pienemann, 1998: Ch. 6) and found that the answer is largely negative: learners tend to progress in the natural sequence regardless of the teaching schedule.

More recently, the pedagogical implications of SLA development studies in untutored settings on L2 teaching have been questioned (Véronique, 2005). At this stage, the answers remain overly general but this problem needs to be investigated in the future.

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MARZENA WATOREK  
CLIVE PERDUE

## Diagnostic tests

Designed with the purpose of identifying gaps in students' learning and their strengths and weaknesses, diagnostic tests can be set at any stage of a course and can have a number of different purposes.

These can overlap with the purposes of other tests. For instance, a diagnostic test can aim to identify areas where remediation is necessary (as does a **progress test**) or to decide whether or not a student should be admitted to a particular course or level (as do **achievement tests** and **proficiency tests**). Alternatively, a diagnostic test can be used to group students of similar ability levels for teaching purposes (as do **placement tests**). Given the considerable overlaps with other types of tests and the huge costs of test development (in time, money and other resources), it is rare that a test is designed specifically for diagnostic purposes. Instead, it is more common for diagnostic information to be drawn from the results of achievement and proficiency tests, even though such tests do not necessarily provide as much depth and precision of detail as a custom-designed diagnostic test.

**See also:** Assessment and testing

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TINEKE BRUNFAUT  
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## DIALANG

DIALANG is an internet-based language diagnosis system which reports your level of skill against the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)**. It has been developed by many European higher education institutions, and is available in 14 European languages. The skills assessed are reading, writing, listening, grammar and vocabulary. More information on DIALANG,

including how to download and use it, can be found on the following website: <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/researchenterprise/dialang/about.htm>

TINEKE BRUNFAUT

## Dictation

Both a teaching and test task, dictation is an **exercise** in which a selected passage is read aloud (or played on an audio reproduction device) to students in carefully chosen chunks at a speed that is slow enough to allow them to copy it down. Sufficiently able students are expected to be able accurately to copy what they hear. It is an integrative task that measures a number of different **skills**, including listening and grammatical knowledge.

However, the ways in which dictation is conducted can vary. For instance, the text may only be read once or may be read twice or more times. Students might be allowed to copy only on the second reading or might have no restrictions placed on them. The length of the pauses can also vary, as can the length of the chunks of text between each pause. On yet other occasions, students might not be required to copy what they hear verbatim but instructed simply to identify and write down the main points. In this case the task has more resemblance to a note-taking task.

Dictation is, therefore, a flexible task type as well as being easy to construct. Furthermore, it is able to distinguish well between students of different abilities. However, there are a number of problems associated with dictation, the first being the difficulties of devising an appropriate marking scheme. Even instructions that seem clear, such as those requiring markers to deduct one mark for misspelt words and two for words omitted or different from the original, are open to much interpretation. Indeed, it is not always possible to tell whether a word has been misspelt or is simply wrong. Also, as with other **integrative tests**, it is not easy to interpret dictation scores, and doubt has been cast on the confidence with which we can identify what dictation exercises measure.

**See also:** Assessment and testing

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TINEKE BRUNFAUT

JAYANTI BANERJEE

## Dictionaries

Dictionaries are **reference works** which provide linguistic information about words. They differ from encyclopedias in that they are more concerned with the meaning and behaviour of words than with the objective realities that the words refer to. The boundary between linguistic and factual information is not always clear, however, and most dictionaries include some encyclopedic elements. Dictionaries can be categorized according to the type of user for which they are intended, their coverage, their purpose, their organizing principles, and the medium in which the information is presented.

Dictionaries provide information about the meaning, spelling, pronunciation, history, grammar and usage of words. Most dictionaries do not pay equal attention to all of these types of information, however, but apply different emphases according to the real or perceived requirements of their users.

The commonest type of dictionary, to be found in most literate households, is a **monolingual general purpose dictionary** for adult native-speakers. General purpose dictionaries aim to provide a comprehensive description of the whole language, and usually include all categories of word information. Other types of dictionary exist for children and language learners who lack the skills to use a general purpose dictionary efficiently, and for users seeking particular kinds of word information.

*Dictionaries for children* include only relatively frequent words or words children find interesting, and the information content is greatly reduced. The language of the entries is simplified, and pictures or examples are often used to explain word meaning. Dictionaries intended for **non-native speakers** (known as 'learners' dictionaries') also adopt a simpler defining style and have less extensive coverage than similarly sized general purpose dictionaries. Learners' dictionaries tend to provide more help with language production by giving detailed information about the **pronunciation**, **grammar**, and contextual appropriacy of the most frequent words in the language, at the expense of historical description and information about less frequent words.

Many language learners at beginner and intermediate level prefer to use bilingual dictionaries. These translate words from the target language for receptive use, and to the target language for productive use. Bilingual dictionaries intended for native speakers of either language are 'bi-directional' and give equal treatment to both wordlists. Most bilingual dictionaries are intended primarily for **native speakers** of only one of the two languages, however, and in these 'mono-directional' dictionaries more space may be devoted to information about target language words. 'Semi-bilingual' or 'bilingualized' dictionaries combine the features of a monolingual dictionary and those of a bilingual dictionary by using the target language for the entry word, definition, examples and grammatical information, together with a brief translation in the user's mother tongue.

*Dictionaries which specialize* in particular kinds of word information may deal with words outside the scope of a general purpose dictionary, or they may take an alternative approach to the treatment of standard words. Regionalisms, slang, new words, archaic words, proper names and technical terms are given only limited coverage in general purpose dictionaries, and are treated in separate word books. Many so-called dictionaries of specialized subject areas are primarily encyclopedic, however, and provide little linguistic information. There also exist productive dictionaries for spelling and pronunciation, and dictionaries of synonyms, antonyms, idioms and collocations.

Alphabetical ordering in general purpose dictionaries often forces collocates and semantically related words apart (although in alphabetically ordered learners' dictionaries some semantic and collocational relations between words are indicated by means of cross-references, examples, usage notes and labelled pictures). 'Thematic' or 'conceptual' dictionaries organize entries not alphabetically, but in thematic groups. This enables users to find words via their meanings, rather than via their orthographic form, although many thematic dictionaries also contain an alphabetically ordered index. Individual entries in thematic dictionaries may contain the same types of information as entries in A-Z dictionaries, but some thesauruses and 'visual dictionaries' of labelled drawings, diagrams and photographs rely entirely on verbal or pictorial groupings to explain word meaning, and provide no other linguistic information. Many alphabetically organized dictionaries contain thematically organized appendices, which list items such as units of measurement.

*Electronic dictionaries* are not usually accessed alphabetically, although some are still based on older print dictionaries which were alphabetically organized. Users of electronic dictionaries can find the entry they need by typing in the first few letters of the search word; many dictionaries will automatically adjust this input to match the uninflected headword form. Some electronic dictionaries provide alternative search modes involving wildcards, Boolean operators, or 'full text' searches which identify all the entries which contain a specified search term. Some pocket electronic dictionaries have scanning devices which 'read' words on a printed page or computer screen and present definitions or translations for them, and many online dictionaries allow users to activate pop-up dictionary entries by running their cursor over words in the text they are reading on the screen.

Electronic dictionaries often contain a range of additional information that it would be impossible to include in a hard-copy dictionary, such as audio pronunciation of words and interactive vocabulary learning exercises. They also often provide simultaneous access to multiple dictionary sources.

Although the prototypical dictionary for most people is the monolingual general purpose dictionary,



truly monolingual dictionaries are a comparatively recent invention. In Europe the earliest dictionaries were bilingual or bi-dialectal glosses to Greek and Latin texts. These were followed by dictionaries of 'hard words', written for educational purposes, and eventually dictionaries that attempted to create a scholarly record of the standard form of an entire language. Although in the past many dictionary users spoke the standard form as a second language or second dialect, the distinction between monolingual dictionaries for foreign language learners and dictionaries for native speakers only became important in the second half of the twentieth century (Béjoint, 1994).

The earliest dictionaries designed expressly for learners of English as a foreign language were the *New Method English Dictionary* (1935) by M. West and J. Endicott, and *An Idiomatic and Syntactic English Dictionary* (1942) by A.S. **Hornby**, E.V. Gatenby and H. Wakefield. Both of these drew on the work of H. **Sweet**, who thought that a learners' dictionary should provide detailed information about a limited number of words, with phonetic transcriptions, simple defining language and plentiful examples.

Grammatical information in the *Idiomatic and Syntactic English Dictionary* included a coding system to indicate the syntactic patterns of verbs, which Hornby elaborated from the work of H. **Palmer**. Subsequent editions of the dictionary, now known as the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, have simplified the coding system but have increased the emphasis on information to aid encoding. Other major English learners' dictionaries with similar aims are the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (first published in 1978), the *Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary* (first published in 1987), the *Cambridge International Dictionary of English* (first published in 1995) and the *Macmillan English Dictionary* (first published in 2003).

Developments in the analysis and description of language have brought about advances in the design of learners' dictionaries. In particular, computer analysis of authentic text has enabled learners' dictionaries to provide much more information about the frequency, behaviour and use of everyday words, as an aid to appropriate language

production. Studies show, however, that both native and non-native speakers usually use monolingual dictionaries to look up rare words, rather than common ones, and while reading, rather than while writing. There is also evidence to suggest that learners (and their teachers) have difficulty interpreting dictionary information, particularly the grammar codes. (Béjoint, 1994: 140–54). If language learners are not making the best use of the dictionaries designed for them, one solution is to provide better training in dictionary use. A number of workbooks exist for this purpose, but dictionary skills and dictionary skills training remain areas that are relatively neglected by educators and researchers. An alternative approach is to adapt learners' dictionaries more closely to the requirements of their users. Lexicographers have tried to make learners' dictionaries easy to use, for example by presenting grammatical information in everyday language, and adding 'menus' or 'guidewords' to help users navigate their way through long polysemous entries.

Electronic formats have also improved the accessibility of dictionary information, and in many parts of the world electronic dictionaries are now more popular with language learners than print dictionaries.

**See also:** Corpus linguistics and language learning; Lexicography and lexicology; Vocabulary

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HILARY NESI

## Didactique des langues (Language teaching methodology)

The terminology used in France to designate the discipline of foreign language teaching reflects the history of the field. Thus, since the beginning of the twentieth century the general term 'pedagogy' had been used and the profession spoke of language pedagogy. The 1950s and 1960s were the period when the scientific approach to language teaching developed due to the influence of linguistics and applied linguistics. The term *didactique des langues* ('language didactics') appeared in the 1970s, following the success of W.F. Mackey's book, *Language Teaching Analysis* (1965) translated into French in 1972 with the title *Principes de didactique analytique*. The creation of this new designation corresponded to a break with tradition: it expressed the will to have foreign language teaching recognised as an autonomous discipline with its own objectives. Michel Dabène (1972: 10), the then director of CRÉDIF, along with the inspector Denis Girard (1972), was one of the first in France to speak of 'language didactics' to cover a specific discipline that takes into account the nature and the purpose of language teaching and not only the nature and functioning of language. Robert Galisson, a member of the Bureau pour l'Enseignement de la Langue et de la Civilisation Françaises (BELC) and then professor at the Sorbonne, was active in proposing successive designations: *linguistique appliquée à l'enseignement des langues*, *linguistique appliquée et méthodologie de l'enseignement des langues*, *didactique des langues* and even *didactologie des langues/cultures* (Galisson, 1990). Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the notion

of *didactique du plurilinguisme* has been advocated as complementary to *didactique des langues*.

## Domination of French as a Foreign Language (*Français langue étrangère* = FLE)

Until the middle of the 1980s research concerning the discipline was based on the teaching of French as a foreign language. This was a recent teaching area without a well defined pedagogical tradition, but it was rich in the diversity of its students throughout the world. FLE was the source of teaching innovations disseminated through the institutional overseas network (*Alliance française*, cultural centres, etc.). The specialised FLE teachers were trained in courses given by CRÉDIF and BELC emphasising audio-visual methodology and then the communicative approach. Published in 1976, the *Dictionnaire de didactique des langues* (Galisson and Coste) is a good illustration of that period. From 1983 university programmes were created for FLE teachers (Bachelor's and Master's degrees with majors in FLE) and provided the bases for the domination of FLE in language teaching research and practice.

Hindered by institutional constraints and academic tradition, language teaching in schools in France found a new inspiration in the contribution of FLE and was influenced by its methodological principles (**authentic** documents, predominance of functional **objectives**, **communicative**, **language teaching**, etc) as well as by anglophone work on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and by the **Council of Europe 'Modern languages' projects** (notably the functional-notional approach). However, the school environment met with difficulties when attempting to implement the communicative approach in the classroom.

## European cross-cultural trends

In the 1980s the situation evolved under the influence of political-institutional factors. One of the major phenomena was the development of a concerted approach to languages within the European Community where the question of languages and linguistic policies became a major issue. The action taken by the Council of Europe put language policy

on an international plane and across languages, i.e. the same teaching principles and models of communication could be applicable to different foreign languages. The situation in France can only be analysed within these movements which tended to unify the learning/teaching concepts at a European level. Specifications produced by the Council of Europe, such as the **threshold levels** for several languages and, after 2000, the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages**, had a strong influence on *didactique des langues*.

### Interaction between French as a native language and foreign language(s)

In France, as in many other countries, mother tongue teaching and foreign language teaching had little in common. The interactions between French as a **mother tongue** (*Français langue maternelle* – FLM) and foreign languages (*langues étrangères* – LE) were progressively built up and stimulated by social factors. At the end of the 1960s, the presence within the French school system of many children of foreign origin encouraged links with FLE. The fight against school failure led the educational authorities to give priority to mastering oral and written French and developing a dialogue between FLM and FLE: ‘The teaching of French, particularly in educational priority areas, can take its inspiration from the teaching methods of French as a foreign language’ (Ministry of Education instruction, 1994). The spread in the 1990s of the teaching of a foreign language in **primary schools** created new links between FLM and LE. One of the objectives of ‘early’ foreign language teaching was to ensure the acquisition of the basic skills which included mother tongue skills to ensure ‘better scholastic results’ (Ministry of Education instruction, 1989). It must be remembered that regional languages (Breton, Alsatian, Occitan, etc.) also had their place, even if it was a minor one, in these projects and were part of the early bilingual education programmes (approximately 110,000 students attended regional language classes in 1996).

The interactions between FLM and LE could be also associated with **Hawkins’** work on language awareness (*éveil aux langues*). Research on the links between the native language and foreign lan-

guages and between foreign languages themselves aimed at the development of a reflexive and cross cultural approach and gave a new impetus to comparative studies. Another example was the work on **intercomprehension** among speakers of Romance languages (French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, etc.). In these types of projects, which received support from the European Union, research was also carried out on the possible harmonisation of grammatical terminology used to describe the different languages. Barriers were being broken down, but the number of programmes still remained limited.

### Teaching foreign languages in schools: *didactique scolaire*

During the 1970s and 1980s, language research did not focus on school institutions as a sector of observation and moved towards ‘real world’ situations. In the 1990s, research returned more actively to the school context. Languages specialists in schools became aware of their own particularities and started to break away from the influence of FLE. The teaching of French as a Foreign Language did not always take into account general educational objectives. Thus, contemporary social issues (such as ensuring the coexistence of different communities in the global society) called upon the teaching of foreign languages to play its role in general education (openness to the other, accepting differences). Another specific issue was the teaching/learning situation. The teaching of foreign languages in schools takes place in an exolingualistic environment with **non-native teachers** and ‘captive’ students whose **motivation** is often low. The idea that the teaching of different foreign languages is related to the same general question – the general didactics of teaching all languages in schools – began to emerge. The creation in 1991 of the University Teachers’ Training Colleges (*Instituts universitaires de formation des maîtres* – IUFM) provided an institutional framework that favoured this development.

### French as a Second Language

An overview of the French situation would be incomplete without taking into account the upsurge

in the 1980s of French as a Second Language (FLS). This ambiguous expression generally takes into account multilingual situations where French is taught as a foreign language, but has a preferential legal status (it can be an official language of state), a social status (it is used in sectors of public life such as the public service and the media to varying degrees by all or part of the population) and finally an educational status (it is the language used in schools) (Cuq, 1991). The development of a *didactique du français langue seconde* can be linked, on the one hand, to the political institutionalisation of an international organisation of *la Francophonie* (the Francophone world) and, on the other, to the official recognition that, on French territory, French is not the mother tongue of all children and that this situation cannot be addressed within a FLE framework. In both types of contexts, the situation of French as a second language requires a specific kind of language teaching.

### Plurilingualism

Since the late 1990s, the insistence on (individual) plurilingualism and interest in the notion of plurilingual and pluricultural competence (Coste et al., 1997) have had a strong impact on *didactique des langues*. The *didactique du plurilinguisme*, influenced by sociolinguistics, ethnography and intercultural studies, finds recognition in educational language policies (probably more in the field of FLE than for EFL). The attention given to contexts, identities and alterity tends to resist and balance the trends toward standardisation and uniformisation in language teaching. The new role afforded the language of schooling within all languages whole school plurilingual and intercultural education raises new challenges for what could be named a *didactique de la pluralité linguistique*.

**See also:** Council of Europe Platform for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education; English; *Fremdsprachendidaktik*; French; *Linguistique appliquée*; Mother tongue; *Sprachlehrforschung*; Standard language

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## Direct method

The direct method of language teaching developed in Europe (mainly in France and Germany) in the late nineteenth century as a result of the **reform movement** against the **grammar–translation** method, and was dominant from the nineteenth century until World War Two. It was mainly based on such theories as linguistic principles of inductive analogy, experimental **psychology** and naturalistic methods of education. The direct method imitated the way that children learn their first language, emphasising the avoidance of **translation** and the direct use of the foreign language as the **medium of instruction** in all situations. Everyday **vocabulary** and structure of the language were used as the

primary need. The method insisted on the introduction of phonetics and the spoken variety of the language. Concrete meanings of linguistic items are introduced through lessons involving objects, and abstract meanings are introduced through the association of ideas. Natural method, oral method, phonetic method and psychological method were some of the substitute names of the direct method. The procedures and main principles of the direct method typically involve:

- The use of the foreign language as a medium of instruction. Translation is totally avoided.
- Learning of a foreign language is similar to that of first language **acquisition**. Imitation and an artificial language environment are needed in the classroom.
- Language teaching is focused on the sentence level with vocabulary of daily routine, oral communication and **grammar** learnt by induction.
- Oral communication **skills** are built up in a carefully graded progression. They are organised around question-and-answer exchanges between teachers and students in small but intensive classes.
- New language points are to be introduced orally. Concrete vocabulary is taught through demonstration of objects and pictures; abstract vocabulary is taught through association of ideas and concepts.
- Both listening comprehension and **speaking** ability are encouraged. And correct **pronunciation** and inductively acquired grammatical knowledge are insisted upon.

The teaching method adopted has the following axioms (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 12):

- Never translate: demonstrate
- Never explain: act
- Never make a speech: ask questions
- Never imitate mistakes: correct them
- Never speak with single words: use sentences
- Never speak too much: make students speak much
- Never use the book: use your lesson plan
- Never go too fast: keep the pace of the students
- Never speak slowly: speak normally

- Never speak too quickly: speak naturally
- Never speak too loudly: speak naturally
- Never be impatient: take it easy

The name of the direct method came from one of the official documentary papers issued by the Ministry of Education of the French government in 1901. However, before the name was put forward, by the end of the nineteenth century educationists had shared a common belief that pupils learn a language by listening to it and also by speaking it. According to those beliefs, a child could acquire the foreign language in the same way as they learned their first language. Scholars (mostly French and German scholars at the first stage) believed that the learning of a foreign language was similar to that of first language acquisition. Direct association of foreign words by connecting them with the concepts of the outside world was emphasised in the method. The writings of **Sweet**, **Viétor** and **Passy**, among several other reformists, explained how linguistic principles could be put into practice at the time of teaching a foreign language in a classroom situation. It was said that the impetus to the direct method can be partly attributed to practical unconventional teaching reformers who responded to the need for better language learning in a new world of industry and international trade and travel, such as Berlitz and **Gouin** (Stern, 1983: 457). As a result, various 'oral' and 'natural' methods developed in this sense. All these methods advocated the learning of a foreign language by the direct association of foreign words and phrases by avoiding the native language.

In the following years, the influence of the direct method on theory and practice was deep-rooted and widespread. The method was first introduced in France and Germany by its supporters and later was recognised officially by the Governments of Germany, France and Belgium (1900–02). An international congress of modern language teachers was held in 1898 in Vienna and decided that the direct method should be used in all elementary teaching of foreign languages. Hennessy, Sauvœur and Berlitz introduced the direct method in the United States where it was well received (Hawkins, 1987: 130). In Great Britain, a compromise policy, i.e. to adopt the direct method's emphasis on the

spoken language and some other techniques, was recommended in the inter-war years (Stern, 1983: 457).

There are several criticisms of the direct method:

1. It is argued that, because of the absence of translation, the method makes it very hard to convey the semantics or to teach grammar. But this drawback is equally refuted by some scholars (Howatt, 1984) who state that semantics can be conveyed by gestures and objects. Similarly, progressing from the simple to the difficult, grammatical patterns can be built up in accordance with the learner's development.
2. It is argued that the direct method can be practised only in a classroom where the number of students is limited, because certain activities involved in the method are unlikely to be applicable to larger groups of learners. However, it is to be noted that the activity and its application to the learner group does not depend on the number of students in the group but the creative nature of the teacher who can divide the class and make it possible to engage all students.
3. The main drawback would be that for most of the time it is difficult to find a **native speaker** to teach the foreign language. However, it can be argued that a language teacher who imparts foreign language instruction in a classroom should be able to imitate the native speaker as far as possible.

Other criticisms involved were as follows:

1. It was hard to believe that the learning conditions of the native language could be re-created in the foreign language classroom.
2. The method was only suitable for teaching younger pupils rather than **adults**.
3. The method was too much dependent on the qualification of the teacher rather than on a **textbook**.
4. It could not go beyond the intermediate level into academic study.

Whatever the criticisms, the direct method remained the biggest force for reform and progress

and the dominant widespread method in the history of foreign language teaching during the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, after the grammar–translation method. Its emphasis on the use of the foreign language as the medium of instruction, and on oral and **listening** communicative skills, and the use of simple words and associations to explain difficult concepts challenged the more traditional grammar–translation method to undergo some changes. It also had great impact on the later **audiolingual** and **audio-visual language teaching** methods. It is still possible to find some of its traces in today's foreign language teaching methods and approaches such as 'Communicative Language Teaching' (CLT), 'immersion', and 'content-based instruction' (CBI) (see Howatt, 2004).

**See also:** Bilingual method; History: the nineteenth century; Jespersen; Monolingual principle; Teaching methods; Translation theory

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## Direct/Indirect testing

Direct testing involves using tasks that are a direct reflection of the skill being tested. The **speaking** and **writing** sections of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) are good examples of direct test tasks, for they include simulated interviews, discussions of a particular topic, report writing and essay writing.

It is argued, however, that it is only possible to have direct tasks for speaking and writing, for these are productive **skills**. The two receptive skills, **listening** and **reading**, on the other hand, are not directly observable, so any measure of these two skills is necessarily indirect, i.e. it is an inference about the skill based on some observable behaviour.

Typical indirect tests generally contain more artificial tasks that are, at best, tenuously related to the skill they purport to measure. They are most popular in contexts where large numbers are being tested, e.g. dialogue completion as a measure of speaking in contexts where the candidature is too large to allow for face-to-face speaking tests. One example of an indirect test task is one of the tasks which used to be part of the Test of English for Educational Purposes (TEEP), where students were given a text which contained a number of errors of **grammar**, spelling and punctuation with instructions to identify and correct all the errors.

Arguably this is a defensible test task, as it reflects a process that most writers in educational institutions have to go through when constructing their own texts. However, the task makes a number of unjustifiable assumptions. For instance, it is unclear whether students are as capable of identifying their own errors as they are of correcting others. Additionally, the task does not necessarily reflect the way people actually write. Finally, it is

not clear how the resulting score can be interpreted, since this involves making an inferential leap from the students' task performance to their actual skill.

Indeed, it can be argued that if a direct test is not feasible it is possibly better, in many instances, not to test at all than to test inadequately. Certainly, direct tests have a higher face **validity** than indirect tests because it is easier for direct test users to see a relationship between the test performance and real-life language use. However, it is important to be aware of the very real risk of direct tests being accepted because they look valid when they might not necessarily be.

**See also:** Assessment and testing

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TINEKE BRUNFAUT

JAYANTI BANERJEE

## Discourse analysis

Several strands can be identified under the label of 'discourse analysis', including discourse analysis in the French tradition, critical discourse analysis, the analysis of discourse in interaction (conversation analysis), forensic linguistics, mediated discourse analysis and, for some people, textual linguistics. These different orientations can be explained in terms of the polysemic nature of the term 'discourse'. It brings together various perspectives: analyses of data at a level above that of the sentence, analyses which explore language in use, or others which consider discourse as a social practice which must be related to a socio-historical context.

The use of discourse analysis from a teaching perspective draws on these different approaches as a function of the situations and the **objectives** of the researcher and the teacher.

Discourse analysis focuses on linguistic data at a level above that of the sentence (utterances, texts, interactions) and describes 'the mechanism of utterance which links textual organisation to a specific social location' (Maingueneau, 1996: 8). It is a practice which consists of seeking points of articulation between the linguistic and the extra-linguistic (social representations, ideology, culture, etc.). All research in this field crosses traditional disciplinary focuses (semantics, syntax, **pragmatics**) and the orientations in discourse analysis throughout the world are closely linked to the intellectual climate of the moment and to the local disciplinary heritage.

In the French intellectual landscape of the 1960s and 1970s, marked by structuralism, discourse analysis arose at the intersection of linguistics (the leading science at the time), humanities and a strong tradition of philology and text hermeneutics. In this context transdisciplinary research such as that of Pêcheux (1975) arose which drew upon philosophy (Althusser on ideology and Foucault on discourse) and upon psychoanalysis (Lacan). At an institutional level, the discipline prospered in the field of linguistics under the influence, subsequently, of Benveniste's utterer-centred framework (*Linguistique de l'énonciation*, Benveniste, 1966 and 1974), of the notion of genre and of the concept of dialogism developed by Bakhtin. The analysts identifying with this strand focused principally on the study of written corpora, with a preference for corpora of an institutional nature, and were particularly interested in discovering formal indicators.

On the Anglo-Saxon scene, discourse analysis developed originally on the basis of studies of oral corpora. In the USA, it emerged in the field of **anthropology** and sociology under the influence of the symbolic interactionism of Goffman and the conversation analysis of Gumperz. In Britain, many studies focused on the discourse of the classroom (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975), inspired by the systemic functional linguistics of **Halliday**. The Anglo-Saxon perspective puts more emphasis on revealing underlying pragmatic purposes in texts

(based on the work by Austin and Searle) and the effect they produce.

Despite these specificities of each geographical tradition, it is possible to identify a certain number of common points concerning what is considered to be discourse for discourse analysis, i.e. it is language seen as a product:

- in context (situation of communication, the historical, cultural and social context);
- articulated, at the level of interpretation, with the non-linguistic, which varies as a function of the approaches and the corpora (ideology, culture, communicative event, social activities, etc.);
- organised in stable forms at different levels (genres, rules of organisation of interaction, praxeological scripts, etc.).

The corpora and domains studied are very varied: political discourse and interactions, professional discourse (media, commerce, education, health, etc.), discourse in intercultural situations, discourse and gender, discourse and discrimination, etc. The categories used illustrate the variety of the interests of the researchers and are taken from different fields of linguistics: shifters, heterogeneity (alien utterance), labelling strategies, metaphors, implications and inferences, speech acts, etc.

Some discourse analysts, such as researchers in critical discourse analysis and some researchers in the French tradition, take a critical view and attempt to identify the power relations and the underlying ideology in discourse.

There are applications of discourse analysis in different domains of social life, such as the professional world in the widest sense, e.g. the judiciary (forensic linguistics). The focus of the discipline on linguistic products, associated with the interests of certain researchers in the social impact of their work, naturally leads these researchers towards concerns with teaching, whether as a matter of helping professionals to look reflexively at their products (Filliettaz, 2002) or more specifically to teach a language.

The encounter of discourse analysis and language teaching has its origin in the **communicative** turn of the 1970s. From the moment of this epistemological change in the methodologies of language



teaching and learning, the objective is no longer to inculcate learners with grammatical rules but to make them acquire communicative competence (Hymes, 1972). The interest in the functioning of language in context, in the social nature of language and in its pragmatic dimension, was realised with reference to instruments such as the **threshold level** (1975) or the *Niveau seuil* (1976) and the **Common European Framework of Reference** (2001) which show the move from teaching language as system to teaching language as communication and action.

The application of discourse analysis to the teaching and learning of a foreign language takes place at several levels. When implementing language curricula, discourse analysis can be called upon to select suitable documents once the objectives have been defined, as a function of the context and the analysis of the needs and wants of learners. Discourse analysis is particularly used in the planning of the teaching of languages for specific purposes. Discourse analysis provides a means of identifying the recurrent markers – grammatical, lexical, phonetic, intonational, etc. – thanks to which it is possible to identify the characteristics of documents, written or oral, linked to situated activities and/or, where appropriate, to genres. These linguistic forms are realised in speech acts, in textual sequences or in operations – of utterance, of discourse, of cognition, etc. – which explain their presence. The process thus makes it possible to create corpora intended for the development of language curricula, but also for the production of **textbooks** or the preparation of **authentic** materials for teaching purposes. Many studies by discourse analysts, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s, have demonstrated the significance of this practice for teaching specialists (Beacco and Darot, 1984; McCarthy and Carter, 1994; Peytard and Moirand, 1992).

The language classroom itself may be a field of observation for discourse analysis which describes exchanges between teacher and pupil(s) through the study of forms of management of interactions (Cicurel, 2002; Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975). Such work may also involve the analysis of teaching strategies such as explanation, definition, exemplification or correction.

The discursive approach can also be used to study texts (official or otherwise) about language teaching in order to understand better the perspectives and the functioning of the field (Moirand, 1988). In teacher training, this kind of approach to documents from the angle of discourse analysis makes it possible to show to those in training the discourses circulating in their professional domain.

**See also:** Communicative language teaching; Conversation analysis; Corpus linguistics and language teaching; Linguistics; Speaking; Speech act theory; Text and corpus linguistics; Writing

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CHANTAL CLAUDEL AND MARIE VENIARD

## Discrete point tests

Such tests attempt to test knowledge of a language in decontextualised segments. Rather than assessing just one language skill at a time or one aspect of that skill, they assume the ability to isolate a particular grammatical form or a particular phoneme in pronunciation. They also assume that a test can comprise a large number of discrete items which, as a group, will cover all aspects of language ability. Consequently it can be argued that, while each item gives precise information about a test-taker's mastery of that aspect of the language, the candidate's total score describes their language ability as a whole.

A typical discrete syntactic item would test the ability to use the present-perfect form of a verb as in 'She (live) in London since she started working for the bank'. Similarly, a discrete phonological item might involve providing a list of words and asking the test-taker to identify the odd one(s) out, as in the following example:

Which two words are the odd ones out?  
Consider the sound indicated by the underlined letters. (Choose *two* words)

book  
food  
cook  
good  
spoon

Clearly, such tests represent a particular view of language ability where the focus is on accuracy of reproduction of isolated segments independent of context, rather than on the construction of meaning. Though this approach is helpful for the diagnosis of students' specific language difficulties, its usefulness for other purposes has been questioned in recent years.

**See also:** Assessment and testing

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TINEKE BRUNFAUT

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## Disorders of language

Disorders of language are brought about by genetic, congenital and acquired brain dysfunction. Difficulties in verbal communication may also arise from sensory/motor, articulatory, perceptual and cognitive sources. These problems are set apart from language impairments, for which the term aphasia (or dysphasia, in Europe) is reserved. The linguistic, cognitive and therapeutic/educational

aspects of both developmental and acquired language impairments have both theoretical import and practical implications.

Peripheral disorders such as hearing impairment and cleft palate will impact on language comprehension and production respectively. General disorders of learning, memory or thought may also be manifest in language, e.g. Down's syndrome, Alzheimer's disease, schizophrenia. The term aphasia is reserved for disorders of language which are not due to mental handicap or sensory/motor defects.

Aphasia typically refers to an acquired language disorder in a person with a previously intact language system suffering from brain damage rather than psychiatric problems. Developmental dysphasia involves language difficulties manifest in early childhood during the acquisition process.

Historically, the study of language disorder has been the primary focus of scientists and clinicians interested in describing the organisation of higher cognitive functions in the brain. During the nineteenth century in Western Europe, research on localisation of function in the brain was first detailed with respect to aphasic syndromes. The principle of hemispheric specialisation and left hemisphere dominance for language was detailed by Paul Broca in 1861. Broca reported on two patients with severe language production problems arising from left frontal lobe lesions in their brains. These represent the first significant case reports in the modern field of aphasiology. Over subsequent decades, detailed descriptions of language disorders and clinical/pathological correlations with autopsies were gathered for a variety of problems in naming, repetition, fluency, sentence formation, comprehension, as well as **reading** and **writing**. By 1900, the major aphasia types had been described, and several competing processing models had been developed. In the latter part of the twentieth century, new methods and technologies enabled advances in the investigation of language disorders in patients prior to autopsy.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the neurologist Norman Geschwind expanded on nineteenth-century (classical) descriptions of aphasia informed by advances in **psychology** and **linguistics**. Imaging techniques such as Computerized Axial Tomography Scanning, Magnetic Resonance

Imaging and Positron Emission Tomography developed in the 1970s and 1980s. These techniques permitted visualisation of brain damage and functional disorder for the first time in living subjects.

Greater precision in the linguistic and cognitive description of language disorders has been provided by advances in the theoretical and experimental methods in the respective fields of linguistics and psychology. Bedside examination and anecdotal descriptions of language disorders have been replaced by standardised **assessment** procedures and experimental language elicitation tasks.

Eight classical aphasic syndromes have been recognised since the initial descriptions in the Wernicke–Lichtheim model of 1874. These language disorders have been classified with various terminological schemes but generally describe disorders according to the spared or impaired performance of auditory comprehension, verbal production, naming, and repetition. Other syndromes detail difficulties with the modalities of reading and writing. Certain language disorders are described with reference to the location of the brain damage rather than the characteristics of the verbal difficulties, such as aphasia arising from subcortical or right hemisphere lesions.

Research into language disorders has provided evidence of neural specialisation for linguistic behaviour. The modular organisation of subcomponents of communication is reflected in dissociations of spared and impaired performance on linguistic, speech (sensory and motor aspects), **pragmatic** and cognitive functions. The study of acquired disorders of reading (alexia) has been paramount in the development of accounts of the normal reading process. Aphasia in **bilingual** speakers provides special insight into the neurolinguistic organisation of multiple languages.

**See also:** Bilingualism; Mental lexicon; Mother tongue; Native speaker; Neuro-linguistic programming; Neurolinguistics; Reading; Second language acquisition theories

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MARJORIE PERLMAN LORCH

## Distance learning

Distance learning programmes differ from those taught face-to-face in that the sources of instruction are separated in time and space from the learners, with the distance being mediated by technology. Learners may study in a flexible manner in their own time, at the place of their choice and without requiring direct contact with an instructor (though some tuition may be available). The evolution of large scale distance language education from print-based correspondence courses began with the inclusion of educational radio and broadcast television programmes, progressed to the use of audio and videocassettes and, most recently, computers with computer-mediated communication (CMC web-based video, audio and interactive multimedia). Educational institutions have adopted these new ways of developing distance language learning opportunities independent of place or time as a means of expanding access to their teaching.

### History and current situation

While some scholars date the beginning of distance learning to St Paul's epistle to the Corinthians, distance education in the modern sense dates from the nineteenth century (Holmberg, 1989). The development of distance education, including the learning of foreign languages, has been described as falling into three stages which reflect different eras of industrialisation. This is outlined in theories advanced over a period of 30 years dating from 1965 by Otto Peters, the first Rektor of the *Fernuniversität* in Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany, who concluded that 'The structure of distance teaching is determined to a considerable degree by the

principles of industrialization, in particular by those of rationalization, division of labour and mass production' (Keegan, 1994: 124).

The first stage of development, facilitated by the invention of printing and the introduction of universal postal services, allowed distance education to reach individuals in their homes or places of work. 'These innovations came together in England in the mid 19th century and led quickly to the offering of courses by correspondence' (Daniel, 1996: 48). The introduction of radio meant that school-children in remote areas in Canada, Australia and New Zealand could be reached with correspondence tuition.

The second major stage, exemplified in the operations of innovators – for example the British Open University (founded in 1969), Deakin University in Australia (founded in 1974) and the Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University in Thailand (founded in 1978) – was marked by new developments such as the enrichment of correspondence education by the integration of other media, beginning with television (asynchronous communication) and the use of telecommunications to link remote classrooms or tutor and student(s) (synchronous communication). **Assessment** schemes and contacts of different kinds with tutors were incorporated and proved crucial to progress and **motivation**. The development of large distance teaching institutions – described by Daniel (1996) as mega-universities – was a major feature of this stage, as the governments of various countries saw them as a cost-effective solution to the unmet educational **needs** of their citizens.

The third major stage of development combines computing and information technology, known variously as the knowledge media or third generation distance education technology. It has been suggested that use of the knowledge media may bring the correspondence and remote classroom traditions of distance education together. They are also, of course, being used in a variety of combinations with traditional face-to-face teaching (Macdonald, 2008), thus blurring the distinctions which have been accepted up till now. Some researchers have redefined these latest developments as a fourth major stage (Wang and Sun, 2001).

## New challenges

The variety and interaction of media which are being used to support the language learner at a distance is constantly changing and expanding. CD-ROMs and the **internet** offer the possibilities of text, pictures, sound and interaction. Electronic mail and computer conferencing are used for tutor–student communication, or for students to communicate with each other. Electronic resources may supplement other learning materials. Since one of the particular challenges of learning languages at a distance is that of learning to speak and understand others speaking, synchronous interactive computer-mediated systems which facilitate spoken communication are of particular relevance (Lamy, 2004). Mobile appliances, such as phones, have been used successfully (Kukulska-Hulme and Shield, 2008).

While choices related to the technology and course content of distance learning programmes have commonly been seen as crucial to course development, researching knowledge about learners to inform course design and delivery is equally important. Doughty and Long (2003) have argued that, since the teacher is remote from the learners, the kind of pre-course analysis used for **syllabus design** and pedagogical decisions in face-to-face classrooms is no longer appropriate. Course designers should rather research detailed learner profiles of the intended target group, consult with students planning to enrol on the courses and develop an instructional design that is flexible enough to accommodate the diverse and changing needs of learners (Hampel, 2006).

Not only must distance language teachers develop new teaching practices in new media, they must also undergo a shift in their identity as language teachers (White, 2007). The new forms of tuition have changed the nature of the interaction between learner and instructor, sometimes for instance, shifting the balance of power between them, since the instructor is not necessarily a technical expert and may not have access to all the available resources. A taxonomy of skills for teaching languages online has been developed, ranging from the more general skills of working with the technology to the social skills of community building, with the highest level covering skills

in teaching languages creatively and developing a personal teaching style (Hampel and Stickler, 2005). Distance language learners also need to motivate themselves to organise and structure their study, since they often have to integrate distance study with personal and professional commitments. Developing and maintaining identities as distance language learners is no simple matter (White, 2003, 2007), and learners of languages at a distance require particular skills of their instructors (Murphy et al., 2010).

**See also:** CALL; Material development; Needs analysis; Self-access; Teaching methods

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## Drama

Drama in foreign language teaching usually involves students acting out make-believe scenarios

in order to practise different uses of language. Often these take the form of simple functional role play (either scripted or improvised). The term 'drama' in this context is also used to embrace related activities including **exercises**, games and simulations. In the 1990s, some writers recommended the adoption of a wider range of drama in education strategies which use the potential of the dramatic art form more fully in order to provide richer contexts for using and exploring language (Shewe and Shaw, 1993). The growing interest in drama is evidenced by the launch in 2007 of *Scenario*, an on-line journal whose main focus is on the role of drama and theatre in the teaching and learning of foreign/second language, including the literature associated with those languages.

The possible categories of drama forms in language learning can be described as follows:

- *Typical exercises/warm-ups/games* might take the following form: in pairs students stand back to back and try to recall as much as they can about each other's appearance; everyone tries to shake hands and greet as many people as possible in the group; in small groups the class try to act out a scene which represents a time of day and the class try to guess in the target language what time is being represented.
- *Improvised role play* might involve the class dividing into pairs to act out a spontaneous exchange between shopkeeper and customer.
- *Scripted role play* is based on similar situations with the dialogue written out for the participants in advance. As a variation, learners are not given access to each other's lines until the dialogue is enacted.
- *More extended drama simulations* might involve students in creating individual fictitious characters in a specific context (e.g. people living in the same country or village, or participants in a press conference) who speak and write to each other over a period of time or engage in problem-solving.
- *Drama in education techniques* include these types of activity but pay greater attention to the art form of drama, seeking for example to inject tension into enacted situations. Instead of a simple scenario of buying an article in a

shop, the teacher might set up a richer context in which the two participants knew each other at school and were great rivals. Techniques might be used to explore inner thoughts and feelings, e.g. freezing the action and voicing inner thoughts, replaying the scene in different ways, repeating the same scene with different intonations.

Awareness of the potential for using drama in foreign language teaching derives from acknowledgement of the importance of child play as a valuable method of learning. In play children use language in imaginative ways in make-believe contexts with a high level of engagement and **motivation**. Even when students are simply repeating sentences or answering questions in the target language, it could be argued that they are using an embryonic form of drama because the intention is that they do so *as if* the situation is happening in real life. Drama provides the potential for developing the contexts in richer ways; if the language is embedded in action which has more genuine motivation, it is likely to be less mechanical and carry more emotional content and meaning.

In the 1970s there were considerable changes in both drama and foreign language teaching. In the latter case, the development of **communicative language teaching**, the concern to increase motivation, lower inhibitions, encourage risk taking and promote collaborative learning paralleled developments in the drama methodologies at the time. Here the focus was increasingly on process rather than product, on exploiting children's natural inclination for dramatic playing rather than emphasising theatrical production, acting skills or performance. Exponents of drama in the foreign language classroom emphasised creativity and imagination, developing activities intended to draw on the learner's natural ability to imitate.

The emphasis on natural imitation meant that spontaneous improvisation, either in groups or even as a whole class, was the dominant method in many drama classrooms. However, this approach required a fairly sophisticated level of language **competence** and was not widely adopted as a method of teaching foreign languages. Instead,

writers promoted the use of games, exercises and simple role plays which many drama specialists would argue hardly qualify as 'drama'. Another tension existed between the more specific **objectives** required of language teaching and the much broader and more general aims of using drama in the same context. Games and simple role play exercises can be employed to target specific **skills** (e.g. the use of a particular tense), but the nature of the dramatic enactment is thereby limited.

The introduction of drama in foreign language teaching was originally intended to produce more natural and **authentic** uses of language, but often its inclusion in the classroom meant that the results were no less stilted and false. This was partly because the make-believe contexts created were often highly functional, devoid of any real human interest or dramatic tension. Drama work with a theatrical/performance orientation was explicitly rejected as being too stilted and unnatural, and the type of free-ranging expressive, creative work predominant in the drama classroom was not suitable for learning a foreign language.

Writers on drama have in recent years tended to look to the art form of theatre rather than child play as a theoretical underpinning for the subject and this has important consequences for the potential use of drama to teach foreign languages. The emphasis on theatre does not necessarily mean work which is oriented to production and performance, but places the focus more on understanding and exploiting the true nature of the art form. This change of emphasis has resulted in the development of a wider range of drama strategies in the 1980s and 1990s which have potential for the foreign language classroom.

The original emphasis on child play and natural imitation, rather than on theatre as a constructed art form, meant that drama (both in the specialist and foreign language classroom) tended to be seen as providing contexts which were a substitute for real experience. It was thought that activities such as visiting an airport, sitting with a family around the breakfast table or buying an item in a shop could be replicated through drama in the classroom as a substitute for the actual experience. However, drama has greater potential than simply seeking to replicate 'normal' real-life situations. It can be used

to explore experiences in ways which are not possible in real life, e.g. freezing a moment in time, exploring subtexts, voicing characters' inner thoughts and intentions. The family around the breakfast table may actually be nervous about having a foreign visitor in their midst and the action can be frozen so that they can voice their thoughts.

In the drama classroom the exclusive use of spontaneous improvisation has given way to a wider range of techniques, including ones which slow the action down and explore underlying human tensions. These approaches have the advantage for the teacher of foreign languages that they do not require the same fluency in language because they do not always have to be spontaneous. They can still, however, have a strong emotional content and be just as engaging. Drama techniques such as 'teacher in role' (in which it is the teacher who adopts the fictitious role, perhaps using the target language), tableaux (in which groups create a still image to which can be added dialogue or thoughts), **questioning** in role (in which a fictitious character is questioned by the class to explore motivation) exploit the power of drama more fully.

Paradoxically it is the use of more crafted, stylised, theatrical devices which come closer to exploring human situations more realistically and in more depth. Language can be explored in human contexts in ways which go beyond the surface meaning of the words spoken. Drama of this kind can examine cultural contexts more explicitly and thus has greater potential for promoting **cultural awareness** in the context of foreign language teaching. The fictitious family around the breakfast table and the visitor can voice their inner confusions and misconceptions while replaying the scene with different outcomes. The more eclectic approach to drama opens up a wider range of methods: using unusual or absurd situations, experimenting with rhythm, sounds and intonation as well as working towards theatrical performance in the foreign language. The potential for using such techniques still

needs to be developed and exploited more fully in the foreign language classroom.

**See also:** Acquisition and teaching; Intercultural competence; Literary texts and intercultural understanding; Poetry; Task-based teaching and assessment; Teaching methods; Total Physical Response

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# E

## Early language learning in formal education

Although the teaching at primary school of one or more languages additional to a child's first language was in evidence in many countries before the second half of the twentieth century, a major change took place in the 1960s stimulated by international policy-thinking in education.

The Hamburg conference in 1962 organised by UNESCO and subsequent international events generated an agenda eventually encapsulated in *Languages and the Young School Child* (Stern, 1969), in which it was claimed that, as a result of major changes in society, education at primary school was moving from a unilingual, unicultural mode to one in which other languages and cultures were to be valued as fundamental to children's education. Among the issues identified as being of concern were:

- the optimum age for beginning another language at school;
- the effects of an early start on the subsequent learning of other (third, fourth) languages and on the development of the child's first or majority language;
- the measurement of children's emerging attitudes to languages, language learning and other nations;
- the special needs of bi/multilingual communities;
- the language-learning and broader educational needs of children from families of immigrants or minority groups;

- the use of the first or majority language in learning an additional language;
- the relative merits of experiential learning, drills or more cognitive processes;
- using the additional language as a medium of instruction;
- how to achieve 'continuation' within primary schools as children proceed from one year-group to another, and likewise 'articulation' with secondary schools;
- how to provide an adequate supply of appropriately trained and educated teachers.

'Early language learning at school' may feature combinations of: an official language of the country (possibly the majority language); another official language of the country (possibly spoken by a minority that may be large or small); an indigenous minority heritage language that does not have official status; a more recent, non-indigenous minority heritage language that does not have official status; and a foreign language. Any of these languages could potentially be a child's first language or an additional language they are learning at primary school.

Since the mid-1960s a number of different models have been adopted in implementing early language learning (henceforth, ELL) at primary school. These vary according to particular combinations of key factor that include: 'time' available for learning and using the language (amount over the years and distribution within each week); 'intensity' (the extent to which the additional language is

used in order to learn something else); ‘starting age’; and ‘language competence of the teacher’. There is not a clear divide between ‘home’ and ‘primary/elementary school’, and in many countries there are early language-learning initiatives in kindergartens, playgroups and nursery schools.

In the initial years of the new millennium there has been an increase in transnational and national policy support for ELL. In Europe, both the European Commission (EC) and the Council of Europe have played a prominent role in promoting the notion of ELL within a set of values that include global and European citizenship, intercultural communicative competence and respect for diversity, and the influence of both has extended well beyond Europe. The EC Action plan for Languages 2003–6 recommends that by the end of their primary school education children should have three languages, a first or national language plus two others, one of which should ideally be started at an early age. The EC also commissioned a review of research on principles and good practice of teaching languages to children (Edelenbos et al., 2006), launched its *Piccolingo* campaign which is aimed at raising the awareness of parents, businesses and other stakeholders, and funded a major research initiative entitled ELLIE (Early Language Learning in Europe), based on substantial transnational collaboration. The Council of Europe has also provided substantial support through the European Centre for Modern languages (ECML), and a large number of initiatives across Europe and beyond have drawn benefit not only from the Council of Europe **Common European Framework of Reference** but also from the **Language Portfolio** (e.g. Vrhovac, 2010).

The first decade of the new millennium witnessed a dramatic extension of ELL, especially in Asia, as China, S. Korea and other states developed ambitious and inclusive policies. In China, national policy from 2001 onwards (Wang, 2007) stated that there should be 80 minutes per week from Grade 3 onwards, and in 2006 a new national curriculum for English was published covering nine levels and containing many attractive features such as encouraging multiple intelligences, cross-cultural learning and assessment in support of learning. There remain, however, enormous problems of

teacher supply, training and professional development, large class-size and disparities between East and West and between cities and rural areas, necessitating heavy reliance on published textbooks and long-term planning. In South Korea an important component of the national strategy consists of ‘teaching English through English’, attaching importance to language use as well as to language learning (Lee, 2010) and signalling a clear intention to move beyond the rigid traditional norms based on a grammar-translation approach.

### Debates about an early start

In the debate about early language learning one of the most contested propositions has been that young **beginners** gain an advantage over older beginners in that their younger age makes them better equipped for language-learning – see Harley (1986) and Singleton and Lengyel (1995). Contributing to the debate were Penfield’s ‘brain plasticity hypothesis’ which stated that up to the age of roughly nine ‘a child can learn two or three languages as easily as one’ after which ‘for purposes of learning languages, the human brain becomes progressively stiff and rigid’ (Penfield and Roberts, 1959: 235–36), and the notion of a ‘critical period for language acquisition’ deriving from Lenneberg (1967). Whatever the merits of these hypotheses, a review of international research conducted during the 1960s and 1970s (Burstall, 1978) demonstrated that in school conditions it tended to be older beginners who made quicker and more efficient progress. There have been several authoritative more recent reviews of research in this area, including Muñoz (2008).

One potential advantage of an early start about which there is consensus is that it can offer more ‘time’. Burstall et al. concluded that ‘the achievement of skill in learning a foreign language is primarily a function of time spent studying that language’ (Burstall et al., 1974: 123). One of the lessons from many research studies is that that, if the benefits of additional ‘time’ within an early start are to be realised, then this must be linked to other key factors, in particular ‘continuity’ of learning experience during **primary education** and into **secondary**, and ‘quality of teaching’ which

itself embraces a range of contributory factors such as language competence of the teacher, ability to provide appropriate input and interaction, ability to encourage reflection and to create an appropriate learning environment.

### Models for the primary school

Four models of languages provision at primary school are presented on a dimension extending from relatively small amounts of language-teaching to high-intensity varieties.

First: '**Language awareness**'. This introduces children to several languages, including non-majority languages spoken in the local community. Among the aims are to awaken children to what language is, to stimulate respect for other languages and cultures including those in the locality, and to create a foundation for the subsequent foreign language learning. Authoritative texts on this model are by Candelier (2004) and Barton et al. (2009). Although the broad educational justification of this approach is clear, no research appears to have been published thus far concerning its impact on children's subsequent learning of a foreign language.

Second: 'Modern Languages at Primary School' (MLPS), or 'Foreign Languages at Elementary School' (FLES). This implies relatively limited amounts of time per week devoted to teaching an additional language by teachers who are in many cases generalist primary school teachers and not language-teaching specialists and who may be far from fluent. This is by far the main model for early language learning across the world. A review by Blondin et al. (1998) of published research on MLPS within the European Union revealed that the question of whether MLPS pupils retain an advantage at secondary school over pupils who began at that stage remained largely unanswered, partly because relatively little research had been done on this aspect. The picture of progress within primary school was more positive, with various studies indicating benefits to children not only in the development of an initial competence in a foreign language but also in the formation of positive **attitudes** towards their experiences. Although the MLPS/FLES model is limited in what it can

realistically be expected to achieve, there has been a wealth of excellent research on it, including the ELLIE project already referred to, with classroom process research in Asian countries also making a significant contribution, e.g. Qian et al. (2009) on code-switching within a holistic approach, and Shintoni and Ellis (2010) on possible differences in mastery of structure, depending on whether the approach is production- or comprehension-based.

Third: **CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning)**, which for present purposes is understood as teaching all or some of one or more subject/content areas through the medium of the additional language (as well as teaching the additional language itself). CLIL is central to the EC Action Plan and has also featured prominently in papers and projects of the Council of Europe. As a result, it has attracted support in many countries across Europe, gradually extending to Asia and other parts of the world. In Finland (e.g. Järvinen, 2008) learners on a CLIL programme showed clear advantages over mainstream counterparts in their development of English as second language, without detriment to their learning of subject-matter; and the CLIL evaluation in Andalusia, Spain, by Lorenzo et al. (2009) is one indication among several of a major commitment in Spain (possibly more than any other European country) to move on a large scale well beyond MLPS/FLES.

Fourth: Immersion or **Bilingual education**. There is no absolute distinction between CLIL and Immersion/Bilingual Education, but in practical terms many CLIL projects occupy from 10 per cent to 25 per cent of total curricular time in any given year, whereas most immersion/bilingual education projects tend to be from 40 per cent of total curricular time upwards. The immersion language might be a foreign language or a second language of the particular country, but immersion also importantly supports 'minority first language maintenance'. This enables children who have some background in a minority **heritage language** to receive some of their education through the medium of that language while also being educated through the country's majority language. Bilingual/Immersion Education has been implemented in several countries besides Canada where it first achieved prominence. For an account of immersion internationally, see

Johnson and Swain (1998), and more recently García and Baker (2007). Doyé (1997) provides an overview of bilingual primary school education in various European countries as well as a focused study of the Europa-Schule in Berlin which covered various bilingual combinations (German plus Russian, French, English, Spanish, Italian, Greek or Turkish). The study by Peltzer-Karpf and Zangl (1997) highlights the stages that the children on an early bilingual education programme went through in developing their second-language proficiency. Phrases that initially could be accurately reproduced were succeeded by a period of grammatical 'system turbulence' until eventually by Grade 4 their grammar system had largely sorted itself out. A large-scale study of partial immersion in Spanish, Japanese or French in the United States by Thomas et al. (1993) showed the pupils to be slightly better than a controlled comparison group in mathematics and much better in English language arts, and to be well above the mean average for their county. Those receiving partial immersion in Japanese did not seem disadvantaged in comparison with the other two language groups.

## Discussion

From the above brief account of four models, it is evident that ELL may serve very diverse purposes, including: (1) the development of an initial, if modest, proficiency in a foreign language; (2) biliterate **bilingualism** including an ability to use two languages for purposes of substantive learning of other subject-matter; (3) maintenance of a minority **migrant and heritage language**, whether official or otherwise, indigenous or otherwise, and its associated cultures; (4) awareness of, respect for and ability to learn from other cultures; (5) metalinguistic awareness, including insight into what language is, what its component parts are, what it is used for and how languages are related; and (6) conscious strategies for language-learning and language-use, on the grounds that it will not be possible to predict what languages an individual will need later in their lives.

Although the issues identified by Stern in the 1960s remain relevant and many questions remain unanswered, the international agenda has changed.

It is no longer a question of experimenting in order to see if something will work. The debate now focuses on identifying and putting in place the conditions for making it work well. Video-conferencing, e-mail and the **internet** have already demonstrated their rich potential for putting primary school children and their teachers in regular touch with their counterparts in other countries, in ways that previously were inconceivable (e.g. Pritchard et al., 2010). The impact of these new technologies not only on children's early learning of another language – including the particular language **skills** and information-handling strategies they will need – but also on the culture of their schools, is a major area for future research investigation.

Thus far the success of ELL has been mixed. If in any of its forms it is to be successful, not only in a small number of privileged schools, but in all state schools across the range of abilities and socio-economic circumstances, then much remains to be done. At present, barriers of various sorts need to be confronted. In some cases, for example, the notion of early bilingual education is simply seen as a temporary phase within an assimilationist policy of switching children from their minority first language to the majority national language, and the potentially damaging consequences of this for such children's sense of identity and educational development have been identified by several researchers, e.g. Johnson (2010). Other barriers are of a more practical sort and include 'inadequate supply and initial training of teachers', 'lack of professional development for teachers in post' and 'incompatibility between an innovative curriculum and a traditional national assessment system'. Sometimes, ELL projects have moved forward too quickly without adequately addressing key factors such as these, and a backlash can ensue. However, where such factors are clearly identified through initial feasibility studies and then explicitly addressed, as in Dobson et al. (2011), which identifies a set of key conditions which were strongly put in place, then positive outcomes can be achieved for children in state schools in a range of socioeconomic circumstances. Among the positively contributing factors were: 'political will' to give the initiative the necessary authority and status and to provide the necessary start-up funds,

'adequate supply and training of teachers', and 'guarantee of continuity into secondary education'.

The message to take was well stated several years ago in the final recommendation of the Luxembourg conference on early language learning, marking that country's period of presidency of the EU: 'The tendency to begin language learning earlier and earlier seems to be irreversible. This process will be successful provided that certain conditions are fulfilled' (our translation) (Wengler, 1999: 35).

**See also:** Age factors; Bilingual education; Communication strategies; Medium of instruction; Mother-tongue teaching; Teacher education

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RICHARD JOHNSTONE

## Emotions and language learning

Stevick (1980) commented that: 'Success [in language learning] depends less on materials, techniques and linguistic analyses and more on what goes on inside and between the people in the classroom' (Stevick, 1980: 4). This is a view shared by Stern (1983), for whom the affective component is often more important to language learning than the cognitive **skills**, and yet one of the most important predictors of success, namely affect, is frustratingly intangible and ephemeral. This might explain why its effect has attracted less attention from researchers than that of specific course materials and teaching techniques.

Arnold and Brown (1999) define affect as 'aspects of emotion, feeling, mood or attitude which condition behaviour' (p. 1). Arnold (forthcoming) points out that affect is 'The inside and between'. The inside refers to personality factors (self-concept/self-esteem, anxiety, inhibition, attitudes, motivation, learner styles ...) while the 'between' refers to the relational aspects which develop between the participants in the classroom and the target language and culture. Positive affect is the fuel for the learning process, negative affect is like cold water dousing the emerging flames, thus preventing progression in the learning of the foreign language.

It is clear that the 'inside' interacts with the 'outside' and might evolve as a result. While personality traits such as extraversion, which is linked to cortical arousal, are unlikely to change because of interaction with 'outside' variables, other personality variables that are more linked to particular

situations such as foreign language classroom anxiety might evolve. Psychological variables that are not linked to any particular personality trait such as **attitudes** and **motivation** are even more likely to be shaped by external factors such as intergroup climate and attitudes as well as the social situation (MacIntyre, 2007). These external variables determine ‘the tension between a desire to approach the target language group and a sense of hesitation or fear of the implications of doing so’ (ibid.: 567).

Research has confirmed that basic personality traits are not linked to attitudes towards foreign languages, but that learners’ politico-cultural identity is linked to their attitudes towards the language spoken by people belonging to a group with whom political relations are strained (Dewaele, 2005). Foreign language anxiety (FLA), tends to be higher in a ‘hostile FL’ environment and learners with higher levels of FLA typically have more negative attitudes towards that FL (Dewaele, 2005). Research has shown that attitudes towards home and foreign languages results are linked to individuals’ language competence, the sociolinguistic context (i.e. the size of the town where individuals live) and the knowledge of a second foreign language (Lasagabaster, 2005).

High levels of FLA can interfere with learning and performance (Horwitz, 2001). A study on young London teenagers who had to decide whether to pursue the study of foreign languages showed that those who had already decided to drop FLs suffered from significantly higher levels of FLA compared to the group of still undecided students and those who had decided to continue the study of foreign languages (Dewaele and Thirtle, 2009). However, FLA has been reported to facilitate foreign language learning and lead to higher levels of FL achievement (Marcos-Llinas and Juan Garau, 2009). One consistent finding in research on FLA is the high degree of variation among learners and users, and research has focused on the possible sociobiographical and psychological antecedents of FLA.

The main sociobiographical variables linked to FLA are quality and quantity of affordances through the knowledge of typologically related or other languages, age, gender, academic achievement,

prior history of visiting foreign countries, prior school experience with foreign languages, expected overall average for current language course, perceived scholastic competence, and perceived self-worth (Dewaele, 2010; Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999).

One lower-order psychological trait has also been linked to FLA, namely trait Emotional Intelligence (Dewaele et al., 2008). Adult multilinguals with higher levels of trait Emotional Intelligence reported lower levels of FLA in various situations and languages (including their L1). It was speculated that these highly emotionally intelligent individuals are better able to gauge the emotional state of their interlocutor, control their stress better and feel more confident (and hence less anxious) about their ability to communicate effectively. A younger age of onset of acquisition of the foreign language, regular extracurricular use of the language, the knowledge of more languages, a higher frequency of use of the language, a stronger socialization in the language, the use of the language with a larger network of interlocutors, and a higher level of self-perceived proficiency in the language were all linked to lower levels of FLA (Dewaele et al., 2008).

Another psychological construct that has been linked to motivation and success in foreign language acquisition is self-efficacy (Hsieh and Kang, 2010). Learners with higher levels of self-efficacy attribute their language test results to more internal and personal control factors than those with lower self-efficacy levels. These findings confirm earlier research which showed that **successful learners** engage in intrinsic motivational processes more often, reminding themselves about their past and future successes, while less successful learners blamed factors beyond their control for their lack of progress (Ushioda, 2001).

Stevick’s (1980) observation about the importance of social relations in successful second language learning points to the crucial role of teachers. As they face a new group of learners, they could be compared to directors meeting an orchestra for the first time. The teacher needs to channel the conflicting emotions and different expectations of this motley group of individuals into a stream of positive affect, thereby unlocking their potential

and showing them the pleasure of positive collaboration towards a common goal. This can happen in a supportive and friendly classroom environment. The subject matter needs to be pertinent and linked to the learners' interests and concerns. As a language teacher I used to tell students during the first session that as a linguist there was nothing I found more interesting than complex **errors**, and that I hoped they would make many at the beginning and fewer towards the end of the course. This indicated that making errors is an integral and natural part of language learning, it lowered students' FLA and contributed to the establishment of a good 'rapport'. This rapport is one of the important elements of learner motivation (Dörnyei, 2005). Once students and teacher have established a common ground and goal in a positive atmosphere, the teacher/director becomes a discreet central figure, encouraging learners to spread their linguistic wings. The classroom becomes a 'pleasant and inspiring environment' and 'the time spent there is a constant source of success and satisfaction for teachers and learners alike' (Dörnyei and Murphey, 2003: 3–4).

It is also an environment where 'flow' can occur, i.e. a state of optimal experience characterized by intense focus and complete involvement on a task (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). It requires (a) a perceived balance of **skills** and challenge, (b) opportunities for intense concentration, (c) clear task goals, (d) feedback that one is succeeding at the task, (e) a sense of control over oneself and the environment, (f) a loss of self-consciousness, (g) a transformation of time, (h) merging of action and awareness, and (i) the autotelic or enjoyable nature of the experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Flow can emerge in foreign language writing, reading, and computer-based tasks (Egbert, 2003). Rubio (forthcoming) has shown that flow states can also occur in different speaking tasks in the foreign language class, especially when students work in groups or in pairs, when tasks are learner-centred.

Although Stevick (1980) argued that **materials** used in the foreign language class have less effect on success than the social relations between the actors, the importance of good materials should not be underestimated. Bland, artificial and uninspiring course books are likely to discourage even the most motivated student. It is thus important to provide

learners with course materials that are intrinsically interesting and linked to their spheres of interest.

In sum, emotion and affect are the prime forces that drive the language learning process. Foreign language teachers need to do as much as possible to nurture a positive and stimulating classroom environment, with surprises, fun and hard work, where learners feel that even though the way ahead is long, progress beckons, with a smiling, fluent, foreign language ideal self at the end of the road.

**See also:** Attitudes and language learning; Beliefs about other countries; Identity and language learning; Motivation; Psychology; Risk-taking and foreign language learning; Successful learners; Teacher education

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JEAN-MARC DEWAELE

## English

English is a subject that appears in most school curricula in the world. Other languages, **French**, **Spanish**, **Chinese** and so on, also figure as subjects, in various places, but their occurrence is determined by considerations of local relevance. English is different: it appears practically everywhere because it is assumed to have a global relevance that other languages do not have. Whatever foreign language appears as a curriculum subject, it is, of course, locally foreign in different ways in relation to the first language of the learners. But the very global status of English would seem to make it different from other language subjects.

The teaching of any language initiates learners into modes of knowledge and behaviour which characterise the community of its users. In many cases, this community is relatively well defined, and the language it uses is that which its members

are socialised into through upbringing as ‘**native speakers**’ and which as such serves not only as a primary means of communal communication, but as the expression of social **identity**. The language in these cases can be said to be integral to a particular community and learning it as a matter of conforming to its culture. Thus in learning the Danish or Thai language, for example, one necessarily learns what it means to be a member of a native speaker Danish or Thai community.

But languages and cultures are not always so closely integrated within well-defined communities. It is not only the French who use French, or the Spanish who use Spanish as first languages, as their primary means of expression. When a language spreads to serve other communal requirements, it will naturally tend to be associated with different cultural values, and to vary accordingly. The extent of this variation will depend to a considerable degree on how far the emergent users will defer to the norms of the original user community. If emergent users are disposed to identify with this community, then variation will be held in check by exo-normative influence. If, on the other hand, they are inclined to independent identity, then language and culture will get realigned in relatively separate endo-normative development. The obvious problem for the teaching of these languages of wider communication and diverse communities is what norm should be set up as the appropriate one for learners to conform to.

This problem is particularly acute for English. For this language has spread to a prodigious extent (see, e.g. Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 1997, 2006) and has been adopted, and endo-normatively adapted, to serve the needs of communication and socio-cultural identity of different communities all over the globe. But English has not only dispersed into different primary varieties of first language in what Kachru has referred to as the ‘Inner Circle’ (e.g. North America and Australia) and the ex-colonial ‘Outer Circle’ (e.g. India and Nigeria) (Kachru, 1992). It has also been taken up as a **lingua franca**, a secondary means of international communication across a range of institutional purposes to do with commerce, diplomacy, science, technology, where what is exploited as a communicative resource is a language that nobody acquires in the course of

socialisation in their primary culture. The vast spreading of the electronic web of global communication over recent years has both promoted, and been made possible by, the use of English as an international lingua franca. As a consequence, most of the people who now use English have not themselves acquired it as a first language and do not use it to interact with those who have.

In these rather remarkable circumstances, it clearly makes no sense to distinguish the community of users from foreigners who are aspiring to join them. The foreigners *are* the users. Nor does it make sense to talk about the language as belonging to such communities for the foreigners have appropriated it to their own purposes (see Widdowson, 1994, 2003). So it is not simply a matter of recognising that there is a problem of deciding which norm of primary ‘native speaker’ use one needs to adopt in deciding which English to teach – British or American or Australian or whatever. For these local national norms, well suited to serve intra-national native-speaker needs, have no necessary relevance for the global institutional needs for the language. If the reason for having English as an obligatory subject on the curriculum is because of its status as an international language, then one cannot at the same time define that subject in terms of any particular community that happens to have it as a first language.

In spite of this, English is still generally conceived of as essentially the cultural property of its native speaking communities, and the subject defined accordingly. Such a conception concedes the authority of such communities to establish and maintain standard norms. In such a custodian role, it is argued, they protect the integrity of the language and prevent it from disintegrating into mutually unintelligible varieties. But this is to impose inappropriate *intra-national* norms on an *inter-national* means of communication, and so to deny the natural adaptive dynamic of the language whereby it necessarily diversifies to meet changing needs. The intelligibility of this varying language cannot be controlled by external fiat but will be internally regulated to the extent necessary for it to function as an effective means of international communication among its users (see Widdowson, 1997). The obvious point here is that the very

international nature of the language acts as a guarantee of its continuing intelligibility, which the imposition of intra-national controls would necessarily undermine.

One assumption that arises from the exclusive association of English with its communities of intra-national users, then, is that these communities have the right and responsibility to control its development, and therefore the authority to determine how it should be defined as a subject to be taught. So it is that teachers are enjoined to teach only 'real' English (Sinclair, 1997); but this reality is defined in terms of what native users have actually produced, all other uses of the language being, by implication, unreal.

A second assumption arises from the notion that English must retain its intra-national character no matter how international its use. This is that emergent users of the language will necessarily have to subscribe to the socio-cultural values of its native speakers and so are effectively complicit in perpetuating their dominance, whether they realise it or not. In this respect, it has been argued, imperialism is inherent in the language itself, so its international spread constitutes the extension of its influence and the instrument of its policies (Phillipson, 1992). In this case, the teaching and learning of English are in some degree charged with ideological significance, and teachers, it is argued, should be critically aware of what socio-political implications underlie their apparently innocent practices. Language pedagogy and politics are inextricably entwined (Pennycook, 1994; Canagarajah, 1999).

These problematic issues about the definition of learning objectives and appropriate norms for the subject arise for the most part because the pedagogic implications of the international status of the language as a lingua franca have not been adequately examined. In a way this is not surprising. The reason why English has become international is, historically, because of the political and economic power of its native speaker communities, and they have a vested interest in sustaining the illusion that the only real English is the one they provide. This being so, they are not disposed to recognise the contradiction that in so doing they in effect undermine the status of English as an international language, and remove the reason why

it figures so prominently as a curriculum subject. Over recent years, however, a growing body of research in English as a lingua franca (ELF) (e.g. Jenkins, 2000, 2007; Mauranen and Ranta, 2009; Seidlhofer, 1999, 2011) has prompted an increased awareness of the need to identify the properties of English as an international lingua franca and to consider their pedagogic implications. There is some recognition too that it follows from this that native users are no longer in a privileged position to pronounce on what needs to be taught in the name of English, or what the appropriate pedagogy should be for teaching it. The traditional orthodoxy still persists, however: that it is only native-speaker standard English that is worthy to be taught or worth learning. Old assumptions die hard, especially when there are vested interests to sustain them, but there are signs that the teaching of English as a subject in the future will change, in some parts of the world at least, to correspond more closely with the global role of the language and the needs of its emergent users.

**See also:** Authenticity; Non-native speaker teacher; Lingua franca; Linguistic imperialism; Pronunciation teaching; Standard language

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HENRY WIDDOWSON

## English for Specific Purposes

The term 'English for Specific Purposes' (ESP) is used to refer to the teaching and learning of **English** for work or study-related purposes. ESP courses are based on an analysis of learners' **needs** in relation to the learners' target discipline, workplace or profession. They aim to help learners enter

or progress in their chosen disciplines and fields. As ESP courses focus on languages and skills of direct relevance to the learners' real-world needs, they function as efficient means by which learners can reach their language learning goals. Thus ESP courses are understood to engender high levels of learner **motivation** and interest. ESP courses are sponsored and funded by government organisations, companies, universities, training colleges and secondary schools. Although ESP courses are taught in secondary education, especially in **vocational** training schools, most ESP courses are taught in higher education or workplaces and they cater for adult learners.

Three general branches of ESP can be distinguished – English for academic purposes (EAP), English for occupational purposes (EOP), and English for professional purposes (EPP). ESP courses can be devised for groups of students on the basis of broad common interests, such as business English or English for academic purposes courses catering for students across a range of business or disciplinary areas. Within each branch numerous sub-branches are possible. For example, in teaching a programme for the hospitality industry, the course developer or teacher might group students according to their workplace roles and teach courses such as English for hotel receptionists and English for restaurant staff.

ESP courses can be categorised according to the experience of the learners. Some ESP courses are devised for students who have not worked or studied in the targeted area. Such pre-experience ESP courses introduce students to the language and linguistic skills they will need to function in their prospective fields and may also introduce some subject content. During-experience ESP courses are developed for students who are working or studying in their fields at the same time and generally aim to provide language and literacy support. Post-experience ESP courses are developed for students who have worked or studied in their chosen field, often in their first language environment.

### Course development

Assessing needs and describing language use in the specific field are two important elements in ESP

course development. The assessment of needs indicates what should be included as course content. Descriptions of language use provide information about communication in the target work area or discipline and provide language content for the course.

**Needs analysis** is critical to the planning of an ESP course. Needs analyses are conducted before a course begins to help course developers select course content, decide the level of proficiency at which to pitch the course and required exit levels. Needs analyses are also conducted during a course for the purposes of fine-tuning the course content. Analyses can be made of a number of different areas. Target situation analysis aims to identify the types of language-based tasks entailed in working or studying in the area and the linguistic skills and knowledge the students will need to function in it. Present situation analysis aims to reach an understanding of the students' current knowledge and linguistic competency in relation to the level needed for effective participation in the target situation. Means analyses aim to understand the opportunities and constraints of the teaching context, such as how much time is available for the course and the teacher's level of background knowledge in the work or study area. This information allows the course developer to set realistic goals for the programme of study.

Various methods are used to assess needs and these include questionnaires. These methods are used to elicit stakeholders' perceptions of learners' needs. Present and past students, employers and academic course advisors can be questioned. Other means of assessing needs include observation of events in the work or study area and the analysis of documents such as job descriptions. A potential difficulty in needs analysis is the possibility that various stakeholders and students have differing perspectives of needs and disagree about what should be the course content.

Analysis of language use is an important aspect of ESP. Course developers try to understand how those in the target workplace, profession and disciplines use language in their everyday communications. In order to develop descriptions for teaching, course developers often investigate the linguistic features of written and spoken texts used in the target

situation or draw on descriptions available in books and published research articles. For example, in developing an ESP course for hotel receptionists, the course developer might record authentic interactions between receptionists and guests, and subsequently identify salient functions and features, such as how the receptionists open exchanges or ask for information. The descriptions of language use will then be used in instructional materials.

Similarly to developers of general English language courses, ESP course developers must decide what to include in the course. The ESP syllabus can be based on any type of unit or a mixture of units including skills, genres, functions, grammar, vocabulary, conceptual and/or cultural content and strategies. For example, in designing an EAP syllabus, the course developers may in accordance with the results of a needs analysis decide to focus the course on academic **writing** and **speaking** skills and specify particular sub-skills of writing and speaking as course content. Or, following the results of a needs analysis in developing an ESP course for air traffic controllers, the course designers may decide on a functional syllabus to include key speech acts, such as requesting clarification and checking facts.

### Materials and methodology

Since ESP courses are developed to cater for the needs of specific groups of learners, course developers and teachers often produce instructional materials in-house to reflect the precise areas of importance and difficulty revealed by needs analysis. In some branches of ESP, such as English for business and English for academic purposes, many published materials are available and in some cases ESP teachers use these and possibly supplement them with their own materials. However, in other branches, relevant published materials may not be available or materials may not be relevant to needs. Schools or departments that specialise in teaching a particular branch of ESP often develop a set of resources for teaching, including **textbooks**, worksheets and audio-visual materials. They may develop a corpus of authentic written and/or spoken texts from the specific work area or discipline that can be used for

teaching purposes. They may, for example, devise instructional tasks requiring students in using computer-based corpus analysis techniques to examine vocabulary or other language choices in the corpus of texts.

ESP teachers draw on a range of methodologies. However, methodologies that have been associated in particular with ESP include the use of authentic texts, the use of tasks to reflect activities practised in the specific work area or discipline, the use of **genre** analysis in teaching writing, the use of role play and scenarios of typical situations in the target workplace or profession in teaching speaking, and tasks requiring students to make observations on communicative practices in their target workplace or discipline. Some methods involve language and subject content being taught together (Content and Language Integrated Learning – CLIL). These include team teaching. For example, in co-teaching a class, the ESP teacher provides language information and responds to language queries and the subject expert provides conceptual information and responds to questions about content.

### Teaching ESP

Teaching ESP makes a number of demands on the language teacher. Often the teacher is needs analyst, course developer and instructor combined (Belcher, 2006). In teaching an unfamiliar branch of ESP for the first time, the teacher has to develop an understanding of the values as well as the communicative practices of the disciplinary area, profession or area of work. In some cases, ESP teachers have the opportunity to teach a branch of ESP in which they studied or worked. However, often this is not the case and the teacher has to be adaptable. As well as demands, ESP offers opportunities to teachers. The work can be diverse. Over time, ESP teachers often teach courses in a number of branches of ESP. They become familiar with work and study in areas that they might otherwise not find out about, and in preparing courses, ESP teachers often come to establish contacts with specialists in different areas.

**See also:** Adult language learning; Languages for Specific Purposes; Materials development;

Speech act theory; Task-based teaching and assessment; Text and corpus linguistics

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HELEN BASTURKMEN

## Error analysis

Error analysis (EA), a branch of **applied linguistics** popular in the 1960s, looked specifically at **second language acquisition** (SLA) whereas previously there was no generally accepted view that first (L1) and second (L2) language learning differed significantly. EA differs from **contrastive analysis** (CA) by proposing that learner errors are not just mistakes due to interference or **transfer** from the first language but evidence of underlying, universal learner **strategies**. Errors were to be seen as patterned and the task was to collect error data and identify the main types. The results drawn from the data could provide feedback for language learning theory and teaching. EA was, therefore, multi-faceted, being an area of interest for language teachers and linguists, promising both practical and theoretical outcomes. The results obtained were illuminating but problems with conducting EA eventually led to its marginalisation. EA is also linked to the concept of **interlanguage** (Selinker, 1972, 1992).

The emphasis placed by EA on the learner's powers of hypothesis formation in the process of

L2 acquisition was part of the trend towards a more student-centred approach (Candlin, 1984) and reaction against **behaviourism**. The demise of behaviourism led to a period of 'flux and agitation' according to **Chomsky** (Richards, 1984: 20), and this 'apparent lack of a linguistic paradigm for second language research' was, possibly, a 'propitious occurrence' (Richards and Sampson, 1984: 3).

As Chomsky pointed to the possibility of innate language abilities, then EA postulated that, with sufficient data, the processes of SLA could be unravelled. Corder's seminal paper of 1967 (Selinker, 1992: 1) outlined many themes, and after this EA received much attention.

Wilkins places the shift of focus onto SLA within CA and its aim of predicting where 'difficulties would be likely to occur' (Wilkins, 1990: 530). In CA, errors are identified as largely the result of L1 interference with learners using familiar patterns, which cause incorrect L2 forms. CA made fairly complex predictions about potential errors and this progressed SLA theory, although it had limitations which EA claimed to deal with. Although CA was concerned with errors, the emphasis tended to be on predictions, not descriptions, of learner behaviour.

It is expected that learners will make errors, but it is the status of these and what they may indicate that are important in EA. For Corder, 'the study of learners' errors is part of the methodology of the study of language learning' (1973: 267), and he distinguished between 'mistakes' and true errors. The former are performance errors, such as slips of the tongue, the latter are markers of where the learner is in terms of L2 **competence**. Mistakes are caused by many factors such as tiredness but, unlike genuine errors, are not indicative of the state of the learner's underlying knowledge of the language or 'transitional competence'. Corder also talked of the 'internal **syllabus**' learners have in L2 learning (1973: 268), which can be accessed through EA since errors are usually systematic and related to underlying systems.

Errors can also be either interlingual or intra-lingual. The latter may be the result of faulty or partial learning of the target language such as over-generalisation and over-simplification. The former result from L1 interference. Richards collected

samples of errors in L2 **English** produced by learners with a variety of L1s and then identified common errors (1984: 181). He assumed that the error types largely excluded reference to the L1 and some were 'interlingual' and indicative of processes being worked out by learners.

Dulay and Burt found that around 80 per cent of errors could be explained without reference to L1 interference (Ellis, 1994: 19). Rather than comparing L1 with the target language, the latter could be compared to the actual performance of learners to see what systematic error patterns emerge. Another problem with citing L1 interference as the main obstacle, as CA does, is that it downplays target language interference.

The degree of emphasis on L1 interference differentiates CA from EA, but this can be viewed as a complementary rather than oppositional link with EA; 'an important source of corroboration to the contrastive linguistic analyses in their claims for predictability of errors' (Candlin, in Richards, 1984: Preface, x). Corder, however, reaffirmed that **mother-tongue** interference was not the cause, noting that most teachers often know where problems may occur. They also encounter errors not predicted by CA, which can help to locate areas of 'interlanguage interference', but not account for many of the errors made (Richards, 1984: 182).

Analysis of errors can assist the formulation of explanations about SLA as well as contributing to the refinement of **teaching methods**. Recognising that not all errors are due to L1 interference was a significant divergence and aimed to produce more accurate information about learning processes. In moving towards the mastery of L2, error analysts suggest that learners develop a series of 'transitional dialects' (Corder, 1971) which are linked to the concept of interlanguage (Selinker, 1972).

Criticisms came as EA proved to be 'an imperfect research tool' (Ellis, 1994: 19). By focusing only on errors, researchers failed to see the 'whole picture' (Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991: 61). An overriding concern with errors also means insufficient attention to what learners do correctly. Problems with recognising errors additionally led to empirical problems with a lack of scientific **validity**. Teachers and researchers collecting 'errors' might actually have been collecting different things. Corder, for

example (1971), identified ‘covert errors’ – L2 forms produced by learners that are grammatically correct but do not actually mean to a **native speaker** what the learner intended and are really errors. James points to this problem of EA failing to recognise covert errors but believes prior CA would assist in this by accurate prediction (James, 1980: 186).

It is also true that errors are caused not only by cognitive processes but by external factors. Teaching methods and **materials** may be unsuitable or faulty, for example, thus producing mistakes which have nothing to do with strategies of innate language learning. It could be argued, though, that rigorous EA would pick up these factors and cite them as extraneous variables. L1 interference, as well, certainly cannot be dismissed, nor physiological factors.

James sees CA as offering simpler and better explanations than EA, which is ‘difficult, long-winded, and not plausible’ (1980: 148). Certainly it was a time-consuming process to collect, collate and analyse error data. James also rejects the notion that common errors made by learners with different L1s are proof that they are non-contrastive errors. He claims that so-called ‘universal’ errors might be instances of interference errors (1980: 185–6). EA should not only be compared in usefulness, however, to CA, with little to be gained by taking ‘an exclusive either-or approach’ (1980: 187).

Larsen-Freeman and Long saw the faults of EA as ‘too blatant for it to continue to serve as the primary mode of SLA analysis’ (1991: 62). EA became more of a research tool for specific problems and was incorporated into overall performance analysis, which looks at the totality of learner language performance. By the late 1970s, the theory of interlanguage and more general SLA theory, to which EA contributed, prevailed.

**See also:** Contrastive analysis; Genre and genre-based teaching; Interlanguage; Learning styles; Psychology; Second language acquisition theories; Teaching methods; Transfer

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## Esperanto

An international language designed for ease of learning and intended as a common, neutral second language for all. Launched in Warsaw in 1887 as 'the international language of Doctor Esperanto' (pseudonym of L. L. Zamenhof, 1859–1917), Esperanto is the only **planned language** to have achieved relatively wide use; between 5 and 15 million people are estimated to have studied it, although regular users probably do not exceed 1 per cent of this number. Most speakers live in Europe, but the movement has a long history in countries such as China, Japan and Brazil, and active users can be found in most countries of the world.

### Form and structure

Esperanto uses a modified Latin alphabet of twenty-eight letters; its phonology is similar to that of Italian or Croatian. A unique morphological feature is its use of word endings to mark parts of speech: nouns end in -o, adjectives in -a, adverbs in -e; the simple past, present and future tenses of every verb end in -is, -as and -os respectively, without distinction of number, person or gender. Word roots are invariant and can be freely combined with each other as long as the result is meaningful, e.g. *vid-o* (sight), *vid-a* (visual), *vid-e* (by sight, visually), *vid-i* (to see); *abl-o* (possibility), *abl-a* (possible), *abl-e* (possibly), *abl-i* (to be possible); combining these roots yields *vid-abl-a* (visible), *vid-abl-i* (to be visible), etc. Most word roots are drawn from Western European languages, with a small number of Slavic and non-European elements. Word order in a sentence is relatively free, similar to Russian; cases other than the nominative are distinguished by the use of prepositions or the accusative marker -n. Parkvall (2010) compares Esperanto's grammatical structure with a wide range of human languages. Less technical introductions include Richardson (1988) and Janton (1993). Jordan (1992) is a detailed reference guide for English speakers.

There is ample anecdotal and statistical evidence of Esperanto's relative ease of **acquisition** for speakers of both European and non-European

languages, although any level of mastery clearly demands greater time and effort from the latter. Among the factors that appear to increase learnability are the close relationship between written and spoken forms, the productivity of the word-building system, the low frequency of irregularities and idiomatic expressions, and the relative openness of the speech community to new learners. Attempts at quantitative comparison have generally estimated the rate of progress in Esperanto as four to twelve times that of other second languages taught under classroom conditions. An early study was conducted by Thorndike et al. (1933) and later overviews are provided by Maxwell (1988), Fantini and Reagan (1992), and Corsetti and La Torre (1995).

Such research has also frequently reported a positive propaedeutic effect on the learning of other languages. For instance, English secondary school pupils who studied Esperanto for a year were subsequently found to achieve better results after three years of French than those who studied only French for four years (Williams, 1965). The effects were strongest for pupils who scored low on a range of intelligence tests (Halloran, 1952). Similar results have been reported for native speakers of Finnish (learning Esperanto followed by German), German (Esperanto/English), Japanese (Esperanto/English) and Italian (Esperanto/French; see overviews listed above). Esperanto study has also been found to improve students' performance on general (native) language tests (Wood, 1975; Piron, 1986), and to enhance various other kinds of language awareness (Fettes, 1997).

A significant original and translated literature has developed in Esperanto (Janton, 1993; Richmond, 1993; Sutton, 2008), and the history and sociology of the movement (or language community) have also attracted scholarly attention (Forster, 1982, and references in Blanke and Tonkin, 2003). A lively account of the contemporary movement through the eyes of a novice can be found in Okrent (2009).

### Teaching

When Esperanto is offered as a formal subject in the public school system, it is usually a local initiative spearheaded by enthusiastic parents or

teachers. Only one national education system, in Hungary, currently offers Esperanto as an examinable subject at the high school level. However, small-scale educational projects involving Esperanto at the elementary school level are not uncommon, at least in the European Union. Examples include the British ‘Springboard to Languages’ project, which has experimented since 2006 with the teaching of Esperanto in several schools, and a set of cultural exchanges under the EU’s Comenius programme involving elementary schools in Britain, Germany and Hungary (2008–10). There is ongoing lobbying in several EU and South American countries to include Esperanto in the national language curriculum. An updated (but incomplete) list of current school-based initiatives is maintained by the teaching resource site [www.edukado.net](http://www.edukado.net).

While evidently connected to mainstream developments in language teaching, Esperanto pedagogy has its own distinctive traditions. Two of the most influential are the Cseh method, also known as the ‘direct method’ because of its reliance on oral Esperanto without translation, and the Zagreb method, which uses L1 translations to achieve rapid comprehension of a set collection of Esperanto texts and then trains learners in the active use of this core **vocabulary**. A catalogue of several hundred **textbooks**, **audiovisual** materials and computer-based courses is available at [www.edukado.net/biblioteko](http://www.edukado.net/biblioteko). Collaborators on this website have produced a comprehensive guide to the teaching of Esperanto (Kovats, 2009).

Since 2008, the Universal Esperanto Association, in partnership with the national Hungarian testing institute, has administered oral and written exams in Esperanto aligned with the **Common European Framework of Reference** (levels A1–C1). Through its affiliate organization, the International League of Esperanto-Speaking Teachers (ILEI), the UEA coordinates a network of national teacher associations in several dozen countries. There is, however, no international system of teacher accreditation, and the quality and content of Esperanto courses and programmes is very variable.

At the university level, Esperanto is usually taught within departments of linguistics, often as part of a course or programme in interlinguistics

(Blanke and Tonkin, 2003). The most important of these, a degree programme at Eötvös University (Budapest, Hungary), ran from 1969 to 2002; a somewhat less ambitious 2-year certificate programme is currently offered at Adam Mickiewicz University (Poznań, Poland). The North American Esperanto Summer Institute ran for 30 years as a credit programme at San Francisco State University (1970–99); after a few years at the School for International Training (Vermont), it moved to the University of California–San Diego (to 2010). Isolated courses in Esperanto and interlinguistics are offered in universities in North and South America, Europe, Asia and Australia.

Graduate theses on Esperanto are concentrated in the fields of linguistics, history, comparative literature and sociology. A fairly complete overview of current publications appears in the section ‘Auxiliary languages. International languages’ of the *MLA International Bibliography of Books and Articles on the Modern Languages and Literatures*.

## Critique

Esperanto has been criticized on a number of grounds, most often on the basis of a priori arguments rather than empirical studies. Its alleged lack of a cultural base, its European lexicon and phrase structure, and its perceived association with naive utopianism or a rootless cosmopolitanism have all been frequently cited (e.g. Mead and Modley, 1967). A more telling barrier to its wider use in education, however, is its lack of economic and demographic power and political recognition, which all but rule out its inclusion in the ‘foreign language’ curriculum in many countries. Teachers wishing to teach Esperanto in a classroom setting must therefore usually relate it explicitly to broader curricular goals such as multicultural education, social studies, or **language awareness**. Works which could help to define or articulate such goals include Eichholz and Eichholz (1982), Piron (1994), Richmond (1993), and Tonkin (1997).

**See also:** Cultural awareness; Lingua franca; Native speaker; Planned languages; Planning for foreign language teaching

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MARK FETTES

## European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML)

The ECML is a Council of Europe Partial Agreement – involving (May 2011) thirty-four of the Council's forty-seven member states – based in Graz, Austria, and has been serving the community of language education professionals in Europe since 1995.

The ECML is a unique intergovernmental centre which offers concrete approaches to dealing with issues and challenges facing Europe's multicultural societies in a period of unparalleled change and mobility. The ECML seeks to make a positive difference to language education in Europe by supporting the implementation of **Council of Europe** language education policies through:

- advancing the quality of teaching and learning languages;
- developing and promoting innovative approaches;
- fostering dialogue between language education researchers, practitioners and decision makers.

The ECML works in synergy and coherence with other units of the Council of Europe operating in related areas. The activities within the ECML's programmes are assisting member states in implementing policy recommendations and reference instruments developed by the Language Policy Division ([www.coe.int/lang](http://www.coe.int/lang)), and address the relevant aspects of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages relating to education ([www.coe.int/minlang](http://www.coe.int/minlang)).

Through its medium-term programmes of activities consisting of projects, workshops and conferences to which participants from the member states are invited, the ECML provides a platform for cooperation with experts, associations and institutions involved in enhancing European standards in language education. It also maintains Europe-wide

networks for teacher trainers, researchers and educational administrators.

The hallmark of the ECML programmes is the organisation of international projects. Following a call for submissions, selected project teams engage in pan-European cooperation. Participants invited to project workshops or network meetings in Graz are acting as multipliers, disseminating project results to their colleagues and networks in their countries.

The second medium-term programme of ECML activities (2004–07) grouped twenty-two projects under the title Languages for social cohesion – language education in a multilingual and multicultural Europe ([www.ecml.at/socialcohesion](http://www.ecml.at/socialcohesion)).

The Centre's third medium-term programme (2008–11) entitled Empowering language professionals: Competences – Networks – Impact – Quality ([www.ecml.at/empowerment](http://www.ecml.at/empowerment)) encompasses twenty-three different projects addressing evaluation, continuity in language learning, **content and language integrated learning** and plurilingual education.

The concept for the ECML programme 2012–2015 is entitled **Learning through languages**. Promoting inclusive, plurilingual and intercultural education. The programme aims at supporting provision of good quality education for all learners by developing and implementing inclusive, plurilingual and intercultural approaches to education.

All publications resulting from the ECML's activities are available on the ECML website and can be downloaded free of charge ([www.ecml.at/publications](http://www.ecml.at/publications)). The expert public is also invited to follow ongoing projects on the dedicated websites providing comprehensive information on all projects.

The ECML also hosts a website dedicated to the European Day of Languages celebrated each year on 26 September. This attractive website features interactive games, an events database and many promotional ideas for the day. Each year in September this website attracts over 300,000 visits (<http://edl.ecml.at>).

## Website

[www.ecml.at](http://www.ecml.at)

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## European Language Council/ *Conseil Européen pour les Langues*

The ELC/CEL is a permanent and independent international association constituted under Belgian law. Its legal seat is in Brussels; its permanent secretariat is at the Freie Universität Berlin (Germany).

The association was officially launched in July 1997 by some fifty universities and associations with support from the European Commission, and its aim is to promote linguistic and cultural diversity in Europe through transnational co-operation at higher education level. It seeks to contribute to the quantitative and qualitative improvement of knowledge of European languages and cultures. In this, it is guided by the conviction that an important aspect of European citizenship is a multilingual and intercultural competence and that, because of this, the promotion of linguistic diversity has to be one of the main educational **objectives** in an increasingly integrated Europe.

In pursuit of its general aim, the CEL/ELC seeks to provide a forum for debate and joint policy development for institutions of higher education as well as for professional and academic organisations with a special interest in language studies; to initiate, launch and manage European projects in education, training and research designed to meet the cultural, social and professional needs of an integrated Europe; to represent the interests of its members in dialogue with European institutions as well as with other national and international organisations; to gather, exchange and disseminate information relevant to the field; to evaluate methods of teaching and research in language studies; to enhance the quality of language learning and language teaching.

Membership in the CEL/ELC is open to all institutions of **higher education** in Europe and to all pertinent international and national associations based in Europe. The CEL/ELC holds a major international conference every 2 years; it convenes task forces dedicated to key issues to conduct workshops, prepare policy papers and launch projects. It co-operates with the European Commission, the

European Parliament, and the **Council of Europe**. The CEL/ELC publishes an Information Bulletin twice a year.

### Website

[www.celelc.org/](http://www.celelc.org/)

## European Language Portfolio

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) is a means of **assessment** which enables learners to keep a record of their language learning achievements both in formal education and training and outside these contexts. The ELP began as an initiative of the **Council of Europe Modern Languages Project** and is closely linked to the **Common European Framework of Reference** (CEFR). It was launched in the European Year of Languages 2001 as a tool to support the development of plurilingual and intercultural education.

The aims of the ELP reflect those of the Council of Europe itself, such as promoting:

- the development of mutual understanding among European citizens;
- diversity of cultures and languages;
- the development of the individual language learner;
- language learning as a life-long process;
- the clear description of qualifications to promote mobility.

The development of a ELP was first proposed at a symposium in Rüschlikon in Switzerland in 1991 to complement the **Common European Framework of Reference** (CEFR) (CCC, 1992). Following a feasibility study (1995–97), proposals for development were accepted by the Council of Europe in 1997 (CCC, 1997), and a pilot phase (1998–2000) agreed covering all stages from **primary education to adult education and training**. Although portfolios have been used for some time for assessment in fields such as art and teacher training where students have to present for assessment practical work completed over extended periods, the ELP is an ambitious initiative: it provides a

self-assessment document for languages which is recognised in all phases of education and training and across forty-seven member states. By 2010, 111 ELP models had been accredited.

The ELP is a personal document in which learners set out, within a standard, internationally recognisable format, their experiences of learning languages in successive stages of education and/or training. It provides learners with an opportunity to reflect on those experiences, and teachers and employers with evidence of them. It offers learners an opportunity to record and value their linguistic expertise and any intercultural experiences acquired beyond formal examinations and qualifications, such as the use of a **minority or heritage language** within their own community. The ELP therefore comprises three parts: a language 'passport', recording formal qualifications; a language biography, describing in more detail their **objectives** and progress in the languages they know and their intercultural learning experiences, such as visits and **exchanges** or work experience abroad; and a language dossier in which the learner may compile samples of work or other evidence to support and illustrate the language biography. It follows that the ELP should be progressively updated by learners and new objectives set as their language learning develops and career transition points are reached, such as changing school or applying for a job.

The main principles for the development of the ELP are that it:

- is the property of the learner;
- has both a learning and a reporting function;
- is based on the CEFR and draws on it for its terminology and descriptors;
- serves, and is manageable by, a range of learners.

In a sense, there is a tension between the ELP's learning function ('process') and its reporting function ('product'). For the former, it needs to be flexible in layout and length to meet the needs of learners for reflection and self-assessment and provide a source of **motivation**. For the latter, it needs to present information in a compact, manageable and immediately recognisable format for users, including employers.

The widely used descriptors of language performance of the CEFR are needed in the ELP for comparison across national frontiers. However, these may not be immediately accessible, for example, for employers without a specialist background in language learning and teaching and may not be 'user friendly' for younger or inexperienced learners. The ELP descriptors therefore need to be adapted to context and some mediation by trainers or teachers is needed, including support for objective-setting and discussion of learning strategies.

The Council of Europe has produced a range of documents to support trainers and teachers. These include banks of descriptors, the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters* and the *Manual for Language Test Development and Examining*. Various projects of the **European Centre for Modern Languages** (ECML) have produced training materials to support the development and implementation of the ELP.

In cooperation with the European Union, the Council of Europe has developed jointly, as part of *Europass*, a *Language Passport*, an electronic version of the standard Language Passport for adults, based on earlier work on the ELP.

**See also:** Assessment and testing; European Centre for Modern Languages; Self-access; Untutored language acquisition

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## Websites

European Language Portfolio: [www.coe.int/portfolio](http://www.coe.int/portfolio)  
Europass: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu>

## Evaluation

Evaluation can be defined as a systematic study designed and conducted to assist some audience to assess an object's merit and worth (Stufflebeam, 1999 and 1994), the first being 'measured against professional standards' and the second 'against institutional and societal **needs**' (Scriven, 1994). Educational evaluation is the process of characterizing and appraising some aspect(s) of an educational process.

### Methodological underpinnings

The underlying logic of evaluation and its general methodology are shared across evaluation fields. In order to reach evaluative conclusions it is usually necessary to identify two kinds of premise: factual premises (e.g. about nature, performance or impact) and value premises (e.g. about the relevant legal or scientific principles) (Scriven, 1999).

Evaluation is usually conceptualized in terms of several major dimensions: fields, goals and purposes for evaluating, models/approaches/strategies and types of evaluation, the audience for an evaluation, evaluators, evaluated entities, methods of data collection and standards and criteria for judging merit and worth.

Underlying the entire array of evaluation fields discussed in the literature – no less than twenty depending on the type of entity evaluated – are transdisciplinary evaluation and meta-evaluation, a practice that demonstrates the reflexive nature of evaluation and the reflective integrity of its practitioners, providing for its consistency. Other conventional fields include programme, personnel, performance, policy, proposal, and product evaluation (Scriven, 1999).

The generic goal of evaluation is to provide 'empirically-driven feedback' to a variety of audiences to influence decision-making or policy formulation (Trochim, 2002). Evaluations may also be conducted to identify the effects of a programme, establish its value for money, justify future courses of action, to compare methodologies, materials, etc., identify areas of improvement, and others (Alderson and Beretta, 1992).

### Types of evaluation

There are many different types of evaluation depending on the object and purpose of inquiry. The most important basic distinction is that between formative and summative evaluation. Formative evaluations strengthen or improve the object under evaluation, while summative evaluations, in contrast, examine the effects or outcomes of some object – they summarize it by describing what happens subsequent to delivery of the programme or technology.

Formative evaluation includes needs **assessment**, evaluability assessment, structured conceptualization, etc. Summative evaluation can also be subdivided into outcome evaluations, cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis, meta-analysis, etc. (Trochim, 2002).

Another possible distinction is between process and impact evaluation. Process evaluation is targeted on implementation, on the interpretation of the programme's intentions and on the experience of conducting the activity. One of the difficulties involved consists in collecting reliable information on how successfully the implementation is conducted. Impact (or 'outcomes', or 'product') evaluation looks at whether the 'outcomes' of the programme would have happened without the intervention, and there is a credible causation between the activity and the impact. Depending on the project, impact evaluation may have policy or decision-making implications (Silver, 2004).

Recent evaluation research lays emphasis on developmental evaluation as *an additional distinct purpose* to formative and summative types (Donaldson et al., 2010).

### Culture-related considerations

Discussion about alternative Western (naturalistic and rationalistic) and Eastern evaluation paradigms has begun (Russon, 2008). The main differences between them may have serious implications for the evaluation process. In the Western judgmental, empirically based paradigms, reality can be known, the inquirer and the object of inquiry are differentiated, truth can be known through logic, and there is a link between action and results. The Eastern counterpart views reality and truth as being

largely beyond the human mind; the inquirer and the object of inquiry are undifferentiated; unattached action is recognized, and judgment gives way to insights into the evaluated entity. Evidently, many of the concepts presented run counter to the thinking of Western culture in general and Western evaluation methodology in particular, which may result in a number of methodological considerations and practical recommendations for evaluators. As a conclusion from extensive study of the literature, Russon suggests (2008) that evaluators should seek new tools to approximate reality in order to understand it in limited ways. Such tools would include metaphors, analogies, and systems models. In order to maximize the benefits of non-differentiation, the inquirer should practise hyper-empathy and pay attention to their intuition. Truth statements that are paradoxical in nature would require the evaluator to question common sense assumptions about the way the world works. Evaluators would embrace ambiguity and uncertainty inherent in the evaluation context. It would also be important for an evaluation report to present a balanced view of the various perspectives of the object of inquiry. Formal logic models would be abandoned in favour of causal loop diagrams and systems archetypes. The adoption of transcended conventional values would lead to the replacement of traditional conceptual dichotomies of either/or judgment with mindful observation of the object of inquiry. The evaluator would avoid socially conditioned interpretations of observations which can lead to new insights about aspects such as the timeframe in which the object of inquiry exists or the insubstantial nature of existence.

## Evaluation in education

Traditionally, there are two common purposes in educational evaluation. Educational institutions usually require evaluation data to demonstrate effectiveness to stakeholders, and to measure performance for marketing purposes. Individual educators may undertake evaluation if they intend to continuously review and enhance the learning process.

Educational evaluation largely draws on models, strategies, and approaches of social sciences. Quite often researchers use these terms as equivalents.

However, many argue that the term *model* is too demanding and opt for *approaches* or *strategies* instead (Scriven and Donaldson, 2003; Stufflebeam, 1999). However, irrespective of the actual terms used in the literature, these overarching perspectives on evaluation fall into four major categories:

1. *scientific-experimental models* prioritizing impartiality, accuracy, objectivity and validity of the information generated;
2. *management-oriented systems models* focusing on comprehensiveness in evaluation, placing evaluation within a larger framework of organizational activities;
3. *qualitative/anthropological models* emphasizing the importance of observation, the value of subjective human interpretation;
4. *participant-oriented models* with the focus on the evaluation participants (Trochim, 2002).

There is no inherent incompatibility between these strategies; each of them brings something valuable to the evaluation process. In fact, integration of various strategies for more reliable results has been recommended. Besides, Scriven's view (Scriven and Donaldson, 2003) of evaluation as a transdiscipline helps to reconcile differences in approaches and puts evaluation into a broader conceptual context.

As for educational research, the following four paradigms can be singled out (Alexander and Hedberg, 1994):

1. *objective-based*: follows the scientific tradition and is straightforward to apply, but disregards unintended outcomes or individual differences.
2. *decision-based*: useful for multi-level or extensive programmes but is difficult to implement and expensive.
3. *value-based*: uses formative and summative evaluation, acknowledges the importance of unintended outcomes and learners' perceptions of the learning experience; however it may leave important questions unanswered.
4. *naturalistic approach*: organizes evaluations around the participants' key concerns, but some of them may have little educational worth.



## The audience

Within a vast range of stakeholders in education, three classes are identified (Guba and Lincoln, 1989): agents (e.g. institutional authorities, faculty and administration, decision-makers, future employers); beneficiaries (e.g. pupils, student teachers, parents); and victims (e.g. dropouts of a course). Different parties involved may have different agendas, views and values which need to be accounted for and reconciled. Issues of social justice may need to be considered in evaluation practice, enabling evaluators to challenge existing evaluation ontological, epistemological, theoretical, and methodological practices. The four major areas where educators can intersect social justice and evaluation in classroom and field experiences are (a) theoretical knowledge, (b) methodological knowledge, (c) interpersonal knowledge, and (d) professionalism (Thomas and Madison, 2010).

## Stages

The usual stages in an evaluation are planning, implementing, interpreting, reporting, using, evaluating. Planning is probably most important since it is difficult to adjust later for mistakes or omission at this stage. However, since evaluations take place in a real world for a variety of reasons, there is hardly any ideal planning and design, nor there is one best way to conduct an evaluation. Some see triangulation (or cross examination, Alderson and Beretta, 1992; or a best-fit approach, Stufflebeam and Shinkfield, 2007) as a solution thereof. Triangulation implies gathering data from a variety of sources and, as with the best-fit approach, combining methods in order to confirm findings across methods and to increase the credibility and validity of the results.

## The evaluators

Generally, the evaluator's role is to

- be objective;
- collect data rigorously and scientifically;
- feed back to the audience and participants;
- understand and describe the project and make judgments;
- be involved with the project from the outset;
- define the nature and methodology of the evaluation professionally;
- monitor the 'process';
- focus on the 'life' of the project in its relevant wider contexts;
- investigate the 'outcomes' of the project;
- judge whether the project gives value for money;
- conduct an external evaluation;
- help participants to conduct an internal evaluation, in addition to the external one, or as a substitute for it (Silver, 2004).

However, distinctions can be made between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' on the one hand, and professional and amateur evaluators, on the other (Alderson and Beretta, 1992). As members of a programme/project/institutional staff, internal evaluators are believed to be better positioned for formative studies. They are thought to have a better insight into the evaluated entity and local context, to be more participant-friendly and to have the time to stay on and facilitate the utilization of the findings. Potential disadvantages are partiality and subjectivity.

External evaluators may provide a fresh perspective, may seem to have greater credibility and less bias and thus be more suitable for summative studies. Potential disadvantages include the hostility towards outsiders and their lack of in-depth knowledge about the evaluated entity. The choice between insiders and outsiders will depend on the purposes for the evaluation.

Many argue in favour of collaboration between internal and external evaluators for greater objectivity. However, objectivity cannot always be guaranteed since evaluation is largely based on judgments. To resolve this dilemma, the advocacy method of evaluation can be used.

Another distinction is between evaluators with formal training in evaluation and experts in other fields who have some or even no on-the-job training in evaluation. The ideal would be a team comprising both kinds of experts.

With responsive constructivism (Guba and Lincoln, 1989) gaining ground, it is deemed reasonable to involve various groups of stakeholders, regarding them as equal partners in the design,

implementation, interpretation and resulting action of an evaluation.

With the growth of multiculturalism, evaluation teams may include experts from various cultural backgrounds working in cultural contexts other than their own. This introduces a new, cultural dimension in the evaluation process where evaluators are seen as cultural beings whose culture-specific values may affect the determination of merit, worth or significance of an evaluated entity (Wehipeihana et al., 2010). Hence, additional ethical and methodological issues may arise.

### Evaluated entities and data collection

Typical evaluated entities in education are educational goals, teachers, learners, courses, programmes, projects, **syllabuses**, school initiatives, methods, instructional **materials**, institutions and administrative personnel.

Educational evaluation involves data collection and analysis, using quantitative and qualitative **research methods** employed by education and social science researchers. The quantitative methods study entities in terms of predetermined variables while qualitative ones are descriptive and discovery-oriented, allowing an in-depth analysis of selected issues. They are associated with open-ended interviews, direct observation, introspection and documentation review (Patton, 1990).

### Criteria and standards

The sources of criteria could be expert opinion in the case of merit evaluations and the assessment of local **needs** and values where worth is the focus of interest. The criteria can be quantitative or qualitative, predetermined or responsive.

For an evaluation to be **valid, reliable** and accurate, it is imperative to have exacting standards to adhere to. In the field of educational evaluation, for example, the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (USA/Canada) provides three sets of standards for evaluations: *The Personnel Evaluation Standards* (2008), *The Program Evaluation Standards* (2011), and *The Student Evaluation Standards* (2003).

Each publication elaborates a set of standards for use in a variety of educational settings. The standards

provide guidelines for designing, implementing, assessing and improving the identified form of evaluation. Each of the standards has been placed in one of four fundamental categories to promote educational evaluations that are proper, useful, feasible, and accurate.

### Evaluating programmes of language teaching

Out of the twenty-two models for programme evaluation described to date (Stufflebeam, 1999), the best ones are decision/accountability, utilization-based, client-centred, consumer oriented, case study, democratic deliberative, constructivist, accreditation, and outcomes monitoring. In language teaching, however, the majority of publications focus on case studies rather than generalized models. While the rationalistic approach requires a comparison between an experimental and control group on pre- and post-tests, other approaches are based on the investigation of different focal points according to the purposes of the study and the needs, values and expectations of the parties involved (see Patton, 1990). However, despite the fact that summative, product-oriented evaluations are still prevalent in language education, many argue for a balance between naturalistic and rationalistic perspectives.

Common means of evaluating teaching may include course evaluations, letters from students and colleagues, in-class/peer evaluations, the receipt of teaching awards, course materials and texts and evidence of innovative strategies and practices. Each of these measures brings with it its own restrictions and limitations. However, course evaluations or student ratings are one of the most common tools used to assess classroom teaching (Gravestock and Gregor-Greenleaf, 2008), and some believe the most heavily weighted for personnel decisions. Student evaluations are also one of the most controversial and highly-debated measures.

By a wide margin, course evaluations are used for summative purposes as a means to make personnel decisions (e.g. hiring, tenure, promotion, and annual review) based in part on a student's rating of an instructor's teaching effectiveness. Gravestock and Gregor-Greenleaf (2008) caution against the use of instruments not specifically designed to provide formative feedback for this

purpose, and that separate instruments should be designed to provide summative and formative feedback respectively.

Course evaluations, however, may have their own limitations, such as bias, lack of statistical reliability and of ability to accurately gauge the teaching effectiveness of faculty. However, a significant majority of researchers consider student evaluations to be useful (Gravestock and Gregor-Greenleaf, 2008).

As for evaluating teachers, the two most frequently mentioned purposes are accountability and professional growth (improvement). Evaluating accountability involves prescribed areas of performance and establishes the degree of achievement of minimum levels of competence. Evaluation for improvement aims at enhancing the professional development of teachers who are at least minimally competent. Various variables – the characteristics of individuals, of evaluation systems and of the context of evaluation – are likely to foster the professional growth of competent teachers (Duke and Stiggins, 1990). Teacher self-evaluation, too, can bring about improvement in practice.

Materials evaluation is an indispensable part of teachers' everyday work. It may involve informal and formal assessment of available teaching resources (**textbooks**, workbooks, guides, visual aids, educational software, etc.) with regard to the curricular, local contexts, types of an educational establishment, of learning needs and expected outcomes. Thus, materials evaluation is also of interest to head teachers, teacher trainers, curriculum advisors, learners, textbook authors and publishers, although these groups can have conflicting opinions about what makes a good resource. As elsewhere in evaluation, evaluators here can be concerned with establishing both merit, the value of the materials as they stand, and worth, value considered in relation to actual classroom use.

Evaluating the quality of language learners' output has been high on the agenda for over half a century. A number of competence-based guidelines – the ACTFL Guidelines (1986, 1999), the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) and the **Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)** (Council of Europe, 2001) – have been elaborated. They have received major attention,

especially with regards to their effects on the definitions of language and language policy (Fulcher, 2008).

**See also:** Assessment and testing; Needs analysis; Planning for foreign language teaching; Quality management; Research methods; Syllabus and curriculum design; Teacher thinking

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## Exchanges

Educational exchanges are ways of enabling contact between members of different cultures and nations, thus opening up unique, but at the same time highly complex learning opportunities. As fundamentally holistic learning environments, they can be a potential means of facilitating and contributing to growth, not only in the realms of language and culture, but also in personal and academic or professional domains. There are many different possible formats, some lasting only a couple of days or weeks, with other more extended frameworks designed for a whole school or academic year. Among the many and varied formats there are, for example, school exchange visits and third place encounters, individual home-stay arrangements, either on a reciprocal or a non-reciprocal basis, as well as field and study trips, international internships for vocational trainees, study abroad, teaching assistantships or exchanges between school or university teachers.

In addition to these face-to-face encounters, web-based, virtual exchanges have begun to establish themselves as a new approach, and this frequently happens in combination, for example, in the preparatory or follow-up phase of a real visit. Some stays abroad are arranged individually. Most exchanges, however, are organized either by

educational institutions such as schools or universities, often with the support of a national exchange agency. For example, in Europe, they are organized within the framework of larger programmes (e.g. ERASMUS or COMENIUS), or they are arranged by regional and international non-profit organizations such as the German–French Youth Organisation (*Deutsch-Französisches Jugendwerk DFJW/Office franco-allemand pour la jeunesse OFAJ*) and American Field Service (AFS). In China, as a second example, the China Centre for International Educational Exchanges, affiliated with the Ministry of Education, is an agency for sending students to study abroad by providing consultancy and helping with admission process; Chinese Bridge is a short-term visit programme organized by the overseas **Confucius Institutes**, which send students to China for Chinese language and cultural experience.

Spending time abroad for educational purposes is not a recent phenomenon but one with a long history. For example, in the late nineteenth century there were several early precursors of learning abroad experiences. At that time, young British gentry and wealthy American youth were taking ‘grand tours’ of continental Europe for general cultural edification (Gore, 2005), and young American postgraduates were seeking advanced scholarly training at German research universities (Walton, 2009). Newly qualified foreign language teachers were also spending time abroad in the countries whose languages they taught at home (Ehrenreich, 2008). After the two world wars, programmes and organizations were established, and they paved the way for exchanges in the hope of achieving reconciliation among the nations through early encounters of the younger generations. A later extension of this aim became the ideal of fostering cohesion among Europeans and inspiring European citizenship. In the light of globalization, the scope has been expanded even further, and international exchanges are now seen as a means of educating the young to become global citizens, helping them to develop a sense of social responsibility and mutual understanding.

In the past, bilateral school exchanges made it possible for young people, who may otherwise not have had the opportunity, to go abroad and experience a new and unfamiliar culture firsthand.

Today, however, with the advent of low-price mass tourism, travelling to a foreign country is no longer anything exceptional. The underlying rationale for educational exchange programmes has therefore had to be redefined. It was observed as well that without additional pedagogical elements, such visits, unfortunately, often remained at a rather superficial level and did not always succeed in establishing close communicative interaction between the exchange parties. Such observations, of course run counter to the firmly entrenched belief (at least in European discourse on the topic, though less so in the USA, cf. Gore, 2005) that exchanges and sojourns have a positive effect and lead, more or less automatically, to improved foreign language proficiency and better intercultural understanding. Yet, sceptical anecdotal evidence of this kind has been corroborated by the growing body of systematic qualitative research into the nature and impact of school exchanges and, predominantly, study abroad (e.g. DuFon and Churchill, 2006; Magnan and Back, 2007; Pellegrino, 2005). The fact that the beneficial effects generally associated with exchange programmes in terms of linguistic, cultural and personal development are achieved best if such stays are integrated into the school or university curriculum is now increasingly recognized by exchange practitioners and study abroad scholars alike.

Educational support is needed before and after, but also during, the actual exchange visit; and similar pre-, during-, and post-exchange activities have been implemented in the contexts of school exchanges, extended home-stays and study abroad. Pre-departure activities include exploratory and reflective tasks aimed at familiarizing students with certain aspects of the exchange partners’ culture(s) and at developing an awareness of their own cultural embeddedness. In addition to **vocabulary** input and skills and strategy training, linguistic preparation should also take into account, and this should be discussed with students, the importance during the exchange of self-positioning for active communicative engagement in bi- or multilingual groups with either **native speakers** or other non-native speakers.

New technology provides helpful tools for tailor-made pre-exchange linguistic instruction (for exchanges at the tertiary level, see Ylönen, 2008)

or as a means of initiating pre-departure virtual encounters between the exchange partners on the web. Once abroad, ethnographic tasks are useful methodological tools for encouraging contact with members of the host community and for promoting processes of intercultural discovery (Byram, 1997a; Roberts et al., 2001; Snow and Byram, 1997). Back home again, the returnees need ample opportunity to reflect on and digest their experiences. As a very crucial stage in the exchange cycle, this is the phase in which individual and collective impressions are shared and analysed and in which the learning processes that have been initiated through the exchange are developed further in the context of the classroom. The students' exchange-induced linguistic achievements, which according to research are most likely to occur in the sphere of spoken language and in terms of increased self-confidence and motivation (and less likely in the realm of, for example, grammatical accuracy), need to be recognized and incorporated into classroom activities and assessment procedures.

Two of the more recently developed types of exchange formats, project-based exchanges and third place encounters, are efforts to remedy some of the shortcomings of conventional bilateral formats that may persist despite imaginative pedagogical tasks. Working on a joint project, for example, has been shown to help stimulate close group interaction and, at the same time, to create sufficient shared 'food for talk'. An additional advantage of third place encounters is the fact that they constitute an environment in which all students meet at the same level with no one being privileged in terms of language or cultural territory. All the cultures involved, the students' cultures as well as the culture of the third place country, are possible objects of discovery; and in terms of communication, the multilingual situation requires conscious language management of everyone.

Byram's (1997b) model of intercultural communicative competence provides a useful starting point for designing activities geared towards intercultural learning. This model identifies four interrelated factors which play an important part in developing intercultural competence among foreign language learners. Building on a general attitude of curiosity and openness and on an adequate degree of cognitive

knowledge of one's own and other cultures, the skills of interpreting and relating different cultures to each other as well as the skills of discovery and of interaction, need to be learnt in order for a foreign language speaker to develop an informed critical awareness and an identity as an intercultural speaker. These different 'savoirs' can also be usefully employed as analytical categories for a qualitative **evaluation** of intercultural learning outcomes. With respect to intercultural learning and a potential student change of attitude towards one's own and other cultures, it is possible that hopes are generally too high, especially in the case of short-term stays. We therefore need to keep in mind that developing intercultural understanding and critical cultural awareness is a life-long and cumulative learning process.

Whether or not former exchange students have 'changed' as a result of their international home-stay experiences is an issue that is explored in a unique mixed-method study with former participants whose sojourns date back up to 50 years (Bachner and Zeutschel, 2009). While the experience has indeed been a positive one for the majority of students, thus supporting the prevalent 'good effects premise', the study also points out that a noticeable minority of respondents do not share this view. The study's findings thus underscore the fact that exchanges are highly complex realities, whose impact is notoriously difficult to assess. Generalizations across different exchange formats, and even across individuals, need to be treated with caution.

Organizing educational exchanges places great demands on teachers (Grau, 2001). The necessary expertise is acquired through personal learning abroad experiences and, more importantly, through **teacher education** and the provision of specialized courses dealing with the pedagogy and methodology of exchanges and international encounters.

**See also:** Acculturation; Acquisition and teaching; Attitudes; Intellectual competence; Internet and language learning; Psychology; Study abroad; Tandem learning

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## Exercise types and grading

Practice activities are at the heart of any learning process. Their aim is to consolidate learning and improve performance. Ideally, foreign language practice activities should help learners progress from strongly teacher-supported controlled exercise types to automatic and eventually autonomous reception and production of the foreign language they are learning. Throughout the history of foreign language teaching authors have tried to design exercise typologies that could meaningfully integrate a variety of exercise types into a coherent whole of progressive practice activities. Taking into account insights from educational psychology, developmental psychology or linguistics, exercise typologies attempt to grade language learning.

### Exercise typologies

Exercise typologies organise exercise types into a systematic whole that holds the promise of grading

the learning process in such a way that steady progress will be made, which will eventually lead to **autonomous learning** and to the acquisition of a high level of knowledge, **skill** and **competence**. Exercise typologies are expected to be scientifically well founded, integrating insights from educational psychology, developmental psychology and taking account of the state of the art of the subject's related disciplines.

Despite their aura of objectivity, presenting themselves as logical organising principles on which courses for teaching particular subjects can be based, exercise typologies have been much debated. Given the complex nature of the learning process, this should not surprise. Typologies not only tend to vary with teaching methods and approaches; they also appear to be in need of adaptation depending on the characteristics of the learner group and the learning situation. Factors as varied as **age**, **learning style**, degree of **motivation**, level of involvement, attitudinal development, prior knowledge, degree of assistance, etc., appear to affect the level of difficulty of particular exercise types. The relative degree of complexity of the contents that need to be acquired also affects the relative degree of translatability of particular exercise typologies into actual teaching practice.

### Principles underlying exercise typologies

Despite these reservations, when observing the principle of *meaningful learning* as defined by Ausubel (1977), observing De Corte et al.'s (1981) *taxonomy of cognitive objectives*, and putting Craik and Lockhart's (1972) concept of *levels of processing* into practice, exercise typologies are helpful instruments for curriculum development, course evaluation or for planning a sequence of practice activities.

According to Ausubel, materials can only promote learning when they are meaningfully related to what students already know, and when they contain cues and exercise types that help students process the new contents and relate them to the contents of their existing schemata (Ausubel, 1977; Ausubel et al., 1978). It follows that exercise types which are too far above or too far below the learners' level of competence may be detrimental to the

learning process, because they either do not challenge or overcharge them.

De Corte's taxonomy of intellectual operations is based on Guilford's 'structure-of-intellect-model' (1969) and resolved some of the hierarchical problems inherent in Bloom et al.'s taxonomy of educational objectives in the cognitive domain, published in 1956. It comprises seven categories which are ranked under two main headings, as is apparent from Table 4. The hierarchy's underlying principle is that of an increase in the complexity of cognitive operations and in the degree of independence in information processing envisaged. Exercise types observing this gradual progression from low to higher levels of involvement, from receptive to productive tasks, from teacher guided to learner independent learning, can be assumed to make for graded consolidation and application of what is learnt.

According to Craik and Lockhart (1972), who developed the notion of 'levels of processing', incoming information is processed by various operations, which can be referred to as perceptual-conceptual analysis. The level of analysis reflects an individual's attention. If individuals deem incoming material worthy of long-term recall, they will analyse it differently from material they judge relatively unimportant. Whether the stimulus is processed at a shallow or at a deeper level depends on the nature of the stimulus, i.e. the exercise type, or the time available for processing, but also on the subject's own motivation, attitudes, feelings, goals, and knowledge base. The operations performed during input thus determine the fate of the incoming information.

Table 4 Taxonomy of cognitive objectives (after De Corte, 1973)

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|                                            |                                          |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <i>I Receptive-reproductive operations</i> |                                          |
| 1                                          | Apperception                             |
| 2                                          | Recognition                              |
| 3                                          | Reproduction                             |
| <i>II Productive operations</i>            |                                          |
| 4                                          | Interpretative production of information |
| 5                                          | Convergent production of information     |
| 6                                          | Evaluative production of information     |
| 7                                          | Divergent production of information      |

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## Exercise types and grading in language learning

In foreign language teaching a large battery of exercise types has been developed over the years. In accord with developments in the concept of foreign language competence, the preference for particular exercise types evolved. Thus, pattern drill exercises and substitution tables can be said to have been characteristic of the **audio-lingual approach** to language teaching, translations of the **grammar-translation method**, and exercise types geared towards the acquisition of the so-called four skills – **listening, speaking, reading and writing** – of **communicative language teaching**.

Exercise types can be classified according to a number of perspectives.

- First, it is possible to order them on the basis of their formal characteristics and, thus, to distinguish types, such as multiple choice, matching, classification, substitution, completion, transformation, etc., exercises.
- Content is a second principle according to which exercise types can be classified. Whereas with some exercise types the focus is on **pronunciation, grammar or vocabulary**, with others the focus will be on activating, consolidating or improving learners' listening, speaking, reading or writing skills. Still other exercise types may be classified as aiming at the learners' acquisition of independent learning skills, intercultural competence or compensation strategies, classifications which are still under development.
- A third perspective attempts to classify exercise types on the reception–reproductive–productive scale.
- A fourth one distinguishes between exercises that typically aim at either accuracy or fluency in language production.

It may be possible to apply still other criteria to classifying exercise types in use in foreign language teaching. It is important to realise that none of the criteria should be used in isolation. Whereas in some cases gap filling or completion may be considered a reproductive exercise type, in other

cases they have to be considered productive. Similarly, whereas, on the whole, the teaching of grammar, pronunciation or vocabulary can be considered to be accuracy-oriented, since it is interested in getting learners to construct their sentences in a way that sounds acceptable, in producing language that sounds right or in using appropriate words to express meaning, some vocabulary or grammar exercises may lead into exercises that aim at improving fluency. Vice versa, listening and reading exercises may be used for learning accuracy, for the acquisition of grammar or vocabulary. Although with most classroom procedures a clear orientation one way or another is evident, a lack of awareness of the orientation of exercise types can lead to confusion and inefficient learning.

**See also:** Syllabus and curriculum design; Textbooks; Text types and grading

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LIES SERCU

# F

## **FIPLV – *Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes***

The World Federation of Language Teachers (FIPLV), founded in Paris in 1931, is the only international multilingual association of teachers of living languages. It has non-governmental organisation (NGO) and operational relations status with UNESCO.

Important among its many aims is the promotion of the teaching and learning of living languages in order to facilitate and improve communication, understanding, cooperation and friendly relations between all peoples of the world. Members of FIPLV include international monolingual associations, federations of language teachers and national multilingual and monolingual associations. FIPLV organises a world congress every three years and is developing its website to provide an ongoing forum for the exchange of information amongst language teachers and associations worldwide.

The supreme authority of FIPLV is the World Assembly, which brings together the representatives of member associations every three years. The World Council meets annually, and the Executive Committee of the Federation meets biannually.

FIPLV enjoys a strong relationship with the **Council of Europe**, and is part of its NGO network. Its official address is at the **European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML)** in Austria, and it is actively involved in the Professional Network

Forum coordinated by ECML. As an NGO, FIPLV is frequently consulted by UNESCO, and in association with UNESCO, actively participates in initiatives of the International **Linguapax** Committee on the theme of the contribution of language teaching to peace.

### **Website**

[www.fiplv.org](http://www.fiplv.org)

## **Foreigner talk**

Foreigner talk (FT) is a cover term for the following three notions:

- 1 a contact language, ‘**pre-pidgin**’, the first stage in the continuum ‘pre-pidgin-pidgin-**creole**-decreolization’ emerging sporadically in the situations of trade, enslavement, navigation and migration (Belikov and Krysin, 2001; Rickford and McWhorter, 1998);
- 2 a specific reduced register of simplified grammatical and lexical resources used when talking to a child, a foreigner, a dog or a machine (Ferguson, 1971, 1975; Ferguson and DeBose, 1997).
- 3 an adaptive linguistic behavior of second language teachers in the classroom when the teacher resorts to limiting lexicon and cutting down on the morphology and syntax of the target language (Chaudron, 1993: 85; Henzl, 1979; Kolesnikova and Dolgina, 2001: 176).

## Characteristics of foreigner talk

Born of the necessity to communicate and a failure to learn the partner's language, FT is a reduced form of a language consisting of content words, usually without inflexions, affixes and copula, and relies on word order to express semantic relations between words. Phonologically FT is very close to the **mother tongue** of the speaker, though rather inconsistently so. Normally it is accompanied by gestures, mimics and body language to facilitate understanding. Other non-verbal means of establishing and keeping contact are slower rate of speech, increased loudness and numerous repetitions. If the situation of contact in trade, enslavement, navigation or migration repeats itself, then the range of grammatical, lexical and phonological variation in FT turns out to be more restricted and systematic. Then there is a chance of pre-pidgin becoming a regular **pidgin** used by speakers of different native languages. Unlike pidgin, FT lacks such a trait as the combination of elements from different languages (Rickford and McWorter, 1998).

Ferguson suggests that 'a major theoretical justification for the study of varieties of simplified speech is the insight they might give into such notions as basic, simple or deep which figure in general theories of language' (1975: 1), and there are widespread if not universal patterns of FT which involve conventional reduction processes similar to those found in pidgins and **creoles**. Explorations into the genesis of the latter suggest that four different processes are involved in creating FT as well: accommodation, imitation, telegraphic condensation and conventions (Arends, 1995). Crystal also writes about accommodation, or convergence, and the modifications which affect several areas of language, including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, speech rate, use of pause, and utterance length in talking to foreigners or young children (Crystal, 1997: 51). The complexity of the process implies that both the speaker and the listener contribute to the FT creation: in actual speech events the influence and imitation may work both ways. This accounts for the fact that a reduced form of the language may not be understood by a **native speaker** of the language in a different situation.

## Associations with other forms of talk

The association between FT and baby talk is built upon the often quoted paper by Ferguson (1971). Further research demonstrated their similarity based on the usage of content words and word order, as well as their heterogeneity as far as repetitions and omissions are concerned: child language omissions occur primarily for prosodic reasons (non-prominent items in the parents' input), though may also be found when a child cannot assign a meaning to a linguistic form, while pidgins tend to omit redundant items (Aitchison, 1995: 71).

Second language teaching poses another situation for simplifying lexicon and grammar to meet the needs of learners in the classroom. However, the teacher's FT strategy is criticized for minimizing the learners' chances of being exposed to natural speech in classroom interaction. Other methods, such as paraphrasing, repetitions and rhetorical devices are recommended to facilitate **listening** comprehension instead (Chaudron, 1993: 85; Kolesnikova and Dolgina, 2001: 176).

Social **attitudes** towards FT in a given community are a controversial issue. Ferguson (1975) found through classroom experiment that students, although they possessed an ability to reduce their language form in imitation of FT, generally expressed a negative attitude towards the register. One of the main reasons for the existence of FT and for the low level of foreign language proficiency that non-native speakers have is social distance between the communicants. If it is large, it will inevitably lead to reducing the number of contacts, lack of **motivation** and consequently to all kinds of modifications and reductions (Ferguson and DeBose, 1977; Long, 1983b). Native speakers who use grammatical simplification can be perceived as unwilling to communicate with foreigners or having no respect for them. Non-native speakers may regard such kind of simplified talk as insulting (Berzeford et al., 1980). However, some scholars argue that FT may be regarded as a gesture of goodwill on both sides, which leads to better understanding and makes communication more efficient (Hatch, 1983).

## Research

Various aspects of FT have been studied. In the 1970s researchers concentrated mostly on the form of language, but in the early 1980s a new term, 'FT discourse' appeared, to refer to using various strategies to change the structure of verbal interaction. The strategies are, for example, asking for clarification and explanation, stating and confirming facts, simpler topic development, changing the topic, paraphrasing, etc. (Long, 1983a, b).

Research studying the linguistic features of FT in German was based on native speakers' communication with adult foreigners (Jakovidou, 1991) and showed three modes of communication: the native speaker speaks as usual; the native speaker uses 'another language' (FT); the native speaker varies his speech depending on to whom exactly he/she is talking. Three linguistic parameters were analyzed: no deviations from usual native speech, full deviation (full change of a linguistic form), partial deviation (wrong endings, for instance). Most of the deviations occurred within articles, prepositions and negative forms: most articles were omitted, negative forms partially deviated from the norm (for example, the word 'nicht' was changed into 'niks'), prepositions showed full deviations which depended on their functions in the sentence. As far as verbs were concerned, syntactic and morphological analyses suggest that in most cases copula were omitted, less regularly notional verbs were replaced by infinitives.

According to K.S. Fedorova, Russian FT has no simplification mechanisms which destroy the grammar system of the Russian language. FT is characterized by redundancy and excessive accuracy. FT strategies include repetitions, giving responses in advance, summing up and correcting the foreigner's talk (Fedorova, 2002).

**See also:** Creoles; Lingua franca; Native speakers; Pidgins

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TATIANA SHEVCHENKO AND LARISA KARPOVA

## Fossilisation

Fossilisation is the term used to describe incomplete language learning. This is identified by certain

features of the learner's first language being different from the speech of the target population, marking the point when progress in that aspect of the target language stops and the learner's language becomes fixed at an intermediate state. This is considered to occur because the learner's internalised rule system differs from that of the target system. Fossilisation can take a number of forms, such as fossilised accent or syntax, in which case it might approximate to pidginisation. Fossilisation would normally be judged in comparison with **native speaker** skills and would be seen as a permanent feature of the learner's language, although some authorities (Brown, 1980) describe it as 'relatively permanent'.

Second and foreign language learning, in clear contrast to first language learning, can generally be characterised by a lack of success, with few learners achieving complete mastery. The dynamics of language learning mean that the **interlanguage** of the learner constantly needs to change as new **vocabulary** and structures are encountered and absorbed. Language development is marked by the learner's language becoming steadily more complex and sophisticated. However, the general lack of success of second and foreign language learners would lead us to anticipate that there is likely to be a point when this progress comes to a halt and learning stops. It is this point which is characterised as fossilisation.

Fossilisation is identified by comparing the learner's **interlanguage** to target language norms. In this way it is possible to identify language structures which differ from native speech. For example, the learner may generalise past tense endings in English to include all verbs, and therefore come up with 'buyed' instead of 'bought'. Such examples may well occur, too, in first language development, but the fact that here it is a transitional stage in their learning process, before correct forms are acquired, points to how the interlanguage of second and foreign language differs by being susceptible to fossilisation.

The metaphor of fossilisation clearly suggests the permanence of the process. We have seen that linguistically such features should represent only a temporary and intermediate stage in the language learning process, as they do in first language

learning. If fossilisation is a permanent process, why and when does it occur? For the language teacher and learner these questions clearly have considerable importance. We would want to know what has to be done to try and avoid a process which, because it is linked to the general failure of learners to achieve native speaker competency, has wide implications.

The fossilisation theory is associated with Selinker and his work on interlanguage (Selinker, 1972). He identified five central processes associated with fossilisation: language **transfer**, transfer of training, **strategies** of second language learning, strategies of second language communication and overgeneralisation of target language material. For Selinker the 'combination of these processes produce what we might term entirely fossilised IL [interlanguage] competence' (Selinker et al., 1975). Language development has therefore stopped.

Although initially fossilisation was identified with **adult** second language learning (Selinker, 1972), it was extended, as McLaughlin emphasises, to include child second-language performance, with the proviso that this took place 'when the second language was acquired after the first language and when it occurs in the absence of native-speaking peers of the target language' (Selinker et al., 1975; McLaughlin, 1987).

Selinker in his study of 7 year-olds in a French immersion programme in Canada, found similar patterns of fossilisation as for adults. He identified three areas of error in the children's speech patterns which were associated with the strategies the pupils adopted in order to communicate effectively. These were language **transfer**, overgeneralisation of target language rules and simplification. So an example of language transfer showing lexical confusion would be: '*Des temps*' (sometimes), of overgeneralisation of past tense endings: '*Il a couré*' (he ran, instead of *couru*), and the use of the infinitive for all tense forms demonstrated simplification (quoted by McLaughlin, 1987).

Ellis (1994) examined possible reasons for fossilisation and found no single cause, with both internal and external factors having an effect. Among the internal factors he considered were **age** of the learner, and the lack of desire for **acculturation**. For external factors he listed lack of

learning opportunity, communicative pressure and the nature of the feedback available to the learner. Ellis suggested that there is a need to analyse the relative importance of these different factors and how they interact, but that we are still unable to do so. He also pointed to the fact that, with the exception of transfer, none of the other processes listed by Selinker as marking the cognitive dimension of fossilisation have been taken up by theorists.

Fossilisation is generally seen as a negative trait in foreign language learning, but for Stevick: 'people acquire as much of a language as they really need for what they really want' (Stevick, 1988). This places a rather different emphasis on the concept by analysing the learner's **needs** rather than the nature of their performance and how well it approximates to native speaker norms. Providing communication can take place satisfactorily, it may be relatively unimportant to the learner that they have a foreign accent or make some grammatical errors. This ability to communicate satisfactorily with reduced grammatical structure and vocabulary is illustrated by **pidgin** languages. Pidginisation is seen by Schumann to approximate to fossilisation (1976). He points to the evidence suggesting that pidginisation might characterise all second language learning and that under certain conditions of social and psychological distance it persists, i.e. learning stops and fossilisation sets in.

The critical issue is at what point fossilisation occurs. While not requiring perfect mastery of the target language, which is achieved according to Selinker (1972) by only 5 per cent of learners, it is necessary to achieve a level of learning which allows adequate communication to take place.

We can see that for the adult learner who has already spent a number of years using the second language in the target country, fossilisation would be likely to occur once an acceptable level of language skills, related to specific individual needs, had been achieved. This might be less evident for the child learner. The fact that Selinker has specifically included children's foreign language learning in the fossilisation process raises a number of interesting points in terms of the permanence of the phenomenon. Here, a change in linguistic environment or increased **motivation** might well lead to elements of language which had previously

been fixed at an intermediate stage becoming fully acquired. In this situation, because the process is not permanent, fossilisation would be an unsuitable description. For language material which became reactivated following a stagnant period, 'dormancy' might be a more accurate description, with for example vocabulary dormancy referring to words which were only partially known becoming fully acquired. In this situation, learning has not stopped but is temporarily suspended unless, or until, there is a significant change in the linguistic environment.

The permanency of fossilisation has also now been questioned by Selinker (1992), who modifies 'the definition of fossilisation to an empirically more manageable concept of plateau in L2 learning rather than the cessation of learning'. He considers that 'it is impossible to show that a given individual has stopped learning'.

Fossilisation matches some of the characteristics of the acculturation, pidginisation theory of Schumann (1976). Both theories are concerned with incomplete language learning. Fossilisation however, includes instructed language learning while the acculturation pidginisation theory is associated with natural language learning. However, the two theories are interconnected because we have seen that acculturation is described as a factor in fossilisation and the process of pidginisation has been identified by McLaughlin (1987) as the point at which 'the learner's development fossilises'.

Fossilisation is a recognised feature of second and foreign language learning. It is to be hoped that research will provide us with indications of how fossilisation can be avoided and the dynamic process of language development maintained.

However, for McLaughlin, the interlanguage theory and therefore fossilisation has had a relatively minor impact on pedagogy. 'Researchers have been primarily interested in describing learners's systems and little concern has been given to pedagogical concerns' (McLaughlin, 1987).

**See also:** Acculturation; Interlanguage; Learning styles; Pidgins; Psychology; Second language acquisition theories; Universal grammar; Untutored language acquisition

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## Français fondamental

*Le Français fondamental (1er degré)* was developed between 1951 and 1954 by a team of **French** language researchers and teachers (M.A. Sauvageot, M.R. Michéa, M.G. Gougenheim, M.P. Rivenc and others) in order to make more effective



the promotion of **French** as a foreign language. It consists of: (a) a number of *special lists* comprising certain structural words (such as articles, pronouns, conjunctions, etc.), interjections, counting words, indicators of quantity, chronology, points of the compass and relational terms; (b) an alphabetically ordered *general word list* of 1,445 items in all (1,176 lexical words and 269 grammatical words); and (c) recommendations for the selection and grading of various aspects of French **grammar** which are to be taught initially, whereas the treatment of other aspects is kept for a later point in time.

The selection of this basic **vocabulary** and grammar which is in principle open for further additions, was made first on the basis of the familiar criterion of frequency – which encompassed also the criterion of *range*, i.e. distribution across a variety of texts – and second on the basis of a new criterion of ‘availability’. The investigation of frequency was founded – for the first time in the history of vocabulary statistics – on an *oral* language corpus of 312,135 words in total, consisting of transcribed tape recordings of 163 informal, spontaneous conversations about everyday topics with 275 speakers from all levels of society and from various regions of France. At the time, this survey and the very project of *le Français fondamental* gave rise to very intense scientific and political debate (Document 36, 2006).

Concrete nouns, whose value and usefulness do not correspond with their general level of frequency because they are highly context- and topic-specific, were not selected by the frequency criterion. In this case the criterion of availability was used. This criterion was developed largely by asking pupils to write for each of sixteen topic areas twenty nouns which they considered to be useful.

*Le Français fondamental 1er degré* was extended with a further 1,800 words of *Le Français fondamental 2ème degré* taken from a written corpus of newspapers and reviews.

*Le Français fondamental 1er degré* is still considered to be valid as a basis for the selection of vocabulary and grammar in **textbooks** for the teaching of French. None the less a review of this pioneer work of the 1950s with equally careful and updated methods of investigation might be useful.

The up-dating needed is particularly important not only for ‘*mots disponibles*’ (available words) but also for the concept of the units investigated. A first step in going beyond the counting of individual words was made in the *Inventaire thématique et syntagmatique du français fondamental* (1971) by R. Galisson, in which collocations of nouns, verbs and adjectives were arranged under thematic headings. Unfortunately this was not developed any further. Larger lexico-grammatical units, which determine language use as *formulaic speech*, could be introduced instead of listings of individual words and grammatical structures. Furthermore the alphabetic ordering, which has no particular significance, could at least be complemented by a statement of frequency which would make transparent the distribution of different classes of words, of individual words within word classes (e.g. the most frequent verbs) and – in accord with a greater stress on language use – of the most frequent syntagms (such as *c’est*) with functional content.

An extension of listings of vocabulary and grammar with lists of speech intentions, topics, situations and **notions**, as is to be found in the curriculum documents of the **Council of Europe** (**Threshold Level**, *Niveau Seuil*) and in the *Volkshochschule*-Certificate or the ministerial guidelines of the Federal Republic of Germany, is not a solution to the problem of making a language inventory, created for teachers and textbook authors, directly applicable for use in the classroom.

**See also:** *Alliance française*; CIEP; CRÉDIF; Vocabulary

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## Fremdsprachendidaktik

*Fremdsprachendidaktik* (FD) is a term traditionally used in universities and in-service training in German-speaking countries to refer to the scientific discipline that deals with foreign language learning and teaching in the context of schooling. As foreign language (FL) learning is not exclusively restricted to this educational context, FD is additionally concerned with informal ways of FL learning, such as a stay abroad in a country where the FL is spoken and in **content and language integrated learning (CLIL)** courses where the FL is used as the medium of communication in non-language related school subjects.

Moreover, the role of informal learning has become more important, as learners are increasingly exposed to a great amount and to various types of FL input in the electronic media and in advertisements, and also because there are more opportunities to use the FL communicatively, especially in lingua franca situations (cf. Ehrenreich, 2009). These developments have broadened the scope of FD. In addition to FL learning and teaching, FD as a field of study now deals with aspects of informal FL acquisition and with the relationship between different foreign languages and directs the attention to pluri- and multilingualism (Meißner and Reinfried, 1998).

With regard to formal FL learning, FD is concerned with the particular FLs taught in **primary**, **secondary** and **vocational schools** and in institutions of **adult education**. In line with this emphasis on specific languages, FD as an academic subject is divided into language-related fields of study such as the learning and teaching of **English/French/Spanish/German/Russian**. In certain regions of Germany the languages of neighbouring countries,

e.g. Dutch along the border with the Netherlands or Polish near the border of Poland, can additionally play a role in FD. Furthermore, immigrant languages and internationally important FLs are gradually gaining a greater momentum, even in school curricula. Inevitably, such developments in formal education tend to affect the choice of languages dealt with in FD, and the field of study of FD is determined by the specific conditions of the different school types. When a foreign language began to be taught from **primary school** to the end of **secondary education**, there was a tremendous development in the research focused on the needs and competencies of young FL learners. This research deals with the question of **age** as much as with the **textbooks** and picture books that are used in the primary school FL classroom.

### *Fremdsprachendidaktik as a discipline*

In the structure of the university, FD is a fairly young scientific discipline. It has its roots, on the one hand, in pedagogy (including sociology) and learning psychology, and, on the other hand, in the departments of modern languages that developed in German universities in the second half of the nineteenth century. FD was first established as an academic discipline in colleges of education in Germany after World War II, when foreign language learning became an obligatory subject – mainly English – in almost all types of secondary school. Later, in the 1970s and 1980s, the demand for more professional teachers became a public issue and, as a result, most of the colleges of education were integrated into the universities in order to improve the academic standards of the teaching profession and to open up the job opportunities for the students enrolled in the respective fields of study. In the course of these changes, FD became a firmly established scientific discipline in universities with a tradition in **teacher education**, mostly in the language departments, in some cases also in the faculty of education.

At more or less the same time, *fremdsprachenlehr- und lernforschung* was developed in some universities in Germany to take the place of FD and, in addition, **applied linguistics** was introduced so as to improve the practical relevance of linguistics for

the language teaching profession. For FD these developments were an indication that its scientific status and standing were not yet firmly established enough especially with regard to its research profile. In more recent years, the scientific field of study of FD had to be adapted under the impact of international and national large-scale student assessment studies such as PISA or PIRLS or DESI. This time it was the quantitative empirical research paradigm of educational psychology and empirical pedagogy that highlighted the problem that FD had to find and strengthen its position in a field of research rivals.

Looking at the historical origin of FD, it becomes clear why a diversified field of study and different research methodologies are indispensable features of this scientific discipline. In the early days of FD, the discussion of **research methods** did not yet play a significant role, because the new discipline was mainly concerned with collecting knowledge based on the methodological experience of FL practitioners or on small-scale observation, and it made information available from pedagogical psychology and linguistics. As FD developed its scientific profile more systematically and became a well established academic discipline, answers had to be found to the question of what type of research method was conducive to investigating the different facets of this growing discipline. An additional incentive to reflect on research methods was given by the proponents of *Sprachlehr-und-Lernforschung* (Bausch et al., 2003, 1995, 1989). As a consequence of these changes, FD is now an interdisciplinary discipline at the crossroads of pedagogy, psychology, sociology, linguistics, and literary and cultural studies.

## Research

In line with the different research traditions in pedagogy, research is either based on the traditions of the humanities or on the qualitative and quantitative research methodology of empirical studies. After approximately 2000, the impact of the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages** (CEFR) and, related to it, an increased focus on FL competences, national standards and large-scale studies have underlined the importance

of the quantitative tradition. Furthermore, there is a connection between FD and **linguistics**, especially **applied linguistics**, psycholinguistics and **second language acquisition** research, because the investigation of the mental processes involved is relevant to a deeper understanding of the network of factors that have an impact on the FL acquisition and learning process. Moreover, firm links with the study of FL literature and culture can be detected in the FD research where processes of textual comprehension and inter-cultural and inter-textual understanding are analysed (Hallet, 2002). This pattern of research interests at the crossroads of related academic disciplines is typical of FD as a scientific discipline in its own right (cf. Hass, 2009).

As in other disciplines, shifts in research paradigm have occurred in the short history of FD. One major shift was the change from a teaching method approach to a learner and learning centred perspective. Numerous research projects have investigated the complex network of variables and factors involved in FL learning, and the teaching methodology had to be adapted to take care of the learner's **needs** (Vollmer et al., 2001; DESI-Konsortium, 2008; Beck and Klieme, 2007). In ways similar to second language acquisition studies, it was the intention of some of these investigations to substantiate the theory of FL stages of development (Pienemann et al., 2006) and to create a deeper understanding of the cognitive and affective processes especially with regard to learning to learn, learning awareness and learner strategies (Raupach, 2009; Nold, 2009; Haudeck, 2008; Finkbeiner, 2005). The respective research methods in these studies include both quantitative and especially qualitative designs, from large-scale data collection and analysis to case studies with thinking aloud protocol, the writing of personal diaries, oral diaries, structured interviews and analysis of learner data with computer text programs. The shift to a learner centred perspective was then modified and corrected due to the public debate in Germany about the accountability of the educational system, which resulted from the impact of large scale studies such as PISA. FL teacher education became a new large scale research field (Nold and Roters, 2010).

Moreover, real FL communication is a new focus in the classroom in line with a major shift to FL competences in the curricula and in connection with the rise of **task-based fl learning and teaching**. This shift in emphasis and methodology is clearly reflected in both large scale quantitative and small scale qualitative research (DESI-Konsortium, 2008; Legutke, 2008; Timm, 2006; Kurtz, 2001). At the same time, the linguistic means of expression, although still important, have become subservient elements or sub-skills in the larger concept of FL communication and in the respective curricula. In the context of these changes, **corpus linguistics** is important in FD (Schlüter, 2002). It is one of the central aims of this research and the methodological innovations to make the FL classroom a more authentic experience for the learner. The renewed interest in the **authenticity** of FL classroom communication coincides with the emphasis on FL competences. It is due to the impact of the CEFR and the related process of standardization and the introduction of national standards that FL **competences** have become a cornerstone of reform in FL education in Germany (Harsch et al., 2010; Porsch et al., 2010; DESI-Konsortium, 2008; Beck and Klieme, 2007). The concept of **competence** now also includes intercultural competences, which form a link between learning the FL competences of listening, speaking, reading and writing and mediation, on the one hand, and dealing with the inter-cultural topics that are central to FL learning and teaching, on the other. Several concepts and models of **intercultural competences** are the focus of current research (Byram, 1997; Byram and Hu, 2009; DESI-Konsortium, 2008).

In the course of the development of FD, there has been an enormous increase in studies centring around the use of expository and especially literary texts, more recently also film analysis. Older traditions in teaching FL literature emphasized the importance of structural aspects of texts and text analysis. It was the role of FD to show how texts had to be analysed, applying the findings of academic literary studies, and to develop a methodology of teaching FL literature and texts. The more recent shift to a learner centred approach is here reflected in a new role for the reader or listener, who is involved in the process of interpretation as a

member in a community whose task it is to construct meaning based on texts (Bredella and Burwitz-Melzer, 2005; Delanoy, 2002; Hallett, 2002; Leitzke-Ungerer, 2009). This reader centred approach has triggered off a great number of studies in FD that highlight the process of meaning construction in the FL classroom, allowing for creative activities in dealing with **literary texts**, and it has created a bridge between literary interpretation and intercultural learning (Bredella and Christ, 2007). At this point the hermeneutic research tradition of the humanities is combined with the pedagogical innovations that have promoted the idea of the learner centred classroom. This complex concept of teaching FL literature and texts has opened up a new field of empirical research. It is a major aim of such studies to investigate the processes of meaning construction under the constraints of the FL classroom (Bredella and Burwitz-Melzer, 2005; Delanoy, 2002).

FD is now a firmly established academic discipline, at least in the context of German-speaking countries. Both in its field of study and its research results and awareness of possible research methods, it has reached a level of recognition and independence such that it can have an impact also internationally. For this purpose, it may need English as an international **lingua franca**. One current example that shows FD can play a significant international role is task-based learning and teaching (Müller-Hartmann and Schocker v. Ditfurth, 2010). Other examples are language testing and evaluation in the context of the CEFR (Harsch et al., 2010; Nold et al., 2009; Alderson et al., 2006; Alderson et al., 2005) and intercultural competence (Byram and Hu, 2009). There is enough scope for further positive developments.

**See also:** *Didactique des langues; Handlung-sorientierter Unterricht; Research methods; Teaching methods*

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GÜNTER NOLD

## Fremdverstehen

*Fremdverstehen* (F.) ('understanding of the foreign') is a form of intercultural understanding which has been developed in the postgraduate programme 'Didaktik des Fremdverstehens' (see the collection of essays in Bredella and Christ, 1995; Bredella et al., 2000; Bredella and Christ, 2007). The following three aspects are essential for F.

### 1 The interdependency of inner and outer perspectives

In order to understand how others think and feel and how they justify their actions we must assume an inner perspective and see the world through their eyes. We must reconstruct their frame of reference and their world view by transposing ourselves into their situations. This is a complex process in which we cannot disregard ourselves since the reconstruction depends on our knowledge about others and our imaginative openness to their different beliefs and values. Adopting an inner perspective is indispensable for F. Without it 'Fremdes' (other) is reduced to 'Eigenes' (own) and distorted. Without it we would be unable to learn how others see us and could not have the experience that things which appear to be meaningless from our outer perspective can become meaningful. Yet F. also comprises an outer perspective. We must see things

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with our own eyes; we not only register what is foreign and different but respond to it. F. is dialogical. This includes, for example, that we will criticize beliefs and values of a foreign culture we regard as inhumane. F., as the interdependency of inner and outer perspectives, creates a 'third space' (see below) in which we can explore what is at stake in understanding others and perceive how it transforms us.

## ***2 The interdependency of collective and individual identities***

Human beings do not exist independently of others, because they are dialogically created in interactions with them. In this process they acquire collective, social identities which prescribe how they have to behave in order to be understood and accepted. Since collective identities are part of the individual **identity**, people feel insulted and violated if they are regarded by others as inferior. This is the thesis in Charles Taylor's influential essay 'The Politics of Recognition'. He points out that a person or a group of people 'can suffer real damage, real distortion', if their collective identities are mis-recognized and 'if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible image of themselves' (Taylor, 1994: 25). Since the images of ourselves are dependent on the images others have of us, 'the politics of recognition' includes F.

In his comment on Taylor's essay, Appiah argues that those who have suffered from mis-recognition of their collective identities must learn 'to see these collective identities not as sources of limitations and insult but as a valuable part of what they really are'. If one is Black in a racist society, Appiah claims, 'one has to deal constantly with assaults on one's dignity'. In this situation it 'will not be enough to require being treated with equal dignity despite being Black', but it will be required that one be 'respected as a Black' (Appiah, 1994: 161). This implies that the Whites must change their 'confining or demeaning or contemptible image' about Blacks by assuming an inner perspective that will lead them to an awareness of the humiliating effects of such images. This underscores the inherent connection between F. and 'the

politics of recognition'. Here novels, plays and short stories can play an important role in making us aware of how others feel and think and in sharpening our sensitivity regarding the effects of negative images (see Bredella, 2002 and 2010). F. is indispensable for correcting mis-recognized collective identities.

Yet they must not be regarded as absolutes and as homogeneous. After having pointed out how important the recognition of collective identities is for Blacks and homosexuals, Appiah criticizes collective identities if they prescribe 'too tightly' how their members have to behave: 'It is at this point that someone who takes autonomy seriously will ask whether we have not replaced one kind of tyranny with another' (1994: 162). It must be recognized that members of a collective identity are differently positioned and that not all of them are equally committed to its beliefs and values. This indicates, as Habermas points out, that we must not regard collective and individual identities as opposites. They are mutually dependent on each other. Collective identities are not pre-given and do not prescribe how we have to behave because we are involved in creating them: 'The identity of the individual is interwoven with collective identities and can be stabilized only in a cultural network that cannot be appropriated as private property any more than the mother tongue itself can be' (Habermas, 1994: 129). For Habermas, collective identities are not an end in themselves but are 'supposed to serve the recognition of their members' (ibid.: 130). From this insight he draws the conclusion: 'The ecological perspective on species conversation cannot be transferred to cultures' (ibid.: 130).

Such an ecological perspective would not only subordinate individual identities to collective ones but would also ignore the existence of multicultural identities and the difficulties of defining the boundaries between collective identities. This insight does not imply that collective identities have lost their significance in a global world. It only makes us aware of the fact that we must not essentialize and reify them but explore the dynamic interdependency between collective and individual identities. This insight is also stressed by Kramsch (1993: 9–10), who shows in detailed interpretations

that the understanding of others and ourselves results from the interdependency of *text* (as expression of an individual's thought and intentions) and *context* (as expression of a speech community's knowledge and expectations).

### 3 The interdependency of 'Eigenes' and 'Fremdes' ('own' and 'foreign')

As Straub points out, we can only understand what is different if we pay attention to the distinction between 'Eigenes' and 'Fremdes': 'What seems to be "different" and "alien" can only be seen from one's own perspective – and this applies to scientific research as well: otherness and alienness are relationally structured' (Straub, 2006: 184). 'Eigenes' and 'Fremdes' are not ontological but relational terms. Nothing is foreign in itself but only in relation to us. Hence 'Fremdes' can become 'Eigenes', and 'Eigenes' can become 'Fremdes' (Bredella and Christ, 1995 and 2007). F. as a dialogical process produces a 'third place' in which 'Eigenes' and 'Fremdes' can be considered from different perspectives and related in new ways. Kramsch introduced the term 'third place' 'for eschewing the traditional dualities on which language education is based: L1/L2, C1/C2, NS/NNS, Us/Them, Self/Other'. Yet third place is misunderstood if it is regarded as a place in which dichotomies have been dissolved: 'Third place did not propose to eliminate these dichotomies, but suggested focusing on the relation itself and on the heteroglossia within each of the poles' (Kramsch, 2009: 199). F. neither abolishes nor does it erect unbridgeable boundaries between dichotomies but directs our attention to their interdependency. This is overlooked by those who assume that globalization makes boundaries between 'Eigenes' and 'Fremdes' disappear so that we can live beyond them in a transcultural world (for a critique of transculturality see Bredella, 2010: 126–46). Before we can develop a new third position between 'Eigenes' and 'Fremdes', we must adopt an inner perspective and understand the differences between them. For example, if we as members of a monotheistic culture want to learn something from understanding a polytheistic culture, the recognition of the differences between them is the presupposition for

polytheism being able to transform our concept of religion (Kimmerle, 2006).

**See also:** Human rights; Intercultural competence; Literary texts and intercultural understanding; Nationalism

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LOTHAR BREDELLA

## French

Although the designation *Français Langue Etrangère* (French as a Foreign Language) appeared in France in the 1960s, it was in the 1970s–1990s that it became established at the national and international level with the widespread use of the acronym 'FLE'. This domain is different from that of French as a Second Language, which describes

everything which was associated at different points in time with the dissemination policies and with the teaching of the French language in the French colonial empire, and in this sense is related to a historical complex of issues which are fundamentally different from those of FLE.

(Vigner, 1998: 181, our translation)

FLE has developed, together with teacher training and the dissemination of French abroad, since the end of the Second World War, under the aegis of two ministries: the Ministry of National Education

(MEN) and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MAEE). In order to understand the process of the institutionalisation of FLE it is therefore necessary to understand the cultural and linguistic policies of France abroad, and the way in which, after 1945, the MAEE and the MEN established their roles as managers of the domain. Since it is linked into an interdependent world, this management has been closely related since 1992 both to the European policy of intercultural openness and of promoting plurilingualism, and to the values of the Francophone world (*la Francophonie*). FLE is now attempting to adjust to its new role of being simultaneously 'a dimension of the Francophone world' (Coste, 1998: 75) and one of the guarantors of plurilingualism.

Following the Second World War, French language and culture, which had until then been closely linked as far as teaching is concerned, began a process of dissociation. French as a language was able less and less to depend on the dissemination of French culture abroad. On the other hand new **objectives** were set for French language activity in the post-war period. In order to attain these, the MAEE developed a foreign cultural programme thanks to a network of cultural cooperation and action, one of whose purposes was to support French as a means of access to knowledge and professional training by sustaining the teaching and dissemination of French within foreign structures: education systems, radio, television, etc. This policy of linguistic, educational and university cooperation involved 35 million learners and 250,000 teachers of FLE throughout the world. The MAEE programmes were put into operation by 300 cultural and linguistic attachés in cooperation with 600 teachers. It was implemented by 133 Cultural Centres and Institutes, a thousand *Alliance française* committees in 135 countries (employing about 5,000 teachers) and 255 secondary and primary schools. All this is sustained by a media network, with the principal operators being Radio France International, TV5 Monde and Canal France International.

Two priorities, one quantitative and one qualitative, thus contributed to the progressive institutionalisation of FLE: the diversification of learner groups, and support for pre- and in-service

training of teachers. Thus in 1951, the MEN created the Centre for the Study of Elementary French so that it could carry out research on the linguistic elements necessary for communication in contemporary French. This had the aim of facilitating the widespread learning of *français fondamental* in developing countries. The results of the research helped in the development of the first **audio-visual** method designed at the centre, which became in 1958 the **CRÉDIF**. The second priority was qualitative. It was necessary to modernise the practices of teachers of French. Two organisations in Paris played a crucial role in the production and publication of pedagogical materials used in the training of teachers: the CREDIF and, from 1959, the BEL (Bureau d'Etude et de Liaison) first headed by Guy Capelle before it became the BELC. Although FLE was first established in these two public bodies, there then came in 1961 the Centre de Linguistique Appliquée created at the University of Besançon by Bernard Quémada, the Centre de didactique des langues created in 1975 by Louise and Michel Dabène at the University of Grenoble, then the CAVILAM in Vichy, the **CRAPEL** in Nancy, and so on.

The creation of the FLE sector also benefited from the energy of the publishers. Thus Hachette-Larousse began the journal *Le Français dans le monde* in 1961, and the *Dictionnaire de didactique des langues* in 1976, in a series reference works begun in 1973 by André Reboullet. Other series of a similar kind began in 1976 and 1980: *Didactique des langues étrangères* edited by Robert Galisson at Nathan-Clé International and *Langues et apprentissages des langues* founded by Daniel Coste and Henri Besse at Hatier.

The domain also developed through national associations (e.g. ASDIFLE: Association de Didactique du FLE, in 1985; ACEDLE: Association des Chercheurs et Enseignants Didacticiens des Langues). At the beginning of the 1980s, work on the history of the domain led to the creation in 1987 of the Société Internationale pour l'Histoire du Français Langue Étrangère ou Seconde (SIHFLES). There is also at the international level the FIPF (Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Français) created in 1969 which comprises 70,000 teachers. Finally the Agence Universitaire de la

Francophonie (formerly AUPELF-UREF) oversees a network of 774 university level institutions which have chosen French as the language of teaching and research.

The institutionalisation of FLE is now complete in France. In fact, at the beginning of the 1980s, the Department of International Relations of the Ministry of National Education formed a commission whose work led to two proposals: the creation of national diplomas for French (the elementary diploma and the advanced diploma in French language: the DELF and the DALF), and the creation of vocational university courses for FLE at first degree and master's level. Thirty years later, these courses are still popular with students who continue to see work opportunities following them in the teaching of French in France and in the wider world.

Since 1975, the work of the **Council of Europe** has taken into consideration the problems of the learning of French as a foreign language by immigrant workers (Gardin, 1976). After the development of the **threshold level in French** (le Niveau Seuil), these problems were at the centre of research on **untutored language learning**. In the educational context, these issues pose a crucial question for the school, that of its role with respect to the children of migrants. Opportunities for **'translation, mediation, interpretation'** help these children to make links between the languages and cultures of their parents and the language and culture of the host society (Mesmin, 1993: 142). So this theme of mediation between several languages and cultures defines a positive role for the school in an international context. In this context the school should promote plurilingual and pluricultural competences, and these competences have been defined. Thus for the authors of *Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence* (Council of Europe, 1997),

to speak about plurilingual and pluricultural competence is to focus on the communication competence of social actors able to operate in different languages and cultures, to play the roles of intermediaries, of linguistic and cultural mediators, able too to manage and develop this plural competence in their course of their personal development.

(Coste et al., 1998: 9)

Thus it is possible to see how FLE since the turn of the century integrates European and Francophone world issues, focuses on the understanding of complex competences which have to be acquired in life-long learning, and is resolutely interdisciplinary.

**See also:** *Didactique des langues; Linguistique appliquée*

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MURIEL MOLINIÉ

# G

## Gender in language

The term *gender*, in the phrase ‘Gender in language’, may refer either to gender in the social sense (it is used in this way in the entry on ‘gender and language learning’), or to gender as a characteristic of language as an abstract system. It is this latter sense in which it is used here, to refer to a grammatical category.

Traditionally, languages have been described as having either ‘natural’ or ‘grammatical’ gender. Natural gender is ‘semantic’. A language with natural gender requires that the gender of an animate noun or pronoun corresponds to the biological sex of the person or animal to which that noun refers. In this way, *woman* and *girl* in present-day English are feminine nouns, and *she* and *her* are feminine pronouns. Similarly, *ram* is a masculine noun and *ewe* is a feminine noun. Nouns like *star* and *museum* are neither feminine nor masculine, but rather ‘neuter’. Despite a very few odd but well-known exceptions (a ship being sometimes referred to as *she*, for example), the English language is usually seen as having natural gender (but see below, and see Cameron, 1985, for a critique of the whole grammatical/natural gender dichotomy).

Grammatical gender, in contrast, is ‘formal’. In languages with grammatical gender, all nouns, inanimate ones as well as those referring to humans and animals, have a gender. Whether a noun referring to an inanimate object is masculine, feminine or neuter is unlikely to be evident from the noun itself. In French, for example, *chaise* (chair) is feminine, hence *la chaise* (the chair), and *pain*

(bread) is masculine (hence *le pain*). The determiner (in these cases, the definite article) indicates the gender. The gender of a noun in a language with grammatical gender has thus to be learned. (Although ‘grammatical gender’ can refer to a range of classes, many languages possess three: ‘masculine’, ‘feminine’ and ‘neuter’.)

Some masculine nouns and pronouns in English and other languages supposedly have the potential to be ‘generic’ or ‘sex-indefinite’, i.e. have the capacity to include both males and females. Examples include *man* (and its compounds) and *he*, and familiar masculine animal forms such as *dog* and *lion*. So, in principle, it is grammatically correct to say to a class of male and female students: ‘Everyone will get his homework back tomorrow.’ But the fact that this utterance is possible means that gender in English is not entirely natural – rather, since *his* here includes females, gender in English is in part grammatical. (Normally having no such generic potential, the feminine forms, in contrast (*woman*, *she*, *bitch*, *lioness*), are then considered as the ‘marked’ forms. Feminine forms are ‘marked’ in many languages.)

The genericity of those masculine forms in English which can in principle also refer to ‘humans’ has, however, since the 1970s been seriously challenged – one reason being that what may be intended as generic may not be so interpreted, and accordingly that women and girls may be effectively excluded by the use of these ‘generics’. ‘Generics’ *man* and *he* have in particular been seen by feminist linguists as one form of ‘sexist language’.

They now have a somewhat old-fashioned ring to them, and, while not falling into disuse, are often substituted for by alternatives such as *people*, *he or she*, *s/he*, and ‘singular *they*’ (‘Everyone will get their homework back tomorrow’), especially in spoken English. These alternatives are now included in many **pedagogical grammars** (Sunderland, 1994) and **dictionaries**, and ‘inclusive language’ is required by many academic journals and institutional Codes of Practice. (However, students are not – yet – recommended to use ‘singular *they*’ in examinations and tests of written English.) Other alternatives have been adopted for other languages, with different strategies being employed for languages with grammatical gender than for languages with natural gender (Pauwels, 1998).

Gender in the English language has thus undergone change in terms of alternatives to ‘generic’ masculine forms now available – something that is important for the teaching of English to speakers of other languages, and which has implications for **teacher education** and **language awareness**. For, while learners may or may not wish to adopt such forms as *s/he* and ‘singular *they*’, they are very likely to come across them.

**See also:** Error analysis; Gender in language learning; Grammar; Linguistics; Pedagogical grammar; Pragmatics; Speech act theory

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JANE SUNDERLAND

## Gender in language learning

Gender in language learning relates to the *people* involved in the learning/teaching process, and to the *language* itself. *People* include students and teachers as well as **textbook** characters. Students’ gender may relate to their **classroom language**, their **learning styles** or **strategies** of learning, their **attitudes** to languages and language learning, their proficiency in the language, and to their performance in different types of **assessment**. As regards teachers, the distribution and nature of their teacher–student talk may be gendered, as may their perceptions of men, women, boys and girls as language learners. Textbooks and other teaching **materials** are gendered in the way they represent female and male characters and their actions.

Gender in the *people* sense refers broadly to the socially-shaped (as opposed to biologically-determined) characteristics of women and men, boys and girls. Post-structuralist thinking sees gender identities and relations as being shaped by, *inter alia*, language use, rather than language use being an effect of gender. Accordingly, gender identities of, and relations between language learners can be seen as being at least as much an effect of linguistic classroom processes as those processes are an effect of gender (see, e.g., Sunderland, 1995a; Norton, 2000).

## Learners and gender

As in other subject classrooms, in mixed-sex language classrooms it is boys who tend to contribute more than girls, and men more than women. In mixed-sex **group work** – arguably a lynchpin of the **communicative** approach – male students have been found to dominate verbally (e.g. Gass and Varonis, 1986). However, there are exceptions (see, e.g., Sunderland, 1998), and it is important to

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remember that, even when there is evidence of male dominance, this is likely to come from a small subset of boys (French and French, 1984). In terms of the gendered *nature* of interaction, Sunderland (1996) found that boys were significantly more likely than girls to follow up the teacher's response to their academic question with another academic question, and Holmes (1994) that a greater proportion of questions asked by women than men in groupwork were 'response-facilitating' rather than 'response-restricting'.

Importantly, there is a large overlap in language learning styles and strategies used by female and male students. Some gendered *tendencies* have been found (Willing, 1989; Oxford, 1994), which might have implications for both teaching and testing. However, it is important to emphasise that there is no proof that these are innate or otherwise fixed.

Many more girls than boys elect to continue with languages when they have the choice. In all-boys schools, however, a greater proportion of boys continue with languages than in mixed-sex schools, suggesting that social reasons play a role (Loulidi, 1990). Studies in the US have found girls to be more positive about language learning than boys overall (Batters, 1986). In Batters's study this included girls being more positive about all type of activities – except for **speaking**, towards which boys and girls were equally positive.

There is a prevailing view that boys tend to see **French** as a 'feminine' language, preferring **German**, but this is not borne out by evidence, and neither is the view that boys are put off language by the number of female teachers (Powell and Batters, 1986). Studies in the US of *adults* learning a foreign language have either found only statistically insignificant gender differences in attitudes towards language study or no differences at all (e.g. Muchnick and Wolfe, 1992).

In the UK, girls do better than boys at languages at GCSE (see, e.g., Arnot *et al.*, 1996), and in some countries girls do so much better than boys that entrance requirements are lowered for boys applying to attend English-medium schools. Further, there is a 'common-sense' belief among some teachers that girls and women 'are' better foreign language learners than boys and men. However, in

some mixed-sex schools, boys do better than girls (Cross, 1983), and those boys who do continue with languages to advanced level perform very well (Arnot *et al.*, 1996). *Why* boys tend to perform less well than girls is a recurring theme (Clark and Trafford, 1995). Neurological evidence is unclear, suggesting that potentially relevant male–female differences in the brain do exist, but that these differences may be too small to account for differences in foreign language achievement (Klann-Delius, 1981).

As regards **assessment**, language tests have been shown to use stereotypical gender representation in the same way as textbooks (see below). Three forms of bias in foreign language and second language tests have been identified: content, task type and tester (Sunderland, 1995b). The content of a test item (e.g. one that draws on gender **stereotypes**) may bias the outcome. As regards task types, male students tend to do better on certain types of item (i.e. multiple choice items), female students on others (i.e. extended **writing**). Testers may also influence the outcome in one of three ways: (a) if they mark female or male students preferentially; (b) if male and female testers have different standards from each other; and (c) if, on an oral test, students respond differently according to whether the tester/interlocutor is female or male (or of the opposite/same sex).

## Teachers and gender

Most language teachers in secondary schools and in language schools worldwide are female (Powell, 1986). This is, however, decreasingly true of language teachers at tertiary level, and the majority of academics who teach **applied linguistics** in universities are male.

Despite the sometimes-expressed belief that male teachers treat students differently from female teachers, there is little evidence of this. Female and male teachers may differentiate by student gender – but tend to do so in the same way. Many studies have found that teachers give more attention to male students – though, again, this tends to be to a small subset of males (see, e.g., Sunderland, 1996). This, however, is more likely to be a result of teacher–student 'collaboration' than teacher intention

(Swann and Graddol, 1988). A few studies (e.g. Yepez, 1994) have found no evidence of differential teacher treatment. Further, greater attention paid to boys is not necessarily that which directly helps learning, but is more likely to be disciplinary in nature. In terms of differential treatment which is likely to help learning, Sunderland (1998) in fact found girls being asked the more academically challenging questions.

As regards teachers' perceptions of gender, Powell (1986) reports some teachers suggesting that it is writing that causes boys to fall behind in foreign languages.

There have been all-female teacher initiatives in the TEFL profession: the organisation 'Women in TEFL' existed from 1986 until 1995; in addition, in the late 1970s and early 1980s there was a magazine for women EFL teachers, *ETHEL*, which ran to at least seven issues. In Japan there exists an organisation called Gender Awareness in Language Education (GALE), a special interest group (SiG) of the Japanese Association for Language Teaching (JALT). There is also WELL (Women Educators and Language Learners), a support group for women teaching or studying any language in Japan.

### Teaching materials and gender

The many 'gender and textbook' studies of the 1970s and 1980s (which became far less frequent from the 1990s) overwhelmingly found textbooks to be populated by more male than female characters, and male characters to have the more interesting and positive personalities and more responsible occupations (see, e.g., Porecca, 1984). Gender bias of a similar nature was identified in **pedagogical grammars** (see, e.g., Stephens, 1990) and **dictionaries** (see, e.g., Kaye, 1989). In 1991 'Women in TEFL' produced *On Balance*, a guide for EFL publishers (reprinted in Sunderland, 1994). The situation may now have improved: one later study of dialogues in three new textbooks, found no evidence of gender bias (Jones *et al.*, 1997). The presence or absence of bias, however, indicates nothing about how a gender stereotypical text will be treated by teachers in class, nor how it will be interpreted by learners, and the same can be said of a 'progressive' text. Looking at textbook interpretation

and use may accordingly be more fruitful than looking at the textbook alone (see e.g. Sunderland *et al.*, 2000a).

### Language learning, gender, teacher education and change

Discussions of 'gender bias' found by studies of language classroom interaction and materials have not always been related to language learning, even speculatively. Doing so would make such findings at least potentially more relevant to discussions of gender on language **teacher education** courses. Suggestions have, however, been made for the teacher as regards remedial *action* in the classroom. These include encouraging male students to be active listeners in groupwork (Holmes, 1994), and asking students to explore English 'opposites' such as *bachelor/spinster* and *man/wife* (Pugsley, 1991).

**See also:** Age factors; Attitudes and language learning; Classroom research; Gender in language; Learning styles; Materials development; Strategies of language learning; Teaching methods

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## Generative principle

The generative principle refers to the human ability to generate an infinite number of sentences from a finite grammatical **competence**. It reflects the crucial feature of human language sometimes called compositionality. A finite stock of words or word groups can be recombined again and again to produce numerous novel sentences. Human language as a sequential combinatorial system sparks off an explosion of possible meanings, due to which we will never run out of new ideas. Nothing like this can be found in animal communication. The most impressive formulation of the generative power of language is probably found in Wilhelm von **Humboldt**'s philosophy of language. For him, the quintessential property of language was *energeia*, its productive potential or creativity:

Denn sie (die Sprache) steht ganz eigentlich einem unendlichen und wahrhaft grenzenlosen Gebiete, dem Inbegriff alles Denkbaren gegenüber. Sie muss daher von endlichen Mitteln einen unendlichen Gebrauch machen, und vermag dies durch die Identität der Gedanken- und Spracheerzeugenden Kraft.

(For it (language) is confronted with an essentially infinite and truly unbounded territory, the essence of everything which can be thought. It must thus make infinite use of finite means, and it achieves this through the

identity of the power to produce both thoughts and speech.)

(Humboldt, 1963: 477)

As competence develops, learners often work with units larger than the word – sometimes called chunks – and do not generate all their sentences from scratch. However, beginners must break down a phrase into its constituent parts in order for the generative principle to come into play. Learners should not be confused with mature speakers who may store and call into play entire phrases many words long.

Teachers at all times have sensed the importance of the generative principle and the necessity for learners to extrapolate underlying patterns from the sentences they hear and produce variations on them. They have tried to teach in ways so that word combinations turn into syntactic germ cells, and sentences become models for many more sentences. Children acquiring a first language play the analogy game, i.e. in phases of mere verbal play of an essentially non-communicative kind they vary words, phrases and ideas in ways reminiscent of pattern drills. However, in the classroom, pattern drills often turned out to be mechanical and monotonous. There has always been the danger of working with isolated sentences at the expense of **message-oriented communication**. The problem remained as to whether successful practice on sentences and their variations could further communicative competence.

The problem seems to be that Humboldt's *energeia* is usually only familiar in its abbreviated formulation, 'making infinite use of finite means', and is interpreted in structuralist, or syntactic, terms only. This holds for linguists of the past, such as Prendergast (1864) and **Palmer**, who were well aware of the generative principle, as well as for twentieth-century advocates of pattern drills. To capture this aspect of language, Palmer (1968: 22) coined the term '*ergon*' and explained it in the following way: 'The number of sentences being infinite, recourse must be had to the study of their mechanism in order that, from the relatively limited number of lesser ergons, an infinite number of sentences may be composed at will.' He chided Berlitz for not realising 'the necessity for the pupil

to mechanise type-sentences and to derive from these an unlimited number of subsidiary sentences and combinations' (Palmer and Palmer, 1925: 7).

The fact that Humboldt's *energeia* was not just about **grammar** but at the same time also about language as a thought crutch, even a thought organ, was consistently overlooked. Pattern drills, as well as substitution tables, aimed at the automatising of structures. They were thought of as the manipulation of verbal elements, not the manipulation of ideas, and thus came into conflict with the communicative approach.

However, modern techniques have been devised where sentence drills have a dual focus, and lexical substitutions are not regarded as mere fillers. Structures are manipulated, but at the same time ideas are toyed with and the semantic potential of a given structure is explored (Butzkamm and Caldwell, 2009). In bilingual, semi-communicative drills, the teacher can personalise the structure by getting the students to produce variations which make particular sense to them. Students will spare more attention for the meaning of what they are saying and even identify with the ideas expressed.

In this way, students will not only perform well in a drill, but are made aware of possibilities for communication. Sentence variations can be a stepping stone for free communication as the ultimate goal. At the same time pupils learn how far they can ride a given pattern, and know when it is safe. Even the simple and time-honoured practice of asking students to make up sentences of their own usually shifts the focus away from the grammatical point to the meanings expressed, and can be highly effective.

Although, as Howatt (1984: 149) points out, it is 'an ancient principle', the generative principle has been neglected because it has not been properly understood. It has been overlooked that a combining of words is not an end in itself but serves a combining of thoughts. If we are aware of the problem, the proper techniques can be found and a balance achieved between a powerful communicative principle and an equally powerful generative principle – as companions rather than as opposites.

**See also:** Audiolingual method; Behaviourism; Bilingual method; Direct method; Learning

styles; Monolingual principle; Second language acquisition theories; Transfer; Universal grammar

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WOLFGANG BUTZKAMM

## Genre and genre-based teaching

The notion of genre as a framework for language instruction is relatively recent, emerging since the early 1980s. Formulated and investigated in research movements across different parts of the world, three distinct focal areas (Hyon, 1996) can be identified. These are:

1. English for Specific Purposes (ESP);
2. Australian genre-based educational linguistics (also referred to as the Sydney School studies);
3. North American New Rhetoric studies.

To a greater or lesser extent, all three approaches involve analysis of the situational contexts or settings of spoken or written texts, as well as their communicative function and purpose within those settings. However, the approaches differ in the extent to which they attend to the formal structures

and grammatical properties of texts related to different settings. Considerable differences are found in the degree to which applications for classroom instruction for both first and second language learners emerge from each approach, those from the Australian research being arguably the most fully developed (Johns, 2002).

## Definitions

The term 'genre' is conceived of rather differently in the three major approaches. ESP researchers (e.g. Bhatia, 1993; Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998; Flowerdew, 1993; Swales, 1990; Thompson, 1994), working with **non-native speakers**, used genre as a tool for analysing the spoken and written texts required in post-secondary academic and professional settings. Their interest is in the common communicative purposes of particular kinds of genres (e.g. experimental research articles, university lectures, master of science dissertations, business letters, medical abstracts, legal case reports) within academic and professional discourse communities. Swales, a major figure in ESP research, defines genre as follows:

A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognised by the expert members of the discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. The rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style ... In addition to purpose, exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience.

(Swales, 1990: 58)

While the surrounding context of the genre is of interest to ESP researchers, the majority of ESP studies place emphasis on analysing the formal characteristics of genre rather than on the functions of texts in their social contexts. More recent studies have widened the focus of attention to encompass notions of hybridity, creativity and criticality in written and spoken professional discourse (e.g. Bhatia, 2004, 2008; Bhatia, Flowerdew and Jones,

2008). There have also been calls for insights from corpus-based research (e.g. Flowerdew, 2005) to be incorporated into ESP teaching.

Australian genre theory is grounded in systemic functional linguistics developed by Michael **Halliday** (1985) who, from his arrival in Sydney in 1975, greatly influenced work in educational linguistics, initially in first language and, more recently, in second language instruction. Systemic functional linguistics seeks to explain why and how people use language in social contexts and what language is required to *do* in those contexts of situation. Halliday based his systems of language function on the notion of *register*, constrained by three variables in the immediate context of situation (Halliday and Hasan, 1989): field (what is being done or talked about), tenor (the people involved and their relationships) and mode (the channel of communication and distance in time and space from events). The notion of genre, which concerns analysis of the structural patterns of whole texts within a systemic functional framework, was developed extensively by Martin (1984) – building on the work of Hasan (1978) – in educational applications. Martin's definition of genre as a 'staged, goal-oriented social process' is elaborated by Martin, Christie and Rothery (1987: 59):

Most members of a given culture would participate in some dozens ... Australian examples include jokes, letters to the editor, job applications, lab reports, sermons, medical examinations, appointment making, service encounters, anecdotes, weather reports, interviews and so on. Genres are referred to as *social processes* because members of a culture interact with each other to achieve them; as *goal-oriented* because they have evolved to get things done; and as *staged* because it usually takes more than one step for participants to achieve their goals.

As this definition suggests, the focus of Australian genre studies is broad, including primary and secondary school genres, non-professional and professional workplaces, and community settings. Work conducted on written genres in primary schools (e.g. Callaghan and Rothery, 1988) identified what are termed *elemental* genres of procedure, report,

explanation, discussion, exposition, recount and narrative. Further work highlighted the concept of 'macro-genres', texts which combine elemental genres in the more differentiated and specialised contexts of the secondary school and workplace (e.g. Iedema, Feez and White, 1994; Joyce, 1992), and also shifted attention beyond written genres to spoken genres in casual conversation (Eggins and Slade, 1997; Thornbury and Slade, 2006).

While ESP and Australian genre studies draw primarily on linguistic analysis, New Rhetoric studies emphasise ethnographic description as their analytical base, as well as situational context and social action (Miller, 1984). New Rhetoric genre research, emerging from North American research, adopts humanist, social and cultural approaches, drawing on the disciplines of rhetoric, **speech act theory**, cross-cultural **pragmatics**, composition studies and professional **writing**. Freedman and Medway (1994:1) explain that recent analyses focus on combining notions of 'types' or 'kinds' of discourse with 'regularities in human spheres of activity'. Thus, genre is placed within 'the complex social, cultural, institutional and disciplinary factors at play in the production of specific pieces of writing' which leads to the 'unearthing of tacit assumptions, goals and purposes as well as the revealing of unseen players and the unmasking of others' (Medway, 1994: 2). Emphasis is also placed on social fluidity and institutional location, as in Schryer's description of genre as 'stabilized-for-now or stabilized-enough sites of social and ideological action' (Schryer, 1994: 108). Ethnographic approaches were used to study genres in scientific research communities (Bazerman, 1988) and workplace settings (Devitt, 1991; Paré and Smart, 1994). More recently, Bawashri (2001) argues for teaching genres as ecosystems, within which rhetorical beings act in response to surrounding systems, while Devitt (2004) promotes a view of genre that unifies rhetorical situation, the group culture and the impact of other genres.

### Pedagogical implications

Genre studies have been characterised both by rapid developments and heated controversies (Reid,

1987; Freedman and Medway, 1994; Hyon, 1996; Benesch, 2001; Paltridge, 2007). One area of dissent focuses on the extent to which language development is enhanced by the explicit teaching of the discourse structures and grammatical forms of genres (Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1993; Freedman and Medway, 1994; Watson and Sawyer, 1987; Widdowson, 1993). It is also argued that using text-based models of generic structures and forms, a particular feature of Australian and, to a lesser extent, ESP instructional approaches, results in prescriptive and derivative writing (Bhatia, 1993; Freedman and Medway, 1994) and in compliance with the discourses of dominant social norms (Freedman, 1993; Luke, 1996). Genre instruction is also seen as interventionist, leading to criticism that it overlooks what is known about natural processes of learning and learner creativity. Counter-arguments by Australian genre theorists define explicit instruction and the use of text models as a process of 'empowering' students by 'apprenticing' them into the established and influential genres required for success in educational and other social contexts (Hammond, 1987; Christie, 1991; Kress, 1993; Martin, 1993; Hasan and Williams, 1996). Australian proponents also criticise the imprecision, or even the virtual absence, of guidelines for teaching of the ESP and New Rhetoric theorists.

The pedagogical applications and influence of genre theory from the three areas, therefore, is highly varied. In New Rhetoric studies, genre theory has resulted in limited instructional proposals (but see, e.g., Bialostosky, 1994) in comparison with those in EAP where teaching has involved helping students understand the organisational and **stylistic** features of professional and academic genres (e.g. Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993; Flowerdew, 1993). The instructional application of genre theory is most extensive in Australian contexts (Hyon, 1996), where theoretical and practical developments have centred especially on disadvantaged student groups in both **mother-tongue** and literacy teaching in schools, as well as in **adult** ESL and basic education programmes (Martin, 2002). Central to Australian instructional applications are various versions of a 'teaching-learning cycle' consisting essentially of four phases: building the context (field); modelling the text; joint

negotiation of text; and independent construction of text (Callaghan and Rothery, 1988; Hammond et al., 1992; Rothery, 1996). The extent of the Australian influence of genre theory can also be measured by the fact that it has provided the basis for curriculum and **syllabus** development in state-based school systems (e.g. New South Wales DET, 1998) and the Adult Migrant English Program (Hagan et al., 1993; Feez, 1998, 2002) and to a lesser extent in EAP programmes (e.g. Drury and Webb, 1991). Further research and evolution of genre-based approaches are likely to focus on the impact of genre instruction on language learning (e.g. Hammond, 1996) and the interaction of genre-based teaching with critical pedagogy (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993; Benesch, 1993, 2001).

**See also:** Conversation analysis; Discourse analysis; Grammar; Language across the curriculum; Language awareness; Linguistics; Native speaker; Task-based teaching and assessment; Teaching methods; Text and corpus linguistics

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ANNE BURNS

## German

With approximately 92 million people speaking it as their **mother tongue**, German is placed about eleventh among the languages of the world (Döcsy, 1986). It is found in a relatively enclosed linguistic space (Germany, Austria, parts of Switzerland and Liechtenstein) and, with a total of thirteen, has the most frontier neighbours in Europe. German as a foreign language is currently learnt on a global scale by approximately 14 million people.

### The demand for German

The interest in learning German has increased particularly in the countries of East and Central Europe since the reunification of Germany and the breakup of the Soviet-dominated Eastern Bloc. It is estimated that about two thirds of all learners of German live in these countries, approximately half of these being in Russia. Even in countries where German used to be learned as a first or second foreign language, German has since lost its status as the first foreign language and is learned, if at all, as a second or **third foreign language** (= L3).

The German-speaking countries, except for Switzerland, are integral members of the European Union, and approximately a quarter of the people of the European Union speak German as their **mother tongue**. German is thus established within the European Union, beside English and French, as a language of commerce and documentation. In the European Union, the interest in learning German is, however, uneven. Whoever learns German does so, especially as an **adult**, often for pragmatic reasons, since knowledge of German can be useful for one's

career and for commercial and economic links. The lack of interest in German or prejudices against Germans on the other hand are still based above all on historical memories (Germany as a former enemy) and on the mistrust of a too dominant Germany. In the school systems, German often comes after **English** or **French**, but there is in some countries growing interest in introducing German as a subject in the secondary school sector (e.g. in Spain and Italy) or in the increase of German teaching in schools (e.g. Ireland) or in the non-school sector (e.g. Greece).

In countries beyond Europe the interest in German is often not only pragmatic but also directed towards German as a representative of a European region with a long-established cultural tradition in music, fine arts, literature, Romantic landscapes and castles, etc., with a high standard of living and well functioning institutions such as the social system, the transport system, political institutions, and its education system. As such, it is seen as being untainted by a colonial and imperial past.

Third, there are in German-speaking countries currently about 10 million people whose mother tongue is not German, and who learn German as a **second language** or who grow up bilingual in the second or third generation. These are above all migrants seeking work from South, Southeast and Eastern Europe, but also asylum-seekers, and political or war refugees. Their number is constantly growing. As one of the consequences of this migration and the interest of many Germans in spending their holidays in the south, German has developed in the last few decades as a kind of holiday **lingua franca** around the Mediterranean.

### German as a school subject

German has almost completely lost its status as the first foreign language in some regions adjacent to the German-speaking countries, for example in Italy, France, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovenia (cf. Fandrych and Hufeisen, 2010). This is also the case in a good proportion of further education schools and colleges in Russia, where there are advanced courses. In most countries in Europe and worldwide, however, German is offered as the second or third foreign language,

especially following English as the first foreign language. For example, in general education schools in Central and Eastern Europe and in the CIS, the distribution of foreign languages is as follows: English 40 per cent, German 30 per cent, French 11 per cent, Russian 10 per cent, others 3 per cent. In professional schools and colleges, however, German is the most popular foreign language (Goethe-Institut, 1998).

### German in adult education

There are many people who begin their German studies as adults after the end of schooling. This is due to the fact that people recognise the usefulness of German in the context of professional training. It is therefore characteristic of German teaching in adult education that there is a concentration on German from a professional perspective, for example German for Business. In many countries such as China, Japan or Argentina, which are geographically distant from the German-speaking area, German is only occasionally taught in schools and therefore its main location is in universities or other institutions of adult education such as the Goethe-Institut and in-country language institutions.

### Development of teaching methods

German as a Foreign Language has followed a similar development to other modern languages such as French and English in its teaching methods (Neuner and Hunfeld, 1993). In this development the method of **grammar–translation** was dominant until the beginning of the twentieth century. Growing out of the teaching of the classical languages Greek and Latin, this concentrated on the transmission of the rules and grammar of the written, literary language and the art of translation. The grammar-translation method is still today, especially in elite education, the leading method for the teaching of German as a foreign language in many parts of the world.

In contrast to the grammar-translation method, a number of methods were conceived – for example the **direct method** or the natural method – from the end of the nineteenth century. The most important of these was the **audio-lingual method** developed



in the USA in the 1940s and 1950s, which became the **audio-visual method** in the 1960s. The latter was accepted in German as a Foreign Language in the 1960s because it had pragmatic objectives – the ability to communicate in everyday situations – and language skills, as opposed to the knowledge about language of the grammar-translation method.

These approaches were developed in **communicative** language teaching from the 1970s onwards. The results of research in pragmatics were linked to a cognitive learning theory and a more consistent recognition of the needs of the learners, and led to teaching which is focused on everyday communication and attempts to engage learners actively in the lesson and take differences among individual learners into account.

In Germany, the debate on the evolution of the communicative approach was clearly influenced by general concepts of a pedagogical–emancipatory nature. This can be traced back to the fact that foreign language learning was introduced for all learners in the German school system in the 1960s, and a rapidly increasing number of pupils of non-German mother tongue had to be integrated into the German school system. This led to the evolution of German as a Second Language, which in turn led to the **intercultural** approach in foreign language teaching. This is a learner-orientated development of communicative teaching. In foreign language learning, the world of the target language and the learners' own cultural world come face to face. The intercultural approach thus attempts particularly to focus on processes of understanding and the negotiation of meaning between other and own worlds.

The intercultural approach has been developed further to include concepts which foster a multi-lingual approach, in acknowledgement of the fact that these learners often have previous foreign language learning experience and arrive at school or university with a broad individual (foreign) language repertoire.

## Institutions

There are many institutions dealing with German in the various German-speaking countries. The ones described here are a selection:

1. the **Goethe-Institut**, which has more than 150 branches worldwide and deals with language courses, teacher education and cultural programmes (Goethe-Institut, 1998);
2. the Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst (**DAAD**), whose focus is the development of scientific cooperation between institutions of higher education (Bode et al., 1995);
3. professional associations: Fachverband Moderne Fremdsprachen (Sektion Deutsch als Fremdsprache); Fachverband Deutsch als Fremdsprache; *Internationaler Deutschlehrerverband*;
4. journals: *Deutsch als Fremdsprache*; *Fremdsprache Deutsch*; *Zielsprache Deutsch*; *Deutsch Lernen*; *Jahrbuch Deutsch als Fremdsprache*; *Zeitschrift für interkulturellen Fremdsprachenunterricht im Bereich Deutsch als Fremdsprache*.

## Trends in German as a Foreign Language

One clearly discernible trend is an interest in learner-orientated concepts, evident in the development of the planning of curricula and the production of **materials** specific to a particular region and target group (cf. Neuner, 1997). The focus is on the learner and the learning process, including learning strategies, individual **learning styles** and types, and also holistic learning and an interest in helping learners to understand meaning together with a concentration on the specifics of German L3 and text competencies. This is becoming the central interest of the development of teaching methods and learning processes. Learning of foreign languages at school is increasingly seen as preparation for life-long learning, with the emphasis on learning to learn and the reinforcement of **autonomous learning**.

As a result of global socio-political developments at the end of the twentieth century, English has asserted itself as the world language of communication, and German is therefore becoming the language which is learnt after English.

## German as a second language

Due to increased migration, research in German as a second language has gained increasing attention. Here questions such as the linguistic integration of

immigrant youths and adults are relevant, but also research into the development of the linguistic and language repertoires of learners with German as a second language. A chief area is that of text competencies, which appear to diverge considerably from the monolingual text competencies of fellow learners in their respective languages.

**See also:** *Interkulturelle Didaktik*; Krumm; Migrant and heritage languages; Teaching methods

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# Global education

Global education is a new field of education developed in the 1970s and 1980s which aims to promote students' knowledge and awareness of the world's peoples, countries, cultures and issues. As an approach to language teaching, it involves integrating a global perspective into classroom instruction through a focus on international themes, lessons built around global issues (peace, development, the environment, **human rights**), classroom activities linking students to the wider world and concepts such as social responsibility, international understanding and world citizenship. Advocates of this approach see the foreign language as a window to the world and global education as a way to bring educational relevance to the classroom through meaningful content based on real-world topics. Interest in this field has led to a healthy debate about language teaching **objectives**, to an increase in language teaching lessons, courses and materials designed around world themes, and to the formation of 'global issue' special interest groups in several language teaching organisations.

Global education arose out of new thinking in education and the social studies in the United Kingdom and the United States. It has been defined as education which 'promotes the knowledge, **attitudes** and skills relevant to living responsibly in a multicultural, interdependent world' (Fisher and Hicks, 1985: 8) and as education which aims to bring about 'changes in the content, methods and social context of education in order to better prepare students for citizenship in a global age' (Kniep, 1985: 15). Global educators designate the fields of peace education, development education, environmental education and human rights education as the four component fields of global education.

The rationale for global education is that:

1. globalisation has led to growing interdependence and increased contacts between the world's peoples and nations;
2. our planet faces serious world problems which require international cooperation to solve;
3. surveys show that modern youth is often ignorant of the world's peoples, cultures and issues;

4. current education systems fail to prepare young people adequately to cope with these challenges due to traditional schooling based on rote memorisation, passive learning and examination pressures.

The goals of global education are divided into the four domains of knowledge, skills, attitudes and action:

1. knowledge about world countries and cultures, and about global problems, their causes and solutions;
2. skills of critical thinking, cross-cultural communication, cooperative problem solving, conflict resolution, and the ability to see issues from multiple perspectives;
3. attitudes of global awareness, cultural appreciation, respect for diversity, and empathy;
4. action: the final aim of global learning is to have students 'think globally and act locally'.

While individual language instructors have long dealt with current events and international themes, serious interest in global education has only come about since the 1980s. One of the earliest publications to deal with global education and foreign language teaching was Conner (1981). A key definition describes global education as 'an approach to language teaching which aims at enabling students to effectively acquire and use a foreign language while empowering them with the knowledge, skills and commitment required by world citizens for the solution of global problems' (Cates, 1990: 3).

A number of figures have addressed the importance of global education for teachers of modern languages. **Rivers** (1968: 262) questions whether international understanding has really been promoted by traditional language teaching focused on memorising vocabulary lists, reciting verb paradigms and deciphering foreign language texts. **Maley** (1992: 73) sees global education as a way to resolve the perennial problems faced by language teaching: the gulf between classroom activities and 'real life', the separation of language teaching from mainstream educational ideas, and the lack of a content as subject matter. **Starkey** (1988: 239) argues that the language class, by virtue of its focus on 'foreign' peoples, should be the most global subject in the school curriculum.

Advocates of global education criticise the narrow focus of much traditional language teaching with its emphasis on linguistic form, trivial content (shopping, tourism, pop culture), its avoidance of controversial issues, and its **textbook stereotypes**. Global language teachers strive to design language lessons around world regions (e.g. Africa), social issues (e.g. racism, sexism, AIDS), international themes (e.g. world religions, the Nobel Peace Prize), and global problems (e.g. landmines, tropical rainforests). They view the language classroom as a place to teach against prejudice, and to experiment with global education videos, role plays and simulations on topics such as war, poverty and pollution. They see e-mail and the **internet** as ways to promote global awareness and **intercultural communication**, and arrange overseas visits and **exchanges** to promote international understanding.

Global education, through its emphasis on meaningful communication about real-world topics, has promoted interest in **content-based instruction** and **communicative language teaching**. It has also led language educators to reach out for teaching resources to global issue organisations such as Amnesty International, Oxfam and UNICEF, and to experiment with teaching ideas, activities and materials from such disciplines as peace education and environmental education. It has further led to new thinking about the social responsibility of the language teaching profession in a world of social injustice, global inequality and **linguistic imperialism**.

The popularity of global education has led to the formation of special interest groups (SIGs) within several major language teaching organisations, notably:

- a Global Issues in Language Education SIG (GILE) formed in 1990 by the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT);
- a Global Issues SIG (GI-SIG) formed in 1995 by IATEFL (the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language);
- a Social Responsibility Interest Section (SR-IS) formed in 2009 by TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages).

These groups have enabled language teachers involved with global education to receive funding,

initiate projects, issue newsletters, create websites, hold workshops, obtain conference time and build networks in order to share their research, teaching experience and classroom ideas.

One initiative linking language teaching with global education is the **linguapax** project of UNESCO. This brought together representatives from **AILA** (the International Association of Applied Linguistics) and **FIPLV** (the World Federation of Language Teachers) to draw up a Linguapax Kiev Declaration entitled 'Content and Methods of Teaching Foreign Languages and Literature for Peace and International Understanding' (UNESCO, 1987). Further UNESCO meetings have generated additional Linguapax declarations and publications.

Global education has had its biggest impact with teachers of **English**, who argue that the status of English as a global language (see Crystal, 2003) makes the EFL classroom ideal for global education. These teachers see English less as the language of **native speakers**, and more as a language for learning about the world and for communicating with the world's peoples. Scholars such as Birch (2009) have discussed the special role that English teachers can play as global educators while classroom practitioners such as Sampedro and Hillyard (2004) have produced resource books with global issue activities for English language teaching.

Critics of global education voice a number of concerns: that global issues are controversial and should be avoided, that global issues invite teacher bias and lead to 'preaching, not teaching', that language teachers don't have the specialised knowledge to properly teach complex global issues, that the curriculum is too full to add something new, and that language classrooms should focus on language and leave world affairs to the social studies. Defenders of global education respond that controversial topics can stimulate student **motivation** and **classroom** language use, that teachers can be 'neutral chairpersons' when dealing with controversy, that teachers can acquire a knowledge of global issues or explore issues with students as co-learners, that global education can be infused into current language content, and that global education involves a global perspective across the school curriculum.

The rapid growth of interest in global education within the field of language education has helped to

stimulate the profession in many ways. It has encouraged a reconsideration of the basic aims of language teaching, sparked a debate about the mission of the profession, promoted a healthy discussion about meaningful content and educational relevance, spurred outreach efforts to other disciplines and to global issue organisations, provoked a sharing of classroom experimentation and research, resulted in new teaching materials on global issue themes, and led to the formation of special interest groups devoted to promoting global awareness through language teaching. The increasing globalisation and interdependence of the world in the twenty-first century makes it likely that interest among language teachers in the field of global education will continue to grow. However, for language teachers to effectively promote international understanding, social responsibility and world citizenship in their classrooms, global education needs to be explicitly included in **teacher education** programs.

**See also:** Common European Framework of Reference; Esperanto; Human rights; Intercultural communication; Intercultural competence; Internationalisation

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KIP A. CATES

## Goethe-Institut

The Goethe-Institut is a worldwide organisation active in the promotion of the **German** language and culture, carrying out cultural exchanges abroad on behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany.

The three main purposes of the Institut are: the support and development of knowledge of the German language abroad; the pursuit of international cultural co-operation; and the promotion of a comprehensive view of Germany through information about cultural, social and political life.

Branches of the Goethe-Institut in over seventy countries implement cultural programmes together with a variety of partners in the host country, give information about Germany, teach German and give further training to teachers of German.

The origins of the Goethe-Institut go back to 1925 when the *Deutsche Akademie* was founded in Munich as an independent institution whose 'Practical Department' had the responsibility for German language and culture abroad. The first Goethe-Institut was created within the *Akademie* in 1932 with the main concern being the in-service training of foreign specialists in German in Germany and the sending of German university assistant lecturers abroad.

The misuse of the *Deutsche Akademie* by the Nazis led to its being closed after 1945. The re-founding of the Goethe-Institut in 1952 was part of the democratic renewal process, and led eventually to the development of the Goethe-Institut of today.

The head office of the Goethe-Institut is in Munich.

### Website

[www.goethe.de](http://www.goethe.de)

## Gouin, François

b. 1831, Normandy; d. 1896, Paris

Gouin's fame rests chiefly on *The Art of Teaching and Studying Languages [ATSL]* (London: Philip and Son, 1892).

He was educated at the College of Séez and became a classics teacher while continuing studies in literature and science at the university of Caen. Advised by his professors, he went to Germany to complete his philosophical studies, first to Hamburg, then to Berlin. He failed in his attempts to learn **German** in the classical (i.e. deductive) manner, which he carried to its extreme limits. Observing on this occasion his 3-year-old nephew during and after a visit to a watermill during the ensuing summer holidays he changed dramatically his view of language development, a change which would eventually lead him to write *ATSL*. Gouin returned to Berlin, becoming professor of **French** to the Berlin Court, and enjoying the friendship of Alexander von **Humboldt**. In 1864 he became educational adviser to the Romanian government and, following its overthrow, he went to England. He subsequently settled in Geneva, where he established a school and wrote *ATSL*. Later on he became Director of *École Supérieure* at Elboeuf, and professor of German at *École Supérieure Arago* in Paris. Here he also gave private tuition in Latin and Greek based upon his natural approach.

*ATSL* consists of five parts. Part One gives an account of the methods in vogue at the time and of Gouin's frustration at failing to learn German by 'the classical method, with its grammar, its dictionary, and its translations' (1892: 35) and at seeing the ease with which his nephew picked up his **mother tongue**. Contrasting the latter's language development with his own, Gouin makes the discovery that the child, stunned by all that he had seen at the mill, shortly after 'manifested an immense desire to recount to everybody what he had seen' (1892: 37). The child could not be stopped telling his story over and over again. Later, he re-enacted the sequence of events in self-regulating talk and play, with numerous variants. This suggested to Gouin that: the child abstracts from the real events and orders his perceptions in succession of time, according to cause and effect; in the 'school of Nature' it is sentences (linked by 'and then ...'), not words, that are the primary units of verbal expression; and the verb plays a central role in the enactment and expression of events (1892: 50).

These observations led Gouin to develop in Part Two a psychology of language learning and teaching

that permitted the selection of topics ('themes') from reality ('Nature') that were capable of analysis into constituent events ('acts' and 'facts') and of expression in at least two basic language functions. A typical **exercice** would reflect the thematic unity ('Series') and look like this:

Theme 'Nursemaid'  
 'Walk, my pretty; That's it!  
 Go towards the door; That's very good!  
 Now you've got there; Bravo!  
 Lift up your little arm; Capital!  
 Take hold of the handle; That's the way!  
 Turn the handle; How strong you are!  
 Open the door; What a clever little man!  
 Pull the door open; There's a little darling!'

Note the simplicity of the interlinking sentences (most of which could be the starting-point of another Series), displaying a chronological order, and the centrality of the verb. The phrases to the left of the semi-colon represent 'objective language' (today mostly called the 'referential', 'propositional', 'cognitive', 'descriptive' or 'transactional' language function), those to the right of the semi-colon 'subjective language' (i.e. the 'emotive', 'expressive', 'attitudinal', 'interpersonal' or 'interactional' language function). Though strongly intertwined and developed simultaneously in natural language **acquisition** (1892: 154), the teacher should begin by teaching the objective language, continue by teaching the subjective language, and finish by teaching the 'figurative [i.e. metaphorical] language', which feeds on the objective language (He fell into the river – He fell into the trap).

Semanticisation took place by having learners enact and verbalise the series, first in their mother tongue and subsequently in the foreign language. Pictures might also be used. The ear being 'the master-organ of language' (1892: 127), much emphasis is placed on ear-training, with the teacher as the learners' model. Unlike other representatives of the **Reform Movement**, Gouin made no use of the science of phonetics or phonetic transcriptions.

Part Three of *ATSL* deals with **grammar**, the morphology and syntax of spoken language, and mood, pride of place being given to the verb. Gouin favours an inductive approach: 'all that the teacher does is simply to aid or direct, it will be the

class themselves who carry out this work' (1892: 262). Parts Four and Five treat the study of the Classics.

It has been observed that Gouin's method illustrates the problem faced by the language pedagogue who wishes to take into account the nature of language. Since no coherent theory of language was available to him at the time, he had to work out his own and to apply it (Stern, 1983: 153). Gouin's method was rather successful on the continent of Europe (especially in Germany and Holland) during the last decade of the nineteenth and the first three decades of the twentieth century, and in America during the early part of the twentieth century (see Howatt, 1984: 314). His distinction of a subjective and an objective language function found its way into Deutschbein (1917) and Kruisinga (1932). As a language pedagogue, Gouin appears to have had little lasting influence.

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ARTHUR VAN ESSEN

## Graded objectives

Graded **objectives** in modern languages (GOML) are an essentially simple idea whose principles, philosophy and ideals are now commonplace, yet

in the UK in the 1970s they were revolutionary. They arose from circumstances peculiar to the UK.

From 1944 onwards, **secondary education** (from age 11–16) was selective. Children deemed to be the most academically able (about 25–30 per cent) were sent to grammar schools, virtually the only schools where modern foreign languages (MFLs) were taught. The MFL course led to a national examination (available in several forms) taken at age 16. This mainly consisted of **translation** with some free composition; the objective was to produce grammatically correct written sentences. There was no central direction of schools, and consequently the non-grammar schools began to teach MFLs (usually **French**) to their ablest learners and a new national examination was created for them – still aimed largely at grammatical accuracy.

A growing feeling among educationists that selection at age 11 was inefficient led in the 1960s to the creation of comprehensive secondary schools which accepted children of all abilities. By the early 1970s these were the norm. There, MFL teaching was expanded further down the ability range so that by the mid-1970s many more pupils were being taught a MFL. The only goal, however, was still the grammatically oriented national examinations, which were inappropriate for the new cohort of language learners. They became, along with their teachers, increasingly frustrated at their apparently unsuccessful language learning and abandoned it as soon as possible. Something had to change.

Teachers began to ask questions they had never asked before. If this course is not suitable for my learners, what course would be? What is French for, and why am I teaching it? The answers came surprisingly easily. A suitable course would be one that would engage the interests of the learners by being relevant to their lives and providing a reasonable hope of success. The purpose of French, as of any other language, is to enable human beings to communicate with each other in the everyday practical world. The purpose of language teaching should not be primarily the production of grammatically correct written sentences. The reason for teaching French was to offer insights into a different culture and into the nature of language and to provide a language **competence** of practical use.

A suitable course would have to have characteristics markedly different from those currently on offer. Learners should not have to wait five years for official recognition of their success; the course should be divided into smaller steps, each of which would be rewarded. Existing examinations were defined purely by task with no indication of the range of language or grammatical complexity involved. The new course should define what learners would need to know in terms of language behaviours and exponents. Existing examinations were norm-referenced; they were devised to produce a rank order. The new tests were to be criterion-referenced, awarding marks for tasks successfully accomplished. The tasks themselves would mirror what is required of language users in the real world, and **materials** would be **authentic**. From these discussions came the main features of most GOML schemes:

- practical language to be used for everyday purposes;
- short-term objectives described in a series of levels;
- each level provides defined usable language and points forward to higher levels;
- authentic tasks and materials;
- criterion-referenced assessment; certificates awarded at each level state the language **skills** acquired;
- ideally (though this is sometimes organisationally difficult) tests are taken when learners are ready and not at some predetermined time.

The dissemination of these ideas and the formation of groups of teachers who set up their own GOML schemes is an interesting example of how new ideas can achieve public recognition if the circumstances are favourable. As previously stated, there was no central direction of schools. It was because the system was highly decentralised that GOML schemes were able to grow and flourish.

The ideas were first expressed in two articles (Page, 1973; Harding and Page, 1974). These were taken up by headteachers, teacher trainers and language advisers (employed by local government to advise language teachers and organise in-service training). These would call meetings of teachers to

discuss the ideas and set up working parties of serving teachers. In 1976 the first two groups were formed. Many more followed. The tasks the groups set themselves were formidable. They had to define **syllabuses** at several levels, devise appropriate assessment instruments, and often create new teaching materials as those commercially available were geared to the old grammatical objectives.

Since they had never done anything like this before, they were learning as they went along. The earlier groups generously made their work available to the later ones, but many preferred to devise their own in response to local needs. A national coordinating committee was formed to disseminate ideas through a regular newsletter and organise an annual workshop. By 1987 there were 82 different schemes, many having very innovative and imaginative elements.

A course aimed at engaging the interest of learners was completely novel in the school context. What does a young learner want to say to French speakers? This question introduced two new principles: first, the idea of basing syllabuses on assumed learner **needs**; second, that language should be approached from a non-**native speaker** point of view. The world over, **native speaker** families had for generations been the kernel of **grammar-based** courses – the Smiths, Greens, Schmidts, Duponts. It was now realised that the needs of non-native speakers had to be addressed.

The question also introduced the concepts of roles and settings: what social roles would our learners be playing and in what circumstances? Some groups based their early levels on these ideas. For example, learners on a school trip where accommodation and food are provided would need to buy ice creams, postcards, etc., whereas learners on a school **exchange** living with a French family needed to express likes, dislikes, exchange personal details, and so on. Those going independently to France with their families, for whom they served as **interpreters**, would have to obtain food, accommodation, understand public notices, etc. It can be seen that the choice of language at each level is driven by purely practical needs and not by the usual grammatical categories.

In the mid-1970s groups became aware of the work of the **Council of Europe's** MFL projects



and particularly of **threshold level**. This expressed in detail many of the ideas groups had been working with. It was enthusiastically welcomed and informed much of the work thereafter. These now-commonplace ideas implied at that time an entirely new idea of what a language is and what language teaching/learning should entail.

All this required an enormous amount of work from teachers. Cooperation was essential. Groups would organise evening, day and weekend meetings where syllabuses and tests were devised and materials discussed and created. It was a huge self-help movement, the likes of which had not existed before, and it was invaluable in-service training. The results were excellent. In areas where GOML schemes operated, twice as many learners opted to continue MFL learning.

In the 1980s, the government decided to create a new national school-leaving examination amalgamating the two existing ones. Teachers in GOML schemes were well placed to offer advice, as they had several years' experience of devising new sorts of syllabuses and testing techniques. They had considerable influence on the debate and the new examinations introduced in 1988 aimed at the **acquisition** of a practical language **competence** and insisted on authenticity of materials and tasks. Unfortunately, they retained the five-year course before achievement was officially assessed.

In the 1990s, the government assumed more central control by introducing a National Curriculum that set out in some detail what was to be taught in each subject. This effectively squeezed out GOML schemes, and most gradually fell into disuse.

It is possible to claim that GOML changed completely the direction of MFL teaching in UK schools. In the world as a whole, MFL teaching was moving towards a more **communicative** approach, but in the UK it was GOML that embodied the idea and showed it could be successful.

Some generally applicable lessons can be learnt:

- All teachers should be encouraged to ask themselves penetrating questions about what they are teaching and why, so as to become reflective practitioners.
- Teachers should be encouraged to cooperate with each other in institutions, cities/regions as

well as nationally, to exchange ideas and materials and discuss language policy.

- Education systems should be flexible, encouraging effective practices and allowing innovative and imaginative teachers to experiment.

**See also:** Attitudes and language learning; CILT; Communicative language teaching; Motivation theories; Objectives in language teaching and learning; Proficiency movement; Threshold Level; US Standards for Foreign Language Learning

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BRIAN PAGE

## Grammar

Despite the central role played by grammar in human communication and the large number of descriptions of it by linguists, it remains a difficult term to define since on the one hand the word 'grammar' can refer to a variety of phenomena and on the other, among grammarians, there is considerable disagreement concerning its nature. Discussions of grammar fall within three main areas: social, **pedagogical** and linguistic, which address the following general issues:

- What is to be regarded as standard grammar and what is the status and role of other varieties? (social)

- How is grammar learnt and how should it be taught? (pedagogical)
- What is grammar and how does it work? (linguistic)

The first question, often referred to as *usage*, is one that arouses considerable interest – and emotions – among the general public. The adjectives ‘good’ and ‘bad’ sometimes used in this connection reflect the fact that this is a social rather than a linguistic issue. In the past, reference grammars and ‘guides to good usage’ tended to take a largely *prescriptive* approach; in other words, authors would seek to impose their own, somewhat élitist, view of correctness upon language users (for example, in **English**, *I shall* instead of *I will*; avoiding ‘split infinitives’, etc.). Nowadays, however, grammarians are more likely to follow a *descriptive* approach: the sole criterion for correctness is whether a form corresponds to actual modern usage, as evidenced in a corpus of authentic data (for example, Biber et al., 1999).

The second issue concerns the learning of grammar and is essentially a pedagogical question.

The third concerns attempts by linguists to explain the nature of grammar: its structure and function within the more general process of human communication. Most descriptions are based on certain common premises: first, that grammar is at the very core of communication, the grammatical system representing an important way of both conveying and creating meaning; second, that grammar can be regarded as *rule-governed behaviour* and as a phenomenon operates in a highly systematic way. It is one of the main tasks of grammarians to explain the ‘rules’ which are the basis of both the form a language takes and of the systematic relationship that exists between form and meaning. It should be noted that the word ‘rule’ is to be understood purely as a synonym for ‘regularity’. In doing so, grammarians will account for sentences which are *well-formed* or *grammatical* (formally correct), *acceptable* (meaningful) and, in some models, contextually *appropriate*.

It is often a source of confusion that the term ‘grammar’ is variously used to refer to a variety of phenomena. In **linguistics** it is usually stated to be one of four ‘levels’ of language, the others being

phonology, lexis and semantics. According to this view, which sees grammar purely in terms of form rather than meaning, it can be further subdivided into *morphology*, which is concerned with the internal structure of words or morphemes, and *syntax* – the patterning of morphemes to form sentences. However, some linguists (e.g. Greenbaum, 1996) use syntax not in this particular sense but quite simply as a synonym of grammar in general. At the broader end of the scale, many linguists apply the word to other aspects of communication which operate systematically. Expressions such as ‘text grammar’ and ‘grammar of speech’ reflect this wider view.

A comparison of theories and models of grammar will show considerable differences, which derive from the respective theoretical orientation of the grammarian and which result in different areas of focus, categorisation and terminology. The influences on modern grammatical description are most noticeable from the following sets of theories:

- *Traditional grammar* is based not on a view of language as a process of communication but on the external observation and analysis of the product, resulting in a form of classification begun by the Ancient Greeks. The most basic categories are *word classes*, also known as parts of speech such as noun and verb. These classes have largely survived in modern categorisation, with some terminological amendment and some additions such as ‘determiners’.
- *Generative grammar*, sometimes referred to as *transformational grammar*, was developed by Noam **Chomsky**. Unlike previous structural approaches, which took as their starting point the form of grammar, Chomsky’s various models of grammar are mentalistic in that they begin with the mind of the speaker, or *internal grammar*. Essential to his view is the existence of a specific and innate language component in the brain, part of which is a **universal grammar**. The mechanism or unconscious knowledge which steers the use of language is referred to as **competence**, which is contrasted with *performance*, language in use. According to Chomsky, it is the task of the linguist to account for a speaker’s competence, i.e. the

mechanisms by which thoughts are stored and converted into sentences. These are specified in terms of a finite number of 'rules' by means of which an infinite number of sentences can be *generated*. Particularly in North America, both his general ideas and the applications of the model, which renders itself open to a type of mathematical notation, has dominated linguistic analysis since the 1960s. Relatively undisputed among linguists is the psycholinguistic orientation of his initial premises. More controversial is his focus on the sentence as the main unit of analysis at the expense of contextual and functional considerations.

- *Cognitive grammar* stands in opposition to a Chomskyan view of language. Whilst accepting his premise that linguistic theory is concerned with 'discovering a mental reality underlying actual behavior' (1965: 4), linguists such as Jackendoff (2002) and Langacker (1991) have provided an opposing view of the nature of grammar, which seeks to embed language within other systems of human cognition. Croft and Cruse (2004: 1) refer to three hypotheses of cognitive grammar: 'language is not an autonomous cognitive faculty; grammar is conceptualization; knowledge of language emerges from language use'. The first of these hypotheses shows a rejection of Chomsky's modular view of grammar and is the basis of the second: that grammar is a reflection of the way in which human beings conceptualise their perceptions and experiences of the world. Unlike Chomsky's 'syntactocentric' (Jackendoff, 2002: 197) view of language, the semantics of grammar is at the very core of this approach. The third premise bridges the gap between competence and performance and provides for a use-based, process-oriented view of grammar.
- *Systemic/functional grammar* was principally developed by M.A.K. Halliday (1985). This has attracted interest in Europe in particular. Functional grammar sees language 'as a system of communication and analyses grammar to discover how it is organised to allow speakers and writers to make and exchange meanings' (Lock, 1996: 1). These meanings are seen as a coherent network of meaning components,

which can be combined in various ways to communicate messages. The term 'functional' has its own special meaning, differing from the usual narrow meaning of 'function' in language teaching. On the one hand, it has a pragmatic sense, referring to the behavioural, message-based aspects of language use; and on the other, it is formal in that it examines the internal function of language elements between themselves as part of a total linguistic system.

It follows from this that any definition of grammar must be seen in light of the respective orientation of the grammarian. Some examples of different ways of defining grammar are: from a formal perspective, 'the patterning of morphemes to make up sentences is generally described as the GRAMMAR of the language' (Allerton, 1979: 42); from an internal perspective, 'a set of rules which allow us to put words together in certain ways, but which do not allow others' (Leech et al., 1982: 3); from a broad functional perspective, 'We refer to the structural or organising principles of language as grammar' (Jackson, 1990: 3); from a cognitive perspective, 'Grammar is the process by which speakers encode their perceptions of entities, actions and properties, and the relations between them, into meaningful grammatical form' (Newby, 2011).

**See also:** Acquisition and teaching; Dictionaries; Generative principle; Grammar–translation method; Language awareness; Linguistics; Pedagogical grammar; Reference works; Universal grammar

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DAVID NEWBY

## Grammar–translation method

A method of teaching a 'modern foreign language' which was developed in Europe and dominant in the eighteenth till nineteenth century, the grammar–translation method was based on the method of studying Latin and Greek adopted by Europeans in the Middle Ages. The language teaching method emphasised the teaching of formal grammatical rules and translating foreign language written texts

into one's **mother tongue** with detailed grammatical analysis. It is the earliest and the traditional method of foreign language teaching, employed mainly when studying and reading academic literature. It was initially called the Grammar method and could also be called the Translation method, Classical method, Traditional method or Reading method.

The procedures of the Grammar–translation method typically involve:

- A summary of the main content of the text using the mother tongue so that learners can get a general idea of what they are going to learn. This is the first step of explaining, understanding, analysing and translating the foreign language text.
- Explain the language points and literal meaning of the difficult words and each sentence with grammatical analysis and translation into the mother tongue. Language teaching proceeds with rules of formal **grammar**, isolated **vocabulary** items (usually the new and difficult words and expressions), application of grammatical rules to the explanation, and analysis of the paradigm text and translation.
- Reading and translating the whole text into the mother tongue, and a final summary of the text also in the mother tongue.
- Questions and answers, **reading** and **writing** practice and **exercises**. These mainly focus on the application of grammatical rules, the translation of the new and difficult words and expressions and typical sentence patterns into the mother tongue and, at the advanced level, vice versa.
- In the whole process of using the method to teach a foreign language, the mother tongue has always been used as a **medium of instruction**, emphasising the reading and writing aspects of the foreign language being taught without paying much attention to the **speaking** and **listening** (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 5–6).

The Grammar–translation method was first adopted by Europeans in the Middle Ages when Latin and Greek were learned and taught. In fact,

Latin and Greek dominated the school curriculum at the time and this situation continued till the end of the eighteenth century. The actual purpose of language learning was to train the ‘faculties’ of the brain, and produce scholars. The learning of a foreign language was considered an intellectual discipline. People were of the opinion that Latin and Greek were the repositories of ancient civilisation. A major part of the curriculum and time in schools were devoted solely to achieving the goals of Latin/Greek teaching/learning. It was considered a matter of prestige to know the two languages.

Because the so-called ‘superior’ languages like Latin and Greek were taught through the Grammar–translation method only, it became very natural that, when students began to learn a modern foreign language and when the teaching/learning of a modern foreign language first became popular, the same language teaching method was imitated, since the basic goal was not communication but translation of the foreign language into the native language – or vice versa. Furthermore, there was no other foreign language teaching method generally known at the time (Howatt, 2004: 133). **Textbooks** were prepared to teach ‘modern languages’ on similar lines to those of Latin and Greek. In such books, grammar rules are introduced at the beginning, followed by written exercises and a bilingual vocabulary list. At the end of the vocabulary list, construction of sentences and later paradigm texts are taught with grammatical analysis, followed by translation. Each grammatical point is explained in detail and illustrations are given in plenty. The students are expected to memorise the rules of grammar (Rivers, 1972: 16).

Criticisms of the Grammar–translation method by language teaching theorists focus on its emphasis of the mental, intellectual, disciplinary and memorisation orientation while ignoring the speaking and listening communication aspect of the foreign language being learned/taught. **Rivers** (1981: 22) observes that, in the Grammar–translation method, little stress is laid on accurate **pronunciation** and intonation. Communication **skills** are neglected; there is a great deal of stress on knowing grammatical rules and exceptions, but little training in using the language actively to express one’s own meaning even in writing. The language learned is

mostly of a literary type, and the vocabulary is detailed and sometimes esoteric. The average student has to work hard at what he considers laborious and monotonous core vocabulary learning, translation and endless written exercises, without much feeling of progress in the mastery of the language and with very little opportunity to express themselves through it.

**Stern** (1983: 456) explains the reasons for the failure of Grammar–translation method and summarises four defects:

1. overemphasis of grammar rules;
2. limitations of practice techniques;
3. sheer size of the memorisation;
4. lack of coherence with language facts.

**Hawkins** (1987: 129) mentions Ticknor, a professor of modern languages at Harvard, USA, who already criticised the Grammar–translation method during the course of his lectures on *The Best Methods of Teaching the Living Languages* in 1832 and who observed that spoken and active methods were best: they should begin in early childhood; and grammar should not be introduced until age 13.

In spite of vehement criticisms of the method, the very fact that it continued over a long period of time as a preferable way and is still being partly used by some foreign language teachers suggests that not only no alternative better than the Grammar–translation method was available to teachers, but it also has some valuable points we should learn from even today. It can increase reading comprehension and make the comparison of the differences between the foreign language being learned/taught and the mother tongue. It has a less strict requirement of the qualifications and competencies of the teacher to enable them to teach the foreign language. Large-size foreign language classes can be taught with the method. As support for the Grammar–translation method, Chastian (1971: 59) observes that Grammar–translation teaching satisfied the desires of the traditional **humanistic** orientation which placed primary emphasis on the belles-lettres expressed in the language.

In the early nineteenth century, notions about the view of language, language learning and language teaching were moving towards reform. The

Grammar–translation method, after a long period of domination, was challenged by the forces of reform at the end of the century, as a more rational and more practical approach (Howatt, 2004: 132). The Grammar–translation method itself also underwent many changes and improvements, combining some points from the other foreign language **teaching methods** such as the **direct method**. The **reform movement** was the result of this. Foundations were laid for new approaches towards language teaching/learning methods. However, traces of the Grammar–translation method can still be found in the reading method and **cognitive** method today.

**See also:** BICS and CALP; Grammar; History: the nineteenth century; Large classes; Learning styles; Reform Movement; Teaching methods; Translation; Untutored language acquisition

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- YU WEIHUA

## Group work

The interest in group work as a means of supporting foreign language learning developed in the early 1970s, and later became prominent as one of the methodological devices that typified many interpretations of **communicative** approaches to teaching. In many countries the impetus came from experiences in mainstream schooling, particularly at **primary** level, and the early interest was simply in finding means of increasing student talking time. An issue that has always been prominent is that of how to control or to promote both the quantity and the quality of each group member's contribution (Long and Porter, 1985). An important distinction to be drawn is between working *in* a group and working *as* a group. Working in a group is mainly a matter of location. Students are sitting in a common area but can be pursuing independent activities, or can be working on the same task but with no impetus for everyone to participate. On the other hand, working as a group presupposes a task in common, some interaction amongst group members, and in the most powerful of cases a task which obliges each member to make a contribution. More refined accounts have been developed, investigating different types of challenge and interaction and the value that each has for learning (Long and Porter, 1985; Pica and Doughty, 1985; Foster, 1998).

Communication games and problem solving activities for groups of learners were created from the late 1970s onwards to set up reasons for oral interaction amongst students, and were seen by many as a particular hallmark of communicative teaching (Byrne and Rixon, 1979). Oral interaction is important in group work, in most cases at least, at some stages in an activity, but **skills** other than speaking can also be exercised. For example, jigsaw listening activities depend on the individual efforts of members of the group to comprehend the content of a listening passage before they can discuss

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their results. The above devices, and many other successful group work tasks, depend upon an unequal distribution of information at the outset of the activity, resulting in an information gap which it is the responsibility of the group as a whole to resolve.

Another device related to the information gap is the opinion gap (Rixon, 1979). This depends on setting up good reasons for some group members to wish to disagree with others' arguments or points of view. Competition rather than cooperation within the group is thus the driving force. It can be used within the framework of a communication game if players can gain an advantage by arguing against another player's proposed move, but it is most commonly seen in role play and simulation activities in which the different role cards distributed to members of the group contain the seeds of a conflict of interest amongst group members. An example of this would be a role play activity for four participants in which three members play people who think they have booked the same table in a restaurant and the fourth plays the waiter who needs to resolve the situation.

Pair work is often seen as a subset of group work, but in fact differs from it in several important respects. It is normally much easier to execute in classroom management terms. Even in a classroom with large numbers and fixed desks it is usually possible to set up pair work by asking desk-mates or near neighbours to work together. It is also true that less sophistication is needed in pedagogical terms to make sure that interaction takes place between members of a pair. The obligation to contribute is much more strongly marked when only two people are involved, and to some extent **materials** need to be less cleverly constructed to ensure that activity of some sort takes place. It is, however, important to be very clear about the aims and the learning potential of the particular type of activity that is proposed for use in pairs, and as with group work it is by no means guaranteed as a path towards communicative interaction. For example, pair work lends itself more readily than group work to the sort of language repetition and

controlled practice work that is not strongly associated with real communication and interaction. The repetition in pairs of exchanges in a learned or scripted dialogue long pre-dated communicative styles of teaching, and continues to be the major form of pair work in many countries. However, genuine interaction and exchange of information can take place in pairs, and the device of the information gap is also useful in the case of pair work.

**See also:** Beginner language learners; Large classes; Learning styles; Materials development; Questioning techniques; Teaching methods

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SHELAGH RIXON

# H

## Halliday, Michael Alexander Kirkwood

b. 1925, Leeds, UK

The founder of systemic-functional linguistics, Michael Halliday pioneered the analysis of language in its social context. He convincingly re-established the centrality of meaning in understanding how language functions after the domination of linguistic research by **Chomsky**'s generative grammar model.

After studying Chinese language and literature at London University, he studied linguistics in China and completed his doctorate at Cambridge University. He taught at Universities in the UK and the USA before being appointed foundation Professor of Linguistics at Sydney University, Australia, (1973–87). His huge publication output of over 170 books and articles and his many keynote addresses at conferences of linguists and language teachers brought him acclaim as a leading international scholar in the linguistic sciences.

Halliday's broad range of research interests is foreshadowed in the topics of his first three articles: 'Grammatical categories in Modern Chinese' (1956); 'The linguistic basis of a mechanical thesaurus' (1956); 'Some aspects of systematic description and comparison in grammatical analysis' (1957). The Chinese language was to inspire numerous articles including 'Analysis of scientific texts in English and Chinese' (1993). The 'mechanical thesaurus' topic evolved into machine translation

and the principles of translation in 'Towards a theory of good translation' (1998). The analysis of language from a socio-cultural perspective produced his systemic-functional model. Other significant publication topics revealing the breadth of his expertise were to be intonation in English, child language development, the linguistic study of literary texts, scientific English, and the construction of knowledge founded on language as a system for making meaning.

Systemic-functional linguistics is derived from the work of Malinowski, Firth (Halliday's teacher), Hjelmslev and Whorf. For Halliday, language is not only *part* of the social process but also an expression of it. He analyses the relationship between the functional organisation of the linguistic system and the patterns of social use of its linguistic resources. Halliday's systemic-functional model posits a tristratal organisation of language consisting of a phonology, a lexico-grammar and a semantics. Each stratum is itself meaning-creating. Through a series of interlocking choices the language user activates the interrelations between strata to produce the desired meaning. The grammatical system, in addition to functioning as the realisation of the semantics, and through that of the context of situation, also functions directly as a form of social action in its own right. Language is a social semiotic.

Unlike most theoretical linguists, Halliday makes no distinction between **linguistics** and **applied linguistics**, participating in applications of his theory of language use to mother-tongue and



second language teaching. His systemic-functional model inspired the development of studies in classroom discourse, in the use of language across the curriculum, in a semantically oriented approach to English teaching, in teacher education, and more broadly in educational linguistics, including the study of semantic variation. Halliday saw knowledge about language and language use as the essential focus in the teaching and learning of all school subjects.

The first annual Systemic Workshop of systemic-functional linguistics in 1974 evolved in 1982 into the annual International Systemic Congress, which has been held in many countries.

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ROSS STEELE

## *Handlungsorientierter Unterricht* (Holistic and action-oriented learning and teaching)

Holistic, action-oriented learning and teaching (in German: *Handlungsorientierter Unterricht*) are principles in schooling that take account of learners' undivided physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual preconditions in the learning process as well as their inherent human drive to be actively and wholeheartedly involved in relevant actions (Finkbeiner, 2002). The teaching approach based

on this presupposition considers that learners make active use of both hemispheres of the brain (Löffler, 2002), thus including reason, intellect and consciousness on the one hand and feelings, emotions and **motivation** on the other (Damasio, 2006). Furthermore, it includes learners' hearts, bodies and senses. As far as foreign language teaching is concerned this means that, far from regarding language use under purely cognitive and instrumental aspects, one also focuses on the affective and emotional domain as well as on motor functions. The individuals thereby are considered as **autonomous** personalities who are encouraged to take responsibility for their language learning and use.

A multi-perspective approach, also called Human GPS (Finkbeiner, 2009), can help implement action-oriented and holistic learning. It includes more than two perspectives and integrates cognitive and meta-cognitive as well as socio-affective learning in a multi-sensory learning environment. Additionally, action-oriented and holistic teaching aim at building up three different however integrative parts of knowledge representation: declarative, procedural and situated knowledge (Garner, 1990; Finkbeiner, 2005).

As learners are to acquire knowledge in an authentic setting in which the development of their autonomy and emancipation will be respected and valued, learning **strategies** and learning techniques play an important role in action-oriented and holistic teaching. A multi-perspective approach with respect to all senses allows learners to not just see, but also hear, touch, smell, feel, taste and sense certain phenomena and experience accompanying motor functions. Researchers and authors referring to this kind of approach focus on the importance of primary experiences and **authenticity** in learning (van Lier, 2007). Language is the most important tool that allows human beings to initiate, be involved in, interfere and withdraw from any kind of actions, and in this respect, language is the most important resource for primary experiences from an ontogenetic point of view. Language and language related actions, therefore, are the most fundamental resource for a holistic, action-oriented way of foreign language teaching and learning.

## Brain research

Learning a foreign language is considered as a fully integrative and holistic process that involves all faculties, such as hearing, sight, smell, touch, taste, and equilibrium when constructing meaning. Language processing, therefore, is based on the integrated activity of separately located faculties and body parts and thus of different areas of the brain. This is a very important hint as to linked and associated learning, but linking and individual and association do not only take place within cognition. Rather, they occur with the feelings, interest and motivational state of each individual (Damasio, 2000, 2001, 2006; Bechara and Damasio, 2005; Immordino-Yang and Damasio, 2007). Motivation and feelings which accompany the learning action are of fundamental importance, because parallel to the memorisation of the subject matter, the accompanying affective status is memorised at the same time. Learners are usually not aware of the latter, as it usually happens in a more subconscious and implicit way. Therefore, one can talk about two sides of a learning matter, simultaneously processed, stored and recalled as two tightly connected representations: the content and the affective state.

To take an example from research (Finkbeiner, 2005, 2006): Motivated **reading** in a foreign language includes deep processing, such as the formation of elaborations, **transfer** and inference. Elaborations, for example, allow readers to link up new information to their cognitive, meta-cognitive, and affective prior experiences, thus making meaningful personal associations. Elaborations are holistic, and even action-oriented, yet in an abstract way: they do not include actual but mental pictures, not actual but mental sounds and voices, not actual but mental actions, yet they include actual feelings. Personal elaborations are most important in 'holistic reading' as they function as a mediating variable between interest and deep-level text processing and thus, become a predictor for learning success. Thus, mental and actual experiences merge into each other and form a new kind of primary experience. Therefore, physiologically, motivated reading can have the same effect as the actual action itself. It also seems to allow flow to happen, which in itself is a holistic experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). This

does not happen with unmotivated reading, which happens on a superficial level where elaborations are not possible, but where rather translation in a relatively verbatim manner occurs. To sum up, abstract actions such as reading can be considered as holistic, action-oriented kinds of learning, when deep processing occurs. This perspective allows us to transfer the approach to a higher, more academic level, and thus to implement it also for **adult** learners.

## Origins and history

Teaching foreign languages according to holistic, action-oriented principles follows a **humanistic** view of the learner. To some extent this integrative teaching approach refers to principles from the history of pedagogy which can be traced back to **comenius**, and from there to Pestalozzi, Dewey, Montessori and numerous other reform pedagogues. (It has to be mentioned that the reform pedagogues referred to in this context are those representing the Reform Pedagogy of the 1920s rather than the **reform movement** in language teaching at the end of the nineteenth century.)

According to Comenius, for instance, teaching should be one wholly integrative, holistic and global process in which illustration, verbal representation and sensory-motor rehearsal and exercise are linked to each other so that they lead to a new kind of order. Pestalozzi focuses on teaching as a fully bodily experience connecting all senses (Finkbeiner, 1995). According to his humanist concept of learning, social relationships are crucial for successful learning. The cooperative aspect makes peer tutoring possible. As a conclusion learners and teachers have interchangeable roles, as well as responsibilities (Finkbeiner, 2004). Dewey's (1933, 1997) philosophy of education and instrumentalism, which is also called pragmatism, points to learning-by-doing rather than rote learning and dogmatic instruction.

## Reasons for the revival and the future relevance of the approach

The renaissance of this approach can be explained with reference to the following aspects: socio-theoretical, anthropological, learning psychological, didactic and methodological (Gudjons, 2008).

### **Socio-theoretical aspect**

The rapid change of the world plays an important role in this consideration. Experiences are becoming increasingly abstract. Educational technology changes at lightning speed and often simulates ‘real life’. Therefore, *Handlungsorientierter Unterricht* is an attempt to support students in actively acquiring culture authentically by means of pedagogically organised sequences of action.

### **Anthropological aspect**

Students are to become aware of the fact that they are able to solve conflicts and problems because they are able to think and act competently. The focus here is on the dialectic view of the individuals and their environment. Cognition and thinking are understood as results of action on the one hand and as most important factors regulating actions on the other. Consequently, holistic teaching must seek to organise active and transparent tasks in order to initiate actions that involve thinking rather than merely presenting facts and knowledge.

### **Learning psychological aspect**

The learning process is significantly supported and facilitated by means of practical experience and action with the object to be learned.

According to Leontjew’s thesis (1982; see also Braun, 1982), the inner states of beings (the subject) transform via the outer world (the object) and thus develop and change. Galperin develops a dialectical entity of action and consciousness that concentrates on this view of subject and object: the consciousness is formed by means of action. In return, this consciousness exerts influence on the activity of the subject (Galperin, 1974). The formation of the consciousness through the internalisation of outer and material actions to intellectual and lingual actions is at the heart of Galperin’s theory of action. This assumption is important for language learning because it focuses on the different stages in **acquisition**. The first stage deals with the material and ‘outer’ actions, which are transformed into language in a second stage. In the third stage, the language has fully developed and is independent of

the material object, i.e. it is able to exist without it. An internal language is created in the fourth stage. The learning process is complete when the individual is able consciously and independently to apply the internalised activity.

### **Criteria and curriculum**

The topics to be taught are selected from given curricula according to their exemplary value. Problem-solving becomes a process in which deep understanding of the subject matter involving critical thinking and linking with prior knowledge is possible. Learning is discovery and does not focus on mere repetition of facts.

The following criteria play a decisive role:

- transparency of aim, content, methods and learning **assessment**;
- students’ interests and experiences;
- individualisation and socialisation;
- sensory activity connecting mental and practical work;
- students’ activity and self-monitoring in planning, completing and evaluating their action;
- focus on the social and emotional level;
- holistic interplay of cognitive, meta-cognitive and socio-affective strategic learning in a multi-sensory learning environment;
- development of interlinked declarative, procedural and situated knowledge representations.

### **Summary**

Despite the relevance of *Handlungsorientierter Unterricht*, a universally valid theory and definition of action does still not exist. That might be due to the fact that, so far, there are only very few empirical studies in the field. A further difficulty lies in the fact that the term ‘action’ is often used in a very colloquial and unreflected sense. Holistic, action-oriented learning and teaching – *Handlungsorientierter Unterricht* – are not compatible with a reductionist teaching of factual and theoretical knowledge in school. Rather, this approach seeks to develop a well balanced and dialectic relationship of theory and practice as well as of reflection and production. Yet, the relationship of the scientific

theoretical content and the orientation towards action and holism must be further elaborated, especially in consideration of the different school types and levels.

**See also:** Autonomy and autonomous learners; *Fremdsprachendidaktik*; Group work; Humanistic language teaching; Learning to learn; Reading; Strategies of language learning; Teaching methods

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CLAUDIA FINKBEINER

## Hawkins, Eric William

b. 1915, Heswall, UK; d. 2010, Hull, UK

Eric Hawkins had a major influence on language teaching in Britain and beyond during the second part of the twentieth century. Himself attracted by the ‘strange alluring song’ of another language from an early age, he firmly believed in the power of language to illuminate the human spirit and to ‘arm our pupils against fear of the unknown, which breeds prejudice and antagonism’.

From this deeply humanist perspective, he promoted the need to redress the ‘uneven playing field’ in school language learning, and is particularly known for his development and promotion of intensive approaches to language teaching. He was also one of the main advocates of **language**

**awareness** as a way of teaching learners about language and engaging their curiosity in all aspects of language.

In 1933 Hawkins won a scholarship to Trinity Hall Cambridge to study French and Spanish. During his time there he spent a summer in Santander at the Summer School of the Republic, where he heard Lorca perform and also met his future wife, Ellen. During the Spanish Civil War, which followed soon after, he was involved in supporting the Basque refugee children who came to England. The significance of this period is described in his book, *Listening to Lorca* (1999).

He qualified as a teacher in 1937 but his career was interrupted by the war, during which he served in the infantry in North Africa, Italy and Palestine. In 1946 he returned to Merseyside as a housemaster at Liverpool College and then took up headships at Oldershaw Grammar School (1949–53) and Calday Grange Grammar School (1953–64). Among many measures introduced to make language learning a broad and relevant experience for learners were the introduction of exchanges and visits, including a scheme to send sixth form (upper secondary) linguists to France and Germany for a term each, and an alternative French syllabus for 16 year olds, in which candidates presented books of their choice for oral discussion.

By the 1960s, Hawkins had gained a national reputation. In 1965 he became the first director of the Language Teaching Centre at the University of York. In 1966 he became one of the founder governors of CILT, the Centre for Information on Language Teaching. He was also appointed chair of the Schools Council Modern Languages Committee (1968–74), whose *Working Paper* 28 (1970) did much to liberalize language examinations.

It was, however, his work at York which confirmed his contribution as an innovator. Increasingly dissatisfied with conventional ‘drip-feed’ foreign language timetabling – ‘gardening in a gale of English’, as he called it, he explored ways of intensifying language teaching through immersion courses, encouraging older pupils to help beginners, and organising reciprocal courses in which matched groups of English and French teachers and

sixth formers taught each other, using English and French on alternate days.

As well as experimentation, the Centre also engaged in influential research programmes. Working with colleagues such as Keith Emmans and Peter Green, Hawkins initiated projects on the characteristics of a good language teacher, the effectiveness of language laboratories in schools and the foreign language needs of industry and commerce.

Outside the language field, Hawkins served on the Plowden Committee on primary education (1963–67), the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants (1965–68) and later the Rampton Committee on the education of children from ethnic minorities (1979–81).

These broader perspectives served to reinforce his conviction in the importance of languages across the curriculum for all learners, and in the existence of an ‘uneven playing field’ which was socially divisive. One response was the organisation of annual summer schools in Yorkshire towns for children who had not had the opportunity to develop academic language competence (what was later to be described as **CALP**). In these residential courses the children were paired with student and sixth-form volunteers to allow them one-to-one adult dialogue.

At this time – and into his retirement – he also refined his ideas about introducing a language awareness course in schools, through which teachers across the curriculum would combine to ‘light fires of curiosity’ about language, and children would ‘learn how to learn’. This proposal, first articulated in 1974 and elaborated subsequently in *Modern Languages in the Curriculum* (1981) and *Awareness of Languages* (1984), has been taken up nationally and internationally and continues to influence policy and practice in many countries.

Hawkins retired from York in 1979 but he continued writing and speaking to new generations of language teachers well into his nineties. In 1999 he published a memoir of his life in languages – *Listening to Lorca: A Journey into Language*. His contributions have been recognised with the award of many academic honours, as well as that of Commandant dans l’Ordre des Palmes Académiques and the CBE.

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## Higher education

The place of language teaching and learning amongst the disciplines of Higher Education (HE) has been subject to a fundamental debate: is it the means to an end or is it an end in itself? If it is the means to an end, what is that end? And if it is an end in itself, then how is that end defined? When one has an answer to these questions, there are then further issues about the ways in which the **objectives** can be achieved, both in terms of programme organisation and in terms of classroom delivery. Whilst these questions have been central since language teaching first had a role in HE, the answers have evolved over time and are still evolving.

### A means to an end

In the teaching of the precursor of modern languages, the classics, the role of language was clear: it was the means of access to great texts. This tradition carried over into the construction of early language **syllabuses**: the emphasis was on knowing the **grammar**, knowing the **vocabulary**, in order to be able first to understand and then to appreciate great literature in the classic texts, the canon, of the

language to be studied. Productive language use, in the form of written prose **translation**, was more a means of ensuring that the grammar was known than a means of communication with an audience. Oral language ability was largely irrelevant to the main objective to be achieved.

Within the same paradigm other models have replaced access to great texts with access to other kinds of knowledge about the particular country and its civilisation. One version of this replaces the **literary** canon with **cultural studies**. This varies from the simple inclusion of another medium, e.g. the cinema as well as text-based literature, to a redefinition of culture to approximate that which a sociologist or an anthropologist might recognise as a definition of that term. A second domain which may be set up as the target for language learners is that of **area studies**. Here the disciplines of geography, politics and economics provide the knowledge base which is to be accessed. A third approach is to define the area to be accessed as that of business in the country; this may be sub-categorised into marketing, human resources, or accounting. A fourth area which has seen the recent introduction of several programmes of study enables students to gain access to the study of law in the country. A few programmes may even provide dual qualifications acceptable in each country. And, finally, more and more scientists and engineers wish to broaden their understanding of their discipline and to make their ideas available to a wider community by adding a linguistic ability to their scientific skills.

Most countries will now have within their HE system programmes of study where the language teaching curriculum will correspond to one or more versions of this overall pattern. The broadest range of courses is probably provided in **English** as a Foreign Language. Other languages may only be studied in a smaller range of contexts. The decisions as to which languages will be taught in which context tend to relate more to how a particular country interprets the need and demand for modern languages rather than, for example, deciding that the languages which should be most widely taught should be those with the greatest numbers of speakers. Also, given the length of time needed to acquire a high-level command of a foreign language

and the requirement for an existing teaching force, any changes in language policy (assuming a country has such a policy) take a long time to be implemented in practice.

Whilst this particular version of the paradigm which sees language learning as a means rather than an end is still present, it is no longer the only or even the dominant model.

### An end in itself

What, then, of the argument that language teaching is an end in itself? There are three main reasons why it may be considered so.

First, the object of the exercise may be seen as the ability to communicate effectively with the inhabitants of the country whose language is being studied. Whilst in the early stages of modern language teaching that communication would have been in writing, now it is just as likely to be oral, by telephone, via television, satellite links or face-to-face. Also, there are broad and narrow definitions of communication. A broad definition will require a sound background knowledge of the culture of the country. A narrow definition may limit the range of communicative functions that a learner may achieve to those which are required by the reasons for the learner visiting the country or by the professional activity to be undertaken. Some learners may also see their role as facilitating the communication of others by mediation between two or more languages as translators or interpreters. In many European countries there are specialist universities for the training of translators and **interpreters**. These have a particular kind of curriculum which is designed to provide a broad base of general knowledge as well as the high-level language skills required for linguistic mediation.

Second, the language may be the object of study for the sake of discovering how language and languages themselves function. This may take the form of a branch of **linguistics**: theoretical, descriptive, comparative, or historical. **Sociolinguistics** and psycholinguistics combine linguistic study with sociology and **psychology**. The process of language teaching and learning may also be the object of study in the disciplines of **applied linguistics**, **second language acquisition** or applied language research.

Third, the learner may themselves intend to become a teacher of the language, perhaps at secondary level, and the subject matter of the teaching will be the language itself. This requires the learner to have explicit or declarative knowledge of language structure and the ability to explain that structure, as well as high-level oral and written language skills, given that almost all language teaching is now done in the foreign language.

Taking into account these various objectives, programmes of language teaching in higher education have the task of organising effective study to enable learners to achieve them. How is this now being done? A subdivision would be into three categories: programmes which aim to produce graduates whose main focus is on language(s) and cognate disciplines; programmes whose main focus is to add a linguistic ability to a student of another main discipline; programmes whose aim is to integrate the language study within the discipline which is the main focus. The first takes the form of language degrees which include within them a greater or lesser amount of education in one or more of the cognate disciplines, either in the foreign language or in the language of the host country. The second takes the form of Institution Wide Language Programmes (IWLP), in which staged progress towards a linguistic goal is made possible. The third seeks to teach much of the subject matter in the foreign language, often through extended periods of residence abroad. The first two are more widespread than the third.

Each of these models is then expressed through the standard modularised and semesterised organisational pattern which is present in many North American, British and, increasingly, European universities. Modules are normally taught and examined within one semester, normally of 15 weeks duration, with two semesters in each year.

One of the main aims of this model is to permit students to attain definable levels and to have those levels certificated before moving on to the next. For many years, **English** as a Foreign Language has had a number of standard examinations (TOEFL, Cambridge Proficiency, etc.) which enable the qualifications gained to be recognised worldwide. For most other languages the system is less codified, although attempts are being made in Europe to

encourage examiners to work within a more standardised framework. What is noticeable, however, is that the range of languages which can be studied in HE and the range of different starting and stopping levels has increased enormously.

With the possible exception of some universities in the USA, most degree programmes will offer or insist upon a period of residence in the country where the language is spoken. This may vary from a few months to a full year. The time may be spent as an **exchange** student, working as a language assistant in an educational establishment, or working for a company. The two former methods are more widespread than the latter. In the case of those programmes where the subject teaching is fully integrated with the subject, students may spend as much as two years studying the subject in the foreign country in order to obtain dual qualifications valid in each of the two countries.

## Teaching methods

How, then, will such programmes be delivered and what principles govern that delivery? It would be useful to be able to report that researchers are now able to give an account of the language learning process which is sufficiently well founded for teachers to derive the principles of their teaching from it. Unfortunately, despite the extremely healthy state of second language acquisition (SLA) studies, there is no consensus as to how learning happens. A major school of thought argues that linguistic knowledge must be related to an innate **universal grammar** (UG) which enables children to acquire their first language on the basis of inadequate evidence, and that, on the basis of an argument from parsimony, it is likely that UG has a role to play in the acquisition of a second language. Given, however, that a second language learner typically has far more nonsystematic variability in their L2, that their learning of the second language remains incomplete, that the influence of the L1 is frequently audible and visible, but that learners have none the less been shown to follow a systematic route in acquiring an L2, there is still a lot of research needed before it will be possible to state exactly what role UG may have in second language acquisition.



Other schools of thought would not attach such importance to UG but would rather emphasise the need for learners to be motivated through meaningful and contextualised language use in the classroom. They would argue that, whatever technical mechanisms are involved in the acquisition of the syntax, the essential requirement is for the learners to have a need and desire to use the language in a meaningful way: they will then find the means of developing the syntax they require to express their ideas. It is, however, probably fair to say that most SLA researchers would subscribe to a view which required learners to be exposed to as much naturalistic language as possible and also to be provided with clear explanations of the linguistic system where such explanation was helpful. Researchers would not expect either simple exposure alone or simple instruction alone to enable L2 learners to become fluent and accurate in the L2: both are needed, but exactly how and in what proportions remain matters for further research.

It is, therefore, not surprising that a variety of methodologies are in use in higher education, some of which stress the need for **authentic** exposure and rely on the learner's ability to create the language in a way similar to L1 learning, and some of which stress the need to learn the grammatical rules of the language in a conscious and explicit way and rely on the learner to apply these rules in practice. Most, of course, do some of each. Depending on the choices made, courses will be sequenced in relation to functions of language, to topics to be covered and to the grammar to be presented. Exactly which of these takes the primary role will depend on the level, prior learning and objectives of the course.

In terms of what happens in language classrooms, again it is clear that variety is the order of the day. The **grammar–translation** method is still used within degree programmes in higher education, particularly towards the end of the course. It often forms part of the final **assessment**. Some institutions still believe that translation into the foreign language is the only skill which ensures precision in the use of specific structures. In order to inculcate knowledge of those structures, use will be made of grammar classes and grammar **exercises** in the first years of the course and **stylistic** exercises later on.

Others will place less emphasis on translation and certainly less on translation into the foreign language. Instead, they will emphasise the four skills of **reading, writing, listening and speaking**, and will organise the course in such a way as to develop these skills in the contexts in which the learners might have need for them. Oral classes, varying from conversation to advanced **interpreting**, will also be a central feature of all university language programmes.

If the language being learnt is English, then separate courses may be offered for academic English, general English or even **English for specific purposes**, including Business English. Most other languages, however, tend to offer more general courses, encompassing various areas, although all can, if required, produce the equivalent to specialised English courses.

The exact specification of skills, the amount of background knowledge, the amount of discussion of literature, etc., will depend entirely on the particular courses being followed. Specialist degree courses will stress more background knowledge, translation and written competence, whereas IWLP programmes will seek to develop the four skills in relevant contexts.

Most Western languages are also taught according to a **communicative language teaching** methodology and will ensure that the language learners are required to make use of their language ability in a variety of communicative situations. This methodology will be present on both degree programmes and IWLP programmes, although the way in which communicative situations are defined will be different. The IWLP situations are likely to be closely determined in relation to the linguistic structures to be used in each of the four skills, whilst degree programme situations may be open-ended in terms of the language structures to be used in accomplishing various tasks.

The delivery of courses is increasingly being influenced by new technology. Computer-based instruction is playing an increasingly important role in the form of CD-ROM-based instruction, multimedia packages and locally networked **materials**. In some cases the use of high-band technology in the form of international networks has allowed live interaction in real time between students in different

countries around a set of teaching materials. Even where such technology is not available, e-mail correspondence between students in classrooms in different countries is making an effective contribution to lifelong learning. The potential effect of the technology is enormous, but it still has a long way to go before it realises its maximum power for change.

**See also:** Area studies; CALL; Communicative language learning; Cultural studies; Interpreting; *Landeskunde/Kulturrkunde*; Secondary education; Study abroad; Translation theory

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RICHARD TOWELL

## History: the nineteenth century

Two opposing currents may be seen in language learning between the Renaissance and 1800. The

best educational practice in these centuries was along the lines of common sense, not yet infected by the virus of formal ‘grammaticalism’; i.e., it was still common practice to teach languages by living contact with them, whether in their oral or their written form. The second trend in language teaching after the Renaissance had already begun to be formalised in a systematic teaching of **grammar** based on paradigms, tables, declensions and conjugations. One can easily agree with Mallinson about the cause of this deviation when he writes:

When once the Latin tongue had ceased to be a normal vehicle for communication, and was replaced as such by the vernacular languages, then it most speedily became a ‘mental gymnastic’, the supremely ‘dead’ language, a disciplined and systematic study of which was held to be indispensable as a basis for all forms of higher education. Classical studies were then intended and made to produce an excellent mental discipline, a fortitude of spirit and a broad humane understanding of life. They succeeded triumphantly for the times in their objective. And when under the pressure of circumstance a modern foreign language had to be found a place in the school curriculum as a serious time-table subject, it was considered natural, right and proper that it should be taught along these patterned lines that had proved their worth.

(Mallinson, 1957: 8)

Modern educational **psychology** has discovered that a double fallacy lies in the traditional belief about the formative value of Latin as such and of the grammatical method as a means of mental training, especially since the concept of ‘transfer of training’ has become better understood. Latin has no unique value for mental discipline. This traditional belief may be explained by turning to the **textbooks** used for so many decades by these teachers. They are probably the chief reason for perpetuating an opinion which today appears clearly contrary to common sense and science.

Nineteenth-century textbook compilers were mainly determined to codify the foreign language into frozen rules of morphology and syntax to be

explained and eventually memorised. Oral work was reduced to an absolute minimum, while a handful of written **exercises**, constructed at random, came as an appendix to the rules.

### The influence of textbooks

Of the many books published during this period, those by Seidenstücker and Plötz were perhaps the most typical and the most influential, since such compilations became the model for innumerable language textbooks during the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. Johann Heinrich Seidenstücker (1785–1817) intended, laudably, to offer only very simple material to the students. But he had an erroneous notion of simplicity. In his *Elementarbuch zur Erlernung der französischen Sprache* (1811), he reduced the material to disconnected sentences to illustrate specific rules. He divided his text carefully into two parts, one giving the rules and necessary paradigms, the other giving French sentences for **translation** into German and German sentences for translation into French. The immediate aim was for the student to apply the given rules by means of appropriate exercises. Seidenstücker was closely imitated by Karl Plötz (1819–81), who dominated the schools of Germany even after his death. In his textbooks, divided into the two parts described above, the sole form of instruction was mechanical translation.

The manuals prepared by Seidenstücker and Plötz had all the material that was needed for a thorough drilling in the niceties of grammar and written French, but no pupil relying on these materials alone would ever have been able to converse with or understand a Frenchman.

In sum, it was ‘a barren waste of insipid sentence translation’, as Bahlsen put it. ‘Committing words to memory, translating sentences, drilling irregular verbs, later memorizing, repeating, and applying grammatical rules with their exceptions – that was and remained our main occupation; for not until the last years of the higher schools with the nine-year curriculum did French reading come to anything like prominence, and that was the time when free compositions in the foreign language were to be written’ (Bahlsen, 1905: 10). Bahlsen is referring to his own painful experience. He had been a student

of Plötz. He describes a situation still common today: having to write a letter or to speak in the foreign language would raise before his mind ‘a veritable forest of paragraphs’ and ‘an impenetrable thicket of grammatical rules’.

The same defects can be found in other authors of the time, such as Johann Franz Ahn (*Französischer Lehrgang*, 1834) and H.S. Ollendorf (*Methode, eine Sprache in sechs Monaten lesen, schreiben und sprechen zu lernen*, 1783) (Bahlsen, 1905: 10). The main fault with the Ahn and Ollendorf method was the principle of constructing artificial sentences in order to illustrate a rule. ‘The result’, as H. Sweet later remarked,

... is to exclude the really natural and idiomatic combinations, which cannot be formed a priori, and to produce insipid, colourless combinations which do not stamp themselves on the memory, many of which, indeed, could hardly occur in real life, such as:

The cat of my aunt is more treacherous than the dog of your uncle.

We speak about your cousin, and your cousin Amelia is loved by her uncle and her aunt.

My sons have bought the mirrors of the duke.

Horses are taller than tigers.

At one school where I learnt – or rather made a pretence of learning – Greek on this system, the master used to reconstruct the materials of the exercises given in our book into new and strange combinations, till at last, with a faint smile on his ascetic countenance, he evolved the following sentence, which I remembered long after I had forgotten all the rest of my Greek – *The philosopher pulled the lower jaw of the hen*. The results of this method have been well parodied by Burnand in his *New Sandford and Merton*, thus: *The merchant is swimming with (avec) the gardener’s son, but the Dutchman has the fine gun*.

(Sweet, 1964: 72–3)

This way of teaching foreign languages became the standard method during the first half of the nineteenth century, especially since the proliferation of textbooks modeled on the Plötz outline

placed ready-made tools in the hands of many unskilled teachers.

### American influences

Fortunately, there were some exceptions to the invading and deviating trend in the first half of the nineteenth century. In both Europe and America a few great teachers felt that the right direction still lay in the natural approach, and they continued to teach languages in a living manner. One of these great educators who took the task of modern language teaching seriously was the American poet Longfellow (1807–82). James Geddes, who effectively commemorated Longfellow's unique contribution to the field of modern language teaching, writes:

That Longfellow began his distinguished career by teaching modern languages has been so overshadowed by his poetical output throughout his life that his pedagogical production which followed upon assuming his duties of Professor of Modern Languages is practically unknown to the average reader. Finding the elementary treatises of the day poorly adapted to his course, he prepared no less than seven different textbooks. The fact that Longfellow brought out seven textbooks between 1830 and 1835 is in itself proof of his seriousness of purpose to teach French, Italian and **Spanish** to the best of his ability. Some of these books were used for many years, a proof of their pedagogical worth and usefulness. They are all small books which, for beginners, Longfellow preferred to those treating the foreign languages *in extenso*.

(Geddes, 1933: 26)

Longfellow treated languages as living languages, and therefore taught them as spoken idioms.

Another great American scholar, George Ticknor (1791–1871), deserves mention here. He was an example of the best in American culture in contact with European leaders, one of the first American scholars with an international reputation in the modern humanities. Ticknor's acceptance in 1816 of the newly established Smith Professorship of the French and Spanish Languages and Literatures at Harvard induced him to spend much time in

France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy. In 1819, after much preparatory work, he was ready to start his active career. His theories of instruction in the modern foreign languages were expressed in his *Lecture on the Best Methods of Teaching the Living Languages*, delivered in 1832. His main ideas can be summed up briefly as follows:

1. The primary characteristic of languages is their 'living aspect'. Ticknor's very first sentence in the lecture is a confession of faith: 'The most important characteristic of a living language – the attribute in which resides its essential power and value – is, that it is a spoken one ...'
2. Therefore, the easiest and best way to acquire a language is to 'reside where it is constantly spoken', and where it should be 'the minister to their hourly wants, and the medium of their constant intercourse', but since this is not possible for all students, the teachers must, 'while still endeavoring to teach it as a living and spoken language ... resort to means somewhat more 'artificial and indirect ... the best method within our power at home'.
3. 'There is no one mode of teaching languages applicable 'to persons of all the different ages and different degrees of preparation who present themselves to be taught'. The method must be adapted to individual differences.
4. Teaching techniques must also be adjusted to different **age** levels. Ticknor does not agree with those who would have all learners follow the natural way, i.e. as a child learns his **mother tongue**, because 'it is plain', he says 'that a method adapted to children seven or eight years old would be altogether unsuited to persons in the maturity of their faculties'. Therefore, the method should differ according to the various age levels; and while the oral approach and the inductive teaching of grammar may be advisable for younger learners, 'the mature students will choose to learn by the analysis of particulars from generals, rather than by the induction of generals from particulars'.

In his sense of balance and his affirmation of progressive principles, Ticknor closely approaches current trends in modern language methodology.

## Practical pioneers

While practice in teaching foreign languages was drifting among the vagaries of formalised grammar, and only a few great teachers managed to keep the main principles of sound tradition from total shipwreck, reform was slowly but surely getting under way. The reasserting of a more natural approach was not only the result of loyalty to a long-standing tradition that dated back to ancient civilisations and had been consciously affirmed, especially during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was more particularly the emergence of new ideas within the ranks of such newly born sciences as **linguistics** and psychology. Representative of the soundest portion of this educational heritage are such teachers as Heness, Marcel, Sauveur, and **Gouin**. On the linguistic side, **Viëtor** could be considered as the pioneer of a more scientific reform that arose toward the end of the nineteenth century.

The idea of the 'natural method', as opposed to the grammar-centred procedures introduced by Ahn, Ollendorf and Plötz, was strongly shared by Gottlieb Heness. Heness started a small private school of modern languages at New Haven, Connecticut, in 1866. His viewpoint was embodied in his text *Leitfaden für den Unterricht in der deutschen Sprache* (1867). Heness was soon joined by another capable teacher, L. Sauveur, the author of *Causeries avec mes élèves* and *Petites Causeries*. They founded a school in Cambridge, and opened summer schools of modern languages counting many outstanding personalities like Eliot, Longfellow and Gilman among their students.

The natural method as practised by Heness, however, may have lacked the systematic character demanded by effective teaching. To bring system and order into natural disorder was the aim of another great pioneer, Claude Marcel, who published *The Study of Languages Brought Back to Its True Principles, or the Art of Thinking in a Foreign Language* in 1867. The title was a very modern statement of purpose, psychologically speaking. Mastering a language was thought to consist not simply in the ability to manipulate forms, but more radically in the ability also to 'think' in the foreign language (what today we may call 'coordinate bilingualism'). However, the systematic character

of Marcel's method depended mainly on a restriction of scope by concentrating primarily on **reading**. The essential steps in the 'Marcel method' are the following:

1. The student's ear is trained by listening to the teacher reading extensively in the foreign language.
2. The student takes over by trying to read first simple, and, if possible, familiar material, followed by more and more difficult discourse as he progresses.
3. **speaking** is then practised on the texts previously read.
4. **writing** is considered the least important ability.

Marcel avoids formal training in grammar or translation. Reading makes up most of the instruction, and grammar does not seem to help in improving reading comprehension. Dictionaries also are avoided, as they would hamper extensive reading. It can be easily understood how much Marcel's approach influenced the 'reading method' around 1920.

Heness, Marcel and Sauveur were European teachers who had left Europe (where Plötz was wielding a dominant influence) and had emigrated to the United States to find a more favourable educational climate. But another European was to exert a large influence in Europe and America. In 1880 the Frenchman François Gouin produced his *L'art d'enseigner et d'étudier les langues*, a work that was at the time completely neglected in France (the author had to have it printed at his own expense), but was a great success in Germany. It took England and America by storm and proved a happy source of inspiration for the later work of the 'direct-methodists'. In his book, Gouin tells of his fruitless attempts at learning **German** by some of the various grammatical methods then in vogue, and how one day his own son inspired him with the idea that was to become the basis of his method. Gouin conceived the idea of developing simple events for school use, known as the 'Gouin Series'. The new element that Gouin brought into the teaching of modern languages was intense activity through dramatisation of the sentences to be drilled. Language was no longer considered a construct

of isolated pieces, something abstract to be anatomised and then pieced together again. 'Language is behaviour', Gouin could say today. Therefore, association, mimicry, memorisation constituted the pivotal activities of language learning. Furthermore, his ingenious classification of activities was meeting not only the child's need for activity, but also its need for concrete and familiar experiences. A third positive aspect to be found in Gouin's method is certainly represented by his use of complete sentences anchored in true-to-life situations instead of fragments of speech taken out of living context.

On the other hand, several methodological weaknesses tend to jeopardise the effectiveness of Gouin's approach. His opposition to phonetics, reading and written exercises, and his recommendation of a large **vocabulary**, not graded by difficulty or frequency, are both weaknesses in the light of modern **applied linguistics**. Furthermore, unlike Comenius, Pestalozzi and more modern teachers, Gouin distrusted realia and pictorial representation and placed his faith instead in a vague intuitive awareness. Finally, the exaggerated analysis of speech and behaviour into 'micro-segments' and the excessive use of translation (especially in the early stages) endanger the positive effects of Gouin's main procedures. Gouin did, however, inaugurate a new era in language teaching by introducing a 'systematic psychological approach'.

### The influence of science

The practical innovations of such talented teachers as Heness, Sauveur, Marcel and Gouin did not impress the public until science stepped in to strengthen the appeal of the new methodology. In fact, the **Reform Movement** came to be officially recognised only when noted linguists became enthusiastic spokesmen for the advancing trend. It was especially the new science of phonetics, 'the science of speech sounds and the art of pronunciation', as it was called by Henry Sweet, that supplied the first scientific basis for the reformed methodology. Alexander John Ellis had published his *Essentials of Phonetics* (1848), E. Bruecke his *Grundzüge der Physiologie und der Systematik der*

*Sprachlaute* (1856), Alexander Bell his *Visible Speech* (1867) and his *Sounds and their Relations* (1882). The new science of linguistics was basically reduced to descriptive phonetics; and it seemed that this science of sounds could promise intriguing new developments in the teaching of modern languages. Furthermore, deep changes in the fundamental structure of European society and in the whole economic outlook were creating new demands upon culture and school education. Germany and England had become industrial nations and strong colonial powers. Colonial exploitation and commercial enterprise depended not only on industrial undertakings but also on adequate foreign language training. The problems of that transitional period were similar to the ones confronting the post-World War Two generation.

In sum, the impact on language teaching came from two fronts, the economic and the scientific. The phoneticians – Sweet, Sievers, Trautmann, Helmholtz, Passy, Rambeau, Klinghardt and others – set themselves untiringly to develop this new science, so much so that it came to be considered an indispensable help in any language course. Archibald Sayce applied phonetics to the problems of language teaching. Wilhelm Viëtor (1850–1918) issued a pamphlet entitled *Der Sprachunterricht muß umkehren: ein Beitrag zur Überbürdungsfrage* (1882).

With withering sarcasm he denounced all the supporters of the Ploetz method and insisted that the spoken language become the basis of instruction; it is through the ear that the child learns its mother tongue, it is through the ear that a more mature person must begin the study of a foreign language. The teacher, therefore, must have a firm grasp of phonetics; and he must have resided long enough in the foreign country to have mastered and to be able to teach an exact **pronunciation**. Again, a language is not made up of isolated words, but of word-groups, of 'speech-patterns', of sentences that mean something. No more lists of words, therefore, to be learned laboriously by heart; no more meaningless snippets of sentences, void of all interest and real meaning; no more grammatical paradigms. Grammar

is to be learned inductively, and translation, a most difficult exercise, is not to be used for the acquisition of new vocabulary, but as an art that requires considerable maturity of knowledge of the foreign tongue before it can profitably be indulged.

(Mallinson, 1957: 14–15)

Viëtor's appeal was heard all over Europe and also in America, especially after he started a review, *Die neueren Sprachen*, that popularised the new approach.

In Great Britain, one of Viëtor's disciples also made his voice heard. He was Walter Ripman, who belonged to a small band of English pioneers who had attended the first modern-language summer course at Marburg after the publication of Viëtor's pamphlet. He came away a convinced supporter, and in 1899 published his translation and adaptation of Viëtor's *Kleine Phonetik* (Elements of Phonetics) – a book that established itself as a classic in England.

In the same period, a Swiss by the name of Alge in 1887 started to use coloured wall pictures, introduced in 1885 by a Viennese, Holzel, to the teaching of modern languages. Thus the famous wall pictures of the seasons, of trades and occupations, and of village and town life, came into existence. Ripman, in collaboration with Alge, wrote his *First French Book* (1898). This was the beginning of a long collaboration between Ripman and his publishers, J.M. Dent and Sons, for whom he remained the general modern languages editor until his death in 1947.

The claims of the reformers were not, however, accepted peacefully. Reactions on the part of teachers and scholars arose, not only because of irrational attachment to old practices, but also because of the initial chaos caused by the unsystematic and rigid application of the new precepts to differing teaching situations and by enthusiastic but unprepared novice teachers. Lack of clear **objectives** and flexibility was frequently the cause of students failing examinations or not managing to get a firm grasp of the language they were supposed to be studying. Consequently, teachers followed one of two courses: some reverted to the old grammar–grind tactics and to the Plötz approach; others tried some sort of

compromise between the oral approach and the use of reading and grammar. It was a 'tamed' **direct method**. A final summing up of the controversy over the original direct method appeared in 1909. It read:

The Reform has fulfilled its mission. It has laid the ghosts of the grammatical method, which made a fetish of the study of grammar with excessive attention to translation from and into the foreign language ... But what the grammatical method neglected, practical and correct use of the spoken language, the reform method has pushed to extremes. In making mastery of the spoken language the chief objective, the nature and function of secondary schools was overlooked, because such an objective under normal conditions of mass instruction is only attainable in a modest degree. The reform method requires not only a teacher who possesses a perfect mastery of the foreign language, but makes such claims on his nervous and physical energy as to entail premature exhaustion.

Average pupils, not to mention weaker ones, do not justify the demands made by the oral use of the language; they soon weary, are overburdened and revolt. Early adherents of the new method, after their enthusiasm has been dashed by stern realities, have gradually broken away.

(Breyman and Steinmuller, 1895–1909, cited by Buchanan and MacPhee, 1928: 19f)

**See also:** Direct method; Grammar–translation method; Humboldt; Materials development; Monolingual principle; Reform Movement; Secondary education; Teaching methods

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RENZO TITONE

## History: from the Reform Movement to 1945

### Europe

In most European countries the teaching of modern foreign languages was introduced into public sector schools in the course of the nineteenth century. In those days the living languages were predominantly taught according to the method used for the dead languages (i.e. Latin and Greek), i.e. by teaching grammar rules and bilingual wordlists, and by translating isolated, not seldom inane, sentences. Growing discontent over this approach was expressed throughout the early part of the nineteenth

century (see Hawkins, 1987: 117), but did not come to a head until the last quarter of that century. When Viëtor's *Der Sprachunterricht muss umkehren!*, regarded by most historians of language education as the reformers' clarion call for innovation and change, came out in 1882 it therefore simply gave expression to ideas that had been in the air for some time, both in Europe and in America.

The **Reform Movement** was induced by political and economic changes in Germany and fostered by the Neogrammarians' interest in the living languages and dialects (especially in their psycho-physiological side) for the purpose of explaining language change. Most, but not all, reformers were also phoneticians. From Germany the movement soon spread to the other German-speaking countries and to Scandinavia, where Francke and later **Jespersen** became its main protagonists. In France and England Passy (founder, in 1886, of *Le Maître Phonétique*) and **Sweet** gave an important boost to the movement.

Henry Sweet felt himself to be a phonetician in the first place and a linguist in the second. It is clear from Sweet's early writings where he situated his 'practical philology' (see Howatt, 1984: 189). It lies somewhere between 'living philology', which was based on phonetics and psychology, and the 'practical study of languages', which meant learning how to understand, speak, write and read a foreign language. In other words, 'practical philology' is the area where general linguistic principles are applied to the learning of other languages. Sweet's 'practical philology' came close to modern **applied linguistics**. Its cornerstones were phonetics (1899: 4) and Herbartian associationism (1899: 40 and 103). He favoured an inductive presentation of grammar (i.e. one presenting sufficient examples for the learners to derive the rule themselves) (1899:117). Sweet was aware of the disadvantages of **age** (the older we are the less grow our powers of imitation and **motivation**) and of already knowing a language (one's own). For this reason he dismissed Gouin's 'natural' method (1899: 76). Nor did he approve of the view that the **native speaker** teacher is the intrinsically better teacher (1899: 48).

The lasting impression after reading Sweet's book is one of emphasis on phonetic and linguistic



principles. For the benefit of missionaries he had added a chapter which contained guidelines for the study of unrecorded, non-Western languages. The techniques described in this chapter, such as the use of native informants and linguistically trained instructors are really adumbrations of what the American linguist Leonard **Bloomfield** was to propose for the language training of military personnel during World War Two (Bloomfield, 1942 and 1945).

Considerations of an educational nature are virtually absent from Sweet's book. His teachers and pupils are bloodless abstractions, and his style is that of learned discourse (Howatt, 1984: 188). How different is Otto Jespersen's book! *How to Teach a Foreign Language* came out in 1904 and has remained popular among language teachers ever since. Small wonder, for this is a book that both teachers and students can identify with, showing as it does their strong and weak points. Not only was Jespersen a phonetician and a linguist as famous as Sweet, but one with a mission as an educator at that. This is evident from almost every page of Jespersen's book, which shows a lively interest in teachers and pupils. His 'inventional grammar' is based upon his precept that one should 'never tell the children anything that they can find out for themselves' (1904: 127), a principle Sweet ridiculed (Sweet, 1899: 116). If Sweet focused on linguistics, Jespersen did so on pedagogy. In Jespersen's book one frequently comes across the expression 'from a pedagogical point of view'. It is Jespersen's pedagogical perspective which determines the choice of his subject-matter and the importance he assigns to the various language **skills**. What was at issue for Jespersen was educating young people to become responsible world citizens. Jespersen was convinced that the modern humanities could play a big part in this (1904: 9). His book was influential in that it defined the principal aim of **reading** in terms of giving 'the pupils some insight into the foreign nation's peculiarity' as he called it (1904: 179). Since Jespersen wrote this, *Landeskunde* has not been absent from European coursebooks and **teacher education** programmes (van Essen, 1986). In the period under review its aims have varied from teaching just the realia to fostering a better understanding between

peoples. Jespersen believed in the latter: 'language teachers all over the world', he writes, 'may ultimately prove more efficacious in establishing good permanent relations between the nations than Peace Congresses at the Hague' (1904: 180).

In foreign-language teaching, Jespersen argued, the language is not an aim in itself, it is a means to an end: communication (1904: 5). This was an encouraging noise, especially at a time when the **grammar–translation** method was rife. What to the modern reader is not so much a novelty as a remarkable statement is the exclamation with which Jespersen concluded his chapter on grammar teaching: 'practise what is right again and again!' As far as I know, nobody has ever accused Jespersen of **behaviourism** because of this.

In the period under discussion, nobody has contributed more to our field than the Englishman Harold E. **Palmer**. Palmer has left us a great many works, all of them of a practical, 'applied' nature. He was completely self-taught, and this may explain why he, of Sweet, Jespersen and himself, was the better language pedagogue. The lessons he taught to **adult** learners at Berlitz schools in Belgium have shaped Palmer as a language pedagogue. He taught according to the **direct method**, without recourse to the native language of his students. His teaching experiences found their way into a number of books, and it is the principles laid down in these books that have remained the core of Palmer's language pedagogy. In 1916 Palmer published his *100 Substitution Tables* (Palmer, 1916), a work with a behaviourist slant.

In the same year, Palmer published *The Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages* (Palmer, 1917), based on an in-service course he had taught in London. It was the first time that the word 'scientific' in the title of a work on language pedagogy was explicitly associated with language education. This book contained so many idiosyncratic terms (e.g. 'ergonics') that it must have driven many a contemporary reader to despair.

Palmer's *Everyday Sentences in Spoken English* (1922a) embodies a first attempt at what in the 1970s was to be called the functional/notional **syllabus**. Palmer's 'everyday sentences', arranged under such language functions as *Asking for Information*, *Giving Permission* and so on, meant a huge

step forwards compared with the often absurd, isolated sentences that were still widely used in the grammar–translation coursebooks of the day. But at the same time they were a major step backwards compared with the connected texts of the reformers, as a context was wanting.

Habit-formation was the strongest pillar of Palmer's language pedagogy (Palmer, 1922b). But, just as with Jespersen and, later, Bloomfield, it would be wrong to attach too much importance to Palmer's behaviourism. At most, Palmer was a proto-behaviourist (Howatt, 1984: 240). When Palmer wrote about habit-formation, behaviourism proper was still in its infancy. Palmer's use of isolated sentences conflicted with the precepts of *Gestalt* (i.e. 'pattern') **psychology** which was just then coming into its own. It also put **non-native speaker teachers** at a disadvantage, since they did not have at their disposal the whole range of sentences that a native speaker teacher potentially had (Palmer, 1922a). Just as Sweet had done, Palmer promoted the view that the teacher should command both the learner's mother tongue and the target language (Palmer, 1917: 163 and 173–4). When it came to using the learners' mother tongue in the classroom, Palmer made it clear that he was not against it as long as it was limited to the explanation of word meanings ('semanticisation'). This flexibility was probably due to Palmer's Japanese experiences, for Japanese teachers had a limited spoken command of **English**, but it was really at variance with his views of a direct method.

After 1931, Palmer took great pains to provide his language pedagogy with a theoretical foundation. This he did with the aid of **Saussure's** teachings (Palmer and Vere Redman, 1932: 72).

Palmer's language pedagogy is perhaps best characterised as 'eclectic', aimed at learning another language as efficiently as possible. If anything, his eclecticism meant pluralistic (Palmer, 1922b: 108). With his methodological pluralism Palmer was way ahead of his time. He anticipated a number of distinctions that have recently received renewed attention or have become topical issues in our field, like Krashen's unconscious **acquisition** and conscious learning in the **monitor model** (Palmer, 1922b; Krashen, 1982) and the presence of an incubation period in unconscious acquisition

(Palmer, 1917: 97) – similar to Krashen's 'silent period'.

The Reform Movement, with its emphasis on the primacy of speech, the use of connected texts, the **direct method** of teaching (i.e. banishing the mother tongue from the classroom) and an observational, inductive approach to grammar, did not lose its momentum until about 1910. Despite the fact that in Germany so many eminent scholars lent their names to the movement, it did not catch on there to the extent that it did in France, where the direct method was introduced at least for English into the whole of education by ministerial decree in 1902 (Rombouts, 1937: 163). Besides Passy, France also had a reformer in **Gouin**, who worked independently of the others and who was not a phonetician like the others (Gouin, 1880).

Gouin's impact on language teaching and learning in general education was bigger in Germany and Holland than in his own country, but even in the former it was marginal (van Essen, 1986: 285, 1989: 114). Today Gouin's name is associated chiefly with the natural method (i.e. imitating a child's language acquisition) and with the 'series' technique (i.e. describing all events in the real world – e.g., opening a door – in terms of some 'natural' order and sequencing a text in accordance with this, giving pride of place to the verb as the pivot around which each constituent sentence revolves).

From 1910 onwards the reform principles were increasingly coming under fire. The movement was criticised for its dogmatic exclusion of the mother tongue from the classroom, for its fixation on learning to *speak* the foreign language, whereas the majority of learners would never speak but would instead read or write it (Rombouts, 1937: 130–1). While the value of *some* phonetics was not questioned, the value of a prolonged period of practising phonetic transcriptions was. And so was the artificial divorce of the spoken from the written language. This might be acceptable for commercial courses, taught by **native speakers**, but not for general education, which had formative pretensions.

In France, the direct method was abolished as abruptly as it had been introduced, by ministerial directive. France then entered upon a period of foreign-language instruction based upon the precepts

of Henri Delacroix (1925), whose theory shows a striking resemblance to that put forward by some North American neurophysiologists in the 1960s: each time we learn a new language we establish a new, autonomous speech centre on the cortex (Penfield and Roberts, 1959). Typical of the *École française de l'enseignement des langues modernes* was the alternate use of the native and the foreign language during the lesson at elementary level. At intermediate level the translations were reintroduced. The way in which the words of a text were semanticised was new. The **translation** of words was avoided by giving explanations in the foreign language. To make absolutely sure learners understood what they were reading, the mother tongue was used (Rombouts, 1937: 164). At the more advanced level, the teaching of literature became more important, while some attention was also paid to **cultural studies**. These were very much an intellectual affair.

In Germany the counter-reform was not as radical as it was in France, but then the reform had not been as radical as in France. The majority of German teachers opted for a method that combined what they thought were the best qualities of both the traditional and the reform methods (i.e. eclecticism). Characteristic of the German counter-reform was that it did not produce any leading figures. It rested on negative experiences with the direct method, on personal convictions, and on regional legislation. At the end of World War One almost everything in Germany had ground to a halt, and so had language teaching. It naturally took the Germans some time to get going again. And when they did, they retained in their coursebooks some phonetics and a very sparing use of phonetic transcription (usually of their own making, with a lot of diacritics). They also kept the connected text as the starting-point of the teaching-learning unit. In Germany, texts (a short story or a dialogue) remained the mainstay of foreign-language coursebooks throughout the interwar period and long after. Their position within the unit shifted from the beginning to the middle, where they became sandwiched between introductory and exploratory **exercises** (Butzkamm, 1973: 78ff.).

Where the German eclectics differed crucially from the reformers is the place they assigned to

grammar. They were not content to deal occasionally with points of grammar, for example, as they occurred in the text; no, grammar was the ordering principle of the whole course! The treatment of grammar was not altogether retrograde, however. The text was used as a grammatical treasure trove, and any specimen found there was dealt with inductively. Anti-reform also meant the use of translations as did the deliberate use of the mother tongue. The most comprehensive account of the teaching methodology of the period from a German point of view is that given by Aronstein (1924).

What was true of Germany was true of many other European countries. In Belgium and Holland the situation was not essentially different (see van Essen, 1986). During World War Two the method debate in the professional journals of mainland Europe at first continued unabated but then stagnated, due to paper rationing or a ban by the Nazis.

## The United States

With the weaknesses of the reform method exposed, and not knowing what to do next, European language pedagogues began to look to the New World for guidance. But they gained little from looking at the United States. Rather the reverse was to be the case, as the following will make clear.

In the USA, foreign-language teaching had long been aimed not at learning to speak another language (there were no opportunities to do that anyway) but at learning to read one. For this reason the methodology of teaching the spoken language had badly lagged behind in compulsory schooling. It was not for nothing that commercial private language schools were booming in America.

In his publications of both 1914 and 1933, Bloomfield devotes a separate chapter to foreign-language education in the USA. In both books Bloomfield shows himself to be familiar with the works of Sweet, Jespersen, and Palmer discussed above. Indeed, in the final chapter of his *Language*, to which he gave the title 'Applications and outlook', Bloomfield pointed to the 'vastly greater success of foreign-language instruction in Europe' when it came to useful language mastery (1933: 504).

Therefore, when war came to the Pacific in 1941, the Americans found out to their cost that very few military personnel spoke any foreign languages. But now the armed forces were in need of people who, in addition to the more common foreign languages, also spoke the more exotic languages not taught at schools or universities. These people now had to be put through crash courses. In setting up such courses the trainers could make use of the experience American linguists had gained in the study of American Indian languages. Bloomfield (1945) described how he, like so many other linguists, had become involved in this **intensive language** programme. And earlier on in the war Bloomfield had produced a pamphlet setting out the guidelines for anyone wanting to undertake the study of a language for which there was no formal training available (Bloomfield, 1942). In writing this very practical pamphlet, whose title bore a strong resemblance to Sweet's (1899), Bloomfield had in effect made a liberal use of Sweet's, Palmer's and Jespersen's works. For anyone familiar with these works, Bloomfield's pamphlet contains very little that is new, not even his emphasis on habit-formation. But as it became required reading for the instructors in the intensive language programme, along with Bloch and Trager (1942), it soon became *the* model for any type of language learning, even after the war (Howatt, 1984: 266).

An important side-effect of the success of the **American Army Method**, as it became known, was that the applied linguist had come to stay in language teaching and language research. In Bloomfield (1942) he emerged as the 'trained linguist'. This was someone who knew the ins and outs of the language, who instructed the informant, and so on. In short he was the person who knew how to process and re-work the raw materials supplied by the informant and make them ready for use in the classroom (Bloomfield, 1942, 1945).

Recent re-evaluations of the intensive language programme suggest that it may actually have hampered the war effort! (Spolsky, 1996).

**See also:** Non-native speaker teacher; Teacher education; Teacher thinking; Teaching methods

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ARTHUR VAN ESSEN

## History: after 1945

This account of language teaching and learning since 1945 will point to various trends in language teaching around the world, focusing not only on *how* languages are taught (so-called methods) but also on *what* is taught, and *why*. This will therefore include a focus on global trends in language use,

and in particular five central themes: a new role for language in global politics and the growth of international languages such as English; decolonization and the struggle for new national languages; increases in formal education, and thus language learning occurring increasingly in school settings; large scale language death; and attempts to maintain language use within multicultural communities and to support threatened languages through language rights legislation. The second section will focus more on how languages are taught, and will look at another five principal themes: the history of language methods as a very particular and implausible history; the marketing forces that have driven distinct trends and histories; the tendency to dismiss as **grammar–translation** all teaching practices that do not fit the category 'modern'; the need to understand language teaching practices as embedded in social and cultural contexts and changing according to different needs; and the rapid changes being brought about with global changes in technology.

There are two kinds of problem in writing a history of language teaching from 1945 to the present: first, how to deal comprehensively with many languages across many contexts. Even book-length histories that have tried to give comprehensive overviews of language teaching limit themselves in crucial ways: Howatt's (1984) history of ELT deals only with **English**, and does so almost entirely within Europe. He describes the history of English language teaching as dividing into two streams at the end of the eighteenth century, English in the Empire and English in Europe; it is the latter with which he deals. Kelly's (1969) impressive history of 2,500 years of language teaching, meanwhile, looks at the teaching of languages other than English but also remains entirely within the bounds of Europe and North America: 'We do not pretend to a world-wide coverage: only the countries whose intellectual traditions are derived from Greece are included' (p. 2). The second problem is how to cover sufficient aspects of language teaching. The history of language teaching as it is commonly told within Europe and North America (e.g. Richards and Rogers, 1986; Titone, 1968) has been concerned predominantly with a history of **teaching methods**, viewed as a path of upward progress

from method to better method. The approach here will take a different direction.

### Global tendencies in a postwar world: What is taught and why?

The year 1945 marked the end of an era of appalling death and degradation. The development of the nation state – defined principally along linguistic and ethnic lines – had culminated in a blood bath of unprecedented proportions. That year also marked the beginning of a series of significant global trends: the decolonization of former European and Japanese colonies; the establishment of the UN and other international bodies; a period of confrontation between the two ‘superpowers’, the USA and USSR, followed by the emergence of the USA as the dominant international force; the rise of East Asian countries as major economic and political forces, to the extent that China looks set to take over as the dominant superpower of the twenty-first century; and the development of transnational institutions such as international corporations, global media, and tourism. The centrality of the nation state with its national language is being eroded in many parts of the world, to be replaced by centrifugal forces towards **internationalisation** and international languages, as well as centripetal forces towards language maintenance and language rights; there are major movements of people, whether business people flying from Berlin to Bangkok, tourists from Beijing to Bermuda, or refugees from Dafur to Denmark; multi-channel TV networks, the internet, Facebook, and Twitter connect people across the world; transnational corporations manage the production of goods in one country and the selling of them in another without ever getting their hands dirty. These broad trends have had interrelated effects on languages, with concomitant effects on language learning and teaching.

Already in 1943, the British prime minister Winston Churchill declared that the sort of territorial warfare going on in Europe would be a thing of the past; the future would be a battle for people’s minds, and the key tool in this battle would be language learning and in particular simplified languages such as **basic** English (Churchill in Ogden,

1968). Such comments signalled a major new strand in global politics. Whereas languages such as English had been rather haphazardly spread under colonialism, and often indeed withheld (Pennycook, 1994), this new era was one of promotion of international languages as part of a new era of attempts to gain international political and economic hegemony. As a result, various major languages, and particularly English, were promoted like never before. It is evident from Phillipson’s (1992) examination of ‘English **linguistic imperialism**’ that the spread of English has been very deliberately choreographed for economic and political gain. This process, he suggests, has led to the domination of certain linguistic and cultural forms and the death of others.

Decolonization produced a shift in the language learning patterns of many former colonies, with new language policies favouring a local language over the former colonial language, and the development of new language teaching initiatives to strengthen the teaching of the new national language(s). Indeed, since education under colonial rule – especially British – had often followed the formula of limited primary vernacular education (aimed at creating a productive but quiescent workforce) and highly restricted secondary education in the colonial language, postcolonial education in local languages was part of a major restructuring of society and education. In Malaysia, for example, following independence in 1957, the strong promotion of Bahasa Malaysia as the national language significantly changed the language learning patterns for Malays, Chinese and Indians (Pennycook, 1994). In the Philippines, the years after 1945 saw a move away from English as a medium of instruction and an attempt to make Pilipino the main language of instruction. From 1974, however, a bilingual system with some subjects taught in English and others in Pilipino was introduced (Sibayan and Gonzalez, 1990). As in many former colonies, the colonial language – English, French, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese – was used less as a medium of instruction and became increasingly a second or foreign language. This, then, links to the third theme, the growth of formal education, and the increased teaching of languages as second or foreign languages within school systems.

Once the early years of postcolonial optimism had passed, however, different patterns often emerged, a result of a mixture of influences including the emergence of local elites schooled in European languages, the dominance of the US and UK in postwar politics, the role English gradually came to play in global media, finance, and politics, and the support for colonial languages through so-called development projects. In the long run, therefore, languages such as English ended up being far more widely taught than they had been under colonialism, albeit now as school subjects rather than as the medium of instruction. In former **French** colonies, decolonization also saw changes in language policies in education, and attempts to shift from using French as a medium of instruction to a second language. Nevertheless, the former colonial languages have remained dominant, with French playing a significant role in Zaïre (Republic of Congo), Mali, Niger, Guinea and other countries (Babault and Caitucoli, 1997). As Kamwangamalu asks: 'The question ... is why French, a foreign language with such limited social distribution, is used as the official language of a multilingual country such as Zaire; while indigenous languages, which have a much wider distribution, have taken the back seat' (1997: 72). In many former French colonies, however, English education has also increased. Globally, English as a language of instruction has moved into high schools, particularly in the area of science and technology, meaning that it has to be taught as a subject at an earlier age in primary schools. The fourth trend, a result of colonialism, the promotion and growth of dominant languages, and other economic and social changes, has been the rapid increase in language death. According to Dixon, it is estimated that 'of the 5,000 or so languages spoken in the world today at least three quarters (some people say 90% or more) will have ceased to be spoken by the year 2100' (1997: 116–17). Taking Australia as an example, it is estimated that as many as 50 indigenous languages have become extinct over the last 200 years, around 130 languages have less than 50 speakers and only remain in limited use by older speakers, about 70 languages have viable communities of speakers and only about 25 of these have 250 or more speakers (Walsh, 1991). At the same

time, a growing acknowledgement in many countries of their multilingual populations has led to various forms of support for 'community languages', while language learning as a communication-oriented educational goal appears to be growing (see Hawkins, 1996). Increasing pressure to encode 'language rights' within basic **human rights** recognized by international bodies such as the UN (see, for example, Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1998) also shows some promise in promoting language diversity. Nevertheless, these recent trends will probably have more to do with promoting multilingualism and diversity over assimilationist policies, rather than actually halting the decline of many languages.

What does all this mean for language teaching? Clearly, there are more people learning the dominant global languages, particularly English (though with languages such as **Chinese** on the rise), than ever before, and people are doing so increasingly in formal educational settings, for formal school requirements and for utilitarian (particularly economic) purposes. The teaching and promotion of English, furthermore, is intertwined with other global trends towards global capitalist markets, global media and so on. Amongst the key trends identified by Graddol (2006) are a peak in English learners at around 2 billion by about 2020; the growing irrelevance of native speakers and traditional English varieties; a bleak economic future for monolingual speakers of English; a growth in multilingual resources on the internet; and Mandarin and Spanish challenging English for resources. The struggle to promote other languages as national, official, or educational languages remains a tough, uphill battle. Multilingualism continues as the world norm, both in informal settings, and in formal educational contexts where multilingualism is officially recognized (India, for example). Indigenous and minority languages, however, are increasingly under threat, and the total number of languages available to be learned as living instruments of communication will be massively reduced over the next 100 years unless immense efforts are put into halting this decline. This may not mean either less language learning or teaching, but it will mean there are fewer languages to be learned.

## Methods and other histories: how languages are taught

The global spread of English and the dominance of Europe and the United States in global knowledge transfer has had many implications for language teaching. On the one hand, as discussed above, English is being learned by ever greater numbers of students around the world. On the other hand, the history of language teaching has been dominated by a Eurocentric version of the upward progression of **teaching methods**. The popular version of this myth is that much of language teaching prior to the twentieth century was conducted according to a so-called grammar-translation methodology, which was replaced by a revolution in language teaching that focused on the **direct method**. This was then followed by a series of methods, starting with **audiolingualism**, developed during and after the Second World War and employing structural linguistics and **behaviourist** psychology. Following that we have various contenders for method status, including the **audiovisual method**, **cognitive code**, a cluster of new methods that emerged in the 1970s including the **Silent Way**, **suggestopedia**, and **total physical response**; and finally the modern era of **communicative language teaching** and **task-based learning**.

There are several problems with this version of the history of language teaching as an upward history of methods. First, it ignores large domains of language teaching, such as which languages get taught, as suggested above. Second, the whole status of methods is highly problematic: the very notion of ‘method’ lacks any descriptive adequacy (in spite of attempts by Richards and Rogers, 1986, amongst others, to bring academic respectability to the area) and is clearly a very reductive way to think about language teaching (Pennycook, 1989). As Clarke (1983: 109) suggests, ‘the term “method” is a label without substance’. Third, this history is in part precisely a product of the ‘method boom’ (Stern, 1985: 249) of the 1970s, an attempt to justify this faddish, market- and career-driven era in North America by attempting to locate it within an unfolding history. Finally, to the extent that this history presents an upward path of development, from weaker methods to more modern teaching,

and does so from a Eurocentric perspective, it suggests a problematic progressivism, whereby whatever is deemed ‘modern’ is presumed to be superior to what happened before and elsewhere. Such claims are often made by contrasting a modern ‘scientific approach to the study of language and of language learning’ with a past guided only by tradition (Richards and Rogers, 1986: 8). Yet, as Kelly’s work suggests, the history of language teaching has been far more cyclical than linear: ‘Nobody really knows what is new or what is old in present day language teaching procedures. There has been a vague feeling that modern experts have spent their time in discovering what other men [sic] have forgotten’ (1969: ix).

This is not to deny the many developments related to language teaching during this period: The notion of **communicative competence** (e.g. Canale and Swain, 1980), while tied for a long time to the waxing and waning of communicative language teaching, has provided a model that broadens the scope for thinking about what language use and language learning involve, and has led to important considerations in areas such as language testing (e.g. McNamara, 1996); the elaboration of the **notional-functional** syllabus (Wilkins, 1976), though echoing various prior orientations, had an important influence on the development of language education through the **Council of Europe** in the 1970s and 1980s and has helped orient syllabus design more generally towards semantic rather than grammatical needs; following from this, the development of language syllabuses for **Language for Specific Purposes** (LSP, EAP, and equivalents in other languages) has made it possible to avoid the scatter-gun approach of general language courses and to target very specific populations and language domains; developments in **second language acquisition**, contrastive rhetoric and **contrastive linguistics**, and **literacy** have given language educators better tools for understanding the development of their students’ language, differences in text organization, and different ways in which students may take meaning from texts.

Focusing more on language teaching itself, a number of frameworks have also been developed that can take us beyond the method concept. These include Mackey’s (1965), and Halliday et al.’s



(1964) attempts to present an overall conceptual framework for understanding language teaching, breaking the process down into processes of selection of materials, grouping and sequencing of materials, presentation, repetition and reinforcement through teaching, and **evaluation**. Other attempts by Bosco and Di Pietro (1970) and Krashen and Seliger (1975) identify characteristics of teaching according to whether teaching approaches encourage categories such as discrete or holistic, inductive or deductive learning. Stern's (1983) model of language teaching (embedded within a broader model of curriculum), suggests that teaching operates with three central pairs of options: cross-lingual vs intralingual (does it employ translation or does it operate monolingually?); objective vs subjective (analytic vs experiential); and explicit vs implicit ('learning' vs 'acquisition'). More recently, Kumaravadivelu (2003) has proposed 'macrostrategies for language teaching' as part of his 'postmethod pedagogy'.

Certainly, such frameworks allow us to understand language teaching in terms other than methods, and to look at language teaching in any context according to such categories. We are then able to consider the suggestion of Kelly's that 'the total corpus of ideas accessible to language teachers has not changed basically in 2,000 years' (1969: 363). This does not mean that nothing changes, but it does suggest that in order to understand what configurations of choices teachers are making, we need detailed analyses of language teaching around the globe. As Holliday (1994) has remarked, such an analysis is still lacking. This leaves us with two broad questions: Are there discernible trends in the teaching of the dominant languages such as English, and what can be said about the teaching of the many other languages around the world? The large scale analyses of language teaching have suggested that teaching trends vacillate between a limited number of options: Howatt (1984) suggests that language teaching falls roughly into the natural or the rational camp, a distinction that echoes Mackey's (1965) image of a pendulum swinging between an extreme grammar focus on the one hand and total immersion in a language on the other. Kelly's vision of cyclic progressions emphasizing different elements of the social (language as social, communicative

behaviour), the artistic (language as a vehicle for creativity) and the philosophical (training in analytic techniques) gives us a further option.

In terms of global trends in language teaching connected to languages such as English, it is tempting to suggest a two-way distinction, following Tsuda (1994) and Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1996), between a diffusionist and an ecological perspective. From this point of view, recent developments in language teaching – audiolingualism, communicative and task-based – have more in common with each other and with the earlier direct method than significant differences. All emphasize oral language use and **monolingualism**, while proscribing **translation**, **bilingualism** and language analysis. As various commentators have suggested (Auerbach, 1993; Phillipson, 1992), such an emphasis needs to be seen in light of the global spread of English. The approach to English teaching advocated by the English-dominant nations has been driven largely by economic and political concerns, promoting new books with new methods, English-only teaching methods, and **native speaker** skills over non-natives, while guarding against the threats to this economic and ideological thrust by claiming that translation and language analysis should play no great role. It is only recently that a more critical approach to these issues has started to question these assumptions, with a burgeoning literature questioning the native/non-native speaker divide and the role of other languages in the classroom (Llurda, 2005).

With respect to the diversity of practices elsewhere and in other languages, we are confronted by the reductionist and implausible description of all forms of language teaching before the twentieth century and outside Europe and North America as 'grammar-translation'. One of the problems with the way in which this history has been told is that an upward path of new and better methods is contrasted with a supposedly static body of 'traditional' approaches elsewhere, a central trope of colonial and development discourse (Pennycook, 1998). To reduce all types of teaching that fail to fit some paradigm of 'modern' teaching to something called 'grammar-translation' is surely to do a disservice to the diversity of language teaching practices around the world. Such a position ignores

change and diversity and alternative ways of teaching and learning. As critical approaches to literacy (e.g. Heath, 1983; Street, 1995) have shown, there is great diversity in how people use and understand texts. We are lacking what Canagarajah (1999) has termed 'ethnographies from the periphery', accounts not only of the global spread of English, the marketization of methods and the homogenization of textbooks to ensure greater sales, but also accounts of resistance and appropriation, of local practices and changing practices. Without this, any history of language teaching is a very particular history.

The Japanese teaching approach known as *yakudoku* (Hino, 1988), for example, cannot be reduced to a notion of grammar-translation but rather suggests a broader cultural orientation to text, literacy and translation. It is also clear from Tang Li-xing's (1983) overview of English language teaching in China that it has changed and been influenced by many factors, from the Japanese, British and US influence in the early part of the twentieth century, through the post-revolutionary (1949) use of English to serve the New Republic, to the 'Russian Years' (1953–57), the subsequent oral emphasis from 1958 to 1966, the banishing of English and then use of English to serve the cultural revolution (1966–77), and a return to more communicative goals in the late 1970s and 1980s. The teaching of other languages in China, such as **Japanese** or **French**, has been influenced by similar shifts as well as other changes more specific to the cultural relationships with Japan and French-speaking countries. This raises several important points:

- Language teaching has never been as static and traditional outside the English-dominant countries as is often suggested.
- Language teaching has not moved in some linear upward path but comes and goes with social, cultural, political, and educational change.
- Language teaching tends to be influenced from many directions – there is no obvious 'traditional' or 'Chinese' way.
- An overview of language teaching needs to include not only so-called methods but also curricular and ideological content.

One trend, however, that is clearly discernible globally is the growth of new forms of technology. Kelly's (1969) history reports on the development of tape recorders, language laboratories, radio, films, television and 'teaching machines'. Today we have a vast, expanding array of new technologies that are changing not only classroom practices but are shifting modes of communication around the globe. The arrival of word-processing changed the teaching of writing; e-mail has changed the nature of writing, the relation between speech and writing, and the possibility of with whom and at what speed people can communicate; the internet more generally has had immense effects on access to information, and has ushered in new, multimodal ways of reading. New media provide a new platform for popular culture, with many implications for changing languages and cultures (Pennycook, 2007). Mobile phones, the new language of text messaging, machine translation, multilingual Facebook pages and blogs all present a new text and media environment with massive implications for language learning and teaching (Crystal, 2009). There are still many questions to do with access to these new technologies around the world; but that they are having immense effects is surely in no doubt.

## Conclusion

Any understanding of language history from 1945 to the present has to take into account both large scale global shifts in language use and local changes in language pedagogies. More people are learning major languages such as English, while there are ever fewer languages available to be learned. More languages are being learned in formal educational settings while the growth of new communication technologies has enabled many new forms of language use and language exposure. We need to understand the spread of English, textbooks and methods as part of a massive marketing exercise, and the development of a particular history of language teaching in terms of an upward path of methods emanating from the West as bound up with this diffusionism. The picture of the rest of the world as caught in a static 'grammar-translation' teaching methodology is also part of

this construction. In order to understand better what is going on in the world, we need ethnographies of classrooms around the world. Only then can we construct an adequate history of language teaching.

**See also:** Communicative language teaching; *Didactique des langues*; *Fremdsprachendidaktik*; Humanistic language teaching; Teacher education; Teaching methods

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ALASTAIR PENNYCOOK

## Hornby, Albert Sidney

b. 1898, Chester, UK; d. 1978, London, UK

A. S. Hornby is best known as a writer of English language teaching **dictionaries** and **reference works**. He began his career in 1924 as an English teacher in Japan, and his early studies of lexis and syntax, influenced by the work of Harold **Palmer**, culminated in the publication of the *Idiomatic and Syntactic English Dictionary* in 1942. This was reprinted as *A Learner's Dictionary of Current English* by Oxford University Press in 1948, and retitled *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* in 1952.

In the 1940s Hornby worked for the **British Council**, and started the journal *English Language Teaching* (renamed *ELT Journal* in 1981). He later became a full-time writer of dictionaries and textbooks. The Hornby Trust, established 1961, funds training for overseas teachers in Britain.

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HILARY NESI

## Human rights

Human rights were adopted as the underlying principle of international law in the Charter of the United Nations (UN, 1945). The United Nations was established to support international efforts to achieve justice, peace and freedom in the world through the promotion and protection of human rights. The basis for this is the fundamental belief that human beings are endowed with inherent dignity. Human rights attach to all human beings equally, irrespective of origin, status, culture or language. They were first comprehensively defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations General Assembly, 1948).

The member states of the **Council of Europe** adopted the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR) (1950) which gives additional legal force to certain political and procedural rights and freedoms. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989)

extended the acceptance of legal obligations to respect human rights to all member states of the United Nations since it has achieved almost universal ratification. Universal acceptance of human rights standards in principle was further confirmed by states representing 99 per cent of the world's people in the Declaration of the World Conference on Human Rights (UNHCR, 1994).

The legal basis of human rights legitimises claims made by individuals and groups acting on behalf of individuals that their rights should be recognised and respected. Human rights provide a powerful discourse for those in struggle and a legal, ethical and moral framework for the regulation of relationships between states, between people and between states and people. Claims made on the basis of human rights may very well conflict. Freedom of expression may be limited by the right to privacy or the avoidance of violence, for example. The existence of human rights standards is not in itself a guarantee that those standards will be observed. Consequently human rights are associated with struggle for human dignity.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) provides a comprehensive definition of legitimate claims. It consists of a preamble and thirty articles that were categorised by one of its authors, René Cassin, as:

- *personal rights* such as: equality before the law and equal entitlement to rights; right to life liberty and security of person; freedom from slavery, torture, arbitrary arrest; right of fair public trial and presumption of innocence.
- *rights in relationships between people*, such as: right to privacy; freedom of movement; right to nationality; right to marry, have children, own property.
- *public freedoms and political rights* including: freedom of thought, conscience and religion; right to freedom of opinion and expression; right of peaceful assembly; right to elect a government.
- *economic, social and cultural rights* including: right to work, rest and leisure; adequate standard of living for health; education; participation in cultural life (Osler and Starkey, 2010).

## Language in human rights

Many of these rights are guaranteed in national legislation. However the UDHR provides a language and a discourse for naming manifestations of discrimination and denial of rights and serves as a standard against which to judge government actions and procedures. Article 2 affirms equal entitlement to all the rights in the Declaration and specifically includes language as one of several grounds that must not be used to justify denial of equal rights. It was considered necessary to state this because language may be a factor in ensuring, for example, equality before the law (Article 7) and a fair hearing (Article 10).

Rights associated with language are also given powerful legal protection in Europe, where the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) is supported by its own court to which individuals can appeal. Article 10 of the ECHR guarantees freedom of expression. This is the right to speak, broadcast and publish in any language, so long as the content is respectful of the rights, privacy and dignity of others. Freedom of association (article 11) allows meetings for cultural, political, religious or educational purposes and the creation of trade unions, political parties and pressure groups. Discrimination on the basis of language is specifically outlawed in article 14. As one example, an individual charged with a criminal offence is required to be kept informed 'in a language which he understands' (article 6). This requires prompt and detailed information to be provided to any accused in a language they understand and the free assistance of an interpreter. The principle here is equality of the right to justice rather than the right to use any given preferred language. Consequently, the right does not extend to the use of the mother tongue in court proceedings and is considered to be satisfied if the accused has access to a bilingual lawyer (Henrard, 2001).

Two European treaties have particular relevance in the context of languages. The first is the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (ECRML) (Council of Europe, 1992) and the second the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (Council of Europe, 1995). Although ratified by about half of the member

states of the Council of Europe, certain states, notably France and Turkey, have been reluctant to sign because they do not recognise any official classification of their citizens by ethnicity, religion or language.

The purpose of the Charter and Convention is to protect minority languages as part of Europe's cultural wealth and traditions. The Council of Europe's project to build a continent-wide democratic space recognises the value of multilingualism as an important contribution to the building of a Europe based on the principles of democracy and cultural diversity within the framework of national sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is also confirmed in the Charter that the protection and encouragement of regional or minority languages should not be to the detriment of the official languages and the need to learn them.

## Language education

Human rights instruments include commitments to goals of education. Article 26 of the UDHR states that: 'Education shall be directed to ... the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding and tolerance amongst all nations, racial or religious groups'. The Convention on the Rights of the Child includes a commitment to provide education directed to 'the development of respect for human rights'. Within Europe such education is referred to as education for democratic citizenship/human rights education (EDC/HRE)

Language teaching is a vehicle for transmitting knowledge and understanding of human rights and a policy instrument for promoting intercultural understanding in a spirit of human rights. The Council of Europe *Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education* (2010) stresses that the aim of EDC/HRE is the promotion of social cohesion and intercultural dialogue and the valuing of diversity and equality, including gender equality. Whilst language learning by itself does not necessarily reduce or remove prejudices, when accompanied by other well-conceived educational experiences it can be a powerful contributor to a culture of human rights and equity. This perspective underpins the influential language policy

document the **Common European Framework of Reference** which emphasises both ‘the importance of mutual understanding and tolerance’ and the need for ‘effective communication skills across language boundaries as an indispensable part of the equipment of tomorrow’s citizens’ (Trim, 2002: 6).

At a global level, UNESCO initiated the **linguapax** project in 1987 to promote language policies for cultural and linguistic diversity, peace and tolerance. It has become an active NGO promoting plurilingualism and linguistic diversity based on the UNESCO Convention on the Promotion and Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005).

**See also:** Gender and language learning; Global education; Intercultural competence; Internationalisation; Nationalism; Objectives on language teaching and learning

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HUGH STARKEY

## Humanistic language teaching

Humanistic education, or the education of the whole person, has the fulfilment of human potential as its aim. As well as promoting ‘self-actualization’,

humane approaches to language teaching recognize the affective nature of the language learning experience. In contrast, scientific approaches give priority to empirical descriptions of the formal or functional properties of the language and to determining a method of instruction which enables the learner to gain control over them. This entry defines humanistic language teaching and discusses the contributions of Moskowitz and Stevick to humanistic methodology. The key principles of humanistic language teaching are then listed.

The study of language was regarded as a humane occupation from the European Renaissance until the early years of the twentieth century when **Saussurean** structuralism first demonstrated the value of a scientific approach. According to Mackey, the term **applied linguistics** was first used in the United States in the 1940s 'by persons with an obvious desire to be identified as scientists rather than as humanists' (1966: 197). The application of structural grammar based on the distributional properties of linguistic items and behaviouristic psychology to the practical problem of language teaching resulted in the first 'scientific' language teaching method, **audiolingualism**. It was against the background of audiolingual teaching with its emphasis on drills and error-free performance that humanistic approaches first began to be advocated in the field of language teaching.

Both Moskowitz (1978) and Stern (1983) state that the alienation which showed itself in the violent student uprisings of the late 1960s and early 1970s in the western world resulted in more humane teaching methods. Certainly a considerable literature advocating humane methods appeared in the 1970s. This literature owed much to the pioneering work of two humanistic psychologists, Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers.

In the field of language teaching, it is impossible to underestimate the influence of Gertrude Moskowitz's *Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Class* (1978). The two opening chapters of this book establish many of the most enduring principles of humanistic classroom management. These are followed by a chapter containing a hundred humanistic exercises exhibiting ten crucial 'categories of awareness': Relating to Others; Discovering Myself; My Strengths; My Self-Image;

Expressing My Feelings; My Memories; Sharing Myself; My Values; The Arts and Me; Me and My Fantasies. One of Moskowitz's classic exercises, a dialogue written between the right and left hands, gives a representative flavour of her work. One of the book's four appendices contains sixty-four 'Humanistic Quotes for the Foreign Language Class', the first two of which are 'The greatest discovery is finding yourself' and 'The most important ideas any man ever has are the ideas he has about himself'.

Moskowitz's book thus put before the language teaching world a series of humanistic principles with which it was largely unfamiliar. Equally important, she established the framework for what we now know as resource books for teachers, books containing supplementary materials written up in an easy-to-use recipe format. By the end of the twentieth century, teachers working in contexts where they were able to devise their own syllabuses had come to rely more on resource books than on coursebooks. The content of many of these books also remains faithful to the humanistic example set by Moskowitz, and in the case of Rinvolucri's *Humanising Your Coursebook* proposes to extend these principles to the way textbooks are used too.

Another important figure responsible for bringing considered knowledge of humanistic methodology to a wide audience is Earl Stevick. In the second chapter of *Humanism in Language Teaching* (1990), Stevick brings together a wide range of different perspectives on humanism in education. Later in the book, he analyses the humanistic qualities of two alternative methods, **community language learning** and the **Silent Way**, methods whose influence has been very great but whose practice has been limited to a small number of specialist centres. Stevick concludes that 'each emphasizes some *uniquely human attributes* of the learner, affirms and promotes human *freedom*, and contributes in some way to the human *dignity* of the learner' (1990: 131, author's emphasis). Stevick goes on to measure other mainstream and alternative methods against these criteria.

The rise of generative **linguistics** and **universal grammar** in the latter half of the twentieth century continued the increasingly scientific study of



language, but seen from a rationalist rather than an empiricist perspective. In the generative model, language is regarded as an innate property of the human mind and thus as learnable rather than teachable. In this way, the generative account of language, despite its strict formalism, underscores the humanistic focus on the centrality of the learner in the language acquisition process.

The cardinal principles of humanistic language teaching include

- respecting learners as people, including fostering the individual learner's self-esteem, promoting mutual esteem among learners, and developing each learner's awareness of self and others;
- recognizing the affective as well as the cognitive nature of the learning experience. This means working productively with the learner's emotional response to the foreign language and culture and to the learning situation, and may involve explicit learning to learn activities;
- respecting the learner's knowledge and independence. Accepting that willing learners know best and will learn in their own time means recognizing that only activities that students wish to engage in should be engaged in;
- recognizing that teachers who manifest their authority by means of praise and blame undermine the **autonomy** and independence of the learner and give the impression of being the sole determiners of what is right and wrong.
- respecting learner language and acknowledging the individual's entitlement to freedom from external correction and authority. This is much less challenging to traditional teacher-as-instructor values now that **second language acquisition** theory has shown that learner 'errors' are developmental and not evidence of insufficient application;
- rethinking traditional syllabuses and materials. Humanistic approaches encourage learners to express their own meanings rather than replicate model utterances. The methods used are person-related and the learner's personal experience and perspective are seen as the primary resource for both lesson content and language form and function. This contrasts with more

traditional approaches which focus on language form and on declarative rather than procedural knowledge;

- teaching in an enabling way, including questioning the role of teachers as performers or entertainers who first determine and then fill the knowledge gap that exists between themselves and their learners. Humanistic approaches regard teachers not as instructors, but as enablers or facilitators who assist learners in self-discovery;
- questioning institutionalized norms and rejecting the kind of pedagogy which sets itself up as the artificial means to a natural end. Such pedagogy is evident in the use of terms like 'hour' to mean forty-five minutes, 'week' to mean five days, 'year' to mean thirty-six weeks, and 'course' to mean the amount of institutional time available for learning. Thus natural communication activities are preferred over artificial, form-dominated syllabuses.

Criticisms of humanistic approaches typically focus on the narrowness and intrusiveness of the focus on the person at the expense of understanding the empirical world and explaining it satisfactorily. An early example of this criticism is provided by Francis Bacon:

error hath proceeded from ... a kind of adoration of the mind and understanding of man; by means whereof men have withdrawn themselves too much from the contemplation of nature, and the observations of experience ... and as it were invoke their own spirits to divine and give oracles unto them

(*The Advancement of Learning*, Book 1, V.6)

This criticism is repeated in a more even-handed way by Brumfit, who writes: 'it is dangerous to assume that intellectual analysis and description of events can be a substitute for experience. But it is equally dangerous to assume that experience, however sensitive, can be a substitute for analysis' (1982: 18).

**See also:** Applied linguistics; Audiolingual method; Autonomy and autonomous learners; Community language learning; Silent Way; Universal grammar

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PETER GRUNDY

## Humboldt, Wilhelm von

b. 1767, Potsdam, Germany; d. 1835, Tegel, Germany

Humboldt held various ambassadorial posts and, as minister, founded the University of Berlin (now bearing his name) according to a concept of 'research and teaching' which had a seminal effect on German and continental European university life after the Napoleonic Wars. In the same capacity and with the same success he planned the new *Preußisches Gymnasium* (together with Johann Wilhelm Süvern, 1775–1829), with its stress on

education through, mainly, the classical languages. He was influenced by the philosophers Leibniz and Kant, by the Weimar classicists Schiller and Goethe, and by the French post-revolutionary philosophers, the *Idéologues*.

Some Humboldtian ideas, in particular those on language origin, overlap with similar ones developed by the theologian and philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803). Many of Humboldt's writings remained unfinished. Others, such as sketches and **grammars** of indigenous Amerindian languages, are still unpublished. It was only towards the end of the nineteenth century that Humboldtian **linguistics** gained general acclaim. Some modern historiographers accuse him of leaning towards racist thinking because of his ideas about the superiority of inflectional languages.

Whereas it was the general aim of eighteenth-century **universal grammar** to show the partial identity of all languages by applying the categories of Latin to their description, it was Humboldt's endeavour to show their major differences as explainable by the fact that each language is expressive of the imagination, the worldview (*Weltanschauung*), and the culture of the people that developed it in the course of its history. This makes it a storehouse of cultural concepts, an ideational unity (*ergon*), but also a means of permanently remodelling these concepts into a new unity (*energeia*). It is this idea about the interconnection between language and culture, as developed in *Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaus* (1836), the introduction to Humboldt's main work on Malayo-Polynesian languages (*Über die Kawi-Sprache*, 1836–39), which came to be debated and accepted as the centre of Humboldtian linguistic thinking. Its obvious consequence was that the study of any language in fact meant the study of the culture expressed by it, as was already common practice in classical philology. Although the abstract thinker Humboldt did not busy himself with the concrete intricacies of foreign language teaching and learning, he applied his main idea to it. He maintained that learning a foreign language in the right way was gaining a new viewpoint on one's own worldview and that this was the main reason for doing it at all.

In Germany, the introduction of modern languages into the curriculum of schools during the second half of the nineteenth century occurred in the light of Humboldtian thinking. **French** and then **English** were taught as part of a general liberal arts education and not for practical purposes. Pedagogically this brought the modern languages into line with the ancient ones and reserved them for the intellectual bourgeoisie. In various ways, and frequently without any direct reference to Humboldt, the idea spread to other European countries, leaving purely practical language teaching to privately engaged house teachers or to schools like the one founded by Henri Berlitz.

In the twentieth century, Humboldtian ideas about language and culture were propagated in the so-called **Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis**. Although it is

common opinion now that languages have to be taught in order to be spoken and written, the cultural dimension of language learning is seen as the general background of foreign language teaching. The general aim of **intercultural competence** is the present-day form of Humboldt's thoughts in language teaching pedagogy.

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WERNER HÜLLEN

## IATEFL – International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language

IATEFL was founded in 1967 by Bill Lee, editor of the *ELT Journal*, as a charity under UK law. Its principal aim is to link, develop and support English language teaching professionals worldwide. IATEFL aims to be at the forefront of international teacher development by encouraging members to share state-of-the-art knowledge and innovative professional skills. This is achieved by various means, including

- inviting existing associations to work with IATEFL as associates;
- helping to set up new teachers' associations around the world;
- hosting an annual conference for 2,000 at-venue and 50,000 online delegates;
- producing online bulletins, print-medium magazines/newsletters, conference proceedings and other occasional publications;
- supporting special interest groups within the association and encouraging them to produce publications and run events and conferences in the UK and around the world;
- supporting a wider membership scheme which allows members of associated organizations, and in some countries individuals, to join IATEFL at a fee that takes into account local economic circumstances.

Membership is open to individuals and institutions with an interest in English language teaching.

### Website

[www.iatefl.org](http://www.iatefl.org)

## Identity and language learning

Interest in identity in the field of language learning is best understood in the context of a shift in the field from a predominantly psycholinguistic approach to **second language acquisition** (SLA) to include a greater focus on sociological and **anthropological** dimensions of language learning, particularly with reference to sociocultural, poststructural, and critical theory (Block, 2003; Morgan, 2007; Norton and Toohey, 2001; Zuengler and Miller, 2006). Researchers of identity have been interested not only in linguistic input and output in language learning, but in the relationship between the language learner and the larger social world. In particular, researchers have examined the diverse social, historical, and cultural contexts in which language learning takes place, and how learners negotiate and sometimes resist the diverse positions those contexts offer them.

Two sets of concerns frame research on identity and language learning: first, SLA needs a comprehensive theory of identity that integrates the individual language learner and the larger social world; second, SLA theorists need to address how

relations of power in the social world affect learners' access to the target language community. In relation to the former, a fully developed theory of identity highlights the multiple positions from which language learners can speak, and how sometimes marginalized learners can appropriate more desirable identities with respect to the target language community. In relation to the latter, identity theorists are concerned about the ways in which opportunities to practice **speaking, reading, and writing**, acknowledged as central to the SLA process (cf., Spolsky, 1989), are socially structured in both formal and informal sites of language learning. Identity theorists question the view that learners can be defined in binary terms as motivated or unmotivated, introverted or extroverted, inhibited or uninhibited, without considering that such affective factors are frequently socially constructed in inequitable relations of power, changing over time and space, and possibly coexisting in contradictory ways within a single individual.

Norton first published these key arguments in the mid-1990s (Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton, 1997), supporting this theory with a comprehensive study of language learners (Norton, 2000). She then followed up these findings in subsequent research, often conducted collaboratively (Kanno and Norton, 2003; McKinney and Norton, 2008; Norton, 2001; Norton and Gao, 2008; Norton and Pavlenko, 2004; Norton and Toohey, 2001, 2004; Pavlenko and Norton, 2007). Norton uses the term identity 'to reference how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future' (2000: 5). In this view, every time learners speak, they are negotiating and renegotiating a sense of self in relation to the larger social world, and reorganizing that relationship in multiple dimensions of their lives. Drawing on poststructuralist theory (Norton and Morgan, in press), Norton argues that three characteristics of identity are particularly relevant to language learning: the multiple nonunitary nature of identity; identity as a site of struggle; and identity as changing over time. The construct of identity as multiple is particularly powerful because learners who struggle to speak from one identity position can reframe their relationship with their

interlocutors and reclaim alternative, more powerful identities from which to speak. This has profound implications for language learning and teaching.

There is now a wealth of research that explores the relationship between identity and language learning, testament to the fact that issues of identity and power are being recognized as central to language learning (see, for example, volumes by Blackledge and Creese, 2010; Block, 2003, 2007; Clarke, 2008; Day, 2002; Heller, 2007; Higgins, 2009; Kanno, 2003, 2008; Kubota and Lin, 2009; Lin, 2007; Miller, 2003; Nelson, 2009; Norton, 2000; Norton and Toohey, 2004; Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004; Potowski, 2007; Toohey, 2000; Tsui and Tollefson, 2007). Further, while much of this research explores the multiple and intersecting dimensions of language learners' identities, there is also a growing body of research that seeks to investigate the ways in which particular relations of race, gender, class, and sexual orientation may impact the process of language learning. Identity research does not regard such identity categories as psychometric variables, but rather as sets of relationships that are socially and historically constructed within particular relations of power (cf. Davis and Skilton-Sylvester, 2004; Ibrahim, 1999; King, 2008; Kubota and Lin, 2006; Nelson, 2009). Further, the key concepts of a learner's *investment* in the target language (Norton, 2000; Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton and Gao, 2008), as well as their identification with *imagined communities* (Anderson, 1991; Kanno and Norton, 2003; Norton, 2001; Pavlenko and Norton, 2007) have been developed to broaden our understanding of processes of language learning.

### Motivation and investment

The construct of 'investment', first developed by Norton (Norton, 2000; Norton Peirce, 1995), is a construct that signals the complex relationship between language learner identity and language learning commitment. Inspired by the work of Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991), Norton argues that if learners 'invest' in the target language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of

their cultural capital and social power. The construct helps to explain why a motivated language learner may nevertheless engage in practices of resistance. For example, if target language speakers are racist, sexist, or homophobic, a motivated language learner may have little investment in the language practices of the classroom or community. Unlike more traditional notions of **motivation**, which often conceive of the language learner as having a unitary, fixed, and ahistorical 'personality', the construct of investment conceives of the language learner as having a complex identity, changing across time and space, and reproduced in social interaction. Further, while motivation is a primarily psychological construct (Dornyei, 2001), investment is a sociological construct, and explores how relations of power impact human relationships.

The construct of investment provides for a different set of questions associated with a learner's commitment to learning the target language. In addition to asking, for example, 'To what extent is the learner motivated to learn this language?' the teacher or researcher asks, 'What is the learner's investment in the language practices of this classroom or community?' Despite being highly motivated, a learner could be excluded from the language practices of a classroom, and in time positioned as a 'poor' or unmotivated language learner. Alternatively, the language practices of the classroom may not be consistent with the learner's expectations of good language teaching, and the language learner may not be invested in the language practices promoted by the teacher.

To illustrate, it is instructive to consider a classroom-based study conducted in a multilingual secondary school in Canada, where Duff (2002) found that the teacher's attempts to foster respect for cultural diversity in the classroom had mixed results. In essence, the English language learners in the class were afraid of being criticized or laughed at because of their limited command of English. As Duff (p. 312) notes, 'Silence protected them from humiliation.' This silence, however, was perceived by the native English speakers as representing a lack of initiative or agency. It could be argued that while the language learners were highly motivated, they were not invested in the language practices of their classroom, with its unequal relations of

power between language learners and native speakers. The investments of the language learners were co-constructed in their interactions with their native speaker peers, and their identities a site of struggle.

The construct of investment has sparked considerable interest in the field of applied linguistics and language education, and Cummins (2006) has argued that the construct has emerged as a 'significant explanatory construct' (p. 59) in the second language learning literature.

### Imagined communities and imagined identities

An extension of interest in identity and investment concerns the imagined communities that language learners aspire to when they learn a language (Anderson, 1991; Kanno and Norton, 2003; Norton, 2001; Pavlenko and Norton, 2007). Imagined communities refer to groups of people, not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through the power of the imagination. In our daily lives we interact with many communities whose existence can be felt concretely and directly. These include our neighbourhood communities, our workplaces, our educational institutions, and our religious groups. However, these are not the only communities with which we are affiliated. As Wenger (1998) suggested, direct involvement in community practices and concrete relationships – what he calls *engagement* – is not the only way in which we belong to a community; for Wenger, imagination is another important source of community. Norton (2001) extended Wenger's work by proposing the construct of 'imagined communities' with respect to L2 learning, arguing that it serves, in part, to explain non-participation and resistance in the language classroom.

Imagined ties extend both spatially and temporally. Benedict Anderson (1991), who first coined the term *imagined communities*, argued that what we think of as nations are imagined communities, 'because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion' (p. 6). Thus in imagining ourselves bonded with our

fellow compatriots across time and space, we can feel a sense of community with people we have not yet met, and perhaps may never meet. A focus on imagined communities in SLA enables us to explore how learners' affiliation with such communities might affect their learning trajectories. Such communities include future relationships that exist only in the learner's imagination as well as affiliations – such as nationhood or even transnational communities – that extend beyond local sets of relationships. These imagined communities are no less real than the ones in which learners have daily engagement and might even have a stronger impact on their current actions and investment.

### Identity and language teaching

The relevance of identity research for classroom teaching is considerable. As Lee's (2008) research in a Canadian post-secondary institution suggests, while many language teachers strive to enhance the range of possibilities available to their students, there is often a disjuncture between the pedagogy as conceptualized by the teacher and the practices adopted in the classroom. Despite the best intentions, classroom practices can recreate subordinate student identities, thereby limiting students' access not only to language learning opportunities, but to other more powerful identities. Lee's findings are consistent with those of Ramanathan (2005), whose research in India found that teachers' language practices can reinforce existing inequities among diverse learners of English. Her research suggests that pedagogical language practices that are ritualized and allow for little meaning-making on the part of students may limit the learner's access to more powerful identities. To promote meaning-making in the learning process, Wallace (2003) has worked with **adult language learners** in the United Kingdom on critical reading courses in which she uses text-focussed activities to address how meaning and power is encoded in texts. Wallace contrasts her approach with dominant English foreign language methodologies that can be seen as 'domesticating' for learners, teaching them only how to fit in with dominant cultures rather than to question and reshape powerful discourses.

Other research projects, which have taken place in diverse regions of the world, are illustrative of the ways in which particular pedagogical practices in language classrooms can offer students opportunities for an expanded range of identities. In Mexico, Clemente and Higgins (2008) drew on their longitudinal study of pre-service English teachers in Oaxaca to raise questions about the dominant role that English plays in the globalized political economy, and to illustrate the ways in which the non-native English teachers in their study sought to appropriate and 'perform' English without sacrificing local identities. In South Africa, Stein (2008) explored the way in which English language classrooms in under-resourced township schools became transformative sites in which textual, cultural, and linguistic forms were re-appropriated and 're-sourced', with a view to validating those practices that had been marginalized and undervalued by the apartheid system. In a similar spirit, scholars have investigated the extent to which multimodal pedagogies that include drawing, photography, and drama can be incorporated more systematically into the English curriculum in Uganda, enhancing identity options for language learners (Kendrick et al., 2006).

In many transformative classrooms that have been discussed in the literature, the language teachers' conceptions of 'language' and thus 'language teaching' are broad in scope (Norton and Toohey, 2004). The teachers conceive of language not only as a linguistic system, but as a social practice in which experiences are organized and identities negotiated. There is recognition that if learners are not invested in the language practices of the classroom, learning outcomes are limited, and educational inequities perpetuated. Further, such teachers take great care to offer learners multiple identity positions from which to engage in the language practices of the classroom, the school, and the community. Research on identity, language learning, and language teaching will remain vibrant for years to come.

**See also:** Acquisition and teaching; Humanistic language teaching; Internationalisation; Nationalism; Skills and knowledge in language learning; Speech act theory; Teaching methods

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BONNY NORTON

### Idioms

The place for teaching idioms in the foreign language classroom is uncertain. One approach characterises idioms as 'interesting because they are colourful and lively' but also comments that they are 'linguistic curiosities ... marginal items which are quaint but not significant' and which are neglected in the classroom (Moon, 1995: iv). The

contrary point of view is summarised in a quotation attributed to Fernando (1996) by Abisamra (2002) 'The sheer number of idioms and their high frequency in discourse make them an important aspect of vocabulary acquisition and language learning in general.' Adherents of the second point of view frequently make claims that, for example, 'idioms are the grease that make language flow'; that idioms have an important contribution to make to fluency and idiomaticity. And that 'a strong knowledge of idioms will help students to be better speakers and negotiators' (Abisamra, 2002). They are considered important enough to be included as tested items in high level English language exams such as Cambridge Proficiency in English.

Part of this disagreement may lie in the definition of what an idiom is. It is generally agreed that idioms are non-compositional in that they are 'complex bits of frozen language, whose meanings cannot be derived from the meaning of their components' (Nattinger and DeCarrico, 1992: 31) and that they are also 'lexicalised in that they have the semantic unity of single words' Pawley and Syder, 1986: 74). Thus they are expressions such as *off your trolley* which has nothing to do with *trolleys*, but carries the meaning of *foolish* or *crazy*, and which may be perceived and used by the speaker almost as a single word. But even within this definition there are a variety of items referred to as idiom in the literature (Moon, 1997: 46). McGavigan (2010: 11) lists some of these and they range from pure idioms (*kick the bucket*), to collocations (*down the drain/tube/pan*), to proverbs (*don't count your chickens*), to sayings (*a bird in the hand*), and to phrasal verbs (*take it out on someone*).

Idioms, it seems, are often confused with idiomaticity, the quality of sounding native-like, and thus many users include as idioms multi-word units whose meaning is compositional. Reputable dictionary compilers such as Collins COBUILD (1995) separate out opaque idioms and metaphoric expression from other fixed expressions and phrasal verbs, since they deal with these in separate dictionaries. With this narrower definition, the idea that idioms are all-pervasive in language can be challenged. Using the frequency information available in the Collins COBUILD dictionary, the frequency of idioms can be compared with

equivalent single words. The most frequent idioms (such as *get the hang of*; *a rule of thumb*) have a frequency of 1 occurrence per 2 million running words. Single words with equivalent frequencies include items such as *reamer*, *traduce* and *mawkish*, which might reasonably been seen as recondite language items and inessential for most language learners (McGavigan, 2010: 13). Because they are infrequent, and often restricted to spoken language use which is difficult to collect, it is unclear just how many idioms there may be in English (or in any other language). The *Collins COBUILD Dictionary of Idioms* (1995) contains something over 4,000 items. The *Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms* (2006) contains over 7,000.

It is assumed that the ability to learn and use idioms effectively is the preserve of the more able learners and that a sizable vocabulary is necessary to handle these items. In the Council of Europe's CEFR hierarchy, for example, knowledge of idioms is assumed to be characteristic only of learners who have attained the highest C2 level of performance (Council of Europe, 2001: 112). McGavigan's study (2010) confirms this and shows that learners can attain high levels of language performance with almost no knowledge of opaque and fixed idioms, and that these idioms are almost completely absent from standard EFL course books. They are included in the Advanced and Proficiency level textbooks (McGavigan, 2010) and in supplementary teaching materials at upper intermediate and advanced levels (for example Milton and Evans, 2000).

Idioms are considered difficult to teach because they often contain unpredictable meanings, grammar and collocations, and have special connotations (Moon, 1995: iv). Nonetheless, they can be taught successfully provided learners are sufficiently motivated and provided an appropriate technique is found. Learners of language in a specialist subject area, business for example, can be persuaded of the usefulness of these items if they can be shown to be important to good and effective communication in this area.

Boers et al. (2006) suggest that idioms can be easy to learn, if treated in a meaningful way such as through the use of etymology. They point out that their component words are usually those found in

the most frequent words in English, they are situational-bound and contextualised, and therefore can be remembered through association of context, place, individuals and linguistic function. Thus, *to wait in the wings*, with the meaning of *being ready to act if needed*, can be learned when it is understood that the origin of the phrase lies in the theatre where *the wings* are immediately to the side of the stage out of view of the audience and where actors wait to enter the stage.

Many idioms are colloquial in nature and tend to be restricted to oral language rather than writing, which is often more formal. It would probably be inappropriate to use *nosey parker* and *going up in smoke* in the context of a formal essay for example. It is important that in teaching idioms the differences which exist in the degree of formality, and even the slangy nature of some idioms, is made plain to learners.

Idioms often lend themselves to being taught with the aid of visuals (*the tip of the iceberg*, *being kept in the dark*) and this may be an advantage in teaching. It has been argued that dual-coding, which is where the coding of memories is in both iconic and propositional form, is an aid to retention and recall (Paivio, 1971 and 1986) and this should aid learning. There is research (Mayer, 1999) which supports this idea that words and pictures presented together helped students recall better than alone.

**See also:** Language for specific purposes; Literary texts; Reference works; Strategies of language learning; Vocabulary

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JAMES MILTON AND PATRICK MCGAVIGAN

## IDV – Internationaler Deutschlehrerverband

The *Internationaler Deutschlehrerverband* is an association of associations of teachers of German, and of sections or groups of teachers and researchers at all levels in multilingual language teaching associations. Individuals may become members if there is no appropriate association in their country.

The aims of the IDV are to promote contact between associations, to support teachers of German in their professional work and in further or in-service training, and to further the development of German as a Foreign Language and the position of German in the world. The purpose is to promote

German teaching which serves intercultural exchange and encounters with the cultures of German-speaking countries and regions.

The IDV was founded in 1968, and comprises more than 100 associations in more than 80 states. It fulfils its aims by organising international and regional meetings for teachers of German on issues connected with German as a Foreign Language (*Deutsch als Fremdsprache*). It also organises seminars and expert meetings and publishes a newsletter and information sheet.

### Website

[www.idvnetz.org](http://www.idvnetz.org)

## Integrated tests

Integrated tests take a view of language ability similar to **integrative tests**, in that a number of components of language ability are assessed at the same time. Integrated tests, however, are a subset of integrative tests. While the latter term can be applied to any test that assesses two or more language **skills** or sub-skills (regardless of their specificity), an integrated test refers to an **assessment** of language ability in which two or more language skills are combined. The Canadian Academic English Language Assessment (CAEL) is a very good example of an integrated test. Test-takers are required to read two articles and respond to questions based on their reading. They are also required to view a pre-recorded lecture and respond to a few questions on what they have seen and heard. Finally, they write a response to a **writing** task in which they are expected to draw on the information from their reading and **listening**. This ensures that all the candidates have the same amount of information on a topic available to them and, theoretically, address the writing task with potentially the same level of background knowledge. Also, since each input section is timed separately, the risk is reduced of candidates taking longer on one task to the detriment of the other components of the test.

However, the primary difficulty of this approach to testing is the ease with which a candidate's

performance on the writing task can be disentangled from their performance on the reading and listening tests. By including separate questions for the two reading texts and the listening **exercise**, the CAEL Assessment goes some way towards being able to account for students' performances. However, even if it is able to disentangle reading from listening (and both these skills from writing), it still encompasses a number of different sub-skills within each language skill. Therefore, the reported scores are summaries of a number of processes that each candidate has gone through in order to complete the tasks.

**See also:** Assessment and testing

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## Integrative tests

While **discrete point tests** isolate the components of language **skills** and test them separately, integrative tests claim to assess the test-takers' capacity to use a number of components of language ability at the same time.

The components being tested can vary widely and operate at different levels of abstraction from the sub-skills involved. For example, a **cloze test** simultaneously tests grammatical knowledge and the ability to extract and predict meaning in a written text. A **writing** test such as an extended essay, on the other hand, tests the test-taker's grammatical knowledge, their ability to construct coherent discourse (a focus on meaning) and their ability to manage their language resources. At a more abstract level still are tests that involve two language skills such as **reading** an article and then writing a summary of the key issues raised. Such a

test (which can also be termed an **integrated test**) integrates a number of language sub-skills such as grammatical knowledge, the ability to extract key information, lexical knowledge (and its sub-skills) and the ability to construct coherent discourse.

Integrative tests are usually preferred to discrete point tests because they reflect real language use more closely, and integrative items are commonly used in **proficiency tests**. However, one disadvantage of integrative tests is that the results are reported as a single score and, since the tasks combine different components of language ability, these scores are not always easy to interpret.

**See also:** Assessment and testing

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## Intensive language courses

Intensive language courses represent a concentrated period of foreign language study, usually of relatively short duration, which may contrast with traditional learning approaches. While a number of different methods exist for intensive language work, the term is characteristically associated with both adult and younger, school-based, learners. However the use of the same term to describe both types of intensive work is not always satisfactory; given the largely different characteristics of each type of learner and the nature of the intensive courses designed for them. For the **adult** learner there is usually a specific goal to the learning with the need to achieve a level of language **competence** quickly for business or leisure purposes. In contrast, for school-aged pupils, intensive work represents an alternative and complementary

approach to normal language lessons with the emphasis on practical language work and the aim to improve language **skills**. The increased need to communicate, due to the nature of the learning environment, provides the opportunity to acquire new material and perhaps, importantly, activate elements of language which have previously been only partially acquired.

### Courses for adults versus courses for younger learners

For adult learners the specific nature of business interests or holiday destinations will provide a context and focus for their learning. Intensive learning is also associated with the development of higher levels of language skill: 'If a higher level of competence is needed intensive study would be paramount' (CILT, 1998). The investment in time and energy required by participation in an intensive language learning programme means professional courses need to meet the specific requirements of the participants. This is made clear from a review of intensive courses at colleges of further and higher education: 'Short intensive courses may also be run, some designated specifically for business and professional people as well as company courses arranged to take place in-college and/or on company premises' (CILT, 1998).

A key to understanding intensive work for younger learners comes from identifying one of the characteristics of the courses designed for this target group: 'the use of the foreign language for some other purpose than merely learning it' (Perren, 1978: 2). Pupils are given the opportunity to use the language in practical situations. The target language is no longer being studied for its own sake but has become a necessary vehicle for communication. Pupils are involved in activities which require the use of the language but, unlike normal classroom procedures, the programme of activities and not the language itself, is the focus of attention. (These activities are often based around a theme which may represent anything from 'secret agent training' to historical events in a target language country, and they provide the framework for the intensive experience.) For this reason intensive work is often based outside the classroom, in special centres, to

provide a different environment in which the language work can take place. Language use become more realistic due to the practical activities in which pupils are involved. To provide more **authenticity**, the intensive work may be situated in a target language country with easy access to the target language and culture. Intensive language opportunities of this kind could be included as part of the programme for short visits or **exchanges** to the target country.

The differences in the nature of intensive courses provided for adults and children are explained by the different characteristics of each type of learner. Adults are likely to be more self-motivated, with a specific target for their learning of the foreign language. They are often not already engaged in language learning and the intensive period may be their first encounter with the target language. The courses provide a concentrated period of exposure to the language, usually within a classroom setting. Increasingly, new technology will help this type of learner to access and interact with the target language. For younger, school-aged learners who are already exposed to the foreign language through classroom learning, it will be important to provide a different approach.

### Links with immersion courses

Intensive language work is closely linked with the French *sections bilingues* and with the immersion work associated with Canadian pupils. However, these learning systems typically represent traditional classroom-based learning. They are not limited in duration, but last for the whole school year. The foreign language is used as a vehicle for teaching either specific subject areas such as geography or history (*sections bilingues*), or for younger children the whole curriculum (immersion schemes). In this respect they share the characteristic of purposeful language use with typical intensive schemes. They differ because, while they extend the period of contact with the target language, they do not provide the short, concentrated period of exposure which might, as we will discuss below, have a specific role in increasing **motivation** and boosting language skills. Confusion over terminology means that intensive work and language immersion are often used synonymously.

### Historical precedents

Intensive language methods have historically been used to enhance and develop foreign language learning. This is a point emphasised by **Hawkins** when he discusses Latin learning in England during the sixteenth century:

there was the daily **grammar** class in which the structure of the language was expounded ... but his supplemented by activity. Pupils were expected to use Latin for all purposes ... any boy caught using English, even in the playground, was to be beaten.

(Hawkins, 1988: 4)

As we shall see below, Hawkins distinguishes between **medium-orientated** and **message-orientated** ('level 1' and 'level 2') teaching. An appreciation that limiting contact of the target language to classroom lessons and not providing sufficient practical language use is evident even from this historical quotation. During the 1940s, intensive learning became associated with the development of the **audiolingual method** of language teaching and the need to run intensive courses to provide military personnel with language skills.

While there is a clear historical precedent for intensive language work, this kind of activity does not fit readily into school-based foreign language learning today. A theoretical case has been made, however in support of intensive work in schools. For **Hawkins**, foreign language learning requires a two-level approach: activities focused on the form of language would concentrate on grammatical structure, **pronunciation** and the accuracy of language; while in 'message-orientated work', 'the learner concentrates on using the foreign language to transact meanings ... the most effective language learning involves a constant interaction between these two kinds of activity' (Hawkins, 1988: 3). This concept was based on the work of Dodson (1978) and Stevick (1976, 1988). Stevick associates learning with the involvement of the learner and the depth of learning which takes place: 'sentences are easier to learn if the student meets them in a meaningful context. One reason for this may be that meaningful context permits more complex

processing' (Stevick, 1976: 30). While Stevick does not deal specifically with intensive work, he considers the intensity of a learner's experience, identified as the 'vividness of exposure to an item,' to be a key factor in language **acquisition**.

In a survey of intensive work in English schools, Hawkins (1978, 1988), found clear evidence for the enthusiastic response of participating pupils and teachers. What was less evident was research to show the extent to which exposure to this kind of experience not only increased motivation, but also improved language skills.

The importance of intensive language courses is related to their effectiveness in creating an environment in which access to the foreign language can be increased and language skills improved. While adult intensive work is a proven and accepted method of developing language skills, school-based initiatives remain unusual. (Before we can argue in favour of increasing the use of intensive language learning for younger students, we need to establish the benefits of this type of learning as a supplement to normal classroom-based activities.) We tend to examine foreign language learning for younger pupils from the perspective of classroom learning. It may be, however, that there are real lessons to be learnt from how pupils' foreign language skills can develop during intensive work, and the relevance of intensive methods to normal classroom practice should be investigated further.

We would expect that increased exposure to the target language, and pupil involvement in an experience where language is used in context, would lead to new items of language being acquired. Some of this **vocabulary** and these structures will be new to pupils, and will be specifically associated with the new environment in which they find themselves. However, what if some of the material acquired by pupils has been targeted for acquisition in the classroom but has remained only partially known until the intensive experience? This would suggest that there is a kind of 'vocabulary dormancy' operating for some language material in the classroom, and that it takes the catalyst of an intensive type of experience for this material to be activated and fully acquired (Daniels, 2000).

From being seen as an unusual and peripheral learning activity, intensive work from this perspective

has the potential to extend and develop pupils' practical language skills. Hawkins considered that a good deal of foreign language teaching: 'has been mere rehearsal, not followed by performance' (Hawkins, 1978). An intensive language experience represents precisely the occasion for pupils to 'perform', using the language for communicative purposes.

**See also:** Acquisition and teaching; Exchanges; *Hundlungsorientierter Unterricht*; Humanistic language teaching; Medium-orientated and message-orientated communication; Study abroad; Task-based teaching and assessment

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JOHN DANIELS

## Intercomprehension

The concept of intercomprehension is an outcome of discussions in Europe of the problems of interlingual communication at the end of the twentieth century. Until then, most linguists and teachers had assumed that the necessity of enabling as many people as possible to communicate with people of other linguistic backgrounds could best be met by the use of a **lingua franca**. The general acceptance of this idea gave way to a more differentiated view which sees the handicaps of a universally used language, such as the danger of **linguistic imperialism** and the disadvantage of the culture-free use of that language, and to a search for alternatives, one of which is intercomprehension.

Among various definitions, the following is the most widely accepted, as it contains the essential components and only these:

Intercomprehension is a form of communication in which each person uses his or her own language and understands that of the other(s).

This implies two distinctive characteristics: it *includes* both spoken and written communication and *excludes* using the target language. Both are important. The former stresses the fact that, depending on the communicative situation, it is the understanding of spoken utterances *or* of written texts that counts. The latter indicates the exclusion of the active use of the target language; intercomprehension does not demand the production of the partner's tongue.

Intercomprehension is of special relevance in Europe, because it provides an answer to the political necessities of this continent. Therefore its two representative institutions – the Council of Europe

and the European Commission – have made plurilingualism and diversification principles of their linguistic policy; if Europe wants to preserve its multilingual wealth, then it is not acceptable that one language dominates. For the promoters of intercomprehension, it would be a contradiction of this principle to grant one language the privilege of a *lingua franca* which everyone has to learn in order to become a fully accepted European citizen and to exclude all those who do not know this language. Any such inequality is avoided in intercomprehension: all languages receive an equal status through the simple arrangement that participants in communication use the language they know best, which – as a rule – is their mother tongue.

Intercomprehension has a solid psychological foundation. It rests on the interplay of man's faculty for language and his ability to exploit his previously acquired funds of knowledge.

The idea that human beings possess a natural capacity for language is nowadays commonly accepted and goes back to **Saussure's** theory of language and language acquisition. Saussure not only introduced the distinction between 'langue' and 'parole', but also the concept of a general **anthropological** basis on which these two phenomena rest, namely 'langue', the ability to encode messages in systems of signs and to decode these signs. (Saussure, 1960: 26) This 'faculté du langage' enables human beings not only to express their ideas, feelings and intentions in languages, but also to understand messages in which ideas, feelings and intentions are expressed. The second element is important for the justification of intercomprehension: Human beings possess a general interpretative faculty that allows them to comprehend messages. Normally these messages are encoded in linguistic systems that the individual has learnt. But the interpretative process is basically the same, when they are encoded in 'unfamiliar' systems. The difference lies in the fact that in the second case the individual has to rely on other funds of knowledge than in the first.

The intention of exploiting previously acquired funds of knowledge is a complement to the idea of the natural capacity for language. Learners of intercomprehension are not linguistic novices, when they are faced with the task of interpreting



texts or utterances in a new language. They possess considerable funds of knowledge which they can apply. The concept of 'funds of knowledge' is based on the premise that human beings are learners throughout their lives and that they have at their disposal a variable amount of knowledge at any stage of their development which makes them competent to solve the problems they are facing. For the purpose of intercomprehension, any knowledge in any area can be exploited that helps to interpret the signs of languages one has not studied.

### **Education for intercomprehension**

Education for intercomprehension presupposes that the acquisition of competence in intercomprehension can be supported by teaching, that teachers as 'managers of learning' are able to arrange the conditions of learning to help pupils acquire intercomprehensive competence. They can do this by implementing a number of didactic principles which are generally accepted, if not always practised, and are ideally suited for intercomprehension learning and teaching.

The first principle concerns **motivation**. A good way of motivating pupils for new learning is to make them aware of competences which they have already acquired. Intercomprehension teachers can make their learners aware of their funds of useable knowledge and encourage them to activate this knowledge for the understanding of new texts and utterances.

The second principle is closely connected with the first. It demands that teachers should begin their helping activities as precisely as possible at the stage of learning their pupils have reached, and employ methodological devices that are appropriate to this stage (Ausubel, 1968: 26). The initial awareness-raising provides a good basis for the search for such devices; and the methodology presented below is based on the principle of finding appropriate 'responses' to learners' cognitive dispositions.

The third principle concerns learner **autonomy**. The measures that teachers take should never be other than assistance and never become interference. This general principle is especially suited for the

promotion of intercomprehension. The acquisition of intercomprehensive competence lends itself to being organized as a self-directed process where learners take the first steps and the teacher, after close observation of their needs, offers support (Doyé and Meißner, 2010).

Last, but not least, the acquisition of intercomprehension offers opportunities for **intercultural education**. In the educational philosophy of the Council of Europe, mutual understanding has never been conceived as a purely linguistic objective, but as a broad cultural aim, which intercomprehensive learning and teaching are particularly suited to achieve. The fact that in intercomprehension the interlocutors are on a par with each other is an essential advantage: it requires that they learn to see and treat one another as partners and develop the attitudes and skills needed in intercultural communication, namely respect, tolerance and co-operation.

### **A methodology for the teaching of intercomprehension**

The protagonists of intercomprehension have developed a methodology that differs considerably from those of conventional language teaching, because the aim is different.

As explained above, teachers have to base their assistance on observation of the needs of pupils. Such observation usually discloses the fact that most learners possess considerable funds of useable knowledge which can be exploited, and the teachers' task is

- to make their pupils aware of this knowledge; and
- to enable them to use this knowledge by developing appropriate strategies.

Funds of knowledge are individual properties and vary from one learner to the next. Therefore it would not be helpful to start from a presupposed basis of knowledge assuming that all or most of one's pupils possess it, but much more appropriate to make them aware of the different domains of knowledge in which they could look for suitable clues.

Several theorists (for example Klein and Stegmann, 2000; Pencheva and Shopov, 2003) have

proposed classifications of the relevant knowledge, each of them with a different emphasis. The following overview attempts to integrate these proposals into a single logical system. The central methodological hypothesis is that all learners have some funds of knowledge at their disposal in each of these categories, which they can exploit, and that teachers can help them develop the **strategies** to use these funds for the understanding of new texts and utterances.

*General knowledge:* Before linguistic knowledge proper comes into play, it is often the general knowledge of the learners that guides them in their interpretation of a given text or utterance. Their knowledge of the world often facilitates their understanding. If listeners or readers are informed about a historical event (such as the building of the Berlin Wall), about the position of a particular country (such as Guyana) or about an institution (such as the Council of Europe), then this historical, geographical or political knowledge can enable them to make first assumptions about the contents of a conversation or a written text.

*Cultural knowledge:* The learners can also make use of their knowledge of other specific cultures and the relationship of these cultures to their own. They recognize certain place names or personal names and infer that the text deals with events in a specific culture. Such knowledge may be stereotypical and contain false generalizations or it may be differentiated, but even so, it may be helpful for a first orientation.

If they are informed about a culture, they can use the references in their comprehension of the text. A mention of Anatolia for example may evoke images of Turkey and Turkish people. A reference to Vaclav Havel may elicit representations of the Czech Republic and its citizens.

*Situational knowledge:* Every text or utterance is embedded in a situation. The persons who produce it, the occasions on which it occurs, the places where it is used provide indications about its contents, and give clues which the learners can use for basic comprehension of the message.

There is always a speaker or writer who pursues a personal interest in the performance of the speech act or act of writing. There are always the factors of place and time which determine the speaker's or

writer's verbal production. There are people to whom the speaker or writer addresses his/her speech or writing. And if the learners are informed about these factors, they can make intelligent guesses about the meaning of the message.

*Behavioural knowledge:* Verbal utterances are often accompanied by other forms of communicative behaviour, and all learners of intercomprehension know that they exist. They have experienced – in their home culture and possibly in other cultures – that people do not only use verbal signs to express ideas, **emotions** and intentions; there are other patterns of behaviour which serve the purpose of conveying information. The most common **non-verbal communication** behaviour in direct face-to-face communication are gestures, facial expressions, posture and movement; the most frequent means in written communication are visuals and the format of the message.

*Pragmatic knowledge:* Pragmatic knowledge is closest to situational knowledge, for the situation in which a text appears often gives clues to its purpose. If for example a certain text in a certain format appears on the last page of a newspaper among many other similar texts, it is probable that it has the function of an advertisement. Or if an utterance is made at the end of a meeting, the assumption is justified that it serves to close the session and saying goodbye.

There are many comprehensible indicators of the illocutionary function of a given text, also in languages unknown to the learners. Readers of a written statement can for example conclude from its outer form whether it is a declaration, a directive or a commissive. Listeners to an utterance in a foreign language can deduce from the stress and intonation with which it is made, whether it is a request, a promise or an apology.

*Graphic knowledge:* On the basis of previously encountered writing systems the learners make assumptions about the writing system in a text. If the new system is familiar to them, they can – in connection with their prior grammatical and lexical knowledge – make further assumptions about the contents of the text.

Other graphic indicators of meaning are text segmentation, capitalization, the use of different scripts, underlining, punctuation marks, numbers and universally applied graphic symbols.

*Phonological knowledge:* On the basis of previously learnt sound systems, listeners make inferences in order to discover the meaning of spoken utterances.

This is the weakest domain in the field of linguistic knowledge because phonic representation differs from language to language. However, there are a few essential sound correspondences among all European languages; and teachers can inform their pupils about the most important ones between the pupils' native tongue and the target language.

*Grammatical knowledge:* On the basis of previously acquired grammatical systems, learners make assumptions about the grammatical structures and formulae used in a given text. In the case of languages of the same family, they can, with some justification, assume that the grammatical structures correspond to some degree to the structures of previously learnt languages. If for example they encounter a text divided into smaller units by the use of periods or pauses, they can hypothesize that these units represent sentences containing subjects, predicates and adjuncts, and – going one step further – that the sub-units may carry the same or similar structural meanings.

*Lexical knowledge:* Two kinds of prior lexical knowledge can be applied by learners who approach a new language: (a) the knowledge of international vocabulary, and (b) the knowledge of vocabulary that the mother tongue (or another previously learnt language) and the new language have in common. (see also Klein and Stegmann, 2000).

Regarding (a) Most European languages belong to the Indo-European group and therefore possess a common core of syntactic structures and vocabulary. Most of the so-called international vocabulary is of Greek or Latin origin or stems from later derivations of these two classical languages. On average, adult Europeans have 4,000 of these easily recognizable words at their disposal. They vary in amount and distribution from language to language, but even such languages as Finnish and Hungarian, which belong to the Uralian Group, contain quite a number of these international words. An awareness of the size of the international vocabulary in their own language can bring intercomprehension learners an enormous benefit.

Regarding (b) Within the three big language families in Europe learners can profit from the affinity of the languages concerned. There is a big Pan-Romance vocabulary, a rich Pan-Germanic vocabulary and a considerable Pan-Slavonic vocabulary that can be exploited. Teachers need to make their pupils aware of the existence of the vocabulary in the family to which their language belongs, to show them how they can use it for the understanding of texts in new languages, and at the same time warn them against the so-called false friends.

Those who insist on the extension of intercomprehensive learning beyond the boundaries of language families do not consider previous lexical knowledge as vitally important. They cannot deny, however, that it is highly relevant within given language families, and in order to demonstrate this importance the European context can serve as a valid example.

## **Developments in Europe**

However convincing the arguments, there is little doubt that the introduction of intercomprehension on a European scale would not be easy. Yet sceptics can be reminded that intercomprehension is already a reality in a number of European regions and in some parts of our continent it has existed for a long time. Italians in Madrid, Swedes in Oslo, Serbs in Ljubljana can very well use their mother tongue and expect to be understood by many people of the host country.

It is a fortunate circumstance that many people in Europe can profit from the fact that the great majority of its languages belong to one of three 'language families':

- The Romance language family with, for example, French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, Spanish, Catalan, Provençal.
- The Germanic language family with, for example, Dutch, German, English, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Icelandic.
- The Slavonic language family with, for example, Polish, Czech, Slovak, Russian, Ukrainian, Slovene, Serbian/Croatian, Bulgarian.

Linguists have for a long time been interested in the question of how similarities between related

languages are recognized and processed, and educationists have begun to explore the ways of promoting intercomprehension through the development of translanguistic methods (Meißner and Reinfried, 1998).

The potential of intercomprehension has been explored in a number of projects, of which EuroComRom (Eurocomprehension in Romance languages) is typical. It is the biggest and most developed of all projects, and is not by chance a project concerned with the most extensive net of languages in Europe. The great majority of Southern Europeans speak languages of Latin origin and the similarities between them are very obvious.

The EuroComRom method uses the close relation of Romance languages in order to promote reading comprehension among students who have learnt (only) one of these languages and wish to understand the others. Its main technique is 'optimised deduction' on the basis of extensive linguistic transfer (Klein and Stegmann, 2000: 13).

Most other projects are similar and have in common the focus on intercomprehension within one of the three language families. There are a few others, however, which include the examination of border crossing between the language families, for example, EU+I (European Awareness and Intercomprehension). Here, intercomprehension is seen not only as the result of linguistic transfer between languages of the same family, but as the result of the transfer of strategies in the framework of a general interpretative process which underlies all communicative activity (Capucho, 2002).

### Open questions

The discussion about the chances of success of intercomprehension in Europe is still in full flow and a number of questions have not yet been answered. The most urgent is whether intercomprehension is suitable only for understanding the gist of texts and utterances in unknown languages, or whether it enables learners to go beyond this goal and comprehend texts and utterances in depth and detail. It seems doubtful that this question can be answered on a general scale. The attainable scope and degree depend on quite a number of factors that have to be taken into consideration, such as

- the proximity of the languages in question,
- the educational background of the learners,
- their verbal intelligence,
- their motivation.

Empirical studies are being undertaken to examine the impact of these factors (e.g. Bär, 2009).

**See also:** Contrastive analysis; Intercultural competence; Interpreting; Translation; Non-verbal communication; Skills and knowledge in language learning

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## Intercultural communication

The interest in intercultural communication (IC) is an outcome of the ongoing globalization of academic studies, professional cooperation and training.

The term IC in its *narrow* sense was introduced into the foreign language and communication training literature in the 1970s and denotes a peculiar communication situation: the varied language and discourse strategies people from different cultural backgrounds use in direct, face-to-face situations. As this term became more popular, it was also used to refer to studies in translation, in **contrastive linguistics** (pragmatics), in reading foreign literature or in comparative analysis of cultural meanings. In this *broad* sense, the term IC faced some criticism since similar studies had been carried out before using the same methodological tools so that this labelling did not reveal important new issues to the respective fields. While this is certainly correct, research and its applications in the narrow sense of the term developed into a specific field of interest, namely the **discourse analysis** of communicative events, where people from different cultural backgrounds engage in face-to-face communication.

The current focus of IC is on how people handle differences in linguistic behaviour – including perceived differences and their effects (psychological attributions and **acculturations**). The analyses result in descriptions of culturally specific ways of expressing and interpreting the situated linguistic action of the co-participants (Gumperz and Roberts, 1991; Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009). Discourse analysis of this process of negotiation of meaning under multicultural conditions was supported by the development of low cost and mobile video technologies allowing researchers to record **authentic** IC and to work out micro-analyses of the specific rules of interaction under the conditions of multicultural influences. This research on discourse in intercultural situations has become increasingly important to the field of FL teaching, since the analyses have provided the linguistic grounds of the competencies FL learners need when they want to apply their linguistic knowledge in real intercultural communication situations.

This concept of ‘intercultural situation’ (IS) is tightly connected to intercultural communication because it indicates the framing activities co-participants apply in order to build up a ‘common’ base of understanding. IS arise under the following conditions: speakers<sub>1-n</sub> from different cultures<sub>C1-Cn</sub>. They communicate various ‘things’, i.e. while conversing they refer to *abstract concepts* (freedom, warm-heartedness, enjoyment, etc.), *concrete objects* (child, dog, apartment, etc.), *institutions* (school, café, etc.), or *perceptions* (pretty, unfriendly, extraordinary, etc.). According to their intentions they realize utterances, carrying out *speech acts* (promising, confirming, evaluating, presuming, etc.) in order to gain purposes like convincing, criticizing, etc. Normally, the presence alone of an interlocutor from a foreign culture (as a co-participant, not a bystander) does not sufficiently determine a situation as being intercultural. In an IS, co-participants need to index the interculturality of the situation by contextualizing the mutual culture-specific productions and receptions of linguistic actions and their inferences concerning the other’s cultural knowledge. Doing so, co-participants use various components of the given situation for setting third-cultural grounds and creating a ‘situated talk’. For example, in a given situation, a group of people from Great Britain, France, Sweden and Germany meet in Frankfurt in order to discuss business arrangements. In this IS various cultural systems are involved that determine the situation consciously or unconsciously as being intercultural. In the given IS the following cultures can be used as common frames of interaction:

- (a) Culture<sub>C1</sub>: Country of origin/cultural background of speaker<sub>C1</sub> (Great Britain); (b) Culture<sub>C2</sub>: Country of origin/cultural background of speaker<sub>C2</sub> (France); (c) Culture<sub>Cn-1</sub>: Country of origin/cultural background of speaker<sub>Cn-1</sub> (Sweden); (d) Culture<sub>Cn</sub>: Country of origin/cultural background of speakers<sub>Cn</sub> (Germany); (e) Culture<sub>CS</sub>: Cultural domain in which the speakers<sub>C1-Cn</sub> are currently interacting, i.e. the cultural domain of the current communication situation<sub>CS</sub> (Germany); (f) Culture<sub>CM</sub>: Cultural domain of the foreign

language being used as a medium of communication<sub>CM</sub>, e.g. English, the form of expression of the cultural domains of Great Britain, the USA, etc.; or (g) Culture<sub>CN</sub>: Domain of an often neutrally perceived culture of the Anglo-American business world (CN).

The task of the participants in such an intercultural situation would be to negotiate, by means of implicit or explicit cues, a situationally adequate system of (inter-)cultural standards and linguistic rules of interaction. In practice, the grounds of this situation can be established within the following frames: (a) the above-mentioned cultural domain CS, that is, the current communication situation ('We are having our meeting in Germany, and I propose we go the German way, establishing time limits for our discussion points and ...'); (b) using the cultural domain<sub>C2</sub> of one of the participants ('As a Frenchman I feel bad about this procedure and I propose to handle this problem as we always do in France, that is, to ...'); (c) the domain<sub>CN</sub> of the 'Anglo-American business world', often considered to be culturally neutral as an artificial cultural background when English is used as a lingua franca; (d) a new cultural framework<sub>IC</sub>, created ad hoc by the participants and including profitable aspects of several cultural domains for the benefit of the group, the situation and the communicative goals.

This last example shows a vision of intercultural understanding: the participants in IC situations are aware of the culture-bound character of meanings and try constructively, in the sense of the original meaning of the Latin *communicare*, to create for themselves a comprehension base for jointly defined frames, meanings, linguistic action and procedures. According to Koole and ten Thije (1994) this kind of emerging and situated common knowledge and action practice can be called discursive intercultural.

Sarangi (1994) and Clyne (1994) divide the attempts of analysing IC into three basic approaches: the 'cultural anthropological perspective' (where persons 'represent' different cultures and, therefore, cause various communication problems out of their different cultural background, e.g. Asante and Gudykunst, 1989; Brislin, 1981); the

'cross-cultural pragmatic perspective' (looking for different realizations of predefined patterns of linguistic action, e.g. Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Kasper and Blum-Kulka, 1993); and the 'interactional sociolinguistic perspective' (providing data of IS that create culturally shaped communicative styles which might cause interethnic misunderstanding, e.g. Gumperz, 1982; Scollon and Scollon, 1994). Some critical discourse analysts (Sarangi, 1994; Blommaert and Verschuren, 1991) question the tendency of all three schools to claim for the manifestations of miscommunication a culture-oriented reason. As can be seen in the data and in follow-up interviews, most co-participants attribute them in this way and react correspondingly. Thus, in IC, the emerging situated discourse and its third-culture effects are not only determined by the composition of cultural backgrounds and linguistic behaviour of the co-participants, but to a great extent by their (mis)interpretation and their attributions of linguistic action.

Any valuable research on IC, therefore, has to focus on how the participants perceive the linguistic manifestations of others, how they create 'new' meanings, adapted to be valid for the emerging particular situation. This means that persons do not rely entirely on their cultural norms but take into account other values and adapt eventually to what they assume as the foreign cultural norms and actions that others orient their talk to. Any attempt, for example in the FL classroom, to improve IC not only depends on the amount of FL teaching input but on the **intercultural competencies** of the co-participants.

**See also:** Cultural awareness; Intercultural competence; *Interkulturelle Didaktik*; Language awareness; Speech act theory

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BERND MÜLLER-JACQUIER

## Intercultural competence

'Intercultural competence' (IC) is a general capacity to relate to strangers or foreigners and has recently been used in distinction from other concepts such as 'cross-cultural competence', 'interpersonal competence' and 'intercultural communicative competence' to define a complex of more specific abilities. The term combines notions of communication and interaction across languages and cultures by focusing on the readiness to establish fluid relationships at the interstices of different and multiply-determined identities whilst having a purpose or task in mind. Nonetheless, neither the concept nor the term has been stable and each of the two terms in the phrase 'intercultural competence' is likewise much debated.

Furthermore, the concept has recently been linked to a philosophical vision of 'cosmopolitanism', a 'philosophical project of mediations' (Benhabib, 2006: 20), which is no less polemical. The idea that cosmopolitanism can foster a process of 'self-transformation' and 'transformation in the social world' and can therefore 'be related to the emergence of new norms and to new worldviews' provides an environment for the concept of IC (Delanty, 2009: 88–253), despite the fact that this may challenge the understanding of 'competence' as product rather than process. In sum, both cosmopolitanism and interculturality entail 'the recognition of reciprocal incompleteness and weakness' of cultures and demand simultaneous 'local identification' and 'translocal intelligibility' (Santos, 2005: 18).

### The limits and possibilities of IC

The need for a more subtle understanding of intercultural interaction contradicts established assumptions among language teachers, for example, that intercultural competence flows naturally from language proficiency and multicultural experience.

Furthermore, research and practice have shown that there is no single model of IC that responds to every intercultural situation nor is there a stage where one becomes fully and definitely intercultural proficient (Deardorff, 2009). What is needed is the development, through formal education, of

certain principles and capabilities that provide individuals and groups with the knowledge and predispositions for effective critical intercultural dialogue. This involves an endless journey where overcoming, more or less successfully, each intercultural situation brings more knowledge and simultaneously more questions. In this spiral process, education needs to provide guidance on how to respond to the unexpected in intercultural circumstances. In short, IC encompasses the acknowledgement of complexity, the recognition of a plurality of perspectives and the promotion of an 'ecology of knowledges' (Santos, 2010).

### A global notion of IC

IC also requires an interdisciplinary approach, although it adopts different approaches depending on the discipline and professional context. In addition, IC, originally defined from a 'western/northern' perspective, has been questioned by scholars who take into account different epistemological, cultural and even civilizational standpoints (Parmenter, 2003; Santos, 2010). Thus, different world-visions generate other parameters for defining IC, based on 'different dimensions of self' that make it 'quite legitimate and "real" in many Asian societies to interact at the level of role and face' (Parmenter, 2003: 128ff.).

Furthermore, although interculturality seeks commonalities horizontally among cultures, historical developments have left vertical, hierarchical and, therefore, power relations among them. The way forward is to recognize equality/equivalence/complementarity/reciprocity relations among diversities where 'the cultures in presence (and in absence) must not give up their roots but instead – grounded on these – new options may be built' (Santos, 2010: 102–3). As a consequence, different social, epistemological and ontological visions, emerging from different linguistic, cultural and territorial geographies and communities, provide different understandings of language, intercultural communication and interaction.

### From Intercultural competence to intercultural responsibility

It can therefore be argued that IC terminology is lacking in breadth and alternatives are proposed.

One focus is on a more elaborate term such as '*protephilic* competences', in the plural, in order to convey 'the appreciation of the diverse diversities of the self and the other' (Dervin, 2010: 158). Another puts forward the idea of 'intercultural responsibility', which includes the sociological, political and ethical intersections of a critical cosmopolitan society (Guilherme et al., 2010). This is a response to the need to consider co-operation in the fulfilment of a goal and a task, the need for solidarity with the weaker, for commitment to social justice, for active agency in the achievement of democratic societies in a global world through intercultural exchange and collaboration. The notion of 'intercultural responsibility' adds a social, relational, civic and ethical component to the conception of IC with a commitment to social justice and an active involvement in matters of individual dignity and collective interest. The development of the concept of intercultural responsibility may therefore respond to this need for restructuring one's bonds in a cosmopolitan society and its implications for the reorganisation of language use, cultural premises and intercultural communication.

### Teaching and learning IC and intercultural responsibility

The turn of the twenty-first century brought a context that required the world of work and the academy to focus attention on the development of this new field, but it has been observed that 'the dichotomies in the field which are most interesting, and most difficult to overcome, include that between the academy and the workplace' (Byram and Guilherme, 2010: 2). While some substantial work was carried out in collaboration between the academy and the **Council of Europe** in education (Byram and Zarate, 1997; Byram, 1997, 2008; Birzea, 2000), in professional training, other approaches were also developed. On the one hand, language education in Europe adopted and developed a taxonomy of *savoirs* and used it in the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages**, namely *savoirs*, *savoir-être*, *savoir-faire*, *savoir-comprendre* and *savoir-s'engager*, the latter focusing on citizenship engagement (Byram, 1997). On the other hand, professional training



built a theory based on dichotomous dimensions, such as individualism/collectivism (Hofstede, 1991; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998), in business studies, and on identity negotiation and conflict resolution (Gudykunst, 2005; Ting-Toomey and Chung, 2005; Oetzel and Ting-Toomey, 2006; Kim, 2008), in communication studies.

Given that balance between diverse world forces, taking into account emerging economies and cultures, is changing power relations at intra-, inter- and trans-national levels, a new critical and cosmopolitan paradigm of IC is required that is grounded on more demanding parameters. Moreover, intensive globalized relationship networks call for an interpretation of IC that tends to pragmatically respond to deeper relations, as proposed by the concept of an 'intercultural speaker' (Byram and Zarate, 1997), although also targeting the development of intercultural responsibility. Therefore, teachers need to discard their role as ambassadors of a foreign culture and the concept of a static, self-contained, and strange culture. Instead, they must acknowledge the interactive nature and the social, political, and ethical implications of learning/teaching about culture. Such an understanding of foreign language/culture education has profound consequences for teacher development due to its effect on teachers' professional identity.

**See also:** Cross-cultural psychology; Cultural awareness; Culture shock; Intercultural communication; *Interkulturelle didaktik*; Intercultural training; Non-verbal communication; Stereotypes; Teacher education

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## Intercultural training/ cross-cultural training

The connotations of the term 'training' reveal physical activities, and it is correct that, in general,

trainees expect of intercultural training programmes (ICTs) not only a specific knowledge *about* a foreign culture, the linguistic and behavioural habits of its members, and/or of the dominant cultural values, but in the first place *how* to proceed in intercultural situations (Bennett, 1986). Perhaps because of these aspects of behavioural rehearsal, this kind of guided 'learning of and about the foreign' is called intercultural training (ICT).

The history of ICT began shortly after World War II (Mendenhall, 1996), stimulated by the still ongoing diversity processes in the population and workforce. For example, the US American Foreign Service Institute hired anthropologists and linguists 'interested in studying the "out of awareness" aspects of communication (proxemics, paralinguistics, kinesics), as well as linguistics, and their training reflected this more holistic approach' (Paige and Martin, 1996: 40). ICT became increasingly popular with the worldwide exports of products, representing a necessary component in the actual phase of creating intercultural learning organisations (Landis et al., 2004).

ICTs are time-restricted learning units, varying from two days to several months; their participants or trainees, are **adults** planning or currently practising intense professional and everyday interactions with persons from a different culture. All learning activities in pre-departure or in-service training are highly structured by a trainer/facilitator, often working with a native of the target culture as a co-trainer. In general, the **objectives** of ICTs concern interaction-relevant knowledge, conduct norms, and behavioural and linguistic strategies. The overall goal is often defined as 'to be able to function effectively in a foreign culture and/or in intercultural situations' which means that ICT influences three main areas: cognitive, behavioural and affective.

Gudykunst et al. propose a basic typology of ICT using the following distinctions: 'didactic versus experiential learning, and culture-general versus culture-specific content' (1996: 61). Concerning the content, the culture-general model demonstrates various ways how culture influences human actions and the interpretation of actions. Culture-specific models apply to specific target cultures. In training seminars, a didactic approach uses lectures and discussions, videotapes, or critical

incidents for elaborating similarities and contrasts between two cultures. Experiential approaches bring to bear empirical knowledge through simulations and games, resulting in explanations about how people tend to adapt to and analyse intercultural situations.

Brislin and Yoshida (1994: 24) summarise three general goals of present ICT. The first is concerned with awareness, knowledge, and information about culture, cultural differences, and the specific culture in which trainees will be living. The second one concerns the attitudes related to intercultural communication. How people feel about others who are culturally different is included here with related notions of tolerance, prejudice, or active enthusiasm about developing close relationships. Another aspect would be the possible emotional confrontation people might experience when dealing with cultural differences in everyday communication. The third area relates to the **skills** or new behaviours that increase the possibility of effective communication when living and/or working with people from different cultural backgrounds.

The inherent critics of this kind of threefold ICT point to the ways anticipatory adjustment to the foreign is practised. It argues that first 'the foreign' is actually no longer a mono-cultural sphere demanding total adaptation but in many cases a multicultural unit and that, second, the interdependence between culture-bound action and reaction lead to situational *inter-cultures* which often are left out in ICTs. From this interactionists' point of view, the main problem of ICT is not the adaptation to the foreign culture nor to the values and the behaviour of their members, but the effects of foreign actions, interpretations and mutual adaptations, resulting in a specific quality of the intercultural discourse (Koole and ten Thije, 1995). From a foreign language specialist's point of view, the basic problem with ICT lies in a general lack of communication analysis. Contrary to its origins, most actual procedures in ICT deal with the psychological *consequences* of interpersonal intercultural contacts such as **stereotypes**, stress, or anxiety/uncertainty management, instead of the communicative exchanges themselves. The latter have to be analysed carefully. Maladaptive interpretations of different (verbal and non-verbal,

direct or indirect) *expressions* of cultural difference can lead to false attributions of the intentions and values of co-participants, resulting in the negative psychological effects stated above, and not the differences alone. Therefore, a primacy of linguistic analysis before the occurrence of any psychological attribution needs to be established. This kind of linguistic approach is important for foreign language teachers because it bridges the existing gaps between the foreign language classroom and the ICT seminar. This will be illustrated in more detail below.

- (a) *Critical incidents*: Trainers present selected case-studies which allows multiple linguistically based explanation hypotheses. Trainers offer different and alternative linguistic explanations and, at the same time, recapitulate latent tendencies to rashly attribute the observed differences to different attitudes on the part of individuals or to whole nations' mentalities, resulting in a first deliberate meta-linguistic reflection on intercultural situations. The trainees' own experiences are generally included in the meta-communicative attempts to describe and analyse intercultural situations.
- (b) *Relevant linguistic categories*: Trainers introduce linguistic categories like 'meaning', '**speech acts**', 'turn-taking', 'silences' or broader ones like 'directness/indirectness', 'theme-construction' or 'register' using examples of critical incidents where these categories explain misunderstandings. Trainers must emphasise that the examples use contrast-cultures and that no attempt is being made to reach conclusions about the 'typical' communicative behaviour of members from either culture. Thus, in this phase of training trainers are not concerned with how **authentic** or typical certain forms of behaviour are. Rather, they are aiming at systematically working out a checklist of linguistic categories that represent a carefully selected choice of factors which threaten intercultural situations. This list will enable them to systematically analyse intercultural situations in search of possible linguistic reasons for misunderstandings. At the same time they will acquire the necessary meta-linguistic basis for exchanging

hypotheses about discourse features in intercultural situations.

- (c) *Discursive interculturalities*: Beginning with the end of step (b), trainees discuss whether certain ways of behaving that are described as critical should possibly be considered a common product of the situation itself, i.e. seen as intercultural behaviour, rather than being considered typical of one culture or the other. This helps trainees to systematically move beyond comparative observations and develop the awareness that certain types of behaviour are reactions to the effects that the (foreign) behaviour of a co-participant has.
- (d) *Evaluation*: The goals of the linguistic approaches of ICT lie in mastering the method of analysis and not in the ability to reproduce knowledge about typical behaviour of representatives of foreign cultures. In the evaluation phase, prepared critical interaction situations – supplemented by others reported by trainees during the course of the seminar – will be systematically interpreted according to the established checklist. This means that forms of behaviour illustrated in the case studies presented are to be identified as e.g. problems of *proximity*, of different *speech act realisations*, of *pause structure*, or as problems of interpreting *non-verbal signals*. The generated hypotheses about possible reasons for communication problems are deliberately not put into a hierarchical order with regard to plausibility or frequency of occurrence in this first step. The reason for collecting all possible cause attributions as explanations is to deliberately develop a tolerance of ambiguity. Contrasting hypotheses are considered equally possible until one or the other receives more credibility from additional information. Only after this does the plenary discussion deal with the question of the plausibility of individual explanatory hypotheses. According to empirical studies, this kind of guided training discourse on critical incidents is at the same time an important training tool as well as a reliable indicator for how trainees gradually develop intercultural competences during ICTs (Nazarkiewicz, 2010).

## Conclusion

Training to improve the analysis of the important linguistic features of intercultural situations represents both a tool for discriminating discourse and psychological approaches to ICT and an ideal link between communication-oriented foreign language teaching and those ICT programmes focusing mainly on culture-specific values.

**See also:** Cultural awareness; Intercultural communication; Intercultural competence; *Interkulturelle Didaktik*; *Landeskunde* / *Kulturrkunde*; Language awareness; Non-verbal communication; Stereotypes

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BERND MÜLLER-JACQUIER

## *Interkulturelle Didaktik* (Intercultural didactics)

The term Intercultural Didactics (ID) was introduced in Germany in the mid-1980s (Gerighausen and Seel, 1987). It covers different approaches whose initial stages became significant as distinct ways of teaching foreign languages in the 1980s (Müller, 1992). Responding to new communicative needs following the extensive internationalization of business and everyday life, their common general objective was to expand the existing goals of the **communicative language teaching** approaches using a specific progression. While the latter intended to build up a communicative competence aiming at the competence of a **native speaker** or a near-native speaker, ID aims at a specific 'communicative competence for intercultural situations' (CCIS).

These two approaches partially overlap. The main difference is that ID emphasizes systematic links between cultural backgrounds and linguistic behaviour and its situational effects, caused by the interpretations made by speakers with different cultural backgrounds. At the same time ID aims at **strategic competencies** for dealing with direct interpersonal contact between native speakers and non-native speakers considered as social actors in and from a culture. This interaction becomes a process of negotiation of meaning (Jauregi Ondarra, 1997; Foster and Snyder Ohta, 2005) related to culture- and situation-bound patterns of social relations. It is influenced by all co-partici-

pants and by their ways of dealing with foreignness and non-understanding that results from interpretations, conceptualizations and reactions by all co-participants.

This interactionist approach is intended to develop a **cultural awareness** of non-native speaker interpretations of **native speaker** behaviour and resulting processes of creating and repairing the meaning of signs. Its source disciplines are: cross-cultural functional pragmatics (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989), **discourse analysis**, and **interlanguage**.

## Objectives and curricula

The general objective of ID is to teach a communicative competence for interacting and, if necessary, **mediating** in intercultural situations. This requires specific skills of interpreting intercultural situations according to general questions such as: How do co-participants express their intentions using culturally influenced rules of verbal and nonverbal interacting, of directness or indirectness, of problem solving, of ritualized behaviour, of taboos, etc.? How do they adapt to the behaviour of foreign co-participants and to the intercultural context? By implementing these questions in various ways in the teaching process, ID demonstrates its concern to systematically introduce a foreign perspective to both the linguistic behaviour of the NS and the NNS, considering possible cultural influences on them and the potentially different interpretations of these. This will be shown with regard to the learning materials as well as to classroom interaction. Thus, the foreign language (FL used in intercultural situations), foreign discourse conventions and foreign value orientations of the target language (TL) speakers are used to build up an analytic competence for dealing with various expressions of foreignness in general, and for becoming a constructive co-participant and a potential intercultural mediator in intercultural situations.

For ID to be realized as a distinct approach, all main subdivisions of didactics must be imbued with interculturalism: (a) for the formulation of learning **objectives** at all levels, (b) for the selection of teaching contents, (c) for the preferred

teaching and learning methods, and (d) for the modes of **evaluation** of communicative competence.

More specifically, the objectives are to promote:

- the presentation of FL meaning as culture-bound (concrete and abstract notions, speech acts, dialogues, texts, symbols and symbolic/ritual actions, politics/ideology, etc.);
- the presentation of intercultural interactions, combined with an analytic focus on the processes of intercultural communication reflecting overlapping culture-bound perceptions and linguistic (re)actions of the co-participants;
- the presentation of grammatical structures (e.g. comparatives, declaratives, negations, hedges, and other linguistic tools for expressing generalized views of the world) as they are used in intercultural situations providing corresponding lexico-idiomatic formula for expressing comparisons and for taking culture-bound perspectives.

The approach calls for specific teaching and learning strategies (Byram, 1991). In order to lead its learners to develop an 'analytic mind', 'ethnographic competencies' (Roberts, 1995: 96) and finally a CCIS, ID uses methods that are 'interactive' in the sense that most of the content is not presented as static units to be learned; rather, textbook authors and teachers present it using different cultural perspectives and students evaluate it in specific classroom and outdoor activities. These procedures require special kinds of classroom discourse and methods of evaluation (tests). A number of ways in which the four didactic components can be developed within an ID will be illustrated with reference to the following approaches:

- *Contact situation approach*: A simple method of introducing ID to a foreign language classroom is to substitute intercultural dialogues for the common monocultural ones, integrating the interaction experiences of the learners in dealing with FL speakers inside and outside the native speaker country. The 'contact situation approach' proposes that a list of typical contact situations between non-native speakers and co-participants from the target culture be compiled. This list of intercultural situations is to be used for

designing communication settings, a progression of speech events and model dialogues.

- *Intercultural cognitive approach*: This approach links **language awareness** and **cultural awareness** in teaching cognitive insights and then behavioural strategies for dealing with different representations of foreignness in intercultural situations. Its progression proceeds through major cognitive and linguistic domains, where conscious examination of native and foreign elements in linguistic interaction becomes relevant in three basic domains:
  - Cognitive basis of perception: parallel to the development of students' linguistic skills, special exercises and outdoor observation assignments lead students to understand how their conceptualization of foreign meanings is influenced by their own patterns of perception. This is intended to stimulate the development of adequate strategies for dealing with the foreign and to relativize common expectations that 'culture' can be learned by simple exposure to the foreign environment.
  - Reconstruction of foreign meaning: A number of semantic exercises devoted to showing that meanings are culture-bound, that they change historically and that they are cognitively organized in a culture-specific web. The progression of these exercises help students to develop conscious strategies for negotiating foreign meanings.
  - Relation between speaker intentions and culture-bound linguistic expression: Special oral exercises systematically teach the students what speaker intentions are communicated by what linguistic means (including variation in register, use of clichés, etc.) and also how particular forms of expression are 'contextualized' by non-native speakers. These exercises are in particular intended to dissociate the routinized and culture-bound establishment of links between speaker intentions and linguistic expressions and to develop appropriate strategies to capture different conventions of conveying intentions of action. As

constant features, the teaching and learning methods of this approach have been applied in the textbook *Sichtwechsel* (Bachmann et al., 1995); its progression intends to lead to language/culture awareness and conscious comparisons between native and target linguistic behaviour, thinking, attitudes, value orientations, etc.

- *Virtual contrast-culture approach*: The dialogues rely on the following constellation: speakers of the TL interact with inhabitants of a fictional country who speak the FL and systematically hint at culture-bound differences in acting and thinking between the TL speakers and themselves. In the model dialogues, they express (virtual) foreign perspectives indirectly or explicitly via metacommunication. In one realization of this approach (Mebus et al., 1987), special cartoon character commentators were added who question and point out specific evaluations of both TL and virtual culture rules, cultural facts, and their situational effects on the ongoing interaction. Such a two-pronged constellation of virtual foreign perspective towards the foreign language behaviour is intended to stimulate the learners to go beyond the presented comparisons and bring in their 'third perspectives': what kind of interaction problems would they encounter with members of the TL? This combination of virtual linguistic and cultural comparisons and evaluations provides a system of analytic tools for creating a collaborative classroom discourse on how to interpret linguistic and cultural conventions and avoids stereotypical we-you confrontation.

All approaches have in common that they seek, by means of a continuous storyline, with selected text, exercises, or ethnographic explorations (Byram and Esarte-Sarries, 1991: 186ff.), to present FL structures, behaviours of the members of the TL culture, as well as information on the foreign culture in a way that students can evaluate their meanings and functions using different perspectives. The intended classroom discourse is not only an exercise of listening and oral skills but leads to a two-fold **communicative competence**: to provide adequate linguistic productions in the TL

and to take into account its possible language- and culture-bound receptions in intercultural situations.

- *Linguistic awareness of cultures approach*: The approach lists possible types of misinterpretations and arose from research in **intercultural communication**, especially the contextualization hypothesis (Gumperz and Roberts, 1991): cultural differences are 'hidden' in linguistic manifestations. These expressions of cultural difference are found in all languages and they can be found in different linguistic cues. All co-participants present them in culture-specific explicit or implicit forms. If the interactors do not perceive these linguistic indicators or manifestations, they represent a constant source of misunderstanding. Therefore, this approach proposes to textbook authors and teachers a cumulative consideration of key linguistic problems. This framework of criteria for the analysis of intercultural communication situations can be applied to any teaching methodology as it superimposes a parallel set of teaching objectives, contents and evaluations on the given progression.

The idea behind the technique is to consciously consider types of communication problems in intercultural contact (illustrated by different episodes, critical incidents or self-experienced situations of the learners) and teach **strategies** for solving them. In a first step, this framework applies to the following set of categories: **lexicon** (including culture-specific meanings, prototypes, culture-specific interrelations and their interpretations by different co-participants); **speech acts** (culture-related preferences in form, condition, sequence, frequency, and distribution); **discourse conventions** (conversation patterns including the length of opening/concluding remarks, use of argument/counter-argument, routines of turn-taking related to the situational context); **topics** (different rules for the choice of topics and recognition of taboos); **register** (different functional varieties of speech, expressing interpersonal relations depending on the situation itself, the status, age, rank, or gender of the co-participants); **para-verbal phenomena** (interpretation of prosody, rhythm, volume, pauses); **non-verbal expressions** (facial expressions, gestures, proxemics, eye contact);

communicative style (direct/indirect realization of speech acts; degree of explicitness in speaking; relationship of verbal and non-verbal expression; rules for interruption, simultaneous talk, self portrayal); culture-specific actions (including rituals) and action sequences (stereotyped interpretation of actions like the wine-tasting procedure before a toast, the emitting of a laryngeal sound after taking a swig of beer or other linguistic and culture-bound forms of expression of courtesy or religion).

All these applications have in common that they do not merely hint at differences and describe them for various reasons, but focus on 'perceived' differences and corresponding 'cultural' attributions. By means of a continuous storyline, contrast cultures, or a parallel awareness-oriented curriculum supplement, as well as selected exercises, or themes, or facts, and the integration of the intercultural experience of the learners or of ethnographic excursions, etc., they try to establish a diversified strategy of building hypotheses about culturally determined behaviour and how it can be interpreted.

The integration of (non-, para-) linguistic behaviour in intercultural situations into the foreign language class leads to a complex teaching situation and raises questions of multimodal interpretations of intercultural interactions which have to be resolved in the future.

The objectives of ID are diverse and can only be attained if the approach is completely directed at realizing them. Therefore, if in a given ID curriculum even one of the four approaches (see above) is left out, one can hardly speak of a single ID. The holistic effort of ID deliberately excludes all eclectic approaches that merely add some culture-contrast contents to their grammar and then focus on specific vocabulary issues at various stages of the teaching process.

### Teacher education and assessment issues

This does not exclude teachers experimenting with the various stages of intercultural work in the FL classroom. However, the continuous process of implementing ID in different teaching and learning settings calls for specific **teacher-education** methods for introducing specific exercise typologies (Müller, 1995), for applying new teaching strategies – or better: for adapted classroom inter-

action activities and a general raising of teachers' intercultural competences. It becomes obvious that teachers who have themselves acquired a **language and cultural awareness** in intercultural situations are the ones who can handle them best in the diverse teaching/learning activities. Therefore, ethnographic methods have been introduced to foreign language and culture studies and to teacher training.

Finally, particular efforts are needed to develop tools for the evaluation of the new intercultural **skills** (Hu and Byram, 2009). Students should not be taught intercultural competencies and then be examined by grammar and lexis oriented tests. They should have the possibility of earning credit related to the intercultural goals of FL teaching (Kramsch, 1991) and – if necessary – compensate weaknesses in other areas.

The results of the (meta)cognitive practices of ID are not restricted to the systematic raising of language and culture awareness. The capacity to consciously analyse the rules of ongoing interactions can facilitate the culture-bound processes encountered in intercultural situations, e.g. through active cooperation with other participants or by acting as a mediator in complex interactions. By these efforts, students can show how effectively they handle the special risks and challenges of intercultural contacts. At the same time they are practising their intercultural experiences and giving assessors the evidence necessary to evaluate their intercultural FL competencies.

These two parts of ID, the raising of consciousness about the main components of interculturality in interaction, and practical skills of cooperating and monitoring this kind of social intercourse, will have to be combined in future qualitative and quantitative research as well as in teacher training.

**See also:** Area studies; *Civilisation*; Cultural awareness; Cultural studies; Intercultural communication; *Landeskunde/Kulturkunde*; Language awareness

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BERND MÜLLER-JACQUIER

## Interlanguage

Selinker (1972, 1992) is credited with the development of the theory of Interlanguage (IL) in relation to **second language acquisition** (SLA). Coming after the demise of **behaviourism**, IL was in line with the growing body of cognitive approaches in applied linguistics. The focus was on the learner and how performance is indicative of underlying processes and strategies. IL was viewed as best explained as a continuum which learners move along as they progress from knowing only L1 to gaining more skills in L2.

It refers to both the internal system that a learner has constructed at a single point in time ('an interlanguage') and to the series of interconnected systems that characterise the learner's progress over time ('interlanguage' or 'the interlanguage continuum') (Selinker, 1972). IL also refers to 'interim grammars which learners build on their way to full target language competence' (Ellis,

1994: 30). IL is closely related to the linguistic theories of **error analysis** and **transfer**.

A number of ideas come within this heading. Nemser wrote of ‘approximate systems’ (quoted in Ellis, 1985: 47) whilst Corder used the terms ‘idiosyncratic dialects’ and ‘transitional competence’ (Corder, 1973). Larsen-Freeman and Long pointed out how ‘the term interlanguage ... entered common parlance, partly perhaps due to its neutrality of attitude’ (1991: 60). There may be different emphases in these concepts but they are used, to some extent, interchangeably.

IL posits that learners are involved in a continual process of hypothesis formulation and testing. As new elements of L2 are acquired, language is tested and assessed. L2 items are also constructed through analogy with items and rules already known. Error analysis helps to distinguish this system which is, according to Corder, ‘not the system of the target language, but a system of some “other” language’ (1973: 268).

Interlanguage theory is based upon a series of assumptions (Larsen-Freeman, 2006: 590–91):

- SLA is a process of increasing conformity to a uniform target language;
- There are discrete stages through which learners traverse along the way;
- Progress can best be defined in terms of one dimension of one subsystem, i.e., accuracy in morphosyntax as opposed to the dimensions of fluency or complexity;
- Learners move through the process in a fairly consistent manner;
- It is possible to adopt a two-phase research agenda, concentrating first on understanding learning and later on accounting for learners’ differential success.

### **Cognitive processes of interlanguage construction**

In SLA, IL performance can be seen as an example of learning transfer, which would include situations in which L1 skills and knowledge influence L2 learning and performance, but it would also include situations in which L2 skills and knowledge that have been learned are subsequently applied

beyond the initial learning task and context (James, 2007).

Five main cognitive processes responsible for L2 acquisition were identified by Selinker (1972):

1. language transfer or interference from L1 (some, but not all, items, rules and subsystems of a learner’s interlanguage may be transferred from the first language). Negative transfer, also known as interference, is the use of a native-language pattern or rule that leads to an error or inappropriate form in the target language. Positive transfer makes learning easier, and may occur when both the native language and target language have matching words;
2. transfer of language training (some interlanguage elements may derive from the way in which the learners are taught);
3. strategies of second language learning (Selinker talks about an ‘identifiable approach by the learner to the material to be learned’);
4. strategies of second language communication (‘an identifiable approach by the learner to communication with native speakers of the TL’, 1972: 37);
5. overgeneralisation of target language rules and semantic features (Ellis, 1994: 351).

These points contributed to an IL agenda in terms of theory, research and teaching methodology. If IL performance is an example of learning transfer, then variation in IL performance may in some cases be related to constraints on learning transfer (James, 2007).

### **IL variation and other language types**

The term ‘IL variation’ has been used to refer to different phenomena. First, a distinction is made between inter-learner and intra-learner variation: inter-learner variation refers to difference in language use between individuals or groups of individuals, while intra-learner variation can also be separated into diachronic and synchronic, where diachronic refers to variation that occurs over time, and synchronic refers to variation that occurs at a particular point in time, for example as a learner performs different tasks (James, 2007).

The concept of interlanguage is also closely related to other types of language, especially pidgins and **creoles**. Each of these languages has its own grammar and phonology. However, pidgins and creoles have many speakers and are developed as a group process, whereas an interlanguage is something that has only one speaker, the learner.

IL, then, is not a haphazard arrangement but is systematic, rule-governed and found among all learners. This was emphasised in Corder's (1973) work on innate syllabus of learning and error analysis. The question then arises of the similarities and differences between the first and second language learning processes. It has to be asked how L2 learners, particularly adults, learn another language since the original language learning device we use as children may be unavailable. Selinker suggested that adults do draw upon the underlying structures which facilitates the transformation of **universal grammar** into that of another language. It is not always successfully reactivated but it remains possible to acquire L2 through other learning mechanisms, which in turn raises the question of the nature of learning abilities of adults compared to children. Whether or not adults involved in SLA can successfully employ the latent language structure or have to resort to other means will affect the nature of their evolving IL.

Studies relating to interlanguage cover the specialisations of interlanguage phonology, morphology, syntax or semantics, and interlanguage pragmatics (Barron, 2001).

## IL and fossilisation

Selinker (1972, 1992) introduced the concept of '**fossilisation**' to explain errors which remain fixed in a learner's interlanguage. The fact that the vast majority of L2 learners do not reach target language (TL) fluency, perhaps as many as 95 per cent (Ellis, 1985: 48) has to be considered. Fossilisation is the term used by Selinker to describe the phenomenon when learning ceases and the IL retains characteristics different from those of the TL. Fossilisation includes temporary fossilisation and permanent fossilisation. Fossilised items may become 'ineradicable through learning or teaching'

(McDonough, 1999: 3). Extended exposure to the language will not necessarily alter fossilised items, such as when people live in a country for many years and whose language fails to move beyond a certain level.

The fossilisation is caused by both external reasons (such as language environment, teaching methods, and textbooks) and internal reasons (such as learners' physiology, psychology, cognitive manner, and cognitive **emotions**) (Huang, 2009). It is not the case that learners are incapable of producing the correct L2 form, and in certain circumstances they may do so, but the IL form is their own 'norm' which they will resort to, especially when under pressure to produce L2 language or when the desire to communicate is strong. This is known as 'backsliding'. Fossilised forms may change but where the correct form is not equivalent to the IL one, there is more tendency to backslide. That learners gravitate towards their own more familiar IL norm has been shown in a number of studies of learner performance (Ellis, 1994: 353).

The IL perspective furthered the development of SLA research as it promoted the examination and evaluation of learner's L2 performance with the key distinction between learning L2 and communicating with it. Criticisms, however, include the view that the IL continuum may be an unnecessary postulate. It may be more fitting to discuss what has or has not been correctly learned rather than resort to unobservable cognitive processes. Fossilisation can be similarly criticised as a disputed phenomenon despite its explanatory powers. Fossilised forms could be persistent errors that were not addressed properly early on and became 'bad habits'. IL supporters would claim that the evidence points to a different conclusion and the continuing use of IL themes stands in its favour.

**See also:** Age factors; Contrastive analysis; Fossilisation; Second language acquisition theories; Untutored language acquisition

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## Internationalisation

The internationalisation of education is a natural result of globalisation, increased migration of

people and ideas, and the concept of a global 'education marketplace' epitomised by PISA scores – i.e. the results of international tests of competence of school pupils – and world university rankings. As countries seek to position themselves in this global education system, they frequently appeal to internationalisation as a concept and ideal of education, and promote internationalisation as a practice in education.

Internationalisation in education has its roots in two separate domains. The first is in the socio-political context of education. From the 1970s, internationalisation and globalisation have become powerful forces shaping the economic and political policies of individual nation states (Turner, 2010), with the rapid development of information **technology** accelerating this process. As education systems are increasingly perceived and structured as part of the economic and political capital of society (Spring, 2006), it is natural that internationalisation has become an issue in education. Within education systems, this socio-political context joins with a second domain, which is the long tradition of education for international understanding and knowledge. The traditional subject areas of world geography, world history, world religions and foreign languages are part of this second domain, and are supplemented by cross-curricular areas of education such as peace education, **global education**, **human rights** education and environmental education.

Drawing together these two separate domains, internationalisation in education is apparent in terms of policy and/or practice. Policy emphasis concerning the internationalisation of education tends to differ at different stages of education, but is rapidly becoming mainstream as well as being on ongoing concern of international schools (Bates, 2010). At the **primary education** level, the focus tends to be on internationalisation of education through promotion of links with schools in other countries or international content in the curriculum. At the **secondary education** level, the spotlight of internationalisation in education often turns to international competition, such as that manifested in PISA rankings. At the **higher education** level, issues of international student recruitment and world rankings tend to dominate policy discourses

of internationalisation of education in many developed countries. However, there is also increasing attention at all stages of education to curricular, pedagogical and personal aspects of the internationalisation of education (Marginson et al., 2010; Ninnes and Hellsten, 2010).

Internationalisation as a practice or process is a more localised phenomenon, and is not necessarily dependent on the existence of internationalisation as a policy. Internationalisation as practice or process involves not only the development of knowledge, **competences** and ways of thinking and seeing necessary to live in international society, but also a rethinking of the **identities** and futures of children and young people (Guilherme, 2002; Jones, 2009; Suarez-Orozco, 2007).

Internationalisation is therefore a meta-curricular issue within which language education plays a central role. Within foreign language education, internationalisation as a practice overlaps significantly with the development of **intercultural communicative competence** (Byram, 1997). The role of foreign language education in developing cultural competence as well as linguistic competence (Byram, 2008) is increasingly acknowledged and is a vital part of internationalisation. Foreign language education may also contribute substantially to students' knowledge and understanding of other countries, people and cultures. Whether it is done explicitly or not, foreign language education can influence students' attitudes to other countries and their people, students' values regarding their own and other countries, and students' identities in the world. By developing knowledge and understanding of the world, intercultural and linguistic competence and positive ways of seeing self and others in a global context, foreign language education plays an important role in contributing to the internationalisation of education.

**See also:** Cultural awareness; Global education; Human rights; Intercultural competence; Nationalism; Study abroad

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## Internet and language learning

The internet constitutes an important pedagogical tool which operates in an individualised and flexible learning and teaching environment. It fundamentally reorganises interactions amongst people and potentially necessitates a reappraisal of the various pedagogical methods, approaches or philosophies used for language learners and teachers. As a fluid environment, individualised yet inherently situated within a social and communicative framework, it can be of great benefit, provided that certain principles are established and issues addressed at an early stage in the language learning and language teaching phases. These principles and issues are based on both practical and pedagogical considerations.

The internet provides immediate, cost-effective and wide-ranging access to **authentic** language learning materials, irrespective of the level and location of language learners or teachers. This potentially promotes the democratisation of the learning process and allows those who would otherwise have little opportunity to visit the target country, or to immerse themselves in the language and culture, to do so from afar. The internet's flexibility, accessibility and user-friendliness mean that it can be used with care as an intrinsic element of individual and collaborative self-directed learning and can also support, for example, **task-based learning**, **tandem learning**, **group-work** or multi-modal creative production. The retrieval of authentic materials and direct communication both amongst learners in a classroom context, and between them and **native speakers** at a distance, constitutes a learning environment which needs to be exploited to its full potential. The very flexibility and range of the internet has led to criticism that time can be wasted in the use of its various applications and that much material on the internet is of little value. This criticism is less valid for language learners and teachers, who, through internet use, gain access to a far wider range of up-to-date authentic materials which would not normally make their way into a **textbook**. Furthermore, in the case of language learners, they have the opportunity to share more responsibility for their learning, as they have equal access to materials, previously only available through their teachers.

This responsibility and ability for self-directed learning raises potential problems. Shared responsibility does not mean that learners are left free to 'surf the net' at will, although unstructured internet use may prove useful and advantageous at times. In order that long-term language learning and language teaching **objectives** do not suffer, language learners must be guided to use the internet in an effective way. They increasingly need to understand how they learn, what **strategies** they most generally adopt, and how best they might exploit the materials they find for their own needs. This pedagogical philosophy generates a more independent type of language learning where language learners can work at their own pace and where teachers become more facilitators of learning than a conduit of knowledge.

The internet can be usefully described as a resource for information-gathering purposes and as a medium through which learning takes place. Language learners or teachers can exploit the many internet applications (discussion groups, e-mail, Usenet, World Wide Web, Web 2.0 technologies, etc.) to develop and enhance a wide selection of **communicative strategies**. For example, students may access internet-based materials primarily to retrieve, adapt and present them: for content (as a basis for project or essay work); for linguistic or cultural value (text analysis, concordancing, specialist vocabulary); for language learning exercises (grammar drills, **cloze tests**); for interaction with other language learners or an even broader audience (e-mail-based correspondence, virtual classrooms, games-based discussions, blogs and wikis), etc. As a resource, the process of internet use is essentially one-way, as a medium it may be two-way. Both processes are valid and of considerable benefit to language learners and teachers, but may not be equally simple to implement, due to pedagogical and practical issues which must be addressed.

If learners and teachers are to use the internet effectively to promote language learning and teaching, they should ideally take into consideration certain criteria. These criteria can provide an appropriate framework within which to measure the value of language learning or teaching activities and the possible, or desirable, levels of **autonomous**

**learning.** Important issues to consider for resource-based, information-gathering purposes are practical criteria such as the access, the use and the reliability of the hardware available, the technical support provided, the internet links used, the level of discourse, the type of register, etc. Of vital importance are also more medium-based pedagogical criteria such as the choice of potential collaborators, the compatibility of computer systems, whether the internet-based activities provide an adequate learning stimulus, whether the activities fit within the general learning environment, whether the activities improve learning outcomes, and so on. For example, if teachers are required to work within the constraints of educational environments which do little to promote, encourage, or enable a learning-centred approach, which do not allow for the development of autonomous learning, or which encourage and reinforce a traditional, didactic style of teaching, then internet use for language learning and teaching may be a largely futile exercise. Conversely, if language learners receive initial training sessions on **learning to learn** via the internet, and if those sessions are supported by constant monitoring (information sheets, questionnaires, formal and informal feedback sessions, etc.), then internet use for language learning can be of a considerable help in the language learning process and in the promotion of autonomous learning.

Language learners and teachers should conceivably consider other issues of a more academic or ethical nature. For example, the accessibility of textual, graphic and audio materials on the internet raises important questions about ownership, copyright and plagiarism. While these questions are being addressed and guidelines established, caution must be exercised. Increasingly, internet providers are restricting website access to casual users and subscription systems are being adopted or reintroduced for web-based newspapers, magazines, journals, radio and television stations. These restrictions also alter the scope and type of **materials** which will be available to language learners and teachers in the future.

It is vital that language learners and teachers assess fully the potential of the internet, as a resource and as a medium, in order for language

learning and teaching to take place in the best possible way and with the best results. The internet is an important pedagogical tool which operates in a highly flexible environment; the way in which it is applied to educational situations will, ultimately, determine the success of its contribution to language learning and teaching.

**See also:** Autonomy and autonomous learners; Materials development; Strategies of language learning

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## Interpreting

The need for language specialists to help mediate spoken interlingual communication has been acknowledged from biblical times; Saint Paul is reputed to have advised the Corinthians to have recourse to interpreters (Herbert, 1978: 5). In today's world, however, the services of professional interpreters to transfer an oral or written

message from a source language (SL) into an oral message in the target language (TL) not only help to further global communication but also to increasingly address internal communication needs in multilingual societies.

### Consecutive interpreting

The presence of specially designed interpreting booths at international conference venues indicates that the process of interpretation at multinational gatherings is now well established. Conference interpreting is, however, a relatively recent development. Historically, international meetings were held in French. During the negotiations following the close of World War I, some of the high-ranking officers felt insufficiently conversant in French and, as a result, discussions were also conducted in German and English. While the German army provided young officers with a good command of French and English to interpret into German, the Allies recruited talented linguists to interpret from and into English and French. Later, during the conference on the Preliminaries of Peace in Paris, a dozen interpreters were engaged in consecutive interpreting with note-taking as we know it today (Herbert, 1978: 6). With the meetings of the International Labour Organization and the foundation of the League of Nations, the need for professional translators rose sharply and in 1941 the first school for interpreters was created in Geneva, with the initial aim of training interpreters for the League of Nations. Today, more than half a century later, there are academic courses for the training of interpreters throughout Europe and increasingly in Asia and the Americas, often in conjunction with translators' training programmes.

The interpreter engaged in consecutive interpreting is usually seated at the same table or rostrum as the speaker addressing the audience and, after each contribution, interprets what has been said into the TL. It is also possible for the interpreter to be seated next to one or two participants at a meeting and, speaking in a whisper, convey into the TL the words of the speaker, a form of interpreting known as whispering interpreting or *chuchotage*. However, although whispered, there is the risk that the voice of the interpreter may interfere with the voice

of the speaker. The method also has the added disadvantage that it is far from cost effective; only a limited number of delegates are able to benefit from the interpreter's work.

### Simultaneous interpreting

Consecutive interpreting, however, soon proved to be rather time-consuming and the need for a more efficient technique became evident. The answer came from simultaneous interpretation, a new mode of interpreting first used in Nuremberg, Germany, the seat of the 1945–46 War Crimes Trials following the end of World War II (Gaiba, 1998). As the right of the defendants to a fair trial made it necessary for the proceedings to be interpreted into German, the services of interpreters were required and, as consecutive interpretation would have taken an inordinately long time, simultaneous interpretation was introduced.

Using the method of simultaneous interpretation the interpreter, who is seated in a soundproof booth with a direct view of the meeting, listens to the speakers and interprets what they say into the TL. By means of a selector switch, listeners can choose one of a number of different language channels in order to hear either the original speech or the interpreted version in their own language. Having the interpreted version accompanying the speaker addressing the audience means a considerable time-saving in comparison with consecutive interpretation and, as a result, the use of simultaneous interpretation now made it possible for multilingual conferences to be carried out at the same speed as one-language conferences.

At conferences and lectures, interpreters are also needed to interpret for the deaf, deaf-blind and hearing-impaired, using **sign language**, viewed as the native language of the deaf. In many countries, sign language interpreting enjoys public recognition as a branch on its own and has generated a significant literature (Roy, 2000).

### Interpreting services

Interpreters are, however, also needed for other forms of interlingual communication, particularly in countries of immigration, or where indigenous



populations speak different languages to the majority, or where sign language interpreting is employed between deaf and hearing persons. While past immigration, indigenous or disability policies often stressed assimilation or ignored linguistic differences, particularly since the 1970s interpreting between private individuals and officials of public institutions who do not speak each others' language has grown steadily, at present probably constituting the most frequently undertaken form of interpreting in the world at large (Gentile et al., 1996, Wadensjö, 1998). Once performed only by bilingual volunteers and family friends, this kind of linguistic assistance to members of ethnic communities has now developed into a profession, and in the most advanced cases in countries such as Australia, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the USA and several other European countries, the field is now characterised by increased training, certification systems and professional development (Hale, 2007; Corsellis, 2008). This kind of interpreting is described in many ways – public service or community interpreting, liaison or contact interpreting or dialogue interpreting. Some countries, particularly those of the *Francophonie* and some Mediterranean countries, avoid the term 'interpreting' (associating this term only with conference interpreting) and use notions of linguistic mediation or cultural interpreting. An increasingly well-researched sub-set of this field is court interpreting, where interpreters usually work consecutively when interpreting evidence to the whole court but employ *chuchotage* to the defendant during other phases of the court proceedings (Berk-Seligson, 2002; Hale, 2004). Telephone interpreting has also grown as a sub-set of this field, providing rapid recourse to interpreters, originally in emergency situations but now as a regular means of service delivery (Kelly, 2008), and increasing use is made of video technology, particularly for sign language interpreting.

Health, social security, immigration, police and security work, law, administration and welfare services are the mainstay of community interpreting, but now with some emphasis on business, financial services and marketing, as awareness of multilingual markets develops. With this profile, however, much of community interpreting is highly

dependant on government budgets, very susceptible to institutional policy imperatives, and always needing to cater for new languages as the diversity of multilingual population increases (*Journal of Specialised Translation*, 2010). As a result, unlike conference interpreting which developed as a strong profession and a thriving market, community interpreting has struggled to develop as a profession and gain good conditions for its practitioners (Sibirsky and Taylor, 2010).

## Research and training

Conference interpreting has had a relatively long period of sustained research, often of a psycholinguistic nature, but we are now increasingly seeing studies in interpreting which cross any ready-made boundaries of conference vs community interpreting (Pöchhacker et al., 2007). Hale (2007) gives an excellent overview of research in community interpreting, and as well as legal interpreting research already mentioned, particular fields are well covered in Angelelli (2004) in health interpreting and Bot (2005) in mental health interpreting.

Some of the best theoretical and practical work has been done in the area of interpreting pedagogy, with Gile's (2009) outstanding work based on conference interpreting but now more widely appreciated across all fields of interpreting. An increasing number of Translating and Interpreting education institutions are also beginning to provide some training in community interpreting alongside other courses, a significant trend that is likely to continue (Corsellis, 2008).

The field of interpreting has thus diversified greatly and presented many innovations over the past half-century or more. Although monolingualism may be viewed as the norm, at least in the Western world, simple observation reveals the global existence of multilingual communities, confirming the dual need for more trained interpreters and for increased efforts in promoting further interpreting research.

**See also:** Higher education; Language for specific purposes; Skills and knowledge; Speaking; Translation; Translation theory

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## IPA – International Phonetic Association

The International Phonetic Association exists to promote the study of the science of phonetics and the applications of that science. The Association can trace its history back to 1886, and since that time the most widely known aspect of its work has been the International Phonetic Alphabet. The aim of the International Phonetic Alphabet is to provide a universally agreed system of notation for the sounds of languages, and for over a century the Alphabet has been widely adopted by phoneticians, linguists, dictionary makers, and others concerned with language.

The Association publishes the *Journal of the International Phonetic Association (JIPA)* three times per year (Cambridge University Press). The journal contains many language descriptions, reports on the application of IPA principles to the transcription of languages and accounts of research into speech processes.

The *Handbook of the International Phonetic Association* (Cambridge University Press, 1999) is a comprehensive guide to the Association's International Phonetic Alphabet. It presents the basics of phonetic analysis so that the principles underlying the Alphabet can be understood, and exemplifies the use of each of the phonetic symbols comprising the Alphabet. The application of the Alphabet is then demonstrated by the inclusion of illustrations, concise analyses of the sound systems of more than twenty-five languages from all over the world, accompanied by phonetic transcriptions of a set of exemplar words and of a passage of speech. Illustrations, accompanied by supplementary audio materials, also continually appear in *JIPA* in addition to scientific articles and reviews.

#### **Website**

[www.langsci.ucl.ac.uk/ipa](http://www.langsci.ucl.ac.uk/ipa)

## **IVN – Internationale Vereniging voor Neerlandistiek**

The International Association for Dutch Studies (*Internationale Vereniging voor Neerlandistiek*), founded in 1970, is an organisation for people

teaching Dutch studies at university. Its most important aim is to provide a platform for Dutch studies in the widest sense in some forty countries around the world.

The IVN supports and encourages teaching and research in the area of Dutch studies with a particular focus on the teaching and learning of Dutch as a foreign or second language; comparative literary and linguistic studies; language and culture pedagogy; cultural history of the low countries and intercultural communication. It organises an international conference of Dutch studies every three years alternately in the Netherlands and Flanders, and publishes the academic and peer reviewed journal *Internationale Neerlandistiek*, which is simultaneously issued as a paper edition and an open access version, the series *Lage Landen Studies* with both edited volumes and monographs on Dutch studies from an international perspective. There are a number of web-based publications such as a bimonthly newsletter and special-interest chronicles. Beyond these, the website plays an important role in providing different kinds of information and discussion platforms.

The IVN receives financial support from the Dutch Language Union (*Nederlandse Taalunie*), an intergovernmental institution of the Dutch and Flemish governments.

#### **Website**

[www.ivnnl.com](http://www.ivnnl.com)

#### **Online journal**

[www.internationaleneerlandistiek.nl](http://www.internationaleneerlandistiek.nl)

## Japan Foundation

The Japan Foundation is Japan's principal agent for cultural relations with other countries. It was established in 1972 as a special legal entity under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the purposes of nurturing mutual understanding and friendship on the international scene. In the late 1960s, amid the mounting need for cultural exchange between Japan and other countries, the groundwork was laid for the foundation of an organization that would be dedicated to international cultural exchange, invested with a powerful system of policy implementation, and endowed with substantial funds.

It was the first specialist organization for international cultural exchange in Japan, and it carries out a broad variety of cultural exchange programmes with personnel exchange as its basic premise, ranging from such academic pursuits as Japanese studies and Japanese-language education to the arts, publication, audio-visual media, sports, and general life culture. It does not work in the areas of science, technology, or medicine. Its activities are financed by operational profits on government endowments, subsidies from the government, and funding and donations from the private sector.

The Foundation coordinates its activities through its headquarters in Tokyo, its branch office in Kyoto and two Japanese-language institutes, and its twenty-two overseas offices in twenty-one countries. Its offices overseas take the form of Japan

Cultural Institutes, Japan Cultural Centers, and Centers for Cultural Exchange. The promotion of Japanese-language education overseas is one of the Japan Foundation's core activities. Many of its annual grant programmes offer support to institutions worldwide to develop their Japanese-language courses (including assistance for staff salaries and teaching materials) and Japanese-language specialists are regularly dispatched overseas. Within Japan, the Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa, acts as a centre of research and information on Japanese-language education, publishing regular academic journals and developing new teaching materials. It also provides short- and long-term training opportunities for teachers of Japanese and surveys the number of learners of Japanese throughout the world on a regular basis. In response to the growing number of Japanese language learners overseas and their increasingly diverse reasons and motivations for studying Japanese, the Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai, was established in Tajiri-Cho, Sennan-Gun, Osaka in May 1997, as an additional facility for the study of the Japanese language. Offering the benefits of residential study programmes in which students live in the dormitory during their term of study, the Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai, invites personnel from the diplomatic and public services.

### Website

[www.jpff.go.jp/e/](http://www.jpff.go.jp/e/)

## Japanese

Japanese is the native language of approximately 128 million people, the vast majority of whom live in Japan. There are, however, significant emigrant communities in Brazil, Peru, the United States, and Australia. Japanese is the ninth most spoken language in the world after Mandarin **Chinese**, **Spanish**, **English**, **Arabic**, Hindi, Bengali, **Portuguese**, and **Russian**.

### History

Writing was introduced to Japan from China in the sixth century, and the earliest studies of language within Japan date from the ninth century. However, these studies focus on the use of classical Chinese and on the development and organisation of the kana syllabaries, particularly as this relates to Sanskrit. The eighth century onwards saw sophisticated literary development, including the *Tale of Genji*. However, possibly because these works were written almost exclusively by women and not in Classical Chinese, Japanese itself was not treated as a scholarly subject until the rise of National Language Studies (*Kokugogaku*) in the eighteenth century. *Kokugogaku* focused primarily on the morphology and phonology of the earliest Japanese language, and it was part of a larger nationalistic movement seeking a supposedly untainted Japanese culture pre-dating Chinese influence. From such proto-nationalistic origins, *Kokugogaku* continues today as an active alternative to the Western linguistic tradition.

The first systematic study of colloquial Japanese was actually completed in Portuguese between 1604 and 1608 by the Jesuit missionary João Rodriguez (*Arte de lingua de Iapam*). A shorter related work, *Arte breve de lingua Iapam*, was published in 1620. These were translated into French in 1862. Both books are based on traditional Latin grammars and include discussion of topics such as honorifics and regional dialects. However, Jesuit scholarship on Japanese was cut short by the expulsion from Japan of the Portuguese (which is to say the Catholics) in 1639. During the period of *sakoku* or self-imposed isolation (1639–1854), only the Dutch maintained a

significant European presence in Japan, and Dutch linguistic studies flourished until the late nineteenth century when **German** and English became more important. As a natural outcome of the continued contact between Japan and Holland, and paralleling the developments in Japan-based Dutch studies, Japanese studies in Europe began at Leiden in 1856. The Center for Japanese and Korean Studies at Leiden continues this work today.

In the period between 1856 and the end of World War I, Japanese scholarship expanded in Europe with the creation of schools or institutes devoted to the study of non-Western civilisations. Examples include the Institut National des Langues et Civilisation Orientales in Paris (1868) and the Oriental University in Napoli (1903). The School of Oriental and African Studies in London was founded in 1917, although Japanese was first taught in England in 1903. Lesser-known programmes were also founded in nations such as Russia and Finland, motivated by direct contact with Japanese. The Oriental Faculty at St Petersburg, for example, has existed since 1895 although the Japanese language was not taught until much later. Early grammars of Japanese published in Europe include *Introduction à l'étude de la langue Japonaise* (Léon de Rosny, 1854) and *Japanschespraakler* (J.J. Hoffman, 1886). The earliest works written in English were published in Japan by diplomats and missionaries. These include *A Short Grammar of the Japanese Spoken Language* (William G. Aston, 1869); *A Simplified Grammar of the Japanese Language* (B.H. Chamberlain, 1887), and *A Handbook of Colloquial Japanese* (B.H. Chamberlain, 1888). James C. Hepburn's Japanese–English dictionary was published in 1867. While Hepburn romanisation stands today as the most popular way to write Japanese in the Latin alphabet, systems based on the sounds of Portuguese, Dutch, German, and French have all been used in the past. The romanisation currently taught in Japan (and used in this article) is known as *kunreisiki* and differs from Hepburn primarily in the representation of the *si*, *ti*, *tu* and *hu* sounds (which are *shi*, *chi*, *tsu* and *fu* in the Hepburn style).

Outside of Europe, Japanese language courses began simultaneously at Shanghai and at Berkeley

in 1900, and at Sydney in 1917. As might be expected, the study of Japanese in Asia was promoted in tandem with the expansion of the Japanese empire beginning with the incorporation of Taiwan in 1895. Japan was also the first country in Asia to undertake a systematic study of the West (from the end of the *sakoku* period), and to many Asian countries became a model for the successful infusion of Western technical, cultural, and social practices. This pattern persists throughout Asia today, and is reflected in the tremendous increase in Japanese language programmes since 1970 focused on specific kinds of technical Japanese. The design of early Japanese studies programmes in the United States was based on their European counterparts. Growth was slow until after World War II, and only eight universities offered language instruction as late as 1934. In 1945 Yale University created the first Japanese **area studies** programme in the United States with a focus on **competence** in the language and first-hand experience in Japan. The language programme was directed by Bernard Bloch, a structural linguist who designed the course for the US government as part of the war effort against Japan. Bloch's own contribution to the understanding of Japanese linguistics is multiplied by the contributions of his students, including Eleanor H. Jorden, Samuel E. Martin, and Roy Andrew Miller, all well-known in their own right as scholars of the Japanese language.

While Japanese studies has generally been introduced at the highest levels of education before filtering downward, the language has in fact been taught at the primary and secondary school levels since the end of World War II, particularly in countries of the Pacific Rim. It has been a nationally tested subject in China since 1972 and in Korea since 1973. In Australia, Japanese language study has been considered a federal priority since 1988 in order to expand economic opportunities and cross-cultural understanding in the Pacific region. And while Japanese has been taught in Indonesia since 1984, after a 2006 school reform it is now offered nationally as a high school elective. As a consequence, secondary school enrolments in Japanese have increased by 400 per cent in 3 years.

## The present

The (provisional) 2009 **Japan Foundation** figures for all levels of education estimate that approximately 3.65 million people study Japanese worldwide. This is an increase of 20 per cent since 2006, and an increase of over 2,800 per cent since the first survey figure collected in 1979. Japanese is taught in over 130 countries at nearly 15,800 institutions. Korea, China, and Indonesia have about two-thirds of all Japanese-language students in the world (and in terms of total student numbers, Indonesia moves to third for the first time). Student populations over 100,000 are found in Korea (964,000), China (827,000), Indonesia (716,000), Australia (276,000), Taiwan (248,000), and the United States (141,000). More than half of these students are in secondary schools. Compared to 2006, the number of students increased nearly 30 per cent at the primary and secondary levels and nearly 23 per cent at the college level. (Non-academic institutions saw a significant decrease.) In terms of trends, between 2003 and 2006, the greatest percentage increase in student numbers was found in Southeast Asia, while the lowest percentage increase was found in China, Australia, and the United States. In the United States at least, Japanese is studied at approximately the same rate as German, Italian, and American Sign Language (all grouped together after Spanish and French), and while interest in the history and literature of Japan remains evident, there is obviously increased interest in Japanese popular culture, i.e. anime, manga, J-pop, etc. Professional organisations for teachers and scholars are found throughout the world. **Textbooks** reflecting a variety of **teaching methodologies** are published in a dozen countries, and recent surveys list over 120 different texts currently in use. Japanese is also well-represented in long-distance teaching and advanced technology projects.

From within Japan, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (*Mombukagakusho* or MEXT) takes a strong role in promoting initiatives in overseas Japanese studies through the Japan Foundation. Amongst its many activities, the Japan Foundation administers the Japanese Language Proficiency Test

(*Nihongo no ooryokusiken*), and it is responsible for a number of efforts to standardise Japanese language instruction. Japanese is also offered by a great number of institutions within Japan. In 2008, the Japanese government announced the ‘300,000 Foreign Students Plan’, an initiative to increase the number of foreign students in Japan to 300,000 by 2020. At the time, this number stood at approximately 124,000, over 90 per cent of whom were from Asian countries.

**See also:** Arabic; Chinese; Higher education; Japan Foundation; Nationalism

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WILLIAM MCCLURE

## Jespersen, Otto

- b. 1860, Randers, Denmark;  
d. 1943, Roskilde, Denmark

In pursuit of linguistic studies, Otto Jespersen travelled extensively in Germany, France and

England. Previous to his academic career he taught **French** and **English** at secondary schools. From 1893 to 1925 he was Professor of English at the University of Copenhagen. His phonetic work included all major European languages and was based on strict observation of daily linguistic performance. It made him the promoter of a type of foreign language teaching which stressed communication and oral **skills**. He was among the founding members of the Danish *Quo usque tandem* Society, called after Wilhelm Viëtor’s influential publication. Furthermore, he took an active part in the development of an international artificial language, contributing to it with his own system called Novial.

Jespersen’s academic work moved away from typical philology as was current most of all in Germany in the second half of the nineteenth century. He refuted the idea that sound laws were without exceptions, and demanded that a distinction be made between the change of sound and the change of meaning. Likewise he refuted the idea that languages had an organic life and that languages of the inflectional type were organically higher-developed than those of other types. Instead he looked at languages as a tool of expression and saw progress in the fact that some managed their communicative function with fewer morphological means than others. For Jespersen, this gave English the position of the most advanced European language, precisely because of its lack of inflectional morphology. His main work, the seven-volume *[M]odern English Grammar* (1912–49) was subtitled *on historical principles* but nevertheless envisaged a comprehensive synchronic **grammar** based on clearly defined syntactic concepts and terms. Besides being brimful with precise structural observations which find recognition even today, it is the first great example of grammars as they became popular later under the rubric of ‘synchronic linguistics’.

Jespersen’s ideas about foreign language teaching, laid down in *How to Teach a Foreign Language* (1904; Danish version *Sprogundervisning*, 1901) are a corollary of his ideas on philology. Twenty years after Viëtor’s seminal pamphlet, it shows the progress that had been made in the meantime. The primacy of speech is unchallenged,

and so is the priority of oral teaching techniques in the classroom. The sole aim of foreign language teaching is natural communication, and the semantically connected text is the centre of classroom work. In 1901 these principles of what was informally called the **direct method** were propagated by one of the most renowned European philologists, whereas in 1882 they had to be introduced by a relative outsider using a pen-name. Moreover, Jespersen himself wrote a number of **textbooks** in English and French, not least among them his *Essentials of English Grammar* (1933, frequently reprinted).

Jespersen was a most successful scholar. In this role he holds an historically important position between nineteenth and early twentieth century philology and later twentieth century **linguistics**, even prefiguring **applied linguistics**. He was also a most successful planner of foreign language teaching methodology. As the most eminent member of the **reform movement** besides Henry **Sweet**, he again holds an historically important position between philologically dominated **teacher methods** and the teaching of foreign languages on linguistic principles, as was advocated in the second half of the twentieth century.

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WERNER HÜLLEN

## Journals

Journals of particular interest to those teaching and learning languages include academic journals that publish research into the literature and other aspects of the cultural life of the country whose

language may be studied, journals in theoretical and **applied linguistics**, and journals whose readership consists predominantly of practising language teachers, particularly those working at school level, which are often published by language teachers' associations themselves.

Many of the journals read by academics and university students in the languages field are devoted to research on **literary** topics, but they may also include those specialising in linguistic studies and those devoted to the political, the economic and the social, cultural and artistic life of particular countries more generally. These are truly international journals in the sense that, though of necessity based and edited in one particular country, they are read and receive contributions from scholars in many countries and are held in university libraries worldwide. In both literary and linguistic fields, the five modern European languages which have traditionally been most widely studied in English speaking countries (particularly **French** and **German**, but also **Spanish**, Italian and **Russian**) are well served both by journals produced within the country in question and also by those published by learned societies, often of many years standing, in the English-speaking world and in many cases containing articles mainly written in English. For an informative listing of even the most eminent of such journals, the reader must be referred to university, online and other catalogues, the following somewhat arbitrary selection being named for illustrative purposes only. The *Revue d'Histoire Littéraire de la France* has been published in Paris by the Société d'Histoire Littéraire de la France since the beginning of the twentieth century; and the *Zeitschrift für Deutsche Philologie* based in Bonn has recently produced its 120th volume in which issues devoted to literary topics alternate with those devoted to linguistic studies of dialect and usage. The Modern Humanities Research Association, founded in Cambridge in 1918, produces the *Modern Languages Review* containing literary studies of works written in various European languages including English, as well as the *Review of Portuguese Studies* and the *Slavonic and East European Review*.

In Britain, long established learned associations dedicated to French, German, Spanish, Italian and



Slavonic studies respectively all have journals wholly or largely devoted to studies of the relevant literatures. In America the State University of New York produces *Nineteenth Century French Studies*, the University of Wisconsin publishes *Monatshefte* with issues devoted to particular themes or authors as well as numbers devoted to German writers of all periods. *Modern Language Notes*, published by the University of Chicago (and often referred to simply as *MLN*), has four issues a year containing articles on French, German, Hispanic and comparative literature respectively. Those concerned with less widely studied languages and cultures will also find journals relevant to the study at various levels of Oriental, Asian, Middle Eastern, Celtic and Scandinavian languages and cultures.

Details of such journals may usually be accessed through specialist university departments and institutions, or through the relevant learned bodies or teachers' associations and their websites.

Though journals classified under the head of general or theoretical **linguistics** may be of academic interest to some teachers and learners of particular languages, their usefulness to practitioners is a matter of contention. Some, such as *Language* or the *Journal of Linguistics*, which take a broader view of the subject, may contain articles making useful and perceptive reference to major controversies regarding the nature of language and its **acquisition**. Often, however, their content is technical and inaccessible to those whose interests are more practical, being concerned with detailed points of underlying linguistic structure or, as the case may be, minor – albeit sometimes fascinating – points of usage or semantic development in a variety of languages and dialects including some that must be considered esoteric. Some linguistics journals, notably those devoted to the detailed study of the French language, *Le Français Moderne*, *Langue Française*, *Journal of French Language Studies*, may seem to offer more appeal to teachers and learners of the language at the highest academic level but are of greater interest to those wishing to speak and write about the language rather than to speak and write the language itself.

Of somewhat greater relevance are academic journals devoted to research in applied linguistics,

which is often taken to be synonymous with the general theory and practice of second language teaching and acquisition, though it may also include first language acquisition and performance and its various pathologies. Journals in this category are widely quoted in some of the theoretical works on second and foreign language teaching and learning which have proved seminal in the subject. Periodicals whose titles include the expression 'applied linguistics' are legion. In addition to *Applied Linguistics* and the *Journal of Applied Linguistics* there exist both an *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* and an *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, as well as national journals or reviews of applied linguistics incorporating the names of the main English speaking countries, not to mention many countries where English is a principal medium of academic communication. In the case of most of these, the learning of English as a second language rather than the study of foreign languages commonly learned by English speakers themselves is the basis of most contributions. This is also true of the authoritative *Language Learning* as well, understandably enough, as of the very influential *TESOL Quarterly* (TESOL: The Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages). For useful reviews of work on topics within language teaching or of work in particular countries, the journal *Language Teaching* is particularly noteworthy.

In recent years journals dealing with **inter-cultural communication** have become relevant to language teachers, partly because of the increased interest among the latter in intercultural competence but also because these journals have broadened their focus. They include the *Journal of Intercultural Studies* in Japan, *Intercultural Communication Research* in China, *Intercultural Education* in Europe, the *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* in the USA, and others.

Finally, there are journals specifically intended to be read by school and university teachers of languages other than English, including the bilingual *Canadian Modern Language Review/Revue Canadienne des Langues Vivantes* and *Le Français dans le Monde*, produced in Paris and containing short topical articles on French political, cultural and social life as well as detailed suggestions for

classroom practice. *The Modern Language Journal*, published by the University of Wisconsin Press for the American National Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations, is a refereed journal devoted to research and discussion on the learning and teaching of foreign and second languages, as is the *Language Learning Journal*, produced for the British Association of Language Learning.

Needless to say, many countries have their own national language teaching organisations producing

their own journals. The contents of these range from short theoretical or research articles and accounts of innovative teaching, to reports of national language policies and items of foreign language teaching news.

**See also:** African languages; Arabic; Chinese; French; German; Japanese; Portuguese; Spanish

COLIN WRINGE

# K

## Kramsch, Claire

b. 1935, Reims, France

Claire Kramsch was born and educated in France. In her professional life she was Instructor for German at the Lycée de Sèvres in France (1959–60), Instructor for French at the Institut Français in Freiburg, Germany (1961–63), Instructor, Lecturer, Senior Lecturer and Professor of Foreign Language Acquisition at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston (1965–89) and has been Full Professor in the Department of German and Affiliate Professor in the Graduate School of Education at the University of California at Berkeley since 1989. She has published nine books and more than 150 articles in journals and books in English, French and German which have had a strong influence on how we conceive of foreign and second language learning and teaching. Her publications, lectures and workshops have been inspiring for researchers and language teachers around the world. She has been a visiting professor in several countries and has received grants, awards, prizes and honors from renowned institutions.

Claire Kramsch has thoroughly explored foreign and second language learning in order to make us aware of its educational significance and its relevance for the learners' understanding of themselves and the worlds they live in. In her influential book *Context and Culture in Language Teaching* (1993) she demonstrates that culture in language learning is not 'an expandable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading,

and writing. It is always in the background, right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners' (Kramsch, 1993: 1). In her book *Language and Culture* (1998) she shows in detailed interpretations of language use and the production of meaning that language is not only a linguistic code but that it expresses, embodies, symbolizes and creates cultural realities and makes us aware of the ambivalence of culture.

For Kramsch language learning is what could be called in German 'ein Bildungsprozess' which enriches the learners' understanding of themselves and others. She succeeds in revealing the educational significance of language acquisition (a) because she is an outstanding expert in several fields (among them **second language acquisition, applied linguistics, discourse analysis**, literary theory, multilingualism, and social and cultural theory), (b) because with her comprehensive knowledge she is able to interpret written and oral texts in illuminating ways, and (c) because she is an imaginative teacher.

In *Context and Culture in Language Teaching* (1993) Kramsch criticizes the narrow pragmatic bent of foreign language teaching and directs our attention to 'the search for an understanding of cultural boundaries and an attempt to come to terms with these boundaries' (12). In 'From Communicative Competence to Symbolic Competence' (2006) she suggests that communicative competence as the general goal of foreign language teaching and learning should be replaced by symbolic competence because the former has been

reduced to the exchange of information, instrumental goals and mere efficiency: 'Language learners are not just communicators and problem solvers but whole persons with bodies, and minds, with memories, fantasies, loyalties, identities' (251). This kind of language learner needs symbolic competence. In her book *The Multilingual Subject* (2009) Kramersch illustrates in illuminating interpretations of a wide variety of texts – including language memoirs of former language learners, learners' journals and discourse completion surveys – the various aspects of symbolic competence, which have in common that symbolically competent students 'must master the grammar, the spelling, the conventions of genre' and that 'in addition they have to be in touch with the symbolic value of words and their subjective resonances' (196).

Symbolic competence is closely connected with the concept of 'third culture' or 'third place' that Kramersch introduced 'as a metaphor for eschewing the traditional dualities on which language education is based: L1/L2, C1/C2, NS/NNS, Us/Them, Self/Other' (199). Third place is a place of encounters and exchange in which our beliefs about others and ourselves are transformed, but this does not imply that third place creates a transcultural world beyond dualities and boundaries. For Kramersch the recognition of boundaries is indispensable. In exploring the opportunities and dangers of computer mediated communication (CMC) Kramersch first stresses that 'the computer has the potential to enhance the multilingual subject's creativity, resourcefulness, and the ability to exploit the symbolic gaps between form and meaning' (183–84), but she also directs our attention to its dangers: 'Computer mediated communication entices us to assume that Self and Other are one, and that we all speak a common computerspeak' (184) and that we live in 'borderless spaces' (185). For Kramersch these dangers confront us 'as never before with the need for boundaries' (183) and the need for symbolic competence.

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LOTHAR BREDELLA

## Krumm, Hans-Jürgen

### b. 1942, Wuppertal, Germany

Hans-Jürgen Krumm studied German and English philology, philosophy, pedagogy and pedagogical psychology in Tübingen. He was Professor for Research in Second Language Teaching at the University of Hamburg and in 1993 he became the first university professor for German as a Foreign Language at the Department of German at the University of Vienna, where he established this subject, particularly through the founding of a master's programme. He was made Professor Emeritus in 2010.

Krumm's research focuses on individual and social multilingualism, language politics (language and migration/integration, the role of the **German** language), **intercultural communication** and intercultural learning, teacher behaviour, teacher training, research on teaching manuals, and text-competence (especially in writing). His influence has extended through his many publications, both monographs and, significantly, handbooks on language teaching and pedagogy. He is a co-editor of the two-volume handbook *Deutsch als Fremdsprache* and of a standard reference book on foreign language teaching. Through his publications, his teaching, his presentations at numerous conferences worldwide and his activities as initiator and coordinator of research projects (for example, **Council of Europe** Language Education Policy Profiles and Language Policy for the Integration of Adult Migrants) he has shaped the field of foreign language teaching to a remarkable extent.

Hans-Jürgen Krumm has been and still is a member of many academic associations and advisory boards, holding the chair of many of them,

among these the subject group German as a Foreign Language in the Professional Association for Modern Languages (1982–94). Since 1996 he has served as the chair of the advisory board of the Austria Institute, member of the advisory board of the Language Centre at the University of Vienna (2001) and the Austrian Language Committee (2003). He was a member of the board of trustees of the Austrian Languages Diploma (1994–2010). He has received many honours and awards for his commitment to language politics and intercultural understanding, among these honorary membership of the International Association of German Teachers (1993), the honorary statuette of the Polish Association of Germanists and German Teachers (2002) and the Austrian Federal Honorary Medal for Achievements in Intercultural Dialogue (2008).

Numerous visiting professorships and fellowships allowed him to work in many countries such as Indonesia, India, Sweden and Argentina. Since 1981 he has been joint organiser of the annual Spring Conference on Research in Second Language Teaching in Rauschholzhausen.

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RENATE FAISTAUER

# L

## *Landeskunde/Kulturkunde*

In Germany (and other German speaking countries) the terms *Landeskunde* (= **area studies**) and *Kulturkunde* (= the study of culture/civilisation) have mainly, but not exclusively, been connected to the study of foreign languages since its institutionalisation in the second half of the nineteenth century. In relation to specific languages terms such as *Amerikakunde* or *Englandkunde*, *Frankreichkunde* etc. have also been used.

In Europe (and contexts influenced by European ideas and developments), the study of modern languages and literatures and their establishment as academic disciplines were modelled on the classics. Historical linguistics, the editing of early **literary** documents and philological analysis were given precedence over the attainment of practical language **competence**, the discussion of more recent texts and a comparative approach to the different cultures in question. Although the university departments were primarily set up to train foreign language teachers, the actual training was more suitable for philologists concentrating on **linguistics** and/or literary criticism because, paradoxically, language practice and foreign-language-teaching methodology were regarded as secondary; and *Landeskunde* (with an emphasis on realia, i.e. facts and figures) came last, if it was taught at all. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, a number of politically rather than educationally motivated debates (influenced by Germany's hostility towards France and its rivalry with Britain),

foregrounded the relevance of the study of culture and led to a kind of *Kulturkunde* (with an emphasis on the national character[s] of the foreign people[s]) which was not so much interested in understanding the foreign culture(s) as aimed at reinforcing the German identity of the learners. This development paved the way for the subordination of all *Landeskunde/ Kulturkunde* to national-socialist educational policy from 1935 to 1945 (see Buttjes, 1990: 48–56; Kramer, 1997: 15–20; Hausmann, 2003).

After the defeat of Nazism and the end of World War Two, the two German states pursued different educational policies. The first response in the Federal Republic of Germany was 'to attempt to make *Landeskunde* value-free by emphasizing its subordination to the aim of acquiring the **skills** of communication' (Byram, 1996: 185). However, values (such as democracy and international understanding) were soon reintroduced, first by the American politics of reeducation (which also supported the development of American Studies) and, later, as a consequence of the early Franco–German rapprochement (from which the evolution of Romance Studies benefited). In the 1950s and 1960s a number of avowedly value-free (or ideology-free) *Landeskunde* approaches existed in schools, universities and teacher training colleges which tried to square the circle of combining the provision of facts and figures, the mediation of positive (and, consequently, sometimes false) images of the target culture(s), and the political education of democratic German citizens.

It was not until the early 1970s that a number of social, political and cultural factors necessitated the re-**evaluation** of the status of *Landeskunde*. The intensifying process of European integration, the rising influx of migrants and the growth of transnational communication (as well as the problems arising from these developments) pointed to the educational relevance of cultural differences and demanded to be taken into account in the training of psychologists, social workers, teachers and, first and foremost, teachers of the indigenous and foreign languages. A long and intensive debate (see Buttjes, 1990: 56–61; Kramer, 1976, 1997: 20–7), which was decisively influenced by the reception of (British) **cultural studies**, by the early 1990s resulted in a discernible change of attitude in favour of the cultural dimension of foreign language education. In the schools, *Landeskunde* is no longer reduced to its former ancillary status (providing background knowledge) but has attained a position in its own right in furthering the learners' intercultural competence; in the universities, *Landeskunde* has been transformed into a kind of (American, British, Canadian, Australian, etc.) Cultural Studies (or *Civilisation Française*, etc.) equal in status with Linguistics and Literature (Kramer, 1997: 48–78).

In the German Democratic Republic a critique of pre-1945 *Kulturrkunde* was complemented by a *Landeskunde* devised along Marxist–Leninist lines which closely followed the vagaries of GDR foreign policy (cf. Kramer, 1997: 27–34; cf. Spantzel, 2001). In the first phase, which lasted from the foundation of the GDR to the building of the Berlin Wall (1961), *Landeskunde* was mainly used to distinguish between friends and foes by painting negative images of capitalist countries and positive images of socialist ones. During the second phase, between the early 1960s and the early 1980s, which witnessed the internal consolidation and international acceptance of the GDR, this position became more differentiated, but not fundamentally different. The more or less compulsive orientation towards the USSR (and the teaching of **Russian**) decreased; and German as a Foreign Language became the context in which *Landeskunde* was discussed. Finally, in the second half of the 1980s, the debate became more open-minded: approaches to intercultural learning (and communication) were

received, discussed and partly integrated, and a number of fundamental questions related to the disciplinary character of *Landeskunde* were raised (see Kerl, 1990).

Today, the term *Landeskunde* is hardly ever used. It has been replaced by Cultural Studies (or *Kulturstudien*, *Kulturwissenschaft*). In universities, Cultural Studies aims at studying a particular culture and society and, by doing so, at learning to understand cultures in general, and at arriving at a better understanding of one's own (cf. Nünning and Jucker, 1999: 135–169, 206–207). In schools, Cultural Studies – very often under the label of Intercultural Learning – aim at teaching a complex but flexible network of culturally specific knowledge, skills and **attitudes** which enables learners of a foreign language to begin (and continue) to communicate with native or other non-**native speakers** of that language, mediate and negotiate between the two (or more) cultures in question and reflect these processes in relation to their own culture(s) (cf. Müller-Hartmann and Schocker-Ditfurth, 2010: 109–120).

**See also:** Area studies; *Civilisation*; Cultural studies; German; Higher education; Intercultural competence; Stereotypes; Study abroad; Syllabus and curriculum design

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JÜRGEN KRAMER

## Language across the curriculum

The concept of 'Language across the curriculum' (LAC) draws upon theoretical ideas from education, **sociolinguistics**, **second language acquisition** and **applied linguistics** (Moon, 1991), extending across the broad rubric of 'educational linguistics' (Spolsky, 1978; Stubbs, 1986; Christie and Martin, 1997). The term *language across the curriculum* emerged from the work of British educationalists and refers to the fundamental role played by language in teaching–learning interactions across curriculum subject areas. **Content-based instruction**, immersion language programmes and adjunct or sheltered subject matter teaching are associated movements emerging from North America. LAC parallels other language-based educational developments, such as **language awareness** (LA), and knowledge about language (KAL) in the UK and consciousness-raising (CR) in the USA, which position language as an explicit and focal object of teacher and learner study. The most recent manifestation of the concepts of LAC from a European perspective is **Content and Language Integrated Learning** (CLIL) (e.g. Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010) where curricular subjects are taught by teachers who are subject rather than language specialists through the medium of a language other than that normally used. In the interests of promoting linguistic diversity and language learning, CLIL is identified as a priority by the Commission of the European Communities (2003). The focus here is on LAC rather than content-based, immersion programme or CLIL initiatives.

The LAC movement began in the 1960s with small-scale initiatives in a few British secondary schools to break down subject area barriers and develop an interdisciplinary curriculum. The centrality of language in processes of learning within the curriculum was highlighted by work carried out by the London Association of Teachers of English (LATE) in the early 1970s and *Language, the Learner and the School* (Barnes, Britton and Rosen, 1969). The Schools Council Programme in Linguistics and Language Teaching, and the resulting *Language in Use materials* (Doughty, Pearce and Thornton, 1971) also contributed. The Bullock Report, *A Language for Life* (1975), gave



official recognition to LAC and stated that 'Every school should have an organised policy for LAC establishing every teacher's involvement in language and **reading** development throughout the years of schooling' (Principal Recommendation 4).

Educational concepts that have permeated the LAC movement include:

- Language is central to learning. It is the principal medium for processing and interpreting new concepts (Torbe, 1976; Marland, 1977).
- Language is the principal means of gaining new knowledge. Learners are assisted in this process when given opportunities to reflect upon and make sense of new ideas through talk and writing (Barnes, 1976).
- Language development is inextricably linked to the learning of subject areas and these provide context and purpose for language development (Messenger, 1980; van Lier, 1995).
- All teachers are language as well as subject teachers, as language is intertwined with all aspects of the curriculum and the discourses of the school (Christie, 1985/1989).

Some of the central assumptions of LAC emerging from educational linguistics are captured in Halliday's (1980) tripartite description of the role of language in education: learning language, learning about language, learning through language.

Sociolinguistic influences emerge from theoretical concepts of register or functional variation in subject areas which hold that learning about the different disciplines is not merely a matter of learning the content with its technical 'jargon' or **vocabulary**. It is rather a matter of being 'apprenticed' into particular varieties of language, 'that is of learning the particular discourse patterns within which are encoded the various ways of working that are characteristic of the different subjects' (Christie, 1985: 37).

The language difficulties encountered in the specialist registers of school subjects have been a concern of classroom-based research in Britain, Australia and the USA. These have focused both on **mother tongue** (Barnes, 1976; Christie, 1985/1989; Hasan and Williams, 1996; Mercer, 1981) and second language medium education (Brinton,

Snow and Wesche, 1989; Crandall and Tucker, 1990; Mohan, 1986). While initially associated with mother tongue primary and **secondary education**, LAC has been applied to other contexts where learners use **English** or other national/international languages as the **medium of instruction**. In particular, the central notions of LAC have been applied in **English for specific purposes** settings (Bhatia, 1993; Swales, 1990).

In second/foreign language contexts, LAC promotes an integrated approach to language instruction where task, topics and texts are drawn from subject matter and the focus is on the development of the 'cognitive academic language skills' (CALP) (Cummins, 1981) required for specific subject areas. The underpinning concept is that by focusing on meaning rather than form, and on subject-specific genres (Martin, 1993; Swales, 1990) required in the curriculum areas, language proficiency is enhanced through contextualised use (Kasper, 1997; Krashen, 1982; **Widdowson**, 1978).

While the concept of LAC has generated innovative thinking about how language instruction can harness language and subject development, it has not achieved widespread acceptance in language education. Fillon (1985) attributes this to the characteristic structures of school organisation, especially at secondary level, which do not support cross-curricular development. He also sees a lack of clearly defined approaches or methodologies; the lack of research evidence that LAC makes a difference to learning; and the limited acceptance and knowledge by teachers and administrators of the basic concepts of LAC. That the central ideas embodied in LAC are complex, sophisticated and not easily understood or put into practice has been suggested by several studies, whose findings question the assumption that teachers are able to communicate content effectively and in such a way that language learning is enhanced (Ellis, 1984; Muresci, 1996).

Kramsch suggests that an LAC/content-based approach 'runs the risk of reinforcing the skill vs. content distinction in language teaching and of upholding the illusion of the transparency of language' (1995: 48). An LAC approach also increases work for language teachers, whose lack of subject-specific knowledge may create difficulty in planning programmes or developing collaborative

teaching relationships that focus on language development with subject teachers.

Perhaps the main impact of the LAC movement is in the attention drawn to the fact that language in the school curriculum is used for a wide range of situations and purposes, as well as to the importance of talk as a tool for learning. Viewed from an LAC perspective, language becomes a medium of interpretation rather than transmission, as well as a process and vehicle *for* learning rather than a product *of* learning. Highlighting the expressive and exploratory functions of language renewed thinking about the essentially interactive nature of teaching and learning and the roles of teachers in mediating classroom interaction and, consequently, in making available the kinds of learning that take place. While the major concepts of LAC have been drawn from Western educational systems, they have influenced educational practices elsewhere. Some examples are the Molteno Project (*Bridge to English*, 1987) to prepare black South African primary children in learning science, mathematics and other subjects, and Bridging Courses for transition to secondary school in Tanzania. There have also been integrated language and subject teaching (e.g. *New Zambia Primary Course*, 1971) and topic/theme-based approaches through project work in primary schools in Botswana. Subject **textbook** development has provided greater accessibility to content (e.g. UMSEPP project in Malaysia for tertiary materials).

The influence of LAC has been spasmodic and complex to sustain. Wells maintains that LAC 'is a slogan to rally the converted rather than a policy that is affecting the daily practice of the majority of teachers and administrators' (1991: 6). Numerous areas remain for further research and development (Crandall and Tucker, 1990) including **teacher education**, student **assessment** and programme **evaluation**, textbook and resource development, and studies of how language is used in subject areas texts and learning interactional processes.

**See also:** BICS and CALP; Content-based instruction; Council of Europe Platform for Plurilingualism and Intercultural Education; Genre and genre-based teaching; Language awareness; Research methods; Second language acquisition; Sociolinguistics

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ANNE BURNS

## Language awareness

Language awareness (LA) is defined in the ALA (Association for Language Awareness) constitution as 'explicit knowledge about language and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching and language use'. This broad definition allows LA to extend into areas that include literature (e.g., Zyngier, 1994), medical contexts (Singy and Guex, 1997), folklinguistics (Preston, 1996), **translation** (e.g., Faber, 1998); but we focus here on what is commonly regarded as the core LA, situated in language classrooms. LA is seen as a state of mind that emerges when we 'focus systematically on language' (van Lier, 1995: 4) and transcend our tacit understandings of language by focusing on representations that can be made explicit. LA implies having access to knowledge about one's (linguistic) knowledge. It thus counters the **behaviourist** approach to language learning which proscribes teaching about language and emphasises learning language repertoires.

Traceable at least back to **Halliday** (1971), LA gained impetus from the Bullock Report (DES, 1975), which highlighted poor standards among

British school leavers amid increasing concern over underachievement in foreign languages (FLs). 'Reflective' teachers, frustrated by government procrastination, initiated local schemes for teaching pupils more about language and languages. Hence LA is rightly deemed a 'grassroots' movement, though institutional support soon followed through NCLE (National Council for Language in Education) working parties (1978) and national conferences (1981, 1985). **Hawkins** (1981, 1984) laid some theoretical foundations, advocating LA as a bridge between **mother-tongue** (MT) and FL education, and creating a new twentieth-century trivium: MT study plus LA plus FL study. Contemporary with these concerns were diverse and increasing references to language awareness in relation to community languages and multi-ethnic educational support, and also in relation to international research into **second language acquisition** exploring the role of explicit knowledge and focus on form. Seeking to bring together these disparate but nevertheless seemingly overlapping fields of language awareness activity, a British Association of Applied Linguistics Seminar on Language Awareness was organised at University of Wales Bangor in 1989, leading to James and Garrett's (1991) edited volume, and followed by the First International Conference on LA in 1992, where the ALA and its journal *Language Awareness* were launched. Since then, the ALA has held regular biennial international conferences.

LA's development has inevitably led to a search for terminological clarity and distinctiveness, for example in relation to consciousness raising (e.g. see James, 1996) and knowledge about language (e.g. see Cameron, 1993), and also to how it is translated into other languages (e.g. see Gnutzmann, 1997, on terms in German). Despite its early UK focus, referred to above, LA has enjoyed parallel development in many other countries. EVLANG (L'éveil aux langues dans l'école primaire) has been a particularly notable initiative that has generated projects in many countries (see Svalberg, 2007). In primary school classrooms, EVLANG employed language awareness activities countering western ethnocentric dominance, and more congruous with the contemporary linguistic and cultural diversity fostered by globalization. A further

development in LA is its growth in the fields of **pragmatics** and inter-/cross-cultural awareness (e.g. see Fenner et al, 2001; Phipps and González, 2004).

LA work is inductive and reflective with learners typically engaging in small-scale nontechnical investigations of language and language learning. Through reflection and ‘*linguaging*’ (‘use of language to mediate cognitive activity’, Swain, 2006), they ‘*surface*’ their intuitions about how language works, what they need to learn, and how. One form of such awareness is identifying available learning **strategies** and judging their relative effectiveness for given tasks – a first step towards learner **autonomy** (Little, 1997). Andrews (1993) provides a guide for teachers seeking LA activities for learners on a range of levels, while Wright and Bolitho (1993) and Borg (1994) exemplify approaches for **teacher education**.

Benefits claimed for LA range across five dimensions: affective, social, power, cognitive and performance (James and Garrett, 1991). The affective dimension concerns **attitude** and **motivation**, endorsing Krashen’s affective filter (in his **monitor model**), which determines whether input to the learner becomes intake. LA aims to stimulate curiosity about language. This aspect is pivotal, for instance, to Hawkins’s proposal for LA as a precursor to FL study in secondary schools, to remedy poor FL achievement.

The social dimension concerns fostering harmonious social relations in potentially divisive contexts of language variation and diversity. Some LA work aims at building ‘... better relations between all ethnic groups by arousing pupils’ awareness of the origins and characteristics of their own language and dialect and their place in the wider map of languages and dialects used in the world beyond’ (Donmall, 1985: 8).

The power dimension focuses on how language is used for hegemony and oppression. Language education should ensure that citizens are sensitive to and able to counter commercial and political manipulation through subtle ideological use of and assumptions about language. LA work with its prime focus on such empowerment of individuals is often called Critical LA (Fairclough, 1992).

The cognitive dimension of LA provides a powerful argument for its inclusion in educational curricula. As Donmall (1985: 7) says, ‘awareness

of pattern, contrast, system, units, categories, rules of language’ is what defines the concept. Relatedly, Hawkins (1984) suggests that the ‘*analytic competence*’ that was developed by learning Latin is generalisable beyond language learning contexts. Again, then, LA serves a more general mind training. The cognitive aspects do not imply a return to ‘**grammar grind**’, since the remit of the new language study also encompasses attention to functions, **genres**, verbal hygiene, social **stereotypes** and the very processes of language learning and use. In addition, insofar as LA fosters language learning, it can be linked with various cognitive advantages accruing from multilingualism. These extend to ‘a greater sensitivity to sociolinguistic interactions with interlocutors’ (Goetz, 2003: 1). It is clear then that there is inevitable overlap amongst these five dimensions.

The performance dimension asks whether knowledge accruing from LA leads to better language learning and use. Is there an interface from ‘*knowing that*’ to ‘*knowing how*’, from declarative to procedural linguistic knowledge? Nevertheless, Hawkins (1984: 150) refers to ‘a mass of research ... showing that insight into pattern lies at the root of successful FL learning and that it is also a key to efficient processing of verbal messages in the MT’. Ellis (1994) documents research showing the effectiveness of explicit language teaching, and there is a general shift in teaching from the communicative to the cognitive, motivated in part by a conviction that cognitive engagement in learning has positive results.

Claims made for LA across these five dimensions are not uncontroversial: for example, see Alderson, Clapham and Steel (1997) on language performance, and Leets and Giles (1993) and Rampton (1995) on social tolerance. James and Garrett (1991) call for continuing **evaluation** of LA.

Also looking ahead, interest in LA and the salience of issues that gave rise to it are arguably being strengthened by globalization and concomitants such as international trade, international conflict, population movement and the growth of multilingual contexts.

**See also:** Acquisition and teaching; Generative principle; Grammar; Grammar–translation method;

Language across the curriculum; Learning styles; Linguistics; Monolingual principle; Teacher talk; Teaching methods

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PETER GARRETT AND JOSEP M. COTS

## Language laboratories

Systems of equipment, first introduced in the early 1960s, allowing learners to work individually on audio material supplied from a central control point from which the teacher maintains a monitoring role. The early popularity of language laboratories coincided with the **audio-lingual method**, and they were seen as a highly effective means of delivering the drill exercises and ‘pattern practice’ and the highly controlled role-play dialogues that typify that approach to teaching. As **communicative language teaching** developed, new uses were found for the language laboratory, with greater focus on listening comprehension and the greater integration of laboratory work with ‘live’ face-to-face interaction among students.

The basic components of a language laboratory are a central control position (or console) linked to a set of student positions. Audio material is transferred to the student positions from the console, and the learners hear it through individual headphones to which a microphone is attached. This microphone is audio-active, meaning that sound entering it is channelled directly to the students’ ears through the headphones, and thus they hear their own voices in a more objective way than is possible when bone-conduction is the main route for the sound to reach the ears. The traditional source of language laboratory material is pre-recorded audio tape, although many laboratories (depending on their age) have facilities for using other sources such as live speech, radio, vinyl records or CD recordings. From the console, which is also equipped with headphones and microphone, the teacher can listen to individual students as they work, can open two-way communication with individuals, or speak to all the students.

The most effective language laboratories are Audio-Active Comparative (AAC). This means that in addition to the headphones and microphone, each student position contains a recording device which allows the material transmitted from the console to be recorded on each student’s equipment. This makes it possible for individuals to work at their own pace, playing, winding and rewinding the tape using student controls which are similar to those on conventional playback equipment. It is also possible for the teacher to control individual student machines from the console. Students can choose to record their own voices as they work, and later listen and review their attempts, comparing them with any model answers on the tape. This explains the ‘Comparative’ part of the label. The lesson material is recorded on to the master track which cannot be erased by the student. The students’ responses are recorded on to the student track which can be played back, but is erased when the machine is next in record mode so that successive attempts can be recorded and reviewed. When a new teaching programme is transferred from the console, previous material on the students’ machines is erased.

The Audio-Active (AA) laboratory is much less versatile. The student positions have no recording device, and therefore learners must work in ‘lock-step’ at the pace of the teaching material as it comes from the console. They also cannot record and review their spoken responses to the material.

The 1960s period of audio-lingual teaching represented the time at which the accepted methodology and the facilities offered by language laboratories were in the closest harmony; however, even during the late 1970s and the early 1980s when communicative teaching was gaining currency, language laboratories retained an important role as the medium for oral drill material. They were seen as a useful resource for providing language drills as part of ‘controlled practice’ in the Presentation, Controlled Practice, Free Practice (‘PPP’) model of a lesson. This ‘weak’ version of communicative teaching often made use of the same types of drill as audio-lingual teaching and differed from it mainly in the greater attention given to the Free Practice stage. As more radical interpretations of communicative

approaches became influential the use of the language laboratory diminished in many institutions, but in others new ways of using it were being developed.

By the mid-1970s growing attention was being given to training listening comprehension as a skill in itself rather than using listening material merely as input for spoken performance. Extensive listening material could be as easily transferred to student positions from the console as oral drill material, and the language laboratory was recognised as a valuable resource for allowing students to work at their own pace with listening passages as they attempted to answer comprehension questions usually presented to them on worksheets. The change from reel-to-reel recording tape to audio cassettes in the late 1970s made tape handling more convenient, making it feasible for students to select their own tapes and place them in their machines by themselves. The creation of listening libraries (often using authentic materials) fitted with those tenets of communicative approaches which stressed the importance of allowing students choice and encouraging independent self-access work. This also fitted with the focus on meeting specific needs, as the discipline of **English for specific purposes** developed. For these types of listening work the full facilities of a language laboratory were not necessary, and the more portable and simpler to operate 'mini labs' became popular. Their main restriction was on the monitoring facilities on the teacher's console. Other institutions opted for good quality individual playback machines.

Significant changes in language laboratory architecture were driven by those aspects of methodology that focused upon the need for students to communicate among themselves and not only in response to the teacher. Until the late 1970s the typical student position was a booth enclosed on three sides preventing contact with other learners but usually allowing eye contact with the teacher. This privacy was at that time considered necessary to build confidence, encourage critical listening, and reduce distractions while the largely drill-type material was in use. Channels were kept open between teacher and learner because the teacher's ability to diagnose the sources of problems and give advice was felt to be an essential support to

the learners' attempts to identify success or failure by listening to the fixed models supplied by the drill materials. From the late 1970s many institutions began experimenting with a more open plan arrangement of student positions, which allowed space for other types of work to take place in the teaching room with students moving in and out of the laboratory area according to the particular activity. The booth 'walls' also came down during this period, allowing face to face 'live' pair and group work to take place. 'Jigsaw listening', a type of jigsaw task technique developed by Geddes and Sturtridge (1978), made excellent use of such a remodelled language laboratory in order to promote communication amongst students based on the information gap principle. For this work, students use the information input from a number of slightly differing recordings as the basis for 'live' group discussions in which they try to piece together a complete story or solve a puzzle. Transferring the different recordings to different groups of positions in the laboratory is the most convenient way to set up such a lesson.

After the early 1980s, the faith of publishers and of many teachers in the value of drill type oral exercises dwindled to the extent that almost no coursebooks were supplied with sets of drill materials on tape intended specifically for use in the language laboratory. Language presentation, practice and listening comprehension materials continue to be published, but none of these necessitates the use of a language laboratory.

As with **CALL** (computer assisted language learning), it is true to say that the power of the technical equipment to promote learning depends mostly on the quality of the software or teaching material used with it. Even before the term 'communicative teaching' was in use Dakin (1973) pointed out the absurdity of 'meaningless drills' and recommended many alternative activities that are still considered valuable. Other attempts to encourage the use of the language laboratory to support realistic use of language can be seen in books such as that by Ely (1984).

Much also depends on the training of both teachers and students to use the controls and facilities to the best effect, and this aspect should not be neglected.



Language laboratories require maintenance, and a technical assistant or a comprehensive maintenance contract are essential components of the budget for an institution that wishes to keep a laboratory in effective use.

A mini lab or a bank of individual playback machines are often the recommended options for many institutions that do not have an existing language laboratory.

Since the 1990s, digital technology has been applied to language laboratory design, resulting in multi-media laboratories based around computer use. The facilities for oral/aural practice through headphones and microphones remain but are greatly enhanced by the possibility of adding in visual display and video images. The teacher can still broadcast material to student positions and exercise control from the console. The addition of computer technology means that language laboratories can now be also used to carry testing software and to keep a record of individual student results.

However, as Salaberry (2001) points out, 'adequate exploration of the pedagogical possibilities that new technologies provide can proceed only through adequate scrutiny of potentially useful inherent attributes of technological tools'. As with the original systems, there is the same need, in exploiting the new facilities of digital language laboratories, for teachers to be led by the learning requirements of the students rather than the capacity of the technology.

**See also:** Audio-visual language teaching; Group work; Internet and language learning; Materials development; Technologies for language learning

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SHELAGH RIXON

## Language planning and policy

Human intervention in questions of language are as old as the relationships among languages and societies. They are taken into account in several domains of human sciences, notably in the work of historians. But it is linguists who were the first to create and structure a specific domain which they named language planning. This was created in the 1960s and 1970s in connection with the emergence of **sociolinguistics**, in order to attempt to bring solutions to language problems in society, among the first of which were those of newly independent countries. This domain was then named language planning and defined as being the collection of measures taken to influence or to try to influence a language situation (Cooper, 1989). Its principal concepts and methods, conceptualised as status planning and corpus planning, were defined on the basis of observation of different types of actions carried out in several areas of the world. In the initial phase of the creation of language planning, the term language policy was little used. When it was, it was either as the equivalent of language planning or to refer to means of implementation. However, it has since then been more and more accepted as including both interventions in language questions and the totality of the context in which they are integrated: problems, claims, objectives, explicit or not, which underpin policy; the principles or values which actors claim for their own, and the ideologies from which they proceed; the public debate which has been created by a policy; the processes of decision-making employed; the means of implementation; the social effects envisaged or noticed. This global and pluridisciplinary perspective pushes aside a too technical concept of language planning, and takes into consideration the functions of languages within society, and the social implications of the usage of languages.

## Status planning

Status planning is the totality of measures taken to organise or modify the use of languages in a given situation. The choice by a state of an official language (Malay in Malaysia, English in Ghana), or of several official languages (eleven in South Africa), attribution of an institutional status to languages used within a country (in the Republic of Ireland, Irish is the national and official language and English is the second official language), are examples of this.

The foundations of status planning come from two concepts of rights: collective rights and the rights of the individual. Collective rights involve two principles, that of territoriality and that of nationality. The rights of the individual draw above all on the International Declaration of Human Rights. It is to this concept of rights that judicial and constitutional courts normally refer, both national and international, when they make judgments about the requests of individuals or of groups of individuals who consider themselves to be disadvantaged by the status of languages pervading in a community. The status of languages in national communities takes into consideration these different concepts of rights to a larger lesser extent and more or less explicitly depending on their history.

## Corpus planning

Corpus planning refers to any action which intends to modify the structure of a language or its functioning. The development of systems of writing, alphabets and orthography are the oldest and best-known form of corpus planning. The writing systems of most languages are subject to reforms at greater or lesser intervals. For example in 1997 the reformed German orthography was adopted by all German-speaking countries. In the process of the standardisation of a language, human intervention can have an effect on the choice of a language variety, the definition or imposition of norms of writing, lexis, or grammar. An institution may be given this task. The most commonly cited example is the French Academy created in 1634. Many other languages have been given academies,

institutes, or councils, charged with similar tasks. Other social agents also take charge of these matters with more or less influence. For example there has never been an academy for the English language but it is generally agreed that this role has been and continues to be taken by the major publishing houses. The development of specialised terminologies, the treatment of borrowings (adoption of words from another language or on the contrary, the transformation of borrowed terms to make them conform to the morphological rules of a language or to the purist aspirations of its speakers), the updating of language use to follow social change (for example the feminisation of titles and functions in French), and in a more general manner the modernisation of a language, are the most frequent aims of corpus planning.

It is possible to distinguish different domains of intervention where language planning measures are considered necessary. A typology of these domains distinguishes, for example, the use of languages in legislation, administration, the judicial system, education, posting of information (urban and road signs, etc.), places of work, economic exchange, consumerism, culture, communication and media, sciences and technologies.

## Language education

Interventions in the educational field have become so important that they are often considered to be the third branch of language planning. In defining their role one can make the following distinctions: the teaching of the **mother tongue** or the first language; the use of languages as means of instruction; the teaching of second and foreign languages. But these different aspects are closely interconnected. For example, learning through the use of a language is often considered to be a means of acquiring this language. This is particularly the case in situations where the aim of language teaching is to maintain or restore its use in a community. Among the significant documents in the educational field are the **Common European Framework of Reference** (Council of Europe, 2001) and the *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe* (Beacco and Byram, 2003), developed at the Council of Europe.

## Language policies

The principal actors in language policies are clearly institutions and political authorities and individuals. States and their institutions are and remain the principal ones among these. Within a state there can be a distribution of powers among central and regional institutions, especially when the latter have legislative powers and distinct authority. For example in the United States in the course of the nineteenth century, several states began to make choices concerning languages in the educational field, whereas the federal institutions said nothing about language questions. This distribution of power may take place in the context of tension and conflict, as in Canada between the institutions of Quebec and those of the federal authorities, or in Spain between the institutions of Catalonia and those of the state. The multiplication of international institutions and the extension of their authority makes them actors who are more and more present and influential in language questions and interventions. This is the case in Europe of the European Union and the **Council of Europe**. In the context of internationalisation of the economy and of globalisation, companies are more and more often inclined to intervene in questions of language for their internal and external communication purposes (Truchot, 2008).

The analysis of language policies involves numerous factors which can be in a broad sense described as sociolinguistic: designation, political classification and categorisation of languages, and linguistic demography. Such analysis has to take into consideration the history of languages, and the linguistic history of societies. The nature of its institutions and political systems also governs the relationships between languages and the government of a society. Study of such relationships makes clear the role of social forces and brings to the fore to what extent political choices about languages are made by social groups, are determined by their interests and their aspirations, and are taken over by political forces which are the expression of them. For example it is not possible to interpret the language policy of Quebec without linking it to the rise in power of a French-speaking middle class in the 1960s and 1970s, to its political

development, to the organisations which gave form to this development, and to the role given to language in this process.

The ways in which societies are organised are influenced by ideas, beliefs, philosophies and the doctrines which mark them, that is by ideologies. References to languages in national ideologies, particularly in Europe, have often been demonstrated (Barbour and Carmichael, 2000), but many political interventions on languages refer to concepts other than the nation. For example, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Liberties, a constitutional text which provides the basis in Canada for interventions on languages at federal level, refers almost exclusively to the individual and his/her rights. The ideology of globalisation tends to focus upon the role of the individual in society and to link individual liberties with the liberalisation of the economy (Truchot, 2008).

The linguistic, social, and economic effects of language policies are seldom evaluated, even if evaluative judgements affirming the success or failure of one policy or another are not rare. Proper evaluations are now necessary.

**See also:** Dictionaries; Human rights; Linguistic imperialism; Mother-tongue teaching; Migrant and heritage languages; Reference works; Secondary education

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CLAUDE TRUCHOT

## Languages for specific purposes

The term Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP) is used to refer to the teaching of second and foreign languages with the aim of helping learners enter or make progress in a particular area of work or field of study. LSP teaching has instrumental aims as language learning is seen as the means to an end rather than as an end in itself. The term LSP is also used to refer to the type of **research** into language use in specific work and study areas which is conducted to provide linguistic descriptions for teaching LSP. Any language can be taught or researched for specific purposes – French for engineers, **Spanish** for tourism, or **Chinese** for international trade. At the present time English is the language taught most widely for specific purposes and most publications in this field describe research into the use of English in particular areas of work or academic study, or report the development of **English for Specific Purposes** courses or programmes.

### Learners, needs and programmes

The development of LSP programmes is often linked to economic conditions and the possibility of work opportunities. For example, increasing opportunities for trade between the West and China may spur the development of LSP programmes, such as English for international business and Cantonese or Mandarin for international trade. Some university degree programmes combine disciplinary subjects, such as engineering and law, and LSP courses (e.g. French for engineering and German for legal studies) with the expectation that the graduates will have increased opportunities to study or work abroad in the future.

LSP learners are understood to want to learn the language on a ‘need to know’ basis and therefore **needs analysis** plays a key role in the development of an LSP course. The course developer uses the findings from the analysis in determining course content. Courses are designed to meet the needs of learners in relation to a particular context and since no two groups of learners or contexts are the same no two courses are the same either. Thus LSP courses can appear very different from each other.

Some needs analyses are narrow in focus, such as an investigation into the needs of an individual or group in regard to their specific roles in a particular workplace or company, or an analysis of the needs of students in a particular academic discipline or for one course of study in an academic programme. Yet other needs analyses have a broader focus and examine the needs of larger and more diverse groups across an industry or a discipline. Examples of the latter include the investigation by Kassim and Ali (2010) of the English language needs of engineers in multinational engineering companies in Malaysia, and the study by Taillefer (2007) into the needs of graduates of economics from one university in France, a study that sought to identify which European languages the graduates used professionally and the levels of competency they needed in those languages for efficient workplace performance.

### The relationship between LSP and general language teaching

Whereas the objectives of general language teaching are often construed in terms of development of linguistic proficiency, accuracy of language use and expansion of linguistic repertoire, the objectives of LSP teaching tend to be construed in terms of development of the ability to participate effectively in key communicative events in a particular workplace, profession or academic discipline. Whereas general language programmes may promote the ideal of eventual mastery of the language and competency across a range of linguistic skills, LSP programmes are generally geared towards teaching only parts of the language of direct value to work or study in the targeted area. They are also generally geared towards teaching only those skills

which are either of particular importance in the work or study area or which have been identified through needs analysis as of particular difficulty for the learners in question. It is not uncommon to find LSP courses that focus on one or two skill areas or communicative events, such as courses in academic speaking and listening skills, report writing for engineering, pilot–air traffic controller spoken interaction, and business service encounters. LSP instruction often has, therefore, relatively more focused and limited aims compared to general language teaching.

There has been some debate about the stage at which learning a language for specific purposes should start. One perspective is that it is better for language learners to acquire the general, basic structures and vocabulary of the language before embarking on learning a language for specific purposes since the latter is the learning of a specific variety of the language and this most generally entails learning advanced uses of the language. However, it can also be argued that there is no ‘general language’ and that all uses of language are derived from one or another variety. Learners may, it can be argued, as easily learn basic structures and vocabulary from the specific variety of their work or study area as from a non-specific general variety or conglomeration of varieties of language. Thus it can be argued that learners do not need to first achieve a certain level of mastery over the language before embarking on LSP. It can also be argued, however, that complex tasks, such as preparing a business report or an engineering proposal, require a certain level of competence in the language and that LSP teaching is most appropriate with students who have at least an intermediate level in the language, a level most effectively acquired from general language teaching programmes.

### Language analysis for LSP

Descriptions of how language is used in the target work or study area are essential to LSP teaching and testing. Through needs analysis the types of interactions, forms of communication and language based tasks involved in working or studying in the area are identified. Once these have been identified, researchers or course developers collect **authentic**

samples of the written and spoken texts involved. The texts are analysed to provide descriptions that can be used in course and **materials development**. Analysis can be made of any number of features including grammatical features, vocabulary choices including technical and semi-technical vocabulary, and the content and organisation of spoken interactions or written communications.

One trend in this area is the use of corpus-based techniques to examine field-specific vocabulary. Such techniques make it possible to identify not only which words occur at a high degree of frequency in the area but also how the words tend to be used, their collocation and any domain-specific meanings they carry. Developments in computer software have provided the means for language analysts to compare corpora. A corpus of texts from one work or study area can be compared with a corpus from another, and through the use of corpus analytical techniques the words and semantic categories occurring with a significant level of frequency can be identified. For example, Pecorari (2009) reports a study into the lexical bundles (a type of multi-word unit) occurring in a corpus of research articles on one particular topic in biology and comparison of the findings from the study to findings from analyses of broader corpora of academic writing.

A further trend is the use of genre-based approaches in the analysis and teaching of written texts produced in professional and academic communities. Such approaches focus on the identification of the rhetorical structure of the **genre**, and this is often presented as a sequence of moves, organisation of content and salient linguistic elements including lexical, grammatical or discourse features. Hyland (2009) for example, discusses the use of genre-based analyses of the sections of research articles (abstracts, introductions, methods, results, discussions of results and conclusions) in teaching writing for the purposes of scholarly publication. Recent trends also suggest a shift away from purely text-based analyses in LSP towards those in which text-based analysis is complemented with investigation of the contextual, cultural and organisational factors that influence the characteristics of the texts produced, such as the expectations and values of the organisation or discipline in regard to the genre (Flowerdew, 2010).

Descriptions of language in LSP are often motivated by interests and needs to develop teaching and courses for a specific group of learners. The descriptions, like courses and groups of LSP learners, range from the highly specific to the more general. The example given above, which described an investigation into vocabulary in one topic area in biology, illustrates a narrow-focused enquiry. A more general enquiry might focus on vocabulary in the field of biology *per se*. An even more general enquiry might focus on vocabulary in natural sciences, an investigation across disciplines. The results of the latter enquiry would be of interest to teachers of a language course for students or scientists from a range of scientific disciplines, whereas the results of the former enquiry would be of particular interest to teachers of a language course catering specifically for students of biology or those working in the biological sciences.

### Teaching and testing

LSP generally focuses on teaching only those parts of the language relevant to work or study in the specific field. The focus varies according to needs. Teaching may focus, for example, on the **speech acts** a community, such as a banking corporation uses in its everyday interactions with clients or on the vocabulary or types of written texts a discipline, such as economics, uses in its communications. Teaching usually focuses on *language use* and in doing so draws on descriptions based on observations of communication in the particular work or study area, rather than the formal properties of the language (such as may be the case in teaching language for general purposes). LSP teaching often centres on the use of authentic texts and tasks. However, it is recognised that learners will not interact in the LSP classroom as they might in a professional or disciplinary environment, and that ‘workplace discourses and practices can never be exactly replicable in a classroom situation, and they will always be “contrived” in some way’ (Flowerdew, 2010: 11).

Although many LSP courses are classroom-based, some LSP teaching (especially teaching learners who have workplace or professional experience) is individualised and some takes place

in on-site work settings. In such contexts, the teacher may focus on the needs of one or more learners to fulfil a role in the work arena, the precise nature of language use characteristic of that role and the provision of feedback on samples of the learner or learners’ production or performance in the role.

Teachers often draw on samples of expert performance to use as teaching materials. So in teaching language for medical doctors LSP teachers might use excerpts from television documentaries recording authentic interactions between doctors and patients in clinical settings, or request medical teaching staff to make recordings of demonstration consultations for use as teaching materials. Student performance samples, such as recordings and transcripts of medical students’ performance during on-site ward teaching, can be used as teaching materials also (Shi, 2009). Students can examine recordings of their own performance to observe and critique their use of language ‘on the job’.

Testing in LSP tends to be performance based and involves assessments of learners’ ability to use the language in specific contexts, such as in events typical of the work or study area, and to perform specific tasks simulating tasks that have been identified as important in that area. The tasks, texts and topics used in **assessment** are often derived or directly taken from the specialist area. For example, a group of learners studying Spanish for the hospitality industry could be assessed on their performance in role plays of scenarios around hotel check-in and check-out, and their reading skills assessed on the basis of the learners’ understanding of email enquiries about reservations, hotel protocols for dealing with payment/non-payment situations and industry-wide safety standards. Therefore, LSP tests for different branches of LSP can look very different in terms of content and what is being assessed.

For stakeholders, such as the learners, teachers and course sponsors, it is often particularly important that the tasks used in assessment have a ‘transparent relationship’ with tasks performed in the relevant work or study setting. When this relationship is clear, receiving institutions, workplaces or academic departments can be expected to take the test results seriously (Basturkmen and Elder,

2004: 681). LSP assessment can be high-stakes, with test results used for selection, registration or accreditation. For example, the communication skills of doctors trained in another country could be assessed through their performance in role-play patient–doctor consultations, and the assessment counted in decisions about registration or accreditation.

## Issues

There are a number of issues for LSP teachers, course designers and researchers. One concerns the level of specificity of LSP courses. Highly specific courses, such as a course focusing on academic writing in one particular discipline, target the needs of a relatively small group and often focus on the analysis and teaching of one or two particular communicative events or written genres. Such courses have the potential to provide learners with an in-depth understanding of language use in a particular context and may target precisely the needs of the students in question but are costly in terms of time for course preparation and research. On the other hand, a more widely focused course, such as a writing course for a relatively large group of students from a range of academic disciplines, although more practical in terms of cost and preparation time, may offer descriptions of academic writing that are too general. Ultimately students will not be evaluated on their ability to write ‘general’ academic prose but their ability to write about content in a particular discipline and satisfying the expectations of that discipline about what constitutes appropriate writing.

A second issue concerns the unequal distribution of research interest in LSP. Published studies have tended to focus on the analysis and description of language use in work and study areas, while relatively few studies have focused on teaching and learning processes. Few studies, for example, have reported investigations into the processes of LSP course and materials development, areas which are often a major part of the LSP teacher’s work. In a discussion of LSP for business purposes, Swales (2000) argued that although there has been a considerable amount of descriptive research into various genres, there needs to be more focus in

LSP on how insights from such research ‘can be parlayed into effective pedagogic delivery systems’ since it is often unclear how findings from such language analysis are ‘transmuted into teaching or study materials’ (p. 68).

Third, there has been debate over the teaching methodology used in LSP. Can LSP be said to have a distinctive methodology or rather does it simply draw on methods used generally in language teaching? Although some **methods** appear to be common to both fields of teaching, LSP teaching, especially the teaching of during or post-experience learners (learners who are concurrently working of studying in the area, or who studied or worked in the area in the past), sometimes uses methods which, if not unique, can be described as distinctive. These methods include the use of deep-end strategies in which students perform the target task at the outset of instruction to reveal any linguistic limitations they may have, co-teaching between LSP teachers and subject experts, and the use of tasks and activities mirroring those of the work or study area. An example of the latter is the use of business case studies in teaching language for business purposes. In teaching pre-experience learners (learners who have not yet entered the work or study area), teachers have to consider the extent to which they should focus on teaching language or focus on teaching both language and subject content and select methodologies accordingly.

The sometimes distinctive features of LSP teaching methodology in conjunction with the demanding nature of LSP course preparation, which often involves the teacher in investigating language use in a specific area, analysing learners’ needs as well as designing a course and creating materials, have implications for teacher education. The extra demands placed on the LSP teacher can be overlooked by teacher education programmes, the great majority of which focus on general language teaching and only some of which include LSP teacher education content. In addition, the amount of ‘lead in’ (preparation) time required for developing an LSP course can be underestimated by principals and administrators.

**See also:** Adult learners; Assessment and testing; Authenticity; Communicative language teaching;

Corpus linguistics and language teaching; English for specific purposes; Genre and genre-based teaching; Needs analysis; Sociolinguistics; Speech act theory; Text and corpus linguistics

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HELEN BASTURKMEN

## *Langue and parole*

Of the three aspects of **linguistics** which Saussure defines, *langue* is the most important one. Roughly speaking, it consists of the words and the grammatical rules of a (national) language. These are organised by syntagmatic and paradigmatic (associative) relations. *Langue* is made the norm of *parole*. Saussure's terms and their definitions became the common property of **structuralist linguistics** and, thus, of the linguistic underpinning of language teaching. They lead to a didactic approach which centres around 'teaching rules' and 'application of rules in practice'. Criticism of this Saussurean framework has its repercussions for the practice of language teaching.

## *Langage, langue and parole*

In his *Cours de linguistique générale* (posthumously 1916, new French edn 1972, new English edn 1974; Harris, 1987), Ferdinand de **Saussure** explains that in a discipline like linguistics the aspect chosen determines the object of reflections. Following this principle, he defines three terms which represent human language from three different aspects: *langage*, *langue* and *parole*. The first, *langage*, is the human faculty to create a system of signs representing various concepts of meaning. It is this psychological faculty, not the endowment with organs of speaking, that governs our handling of linguistic signs. The concrete shape of this abstract faculty is *langue*, a (national) language. It is the only means by which *langage* can be made an object of reflection. All members of an



interacting group develop in their minds a number of almost identical *signifiants* with almost identical *signifiés*. (Saussure admits that these identities are never perfect.) They are a sort of social crystallisation, a common property used to the effect that speakers and listeners usually understand each other. A language consists of the hypothetical sum of all potential word-meanings stored in the minds of all its speakers, and moreover of the whole system of grammatical rules that is at their virtual disposal.

As language can only become real in a *langue*, any *langue* can only become real in *parole*, i.e. in acts of speech (or writing). Speaking is performed by a psycho-physical mechanism; its linguistic quality, however, lies in the fact that it gives the system of *langue* a phonetic (or graphetic) expression. Contrary to *langue*, *parole* is individual. It is subject to the accidental circumstances of the act in time and space. However, it leaves speakers a certain liberty for their creative imagination. Acts of speech may contain elements which are not covered by the regularities of the language. Whereas *langue* represents the essential of language, which binds speakers by rules, *parole* represents the circumstantial. Both are dependent on each other. If there were no speech, no language would become real. If there was no language, speech would not be communicative, and would consequently not be speech.

### Syntagmatic and paradigmatic order

In spite of the fact that *langage*, *langue* and *parole* are simply three different aspects of the same thing, they are different objects of reflection in linguistics. Although all three objects are worthy of investigation, Saussure pays more attention to *langue* than to the other two because, for him, it gives the norm with which speech must be measured. Apart from its linguistic system, a language is also determined by its history. At a given moment in time, a language can be understood as the product of this history. However, this fact does not affect its synchronic system. A synchronic crosscut through a language is always artificial, because it ignores the changes which take place at every minute. In spite of this imprecision, synchrony is superior in linguistics to diachrony because the system effective

at a given moment (or short period) in time is the only reality for language users.

In explaining the organisation of *langue*, Saussure focuses on words as semantic units (lexemes) and as types of grammatical behaviour (word-classes); and on types (structures) of sentences. He finds two kinds of order. The first is the syntagmatic one, a consequence of the linear character of signs. It determines the sequence of parts of words (morphemes, like 're-sist-ance') and of words in sentences. Thus it pertains to the rules of word-formation and of syntax. The second is the paradigmatic one, which Saussure calls 'associative'. It pertains both to meaning and to form. Paradigmatic relations of meaning exist between near-synonyms (like 'teaching, training, educating'), paradigmatic relations of form exist between words of analogous formation (like 'insistence, resistance, consistence'). Both kinds of order work together. Words related to each other paradigmatically can substitute in a syntagma. *V + tion*, for example, can appear as 'education, publication, vindication', etc. *N + V + Adv* can appear as 'Farmers work hard, Ostriches run fast, High-rises are modern', etc. When sentences are being formed, both orders are at work. Syntagmatic concatenation does not only move individual words, but whole systems of paradigmatically related ones, a fact which greatly enhances the potential of each syntagma.

Contrary to *parole*, the ordering systems of *langue* determine the stability, the order, the typical structure of language which speakers abiding by the rules – the majority – will use. But Saussure admits that there may also be creative elements in speech which are not covered by the rules of *langue* and yet are 'speech'. They are often the beginning of changes in the system.

### Criticisms

Saussure's ideas about *langage*, *langue* and *parole* were a great success, in particular after 1945 when they started to conquer linguistic thinking in the whole world (Koerner, 1973). Before that date, Saussure's whole edifice of thoughts had largely been understood as a kind of formalisation of **Humboldtian** ideas. The general success pertained, above all, to the synchronic study of *langue*.

Language description according to structuralist principles, which was the linguistic underpinning of language teaching methodology after Saussure, thought of itself as the application of this Saussurean concept to one national language. One reason for this may be the fact that, in spite of his innovations, Saussure actually conforms in many respects to the status quo and to common experience. People have always looked at **dictionaries** (words) and **grammars** (rules) as the two main repositories of the units of a language. Grammar has always been a crosscut of average usage, even if it was mostly related to the 'model' quality of those speakers who supposedly knew better than others. So linguists as well as the common teacher could in principle go on as before and yet follow Saussure.

Of course, there was (and still is) also criticism (Hartmann, 1998), in particular of *langue* as a hypothetical construct, because there is no such thing in reality as a collective brain or memory. If Saussure's construct is meant to explain why people who speak one language actually understand each other, a difficult philosophical problem was solved simply by presupposing what was to be proved. Indeed many philosophers paid attention to the problem without proposing such an easy solution (Taylor, 1992). In his dichotomy of **competence and performance**, Noam **Chomsky** tried to solve the same problem in his own way. What the hypothesised common property of *langue* is for Saussure, the genetic endowment of human competence is for Chomsky.

There were also linguistic observations which undermined the **validity** of the *langue/parole* dichotomy. The structural potential that develops out of the interplay between the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic orders is not realised in some cases because it violates some norm. Certain word-compounds, for example, could but do not exist (e.g. *+pocket-picker* [instead of 'pickpocket']). There is also a limit to the number of relative clauses within one sentence. The 'norms' that forbid such constructions can in many cases be described, but they are not covered by Saussure's understanding of *langue*. This is why the dichotomy was replaced by a tripartite framework which differentiated *langue*, *norme* and *parole*.

Furthermore, linguistic investigations into larger units than sentences found regularities of the syn-

tagmatic as well as of the paradigmatic kind which had hardly been treated in grammar at all. **Text linguistics** deals with such issues of rules of anaphora and cataphora, of substitution and ellipsis, of pronominalisation and repetition, which are just as compelling as syntagmatic rules for sentences, and yet they are not usually subsumed under *langue*. Moreover, **discourse analysis** uncovered regularities of turntaking and turnyielding, of adjacency pairs, etc. They may ultimately be of a social rather than a linguistic nature, but they certainly have their repercussions in linguistic structures.

Such criticism can lead to quite different consequences. Either more and more phenomena of *parole* will be accepted as properly belonging to *langue*, which, in the long run, renders the two terms useless. Or the dichotomy is eventually given up altogether. Linguists following Ludwig Wittgenstein, for example, maintain that no hypothetical store of rules, no fixed yardsticks above daily language use, are needed in order to explain linguistic regularities. In what he calls 'games', it suffices to assume that people permanently and cooperatively evolve forms of linguistic behaviour, that they accept, criticise, negotiate, agree and disagree about how to use their language in the same way in which they do so in games or rituals. Although there are many similarities between *langue* and the 'language game' (Harris, 1988), speech would then not be a practice following a set of stable (or slowly changing) rules, it would be a practice which sets and discards its own rules by its very performance and, in order to do this, is in constant flux.

This consequence is rather of a theoretical (or philosophical) than a practical nature in linguistics. Yet, it has its impact on the classroom. Following the Saussurean model, language learning appears to be being taught a set of rules and applying these in practice. The stability of teaching and learning lies in grammar and word-meanings. Linguistic practice is measured by the fluency and, above all, the correctness with which these are realised in acts of speech. Following the post-Saussurean model, language learning appears as a practice of **speaking** where the communicative effect matters more than the correctness of expression, where meaning is expressed by approaches and attempts, and where it is finally reached by a kind of negotiation. This difference

may be more of a stylistic and attitudinal character for schools rather than fundamentally a question of curriculum. It will none the less affect the way in which a newly-learned language is handled.

**See also:** Competence and performance; History: the nineteenth century; Linguistics; Pragmatics; Saussure; Sociolinguistics; Structural linguistics

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## Large Classes

Large classes are widely considered to be problematic for language learning – generally, the smaller the class, the better the learning – and yet some teachers effectively manage large classes in which students learn successfully. Class size in itself does not necessarily have a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning. What matters is teachers' and students' perceptions and assumptions about large classes, the teaching methods and ways of organizing interaction, giving attention to individual learners and adequately assessing students' work.

The notion of 'large' is relative. In different countries the average number of students in language classes can vary enormously. In Britain, a class of 30 to 40 students is considered large, in China average numbers can be 50 to 60 or more. Attitudes to class size are greatly affected by the context. At national levels, in many developed countries educational policies are designed to reduce class sizes. In recent years, average class sizes have become smaller and teachers want this to continue, yet funding arrangements may encourage larger classes, especially in higher education with expanding student enrolments and therefore increased fee income, but with relatively fewer staff and resources. At a personal level, concepts of 'large' depend on teachers' experience: the larger the class which teachers regularly teach, the larger their idea is of what class numbers are intolerable, problematic or even ideal. At an institutional level, private language schools in many countries flourish because they are able to ensure small classes and this is desired by students or their parents. The issue of class size is thus bound up with students' needs, attitudes and motivation, and perceptions of learning outcomes, eg in larger classes, it is more likely that the diversity of learners' abilities, language-learning experience and learning styles will increase. In different situations, the effect of these factors can either reinforce or override the perceived difficulty concerning a large number of students and this can be also greatly influenced by teaching methods.

The problems experienced in large classes include issues about managing time, teacher stress

and workloads; organizing classroom interaction for effective language learning; managing classroom noise and ensuring on-task attention; assessing all individuals appropriately; and tackling the affective consequences of classes of large numbers for teachers and students. There are a range of methods and strategies to help teachers handle these problems but some solutions will themselves be constrained by further complicating factors like room size and seating arrangements; the availability of current materials, computers and online resources; or whether language classes are compulsory and have required assessed standards which learners must reach by passing an exam.

Classroom control and management problems can be reduced by getting to know students' names rapidly (e.g. using seating plans and giving some individual personal attention), by reducing noise levels (talking or whispering quietly in pairs, regulating activities by quick responses to teacher signals), by keeping activities brief, by ensuring clear directions and giving models so that students know what to do, and easing transitions from one task to another (using clear signals and instructions, demonstrations and examples). Student involvement in activities, particularly for oral skills, can be facilitated by work in pairs or groups. This can be managed, despite the frequently encountered difficulties of lack of space and crowded fixed seating, by using short, purposeful activities with pre-organized pairs. Such activities may have a focussed outcome and can be demonstrated in advance by the teacher (or chosen pairs of learners) or prepared with silent planning or through homework. Assessment problems can be reduced by making teacher notes on brief individual oral presentations to the class, assessing brief in-class tasks combined with longer homework activities, and keeping writing tasks focussed. In assessing writing, the teacher's marking load (which can be enormous in large classes) can be reduced by giving clear guidelines or models of writing, by limiting word length of assignments, encouraging student editing and redrafting, and using some peer marking or adopting a policy of selective marking (provided students and parents understand this). Affective consequences of large classes include the threat to both teachers' and students' morale and motivation,

the difficulties for the teacher to establish personal rapport with learners, and to know them as individuals, and teacher feelings of frustration, self-doubt and guilt about having to use teacher-led activities and limit more communicative, participatory kinds of interaction (the latter are often also constrained by limited resources and materials). Such feelings can be countered by a belief that success is possible, by observing effective teachers working with large classes, by making strong efforts to know students, and by some willingness to use an eclectic mix and variety of methods. The uses of computers and e-learning strategies, with discussion groups, teacher consultations online and use of Internet resources offers additional support and often enhances learning motivation.

Research on successful language teaching in large classes in China (Jin and Cortazzi, 1998) shows that teachers practise combinations of the above points. In addition, they use whole class interactive teaching; this means the teacher uses some choral activities but will also engage one or two students in sustained dialogues or talk about their reading while the others listen. It means that feedback on written work may involve several students in writing their work on different sections of the board or on wall posters to explain it to the class or that groups will prepare oral presentations for the class. Such activities in which a few students talk at some length are successful because the classroom participants share a cultural belief that interaction is not only social but also cognitive; that is, students understand that effective learning includes listening with close attention and giving their mind both to the teacher and to each other. There are further key factors in this successful teaching. First, teachers train the students in the ways of learning which are encouraged; they give clear expectations about ground rules and participation. Second, lessons are taught with a wide variety of activities (some routine ones, some more innovative), a smart pace and rapid transitions between tasks (this maintains interest and saves time). And third, of critical importance, teachers are given adequate time for detailed preparation, marking of written work, and involvement in out-of-class language practice activities, such as language clubs or giving individual attention during breaks.

Educational research on large classes is often equivocal regarding learning outcomes; the results of some studies certainly favour reductions in class size but more longitudinal studies, specific studies of language classrooms, and international comparisons are needed. Such research is complex since class size is inseparable from other constraining factors, especially in developing countries. Social and educational traditions and cultural attitudes and beliefs about learning and teaching methods are part of this complexity but, as indicated above, there are situations where these can be key elements in successful teaching and learning of languages even when class numbers are apparently unacceptably high.

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LIXIAN JIN AND MARTIN CORTAZZI

## Learner narratives

To understand learner narratives, we must comprehend narrative in general. '... [n]arrative can be viewed under several profiles, as a cognitive structure or a way of making sense of experience; as a type of text, produced and interpreted as such by those who generate or navigate stories in any number of semiotic media[;] ... and as a resource for communicative interaction' (Herman, 2009: 7). Put more simply, narrative, also known as story, is one of the key ways we understand the world and our place in it, 'the primary scheme by which human existence is rendered meaningful' (Polkinghorne, 1988: 1). The narratives of the world are

innumerable and can be articulated in spoken or written language or in fixed or moving images or some combination of these. To paraphrase Sartre, people are always tellers of tales, living surrounded by stories and trying to live life as if telling a story (in McAdams, 1993: 17).

We selectively choose which details to notice, emphasize, and remember in the ongoing story of our lives, thereby interpretively constructing our own social realities and personal theories and seeking reasonable order and coherence (Bruner, 1991), and life itself can be viewed as a narrative containing many smaller narratives (Moen, 2006). Defined as 'the recounting of events,' narrative actually has two aspects: both telling and knowing (Porter Abbott, 2002). Narrative helps the teller and the receiver to understand – to hear with new ears, see with new eyes, and grasp meaning with a new heart and mind.

*Narratology or narrative study* is the science of analyzing narrative structure, characters, and narrative acts, while *narrative inquiry* is 'an ethnographic approach to eliciting understandings' through stories (Pavlenko, 2002: 213). In the language learning field, the focus is mostly on narrative inquiry.

## Learner narratives

Learner narratives are stories offered by learners. Benson and Nunan (2006) distinguish between autobiographical learner narratives that are published without a researcher's analysis and those that researchers analyze in an almost biographical way. However, sometimes the language learner and the researcher are the same person. Learner narratives can draw upon multiple data sources: interviews, oral histories, learner diaries or dialog journals, learner histories, poems, songs, art objects, photographs, letters, notes, learner-made films or audio-recordings, learner blogs, learner contributions to discussion boards, and learner websites.

Benefits of language learner narratives include (a) revealing emotions, (b) portraying transformations and hot cognition, and (c) making sense of experiences and power relations in varied settings. First, learner narratives, like novels and short stories, reveal emotions that are otherwise typically unsaid and sometimes unsayable. 'Emotions pervade all of our activities' in language learning

(MacIntyre, 2002: 61). Learner narratives often unite emotionally fragmented elements, as also occurs in narrative therapy (Mehl-Madrona, 2010). Certain learner narratives (e.g., Mori, 1997) tend toward bleak emotions, while preternatural cheerfulness dominates a few (e.g., Hales, 2010), but many learner narratives reflect a wider range of emotions: happiness, joy, pleasure, ambivalence, contentment, frustration, consternation, anxiety, and shame.

Second, narratives reveal the learner's **identity** transformations (Eakin, 2008). New or expanded personal identities emerge as learners 'physically and symbolically cross the border [ ... ] between one way of being and another and perceive themselves as someone other than who they were before' (Pavlenko and Lantolf, 2000: 174). Learner transformations are linked to *hot cognition*, i.e. learning in which emotion and motivation spark multiple cognitive levels in an individual within a given sociocultural context (Oxford, 2011).

Third, learner narratives help learners make sense of their experiences. If their narratives are shared with teachers, teachers gain insights about their learners and can often teach more effectively. Efforts to make sense of learning experiences reveal that all learning is 'cultural' (Vygotsky, 1978) because learning is influenced by beliefs and values in educational and academic cultures, institutional cultures, class- or gender-associated cultures (Pavlenko, 2002), and cultures of families, political groups, and religions. Multiple voices (Bakhtin, 1986) from these cultures subtly reverberate in learner narratives, helping to create meaning. Some learner narratives critically address power issues and thereby connect the personal to the political (e.g., Norton, 2000; Santa Ana, 2004).

## Methodology

Some individuals initiate their own learner narratives, but others are encouraged by teachers or researchers. Elicitation involves using welcoming questions to invite learners to share stories about their learning experiences, feelings, and thoughts. Though some post-positivist researchers decry learner narratives as subjective, the scientific virtue of subjectivity lies in the fact that it provides personal authenticity, multiple time aspects, integ-

rity of the whole, causality, plausibility, and invitational tone (Connelly and Clandinin, 1999). Ordinary generalization is not required but narratives have 'naturalistic generalization' or 'receptive generalization' (Smaling, 2003), in which the receiver has a vicarious experience through the narrative and decides whether the story is personally relevant.

Narrative inquiry requires 'an analytic examination of the underlying insights and assumptions' of a story (Bell, 2002: 208). Oxford (2009) argues that a key analytic assumption is that learner narratives involve 'triple re-storying'. When individuals learn a language, they cross an internal (and possibly a physical) border and thus re-story their own lives ('self-translation', Pavlenko and Lantolf, 2000). When they tell their language learning stories, they filter, organize, and structure information, emphasizing some things and not others; this is the second re-storying. When researchers analyze and interpret stories, they make additional connections in the third re-storying. Researchers concerned with the ethics of the interaction attempt to share their interpretations with learners whenever possible (Josselson, 1996). Where narrator/learner and researcher are identical, the third re-storying still occurs, although the roles are likely to be blurred.

Specific analytic tools include: (a) using empathy and iterative thematic analysis to understand the message; (b) avoiding reductionism and expectation of a classical plot or a neat resolution; (c) looking for specific case elements (see case studies below); (d) querying the narrative or the narrator (asking 'Who, what, when, where, why, how, and with what outcome?'), (e) plotting action lines, trajectories, and multiple voices; and (f) viewing the narrative as a symphony or a painting.

## Selected types of learner narratives

*Learner diaries* allow learners to keep an introspective, regular record of aspects of their ongoing learning processes (Mackey and Gass, 2008). Such diaries can be teacher-guided or open-ended. For selected learner diary studies and reviews, see Allison (1998), Bailey (1983), Krishan and Hoon (2002), and Matsumoto (1987). Sometimes learner-diaries are sophisticated adult researchers writing about their language learning (e.g., Carson and

Longhini, 2002; Llovich, 1997; Ogulnick, 1998; Sachs, 2002; Schmidt and Frota, 1986; Schultz and Elliott, 2000). When someone else actively responds to a learner diary, an intensive dialogue occurs, creating a *dialogue journal*.

*Learner histories* can be (a) relatively short works based on analysis of retrospective learner interviews, learner essays, poems, pictures, or other elements (e.g., Belcher and Connor, 2001; Oxford, 1996, 2009, 2010; Oxford et al., 2011; Oxford et al., 2005); or (b) book-length learner autobiographies covering many years (e.g., Hoffman, 1990; Hong Kingston, 1989; Kaplan, 1993; Lim, 1997; Rodriguez, 1983/2004). *Learner case studies* are, or can contain, learner narratives. In a learner case study, the researcher explores in depth a system or case 'bounded' by relevant criteria, such as time, importance, strategies, motivations, emotions, cultural contexts, or social roles. The focus can be the entire case or an issue illustrated by the case. Single-case studies and multiple-case studies (e.g., Stevick, 1990) are possible. Varied data, including narrative and numerical, can be included (Yin, 2003). A case study often starts with a narrative description, presents a thematic analysis, and ends with lessons learned.

**See also:** Emotions and language learning; Learning to learn; Research methods; Risk-taking and foreign language learning; Strategies of language learning

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REBECCA L. OXFORD

## Learning styles

Learning styles are cognitive differences in the ways in which individuals learn. A learning style is

a relatively permanent, characteristic approach to a wide range of perceptual and intellectual activities, tasks and situations. Witkin et al. (1971) define what they call cognitive style as:

a characteristic, self-consistent mode of functioning which individuals show in their perceptual and intellectual activities ... it is a term used to describe individual differences in the way one habitually tends to perceive, organise, analyse or recall information and experience.

Although interest in learning style has a long history in **psychology** and **anthropology**, it was only in the 1960s that it became a topic of intensive research and speculation with particular reference to language teaching and learning. By the early 1970s some twenty-five different styles had been identified or at least suggested. Typically, learning styles have been investigated and described on the basis of polarities such as:

- field dependence and field independence
- holists and serialists (globalists and analysts)
- broad categorisers and narrow categorisers
- data gatherers and rule formers
- planners and correctors
- impulsivity and reflectivity
- levelling and sharpening

Although the **validity** of some of these distinctions, in particular field-dependence/independence, is now generally accepted, the proliferation of terms is indicative of a number of conceptual and methodological problems which continue to hamper research in this area. For instance, field dependence/independence as determined by the Embedded-Figures Test (Witkin et al., 1971) came under attack in the early 1990s (Griffiths and Sheen, 1992; Chapelle, 1992; Sheen, 1993). In addition to the sheer complexity of the issues and objects in question, these include the lack of an overall theoretical framework bringing together the psychological, linguistic and social aspects of ‘learning’ and the difficulty of designing instruments for collecting data and comparing results across individuals, groups and cultures. These are major objections, and explain to a considerable extent why, although

the notion of learning style continues to fascinate teachers and learners alike – and with good reason, since it addresses matters which both experience and intuition show to be of real pedagogical relevance – there has been a distinct cooling-off of scientific enthusiasm in linguistic circles in recent years.

The proliferation of inventories and theories (Coffield et al., 2004 identify no fewer than seventy-one different models) – and, it has to be said, the proselytising attitudes of some learning styles enthusiasts – has led a number of researchers (Cf. Ivie, 2009) to the view that the concept of learning style has now lost whatever interest, cogency and usefulness it may have once had. They find that the progressive extension of the term to include aspects of the physical environment, neurolinguistic issues, psychological, cultural, sociological and biological factors has attenuated its meaning to the extent that it is often little more than a cover term for anything whatever that may impinge on the learning process (Price, 2004). A related cause for concern is the circular nature of much of the research on accommodating learning styles, where typically an individual learner's style is diagnosed by means of a questionnaire and then taken into account in instructional design, choice of methods and materials, etc. with any successful outcomes being attributed systematically and exclusively to the accommodation.

### Historical development of interest in learning styles

The identification of the sources of individual and cultural variation in cognition, as opposed to the universal characteristics of the human mind, is a central and defining concern of modern psychology. The cognitive effects of cross-cultural differences have been of interest to anthropologists and psychologists since at least the nineteenth century. A long line of investigation can be traced from Herder and the German linguists, including Grimm and **Humboldt**, through to Boas and the early twentieth-century American anthropologists in which the notions of cognitive relativity and determinism were debated and investigated. The **Sapir-Whorf** hypothesis is a linguistic variant on this theme. In particular, the question of possible relationships

between variations in language and behaviour and differences in perception has been the subject of numerous studies.

One of the aims of the Torres Straits Expedition of 1899 was to evaluate the perceptual capacities and proclivities of groups which were remote from Western civilisation, including hearing, smell, cutaneous sensitivity and discrimination of weight, reaction times, acuity of vision, and colour perception. Amongst the other factors which have been investigated since are: group maintenance structures (social, political: e.g. hunter-gatherers, agriculturalists, fisherfolk), economic and rearing practices, environmental and ecological features such as terrain and climate, shelter and architecture, and language. Witkin (Witkin and Goodenough, 1981), for example, has related child-rearing practices to the degree of field dependence shown by members of a culture, showing that those with higher levels of dependence have more difficulty in perceiving as discrete the constituent elements of a perceptual field than do those with lower levels.

Such work had little influence on education in general or on language didactics in particular until a number of contingencies obliged various actors in the field of education to rethink just what 'learning' is and how it is related to 'teaching'. Until the late 1950s, what passed for the study of learning was really the study of teaching, the investigation of the ways in which the behaviour of one person can influence the behaviour of a second person. This was particularly true of academic psychology, of course, with its **behaviourist** bias, but in contemporary educational discourse the two terms were used as near synonyms, since approaches to both psychological and educational research were overwhelmingly teacher- and teaching-centred. Only as humanistic and learner-centred approaches developed did a redefinition of learning as a psychological process slowly emerge. Learning came to be seen as the extension of meanings of which the individual is capable and to be the fruit of a number of mechanisms, such as the assimilation of new information, decision taking and problem solving. This development was due to the limitations of academic psychology and its inability to respond to the interest in personal development and self-realisation which characterised the 1960s and to

which the conditioned reflexes of pigeons pecking at popcorn seemed completely irrelevant.

It has also been suggested that the growing interest in learning styles, and the ways in which that interest was canalised, were directly related to the contemporary opposition in language teaching methodology between the **grammar–translation** and the **audiolingual** approaches. It can be argued that any language teaching methodology is an attempt, however vague or unconscious, to encourage a given learning style and that the contrast between these two approaches in particular, because they imply learning styles which are so very different, served to bring out this fact, which in turn encouraged researchers to investigate, identify and describe the differences. The grammar–translation method concentrates on the language system and can therefore be seen as favouring learning styles that would later be dubbed ‘field independent’, ‘sharpening’, ‘reflexive’, ‘rule-forming’ and ‘explicit’. The **audiolingual method** was largely based on a refusal to teach the system, and can be described, anachronistically, as ‘field-dependent’, ‘data-gathering’, ‘encouraging impulsivity’ and ‘levelling’.

Amongst the most important contributions to the study of learning styles, and those to which linguists and didacticians tend to refer, are those of Pask (1976), Fischer and Fischer (1979), Letteri (1982) and Kolb (1984).

Pask (1976) proposes a taxonomy of ‘styles and **strategies of learning**’ which can be diagrammed and glossed as follows:

|            |                                                                                                                                                        |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| HOLIST     | <p>+ <i>Global Learner</i><br/>gets an overall grasp before attending to details<br/>- <i>Globetrotter</i><br/>superficial overgeneraliser</p>         |
| GENERALIST | a versatile learner, capable of metacognitive choice of learning approach                                                                              |
| SERIALIST  | <p>+ <i>Operational learner</i><br/>step-by-step, analytical and methodical<br/>- <i>Unreflecting learner</i><br/>Can’t see the wood for the trees</p> |

B. and L. Fischer (1979) suggest this list of ‘learning styles’:

1. The incremental learner
2. The intuitive learner
3. The ‘specialist’
4. The ‘all-rounder’
5. The involved learner
6. The uninvolved learner
7. The structure-dependent learner
8. The structure-independent learner
9. The eclectic learner

Letteri (1982) establishes ‘cognitive profiles’ along seven parameters:

1. Analytic Global
2. Focused . . . . . Unfocused
3. Narrow . . . . . Broad
4. Complex . . . . . Simple
5. Reflective . . . . . Impulsive
6. Sharpening . . . . . Levelling
7. Tolerant . . . . . Intolerant

Although such models are all based on considerable amounts of empirical research, they are open in varying degrees to a number of criticisms. They are all based on binary oppositions, and on the assumption that learning styles are innate and unchanging, that one is born under the sign of a particular style and that nothing can be done about it. They all contain built-in value judgements and have little or no social or interactive component.

In many ways, Kolb’s theory (1984) can be seen as a masterly synthesis of approaches like those outlined above, but it is also a largely successful attempt to deal with their limitations, particularly the social and interactive component. For Kolb, learning is seen essentially as a process of resolution of conflicts between dialectically opposed dimensions, the prehension dimension and the transformation dimension. *Prehension* refers to the way in which the individual grasps experience, and includes two modes of knowing: apprehension and comprehension. Apprehension is insight, instant and intuitive knowledge and understanding, without any need for logical processes, inquiry or analysis. Comprehension involves the introduction

of conscious order into this flow of apprehended sensations. *Transformation* refers to the way in which experience is transformed or processed either by reflective observation or by active experimentation.

Since individuals emphasise or minimise the time and effort devoted to these different steps in the learning process, it is possible to establish four major categories of learner, or tendencies in learning approach, which Kolb describes as follows (Kolb, 1976):

1. The *Converger's* dominant learning abilities are abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation. This person's greatest strength lies in the practical application of ideas. A person with this style seems to do best in those situations like conventional intelligence tests where there is a single correct answer or solution to a question or problem. This person's knowledge is organised in such a way that, through hypothetical-deductive reasoning, this person can focus it on specific problems.
2. The *Diverger* has the opposite learning strengths to the Converger. This person is best in concrete experience and reflective observation. This person's greatest strength lies in imaginative ability. This person excels in the ability to view concrete situations from many perspectives. A person with this style performs better in situations that call for generation of ideas, such as a 'brainstorming' idea session.
3. The *Assimilator's* dominant learning abilities are abstract conceptualisation and reflective observation. This person's greatest strength lies in the ability to create theoretical models. This person excels in inductive reasoning and in assimilating disparate observations into an integrated explanation. This person, like the Converger, is less interested in people and more concerned with abstract concepts, but is less concerned with the practical use of theories. For this person it is more important that the theory be logically sound and precise; in a situation where a theory or plan does not fit the 'facts', the assimilator would be likely to disregard or re-examine the facts.
4. The *Accommodator* has the opposite learning strengths to the Assimilator. This person is best

at concrete experience and active experimentation. This person's greatest strength lies in doing things – in carrying out plans and experiments – and involving oneself in new experience. S/he tends to excel in those situations where one must adapt oneself to specific immediate circumstances. In situations where a theory or plan does not fit the 'facts', this person will most likely discard the plan or theory. This person tends to solve problems in an intuitive, trial-and-error manner, relying heavily on other people for information rather than on one's own analytic ability.

### Learning styles and language teaching

A number of attempts have been made to integrate research on learning styles into language teaching methodology, mostly in the context of learner-training activities where learners are being prepared for self-directed or **autonomous** study. Two main approaches have developed. In the first, learners are invited to discover, reflect on and thereby optimise their own learning style. In the second, they are encouraged to become more flexible learners by widening their range of styles, so that they can make appropriate metacognitive choices when faced with particular tasks. In both cases, the methodology and aims have been strongly influenced by the work on **language awareness** carried out by **Hawkins** and colleagues in the 1970s and 1980s (Hawkins, 1984) and still very much alive as 'reflective learning'. Kohonen's work in the field of 'experiential learning' makes explicit use of Kolb's categories (Kohonen, 1990). In the United States, Dunn and Dunn (1979) have suggested that there are eighteen elements of learning style, whose relative importance will vary depending on whether the learners are tactual, kinaesthetic, auditory or visual: environmental elements (sound, light, temperature, design), emotional elements (**motivation**, persistence, responsibility, need for structure), sociological elements (working alone, with peers, with an adult, some combination), physical elements (perceptual strengths, intake, time of day, need for mobility). In Australia, Willing (1989) has developed **materials** for 'teaching how to learn' which include a Learning Styles Inventory based

on a quadripartite distinction: communicative/authority-oriented/concrete/analytical. In France, Narcy (1991) has devised self-**evaluation** questionnaires which include several binary distinctions, some of which have distinct psychological overtones: shy/extrovert; perfectionist/realist – clearly related to Hatch's (1974) distinction between 'rule-formers' and 'data-gatherers'; visual/audile; teacher-dependent/teacher-independent. In Britain, Ellis and Sinclair (1989) have produced learning-to-learn materials based in part on comparable questionnaires. Such materials and activities are being used and imitated worldwide in the language resource centres and autonomous or self-directed learning schemes which have followed on from the pioneering work carried out from the 1970s onwards by centres such as the **CRAPEL**, the Language Centre of the University of Cambridge and the Centre for Language and Communication Studies in Trinity College, Dublin.

**See also:** Autonomy and autonomous learners; Behaviourism; Cognitive code theory; Cross-cultural psychology; Group work; Learning to learn; Second language acquisition theories; Strategies of language learning; Successful language learner; Untutored language acquisition

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PHILIP RILEY AND RICHARD DUDA

## Learning to learn

The term 'learning to learn', sometimes also expressed as 'learning how to learn' (for a critique see Winch, 2008), describes the process of acquiring those **skills** that provide the learner with the possibility of understanding and mastering any area of knowledge at present or in the future. Learning to learn skills are transferable, inside and outside the classroom, and from one subject to another. Learning to learn can be carried out either by oneself as in independent study, or in learning with others as a social activity, with or without a teacher. It could be self-directed, group-directed in a collaborative context, or institutional.

Learners who have learned how to learn know how to take control of their own learning; how to develop a personal learning plan, to diagnose their strengths and weaknesses as learner, to chart a personal **learning style**, and to overcome personal blocks to learning. They know how to learn effectively in any situation, alone or with other people, and how to help others learn more effectively.

Skills of knowing how to learn involve three aspects: the conceptual understanding of the process of learning, a metalanguage, and a positive **attitude** to learning. The conceptual understanding of the process of learning implies having planning

skills for deciding what, when, how and where to learn, setting realistic goals, finding learning resources, choosing and implementing learning strategies, estimating progress and assessing results. Metalanguage enables one to talk to oneself and to others about the learning process. A positive attitude towards learning new things in new contexts, and the ability to sustain **motivation**, are also necessary.

For learning to learn in a collaborative context, where leadership and participation are fundamental, members of a group need to learn to be adept at **planning**, conducting and evaluating their concerted efforts, to use the experience and expertise of all members to accomplish group tasks and goals, to utilise helping skills, and to be sensitive to the group process. Cooperative learning gives participants a positive experience of mutual support when faced with problems, helps to teach accountability for one's work, and develop social skills.

In the institutional mode, as in the workings of a school, college, or programme, the learner needs to learn how to study, take notes, write reports and essays, cope with taking examinations and satisfy the required criteria (for further information, see Smith, 1983).

Learning to learn includes the development of self-knowledge, i.e. the awareness of understanding self as learner. From practical experience and from exposure to theories of learning, in learning to learn one develops a sense of one's own learning style. Each person has their own unique way of learning and, through the process of learning to learn, an individual is empowered to understand, appreciate and use their own particular style. The learner will need to be exposed to a variety of learning styles so that they can choose the one that works best for them according to the particular task they want to do. Furthermore, identifying one's own learning style (Reid, 1995), and one's own individual pattern of learning (O'Toole, 2008), provides further opportunities for the learner to develop metacognitive abilities and practices.

Through preparing the mind for learning, the learner develops an understanding of a number of interacting processes, such as the affective (becoming motivated, reducing stress), the social (getting help, creating and using opportunities), the cogni-

tive (a mental plan to understand knowledge), and the metacognitive (setting goals, plans, monitoring and evaluating learning), which work together to regulate how well the information being learned and expressed is being processed. Metacognition, knowledge about knowledge, or knowing what knowledge is like, how it works, and how it is acquired, plays a major role in a learner's success in learning. Metacognition includes affective factors, effective strategies, and knowledge of task demands such as the purpose and nature of tasks. A metacognitive strategy is a plan about how to organise and monitor cognitive strategies, e.g. the planning of subsequent mental actions to derive the meaning of an unknown text from the context (Westhoff, 1990).

Each learner may use one or more learning **strategies** at different times depending on a range of variables, such as the nature of the learning task, motivation levels and experience. The learner becomes aware of the factors that affect their learning both positively and negatively and, as a result, will recognise those learning strategies, situations, contexts and factors that suit them best, so that they may become more effective in learning. They will thus be able to make informed choices about what, how, why, when and where they want to learn.

The information that learners will look for to be able to make such choices is information about the nature of the subject itself, about learning techniques particular to the subject, and about themselves as learner. Learning to learn makes learning accessible to everyone, promotes **autonomous learning**, and implies the need for the availability of ample material and resources, as well as a new role for the teacher as a resource and support person.

The concept of learning to learn increasingly gained importance in the latter half of the twentieth century. John Dewey, the well-known American philosopher, proposed that schooling be evaluated by its success in creating in the learner the desire for 'continual growth' and for supplying them with the means for making that desire 'effective in fact' (Dewey, 1966). Smith (1983) outlines a number of factors that have contributed to the mounting concern with learning how to learn, such as the view of education as a lifelong process, the shift from a preoccupation with teaching to a preoccupation

with learning, the interest in the notion of learning style, and the growing importance of **adult** education. The **Council of Europe** has made a particularly significant contribution to a learning to learn approach in the field of modern language learning (see Holec, 1988; Holec and Huttunen, 1997). These works illustrate how the principles of learning to learn are applied to language learning. Furthermore, within the European Union's framework of competences for lifelong learning, 'learning to learn' is listed as one of the eight key competences (for broader discussion see Deacin Crick, 2008).

The principles of learning to learn can be injected into the language **syllabus**. Such a syllabus would be process- rather than product-oriented, and would take into consideration not only the declarative knowledge, but also the social skills, the existential competence (attitudes, values, **motivation**, **beliefs**), and the ability to learn (learning skills and strategies) that a learner needs to be able to communicate efficiently and effectively in the target language and culture (Newby, 1998).

In the classroom, learning to learn is enhanced through activities that encourage hypothetical thinking, the analysis of different points of view and the exploration of relationships. An example is an **exercise** that looks into the effects of historical events, geographical features, population spread and density, and political systems, on peoples' attitudes, daily life, building structures and transport systems. Creativity is encouraged, for example, through the application of different symbol systems, such as the musical, the artistic, the graphical and even the mathematical in language learning (see Camilleri, 1998).

The following are ideas for use in the classroom to enhance the learning to learn process:

- Weekly tasksheets with a variety of exercises that allow for reflection, choice, decision making, **evaluation** of tasks and evaluation of attitude to work.
- Workshops that allow for individual work pace, for an awareness of personal learning strategies, capacities, **needs**, motivation, and differentiation of level of difficulty.
- **group work** that encourages cooperation among learners, and allows for choice and

negotiation. The opportunity to present work in plenary sessions addresses creativity, self-confidence and presentation skills. The production of student and class magazines and project work allows for free choice of topics, for individual or group work, and for a space to address particular needs and interests (see Fleischmann, 1997).

**See also:** Autonomy and autonomous learners; Council of Europe Modern Languages Projects; Humanistic language teaching; Learning styles; Strategies of language learning; Untutored language acquisition

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ANTOINETTE CAMILLERI GRIMA

## Lexicography and lexicology

Lexicology may be defined as the study of the stock of words in a given language, i.e. its **vocabulary** or lexicon, while lexicography deals with the writing, compilation and editing of both general and specialised **dictionaries**. Both are derived from Greek *lexis* (word), *lexicos* (of/for words). They contribute knowledge to the teaching and learning of vocabulary and to the production and use of dictionaries.

## Lexicology

As the study of lexicon, lexicology first defines the word as a unit. Second, it investigates all the other



aspects of words in a given language, often drawing on linguistic data contained in digital corpora and databases. These aspects are:

- word origin (etymology),
- word formation (morphology),
- diachronic change in the lexicon: the creation of new words (neologisms) and the loss of others (desuetude),
- the components present in word meaning and the kinds of meaning relations that exist between words, including synonymy, antonymy and hyponymy (semantics),
- formulaic language and multi-word units (phraseology),
- word class,
- word frequency,
- the co-occurrence of words (collocation),
- restrictions on word use in terms of historical, geographical, occupational and/or social contexts.

### Lexicology as a level of language analysis

Lexicology is only one level of language analysis, the others being phonology, syntax and semantics. Although these levels are sometimes treated in isolation, none of them can be studied successfully without reference to the others. All these levels of analysis interact with one another in various ways, and when we use language, we call on them simultaneously and unconsciously. For example, it may be thought at first sight that phonology does not interact with lexicology in any significant manner, but the meanings of lexical items are often distinguished at the level of phonology. The visually identical nouns *bow* (a knot) and *bow* (bending the head or upper body), for example, are pronounced differently, and mean different things.

### Lexicography

Lexicography can be viewed from at least four different standpoints: that of the profession of dictionary makers, the theory or set of principles involved, the actual practice of dictionary making, and the description and evaluation of dictionaries in terms of their design, access and use (meta-

lexicography). All four standpoints are closely related.

- As a profession, the focus is on the training, the job specification and career structure of professional lexicographers.
- As a theory, the accent is on the principles that underlie the process of compiling and editing a dictionary. Some of the principles are clearly of a linguistic nature, including the description of vocabulary as a whole and that of individual lexical items. Others stem from the domain of book production.
- As the practice of dictionary making, lexicography refers to the actual compiling and editing of dictionaries, with special emphasis on the various stages of dictionary making.

Metalexicography is generally concerned with the appropriacy, accuracy and accessibility of dictionary information from the perspective of the dictionary user.

### Lexicographical principles and techniques

All lexicographical practice presupposes at least some implicit or explicit lexicological theory, because lexicographers must operate with some notion of what a word (as a lexical item) is, and what should be included in the description and definition of a word. For instance, lexicology pays special attention to homonymy (two words with the same meaning) and polysemy (one word with several meanings) which are also of great interest in lexicography. In this sense lexicography may be regarded as applied lexicology.

Lexicology is not the only area of study relevant to lexicography, however. **Sociolinguistics** informs the selection of the language variety to be used in the dictionary and contributes information on the acceptability of words in different socio-cultural contexts, while phonology contributes information about the pronunciation of words, and syntactic theory underlies dictionary descriptions of grammatical patterns (see Jackson and Amvela, 2007). The dictionary is therefore the meeting point of all the systems involved in the **speech act**. Modern lexicography also relies on **corpus linguistics** techniques

to identify the relationships between words in specified contexts, and to provide attested examples of word use (see Atkins and Rundell, 2008).

### Significance for language teaching and learning

Lexicology deals with the study of the stock of words in a given language, while lexicography systematises some of the findings of lexicological study and makes them accessible to non-linguists. Both areas have a great deal to contribute to language teaching in general, and to the teaching and learning of vocabulary in particular. Lexicological knowledge can help **curriculum designers** and **textbook** writers decide on the vocabulary content of language courses, and the order and contexts in which vocabulary is presented. Lexicography has an even more direct impact on language teaching and learning, because dictionaries are consulted as reference tools to support a wide range of language-related activities, and some teachers and learners also treat dictionaries as learning materials, to be studied systematically (see Tarp, 2009).

**See also:** Dictionaries; Mental lexicon; Sociolinguistics; Text and corpus linguistics; Vocabulary

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ETIENNE ZÉ AMVELA

## Lingua franca

A language that is used as a medium of communication between people or groups of people each speaking a different native language is known as a lingua franca. The term lingua franca comes from Italian and means literally 'French' or 'Frankish language'. The first language to be so known originated in the Mediterranean area in the Middle Ages, and is linguistically based on Southern French and Italian mixed with elements of Greek and **Arabic**.

Latin, associated with the rise of the Roman Empire, became the lingua franca of the Catholic Church and learning, while **French** used to be the language of international diplomacy, although it has largely been replaced by **English**. In eastern and central Africa, Swahili serves as a lingua franca; in many parts of western Africa, this role is fulfilled by Hausa (Samarin, 1968). Being used in practically all spheres of international communication, i.e. politics, trade, industry, science, entertainment and the world-wide web, English is today the world's most widespread lingua franca.

A lingua franca can have different origins and forms. It can refer to a third *natural* language, as, for example, English in a communication between a Norwegian and a Chinese person; or it can be a *pidgin* language generally resulting from (restricted) business transactions in the East and West Indies and Africa, as well as North and South America. **Pidgins** are simplified communication systems generally based on English, French, **Spanish** or Italian and one of the indigenous languages and are thus developed by speakers of

mutually unintelligible speech communities. When a pidgin supersedes the original language of a speech community, it becomes a **Creole**. A further manifestation of a lingua franca is exemplified by *artificial* or *planned* languages such as **Esperanto**, **Frater** or **Volapük**.

In accordance with its historical origin, the concept of lingua franca is meant to describe communication exchanges between speakers of different **mother tongues** by means of a third language, i.e. 'a medium of communication between people of different mother tongues, for whom it is a second language' (Samarin, 1987: 371). Failing to meet the criterion of third language for the use of the English language, e.g. between an Australian and a Bulgarian at an international meeting, would not really fall within the scope of the preceding definition of lingua franca communication. However, most current conceptions of lingua franca include cases like the preceding one in their definitions, especially if the cause and topic of the communication are of a non-native nature and take place in neither of the communicators' country of origin, i.e. on 'neutral' territory. Similarly, in international scientific communication, English is considered to be a lingua franca. However, in the strict sense of the definition it is not – since native speakers of English, being able to use their mother tongue and not having to rely on an auxiliary language, can gain a communicative advantage over non-native speakers (Carli and Ammon, 2007).

### **English as a lingua franca**

Lingua franca is a functional concept in the sense that it refers to verbal communication between speakers of different languages irrespective of the number of speakers using a particular lingua franca, the range of use or the quality of communication, and it therefore must not be equated with an international language (Ammon, 1994). The use of Swahili as a lingua franca, for instance, is geographically restricted, whereas English has become not only an international lingua franca, but the first world language in human history. It is not so much the total of 400 million **native speakers** (**Chinese** has one billion) that has made English a global language (Crystal, 1997, 2003), but the

political, military and economic power behind the English language and the countries it is most associated with, above all the United States. The worldwide presence of English today originates historically from British colonialism (Pennycook, 1994; Phillipson, 1992), which from a linguo-political point of view helped English to become an official language in more than sixty countries.

Because of the very wide range of uses for which global English is employed, as well as its concomitant linguistic variability and instability, global English cannot be classified as a linguistic variety of English. Since it has no distinct phonological inventory, no specific lexis and no specific **grammar**, it does not affect the linguistic system of English. Thus, global English is not particularly a formal-linguistic phenomenon; instead it refers to contexts of use definable by extralinguistic factors such as the relationship between speaker and hearer, the time and place of communication, the purpose and topic of communication, etc. The use of English as an international lingua franca has a number of implications for the teaching or learning of English for such purposes (Gnutzmann, 1999; Gnutzmann and Intemann, 2008).

It has been estimated that about 80 per cent of verbal exchanges in which English is used as a second or foreign language do not involve native speakers of English (Beneke, 1991; on the linguistic and intercultural characteristics of non-native/non-native discourse see Meierkord, 1996). As a result, when English is used as an international language, its use has become de-nationalised and is hardly connected any more with the values and assumptions of Anglo-American culture. The range of uses for which English as a global language can be employed may vary from extremely basic and rudimentary communication exchanges to very elaborate linguistic forms of expression practically indistinguishable from native speaker quality, e.g. in written academic discourse. To what extent a common cultural basis between the interlocutors needs to be negotiated will depend on the purpose and goal of an English-based lingua franca communication.

When used as a lingua franca, English is no longer founded on the linguistic and sociocultural norms of native English speakers and their respec-

tive countries and cultures (Seidlhofer, 2007). In principle, it is neutral with regard to the different cultural backgrounds of the interlocutors. As a consequence, in such lingua franca situations there is no need for non-native speakers to accommodate their **identity** and **attitudes** to some kind of Anglo-American behavioural and cultural system. Depending on the length of the communication, the interlocutors, no matter whether they are native or non-native speakers, should work out some kind of common linguistic and intercultural basis for their communication.

Since, in its spoken form, English as lingua franca communication is not based on any particular national linguistic standard of English, relying on native speaker norms (or near-native speaker norms) does not necessarily guarantee that the communication will be successful. On the contrary, using elaborate linguistic structures or **vocabulary** may even be harmful to the success of the communication, if the participants do not share a similar linguistic repertoire. Thus, not only non-native but also native speakers of English need to become aware of the different attitudes to and assumptions about English and apply this knowledge in order to adapt their verbal and **non-verbal communication** behaviour to the particular circumstances. Native speakers should recognise that in lingua franca communication their 'native speakerism' does not entitle them to any feeling of linguistic or cultural superiority.

The increasing use of English as a global language, in particular its use as a means of communication among non-native speakers of English, makes it necessary to draw a distinction between English as a lingua franca and English as a Foreign Language. With regard to the use of English among non-native speakers it is important to remember that the way we perceive other people's acts of communication may to a large extent be determined by our own culture. In order to ensure a high degree of success in communication among non-native speakers of English through the **medium** of English, future teachers need to be made aware of the diversity of English(es) (Kirkpatrick, 2010; McArthur, 1998) and to learn how to recognise culture-induced misunderstandings and how to cope with them. For this reason, it seems essential

for **teacher education** that appropriate communication strategies and the general principles of **intercultural competence** should be dealt with. Examples of these include awareness of the culture-specific dependency of thought and behaviour; knowledge of general parameters such as religion or role of the sexes according to which cultures can be distinguished; interpersonal sensitivity – the ability to understand a person in his or her own right; cognitive flexibility – openness to new ideas and beliefs; behavioural flexibility – the ability to change one's behaviour patterns (Gnutzmann, 1997).

Since communication with native speakers will undoubtedly continue to be a major linguistic and cultural challenge for foreign learners of English and, due to the lack of a 'World Standard English' (Crystal, 1994), some kind of Anglo-American lexical and grammatical standard should remain the linguistic basis of English language teacher education. Due to the immense amount of phonetic variation of English and the waning influence of former standards such as *received pronunciation*, it is much more problematic to decide on a unified **pronunciation** teaching standard (Jenkins, 2000). As far as the non-language, i.e. the cultural, content of the classes teaching English as a lingua franca is concerned, topics of the native English cultures play only a minor role and should, to a great extent, be replaced by culture-general topics which account for the use of English globally. In view of the omnipresence of American politics and its value system, however, the preceding remark on the role of culture is more theoretical than practical in character. Although the use of English as a world language is sometimes regarded as **linguistic imperialism**, it would be rather narrow-minded, on the other hand, to ignore the function of English as a means of global communication and its potential for international understanding.

**See also:** Creoles; Lexicography and lexicology; Monolingual principle; Mother-tongue teaching; Native speaker; Non-native speaker teacher; Pidgins; Sociolinguistics; Standard language; Text and corpus linguistics

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## Linguapax

Linguapax emerged from a UNESCO experts meeting in 1987 in Kiev (Ukraine) which was followed by a series of workshops and international meetings focused on the promotion of multilingual education as a way to promote a culture of peace. In the year 2001, coinciding with a growing awareness of the loss of the world's linguistic heritage, the UNESCO Centre of Catalonia decided to continue the project and establish its headquarters in Barcelona.

Linguapax's overall objective is the preservation and promotion of linguistic diversity worldwide. Linguapax develops activities along three major

lines: consultations for state and sub-state language policy makers; collaboration in language revitalization projects; and elaboration of multilingual materials advocating the values of linguistic and cultural diversity.

In 2006, Linguapax established a network of organizations, from every part of the world, involved in the safeguarding of linguistic diversity. These partners became regional Linguapax delegations, acting both autonomously and interactively, with the capacity to carry out specific projects suited to local needs.

### Website

[www.linguapax.org](http://www.linguapax.org)

## Linguistic imperialism

Linguistic imperialism or language imperialism is a term used to refer to the predominance of one language, in particular the English language, over other languages as a mechanism of military, economic and cultural hegemony.

The concept of linguistic imperialism (LI) is most associated with Robert Phillipson, whose *Linguistic Imperialism* (1992) triggered thinking about English as symbolic and cultural capital and the role of the ELT profession within socio-political, economical and cultural contexts. His *Linguistic Imperialism Continued* (2009a) focuses again on English expansion and how its dominance persists in the twenty-first century. Phillipson defines LI as ‘the dominance asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages’ (1992: 47). Phillipson regards LI as a subtype of linguistic imperialism, which ‘studies attempts to put the sociology of language and education into a form which furthers scrutiny of how language contributes to unequal access to societal power and how linguistic hierarchies operate and are legitimated’ (1997: 239). He also perceives LI as a subcategory of cultural imperialism – along with media imperialism, educational imperialism and scientific imperialism – in its function of

maintaining injustice and inequality by means of language policies (2009a).

The term ‘language imperialism’ is used by Knowles (1998) in a similar sense, involving the transfer of a dominant language to other peoples. The transfer is essentially a demonstration of power – traditionally military power but also in the modern world economic power – and aspects of the dominant culture are usually transferred along with the language.

### The LI thesis

Why and how the dominance of English has been a fact of life are central parts of the LI thesis. More specifically, the study of LI ‘focuses on how and why certain languages dominate internationally, and on attempts to account for such dominance in an explicit, theoretically founded way’ (Phillipson, 2009a: 1). Such study ‘is invariably connected to policies in commerce, science, international affairs, education, culture, and the media, all of which involve material resources and attitudes, and all of which evolve dynamically’ (Phillipson, 2009a: 5–6). The notion of ideology is also central here with the implication that the promotion and marketing of the English language is not value-free: it is linked in a variety of ways with the former colonial strength of Britain and in more recent decades with the power of the USA.

Drawing on Johan Galtung’s theory of imperialism and Antonio Gramsci’s social theory of cultural hegemony, LI theory offers a conceptual framework for the study of the continued global predominance of former colonial languages, especially English. Without the LI analysis, it might appear that the transition from imposition to ‘market demand’ for English has been a naturally occurring one, related to its innate properties and common sense of foreigners in recognizing its inherent value. Phillipson explains the transition not only as part of the prevailing ideology but also relates it to hegemony (1992: 8). Ideas and beliefs which may seem common-sense and remain unquestioned, are part of hegemonic power, with a dominant group retaining control through this lack of questioning, once they have gained the upper hand.

The notion of postcolonial imperialism is supported by quoting analogies made by a variety of commentators, e.g. ‘Once we used to send gunboats and diplomats abroad; now we are sending English teachers’ (International House brochure, 1979, cited in Phillipson, 1992: 80). There is thus an attempt to link the previous militaristic and political force of the British Empire with a new one, which supports the spread of the English language and its links with certain cultural forms and political processes. The new ‘foot soldiers’ of this aggression are ELT practitioners.

The rush to expand ELT in former African colonies as well as East Asia can be cited as part of the linguistic imperialist drive in the 1950s through to the 1980s. In more recent times, the overthrow of communism in Eastern and Central Europe has opened up new areas. One aim, according to the incumbent British foreign secretary in 1990, was to replace Russian with English as the second language throughout the region (Phillipson, 1992: 10). In line with this, many resources were placed in these countries in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War and the region appeared as a priority. An unstated premise seems to be that if people speak and read English they become part of the wider democratic and capitalist, western community and that language can somehow bind them into certain processes and structures in ways superior to former colonial ruling practices.

In the era of globalization, LI continues to be a mode of cultural imperialism (Phillipson, 2009a). Therefore, the recurrent theoretical concerns of LI are how the dominance of English in all domains of power is maintained, legitimized and persists in global contexts, e.g. the role of English in globalization and the neoliberal empire, the conspiracy of English as a ‘world language’, and the balance of English and other languages in education.

### Debates over LI

In general, two camps can be identified regarding perception of English language imperialism as observed by Jambor (2007: 103): those who state that the English language is imperialist due to its growing stature in increasingly more domains around the world, and those who argue that the

English language is merely an innocent bystander while it is actually the economic and military might of the countries associated with it that are the real culprits and not the language *per se*.

The debates between the two camps mostly centre on two aspects: whether the dominance of English is imposed or elected, by force or by choice, conspiracy or non-conspiracy and whether the spread of English has led to hegemony or to democracy, to the decline of local languages and cultures or to linguistic diversity and the cultural progress of the dominated. While both camps seem to recognize the link between linguistic imperialism and hegemony in the colonial periods, what has motivated the spread of English in postcolonial times is highly contentious.

The imperialist view takes a more multi-disciplinary approach and emphasizes the imperative to see English in historical, socio-political and cultural contexts (Phillipson, 2009b). Phillipson shows how institutions in the UK and US have constituted the power of English by drawing on an array of documented evidence in national and international development policies and strategic plans of these two ‘donors’ of English. It is the ‘imperialistic impulses’ of the ‘centre’ (capitalist countries) that have caused the current world-wide dominance of English (Carpenter, 2007: 11). The expansion of English is by no means neutral, innocent or detachable from other forms of hegemony. Moreover, LI ‘permeates all the other types of imperialism, since language is the means used to mediate and express them’ (Phillipson, 1992: 65). Jambor also argues that ‘whether it is adopted by “choice” or by “force”, the imperial nature of the language nevertheless ends up remaining the same’ (2007: 118). LI in education is exercised through both the teaching of English in dominated nations and education through English in Europe and other parts of the world. The identifiable outcomes of the promotion of English are two-fold: the enhancement of the power of the ‘imperialists’ and simultaneously the decline of local languages and cultures. Phillipson details how the disciplines of English have been disciplining other languages of the world and urged that such disciplining be ‘restrained maximally’ (2009b: 26) for a healthy and balanced linguistic ecology.

In contrast, the non-imperialist view tends to take a more sociolinguistically oriented approach, perceiving the dominance of English as a natural result of the jungle game between the powerful and the less powerful or the powerless. Crystal (1997), taking into consideration the cultural, historical, ideological, religious, military and economic strength of the English speaking nations, accounts for the expansion of English as the success story of the more powerful just as the rise and fall of other dominant languages such as Latin. Davies (1996) attacks the imperialist view with three arguments: (1) the dominance of English analysed in terms of the feeling of 'guilt' of former colonial nations over imperialism and colonialism and of 'romantic despair', with an unstated desire to allow peoples to return to their 'innocence' (1996: 485); (2) the legitimacy of the donor countries being beneficiary recipients if what they offer meets the demands of the local purchasers, as in the case of foreign aid in ELT; and (3) the free choice of English rather than a local language by the dominated nation states as prevention of linguistic inequality and hegemony in multilingual societies.

In a refutation of the interpretation of ELT practitioners as the 'new foot soldiers' of imperialism, Canagarajah (1999) points out that the macro-political perspective taken by Phillipson overlooks the micro-social processes happening in classrooms. Citing an ethnographic study of ELT in Sri Lanka, he argues that learners 'resist' the impositions of LI and use English to their own ends either surreptitiously in their responses to the teaching materials imported from the anglophone world, or in ways of writing, of 'writing back' as Pennycook (1994) would call it, to use English for their own purposes.

Rather than engaging in the debates over imperialist nature of English, Canagarajah is more concerned about how English can serve local interests and is more interested in 'exploring the limitations as well as the possibilities of such micropolitics' (Rubdy and Saraceni, 2006: 200). Canagarajah draws upon critical pedagogy (1999) to argue that resistance is possible and can be developed in a systematic pedagogy. With respect to the ideological worries about linguistic imperialism, Canagarajah contends that distinctions should to be made between ESL vs EFL/instru-

mental contexts, and the functions of local vs inner circle norms for business or education outside their own community. Localized norms may still develop over time in expanding circles (Rubdy and Saraceni, 2006). The increasing claim of English as a multilingual and multicultural language (e.g. Honna, 2008) seems to support Canagarajah's appreciation and appropriation of the 'poetics of World Englishes' by which 'the postcolonial speakers of English creatively negotiate the place of English in their lives' (Rubdy and Saraceni, 2006: 200).

While the debates will go on and the expansion of English will persist, the different approaches to and views of language dominance and that of English in particular by the imperialist and non-imperialist camps have shed light on the complexity and dynamics behind the global spread of English and the potentials that can be appropriated as linguistic, social and cultural capital for the promotion of diversity and democracy or dominance and hegemony in a globalized yet still globalizing world.

**See also:** British Council; Communicative language teaching; History: 1945 to the present; Intercultural communication; Internationalisation; Lingua franca; Sociolinguistics

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## Linguistics

The use of teaching material is the distinguishing feature of language teaching as compared to **untutored language acquisition**. The writing of teaching material requires linguistic information from phonetics/phonology, **lexicology** and semantics, **stylistics** and idiom theory, syntax, **text linguistics** and **conversation analysis**. Contrary to theoretical linguistics, this information must be

rendered in a performance-oriented way, as the substance of procedural, not declarative knowledge, and coordinated with psychological and psycholinguistic information, with a didactic selection and marking of topics and with a consideration of the external conditions of classroom management. The resulting store of knowledge in **applied linguistics** makes use of the achievements of traditional as well as of recent linguistics.

### Traditional and recent linguistics

'Linguistics' is a rather recent name for the scientific discipline whose representatives are concerned with the description and analysis of language in general and of national languages/dialects in particular. Unfortunately, the adjectival version of the term is ambiguous. It refers to 'language' in the more common sense (e.g. *linguistic atlas* = 'map showing the geographical distribution of languages') and also to the scientific methods of the academic discipline in its most recent version (e.g. *linguistic analysis* = analysis according to the methods of contemporary linguistics'). The meanings must be kept apart and properly understood. The OED Supplement gives as the first source for *linguistics* 'Webster 1847,' and then dates and names only from the twentieth century.

However, thinking about language has been a traditional element of European culture since the Classical Greek period (Lepschy, 1994). It covered themes which are today obsolete (e.g. 'the perfection of languages' or 'universal languages'), themes which are still topical today but not in the ancient contexts (e.g. 'the origin of languages' or 'the dependence of thinking on language'), and finally themes which enjoy an unbroken interest (e.g. grammar or style). As historical topics, they are usually called 'linguistic' in the more common sense of the word, e.g. in 'the history of linguistic ideas' or 'the history of linguistics' (Robins, 1990).

It is only since the end of World War Two that the narrower meaning of 'linguistics' has come into use. In the Anglo-Saxon and anglophone world, the seminal works for this development were Ferdinand de Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale* (1916) and Leonard Bloomfield's *Language* (1933). The paradigmatic features which evolved in

the wake of these two books, after approximately 1950, and which at first were named '**structural linguistics**' – a term which has become somewhat archaic in the meantime – constituted a new disciplinary coherence and attracted the new meaning of the old name. This development was reinforced by the foundation of university chairs and institutes devoted to linguistics, and of journals, learned societies, etc., i.e. measures which give an academic discipline its institutional framework.

The focus of this new linguistics was at first on such features as syntax and structural semantics, but then widened more and more to include aspects of language use. Many of the traditional linguistic topics were resurrected in those branches of linguistics characteristically named with a qualifier, e.g. anthropological linguistics, psycholinguistics, **sociolinguistics**, ethnolinguistics, etc. Only the term 'phonetics' was not drawn into this whirlpool of naming but, complemented with 'phonology', kept its stable meaning in the past and the present.

At first sight, it seems obvious that linguistics is the proper source discipline for language teaching. What else should be required for this activity other than a description and analysis of the teaching subject? However, the differentiations of the meanings of the lexeme 'linguistic(s)' already show that things are more complicated than that. A short summary of the writing of grammars, certainly a focal area of linguistics at any time, will show this.

It began with the *Techné grammatiké* of Dionysius Thrax (?170 BC–?90 BC) which established a century-long tradition expressing itself, above all, in a tightly knit set of grammatical terms (Michael, 1970; Padley, 1976). They dominated the teaching of Latin via Donatus (fourth cent. AD) and Priscian (sixth cent. AD) through the entire Middle Ages. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, an interest in vernaculars arose in Europe (Padley, 1985; 1988). William Bullokar (?1520–90), for example, was the first to write a grammar of **English** still entirely under the spell of Latin categories, as many grammarians after him would be, even if they intended to move away from them, as John Wallis (1616–1703) did. Since then there has been a continuous stream of grammars of English (and of all other European vernaculars in the respective countries) to the present day (Göbels, 1999). All too

often the fact has been ignored that most authors of this century-long tradition saw themselves in a didactic context, first the teaching of Latin and then the teaching of English, mostly but not only as a foreign language. Most grammars which we today think to be landmarks of European grammatography were written as schoolbooks. This was also the case when the dominant works of Robert Lowth (1710–87, *A Short Introduction to English Grammar with Critical Notes*, 1762) and Lindley Murray (1745–1826, *English Grammar*, 1795, and *English Exercises*, 1797) appeared, whose normative attitude established a direct connection between language description and norm-bound teaching. Between 1801 and 1900, no less than 856 grammars followed the two giants onto the market (Michael, 1991). They completed the move away from the Latin categories of description which centred around word-classes and inflectional paradigms, and favoured a phrase-and-clause approach, thus preparing the way for the generally accepted grammatical approach of today. Authors who did not write for the classroom were by far in the minority. Although Francis Bacon (1561–1616) had already spoken of a 'philosophical' and a 'literary' grammar – the one for the analysis of thinking, the other for learning a language – the difference between a 'practical' and a 'scientific' grammar hardly existed, although there were certainly works which proved more useful in one or the other role.

Leaving aside grammars on diachronic principles, like Otto Jespersen's (1860–1943) seven-volume work, the dichotomy 'scientific versus practical' appeared sharply only with the methods of modern linguistics in the second half of the twentieth century. Now the conception and drafting of grammars grew into a highly abstract and formalised discipline with universalist but not with descriptive ambitions. A model-driven analytical way of treating language in general appeared, although mostly exemplified by English – at present the best-analysed language in the world. Its overriding aim is to make the system (or systems) of any language visible on its various levels, i.e. a philosophical grammar in Bacon's terminology.

Even where this is not the case, as in Quirk et al.'s descriptive *Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* (1985), the systematic treatment

of the English language grew to such a size that an adaptation for teaching purposes could only be done by much curtailing.

From the 1990s, with the development of computer-assisted analysis of corpora, major dictionaries were produced and the combination of **corpus linguistics and language teaching** led to significant changes in teaching materials. **Cognitive linguistics** also began to provide insights into approaches to language through the analysis of meanings and thus a basis for new approaches to language teaching.

### Teaching material and linguistics

As a rule, the teaching of languages is done under formal conditions as they prevail in a classroom, in the presence of a teacher and with the use of teaching material. This represents the essential difference from what is called informal (or natural) language acquisition, which children undergo in and after their second year of life. There are so-called alternative **teacher methods**, e.g. **suggestopedia**, which avoid the conditions and routines of formal teaching, but measured against the general trend of language teaching they are exceptional.

Classroom procedures (e.g. **questioning techniques** with exchanges frequently truncated by error correction) are just as alien to baby talk as information on the language to be learnt with the help of teaching material is. These aids appear in various kinds and sizes, as printed books and as audio-visual or computer-aided media (for **CALL – computer assisted language learning**), as integrated works, or as a set of specialised sources of information which complement each other. Irrespective of these differences, the aids for language teaching fulfil certain functions which are ultimately dictated by the nature of the language to be taught. Functionally, they consist of what used to be (and still is) a **textbook**, a **grammar** and a **dictionary**.

It is the function of textbooks to show the foreign language, above all, in written (printed) performance. Contrary to acoustic media, their opportunities of doing the same with oral performance are rather limited, yet they exist. The acoustic media are frequently added to the printed book. ‘Showing the language’ includes information

on spelling and pronunciation (via phonetic script in the book, directly in the acoustic medium), information on style and idioms, and on the format of written as well as of spoken texts, e.g. letters or conversations. Of course, ‘showing the language’ also pertains to grammar and lexis, but both of these have their own text-independent order. Grammars (as books) give the rules of grammars (as structures) in their own system as a set of descriptive and normative statements, and frequently also examples. Information on style and idiomatic language use can be added by special rules or by the exemption from rules altogether. Dictionaries, finally, make lexis available, mostly – but not always – ordered according to the alphabet. This regularly includes information on spelling and meaning, and can include information on pronunciation, the grammatical behaviour of words, and special restrictions on use. In addition to the teaching aids, there is usually **exercise** material of various types which serves potentially all the functions mentioned.

Obviously, the following subdisciplines of linguistics pertain to language teaching with the material used in the classroom:

- phonetics/phonology for the teaching of **pronunciation** and also, to a limited extent, of spelling;
- lexicology and semantics for the teaching of lexis;
- stylistics and idiom theory for the teaching of language performance;
- syntax for the teaching of grammar;
- **text and corpus linguistics** and conversation analysis for the teaching of text production and text reception.
- **cognitive linguistics** for the teaching of meanings

All this linguistic information is regarded as being the substance of language teaching. But it is not intended that this substance be taught as such, i.e. as a corpus of statements and norms on a linguistic metalevel, but rather as the stimulation of the mechanism of mental decisions which we must make in correct language use, be it productive (**speaking, writing**) or receptive (**listening, reading**). This is the difference between what is usually

called 'declarative knowledge' (know how) and 'procedural knowledge' (know that). The former is a store of descriptive statements on linguistic regularities, i.e. of rules, retrievable for application in language performance. The latter is the ability to produce or to understand these regularities without resorting to the rules (Anderson, 1990; Glover et al., 1990). It is the common assumption of language teaching theory that, whereas children arrive at procedural knowledge without any declarative rule-formation, foreign language learners in the classroom cannot do without a certain amount of it, which will gradually be turned into the procedural faculty (Hüllen, 1987). It is the main function of the exercise material and also of language practice in the classroom without any printed or acoustic aids to achieve this goal.

### Applied linguistics

Those areas of traditional and recent linguistics which are a prerequisite for the writing of teaching material are usually called 'applied linguistics'. The term repeats the differentiation between theory and application as is to be found in many scientific disciplines, e.g. mathematics, musicology, the law, but also inside linguistics, e.g. lexicology (as opposed to lexicography), stylistics (theory versus practice), etc.

Seen against a universal theory of language and language use, the description of an individual language/dialect can be regarded as a first degree of application. Thus, a grammar of English, even if not planned as a teaching grammar, is an application of a set of theoretical presuppositions to one special case. However, as a theory of language can hardly ever be thought of without reference to languages, it seems feasible to define 'theoretical' (or 'pure') linguistics as embracing the categorial groundwork of the discipline as well as the description of a language, as long as the focus is on the language itself. In contrast, teaching **materials** are a true case of the application of linguistic insights to an area of interest which lies outside the language proper. It goes without saying that there are also such areas of interest outside the didactic one, like language acquisition, **translation**, computer use, neurological applications, etc. The

applicative transposition which leads from 'linguistics' to 'applied linguistics in a didactic perspective' is quite complex.

First, without any didactic perspective, linguistic information tends to be organised in modules of which there are simple ones (e.g. sounds, word-formation, linear order, or meanings corresponding to phonetics, morphology, syntax, or semantics) and complex ones (e.g. style and text-formats corresponding to stylistics and text and corpus linguistics). From a didactic perspective, however, linguistic information must be organised in a performance-oriented way. The difference between the one and the other is that the modular organisation of rules dissolves and rearranges itself in such a way that all modules become concomitant specialised parts of even the smallest utterance (Spillner, 1995).

Second, without any didactic perspective, performance-oriented linguistic information tends to appear as the contents of declarative knowledge. From a performance oriented, didactic perspective, however, linguistic knowledge, which is a stative aspect of the human mind, also dissolves and rearranges itself in such a way that all statements become concomitant specialised parts of even the smallest mental activity.

Third, the didactic perspective also comprises the learning aspect, i.e. the distance between 'not being able to' and 'being able to' with its many transitional phases (e.g. **interlanguages**) in between. This entails an interdisciplinary matching of psychological knowledge about the nature of learning in general and of psycholinguistic knowledge about the nature of language learning in particular with the linguistic facts.

Fourth, it also entails a special selection and marking of the linguistic information available. There are insights which are too abstract or too subtle to be of interest to the average language learner. There are also insights which are too elementary to be of interest, because learners need not be taught how to speak. Didactic marking of linguistic insights also pertains to contrastive phenomena. Although the far-reaching expectations which were once attached to **contrastive** linguistics have never been fulfilled, it is beyond doubt that the processes of learning a new language are

inevitably influenced by the linguistic **competence** already existing in the mind.

Fifth, and last, teaching under the formal conditions of classroom management is bound to the circumstances of time and place and to the availability of resources which are external to the phenomena of language and language learning and which, nevertheless, have their impact on the organisation of any sort of material.

It is probably futile to question whether applied linguistics is an academic discipline in its own right with its own subject, method, terms, aims (etc.) of investigation. Such (ultimately Cartesian) criteria are obviously hardly applicable to a field of scientific work between pure theory and the knowledge-driven activities in a classroom. The investigative principles of the disciplines which pool their stocks of knowledge in applied linguistics are too divergent ever to be unified in the strict sense. In fact, 'applied linguistics' is so unlike 'linguistics' in many respects that one could think of a separate name, like *Fremdsprachenforschung* or *Fremdsprachendidaktik* in German.

More important than naming is the fact that the integrative work which leads to applied linguistics is never a one-way process. Developments as they occurred in recent psycholinguistics or sociolinguistics, for example, should be taken into account, but they are not *per se* applicable to language teaching (Honey, 1997). New linguistic findings, like those of **speech act theory**, can, of course, initiate the reformulation of teaching aims; but teaching aims *per se* select and highlight certain linguistic phenomena and neglect others. Rules of **pedagogical grammars** are certainly often the calques of rules which also appear in theoretical treatments of a language. But the twenty-five 'verb-patterns' in the preface of A.S. Hornby's *Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (1948), one-sidedly drawn from his experience of teaching English in Japan, antedated the later 'pattern practice' in the wake of structuralism by at least two decades. Far from being a one-way procedure, applied linguistics from the perspective of language teaching is like the demarcation of a domain from various directions where those involved need to be convinced that they must make every effort if they are to meet at all.

One consequence of all this is that, for example, grammars as teaching material show the same difference to linguistic grammars as applied linguistics does to theoretical linguistics. In fact these grammars work with a basic stock of terms (noun, verb, adjective, etc.) which is quite traditional and not too far removed from Latin grammar. Moreover, they employ a basic knowledge of phrases and clauses as sentence constituents in coordination or subordination as it evolved in the nineteenth century. From the more recent models it is only the central procedures, like segmentation, substitution, transposition, transformation, deletion and others, which are made use of mostly in the ways of presenting linguistic material in schoolbooks. Many attempts at using terms and more subtle arguments from recent linguistics were aborted as ineffective. This, however, does not preclude general approaches of very recent linguistic analysis from having a profiling effect on teaching. The so-called '**notions and functions** approach', for example, was certainly stimulated by the shift from purely formal to more semantic models of explanations which occurred in the early 1970s. The mutual influences between theory and practice need not be systematic.

It is a prerequisite for the authors of teaching material of any kind that they be knowledgeable about the contents of and the interrelations between linguistics and applied linguistics, and that they have a good deal of practice in teaching itself. Moreover, it is highly advisable that teachers of foreign languages share this knowledge, at least to a certain extent, so that they need not blindly follow the teaching material, which after all is also a product of the market, but so that they can make their own decisions about the work in the classroom.

**See also:** Applied linguistics; Cognitive linguistics; Communicative language teaching; Corpus linguistics and language teaching; Grammar; Lexicography and lexicology; Notions and functions; Pedagogical grammar; Psychology; Sociolinguistics; Speech act theory; Text and corpus linguistics

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## Linguistique appliquée

The designation *linguistique appliquée* (Applied Linguistics) applied to language teaching was first used in France at the end of the 1950s, long after what had been done in North America. What is peculiar to France is the emphasis on one's own language taught as a foreign language and, from the 1970s, on creating an approach to language teaching (**didactique des langues**) which is not subordinate to linguistics. From the end of the 1980s, language teaching has drawn upon different disciplines – including linguistics – to define its issues and the term *linguistique appliquée* (LA) is now largely part of the past.

## From the 1950s to the early 1970s

The somewhat late and slow introduction of applied linguistics in France was due to a linguistic tradition distant from American influence. French linguists were above all 'French-speaking', and **French** together with **German** was the most used

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language in European linguistics until the beginning of the 1950s. Unlike the United States where linguists were interested in the teaching of foreign languages (German, Russian, Japanese, etc.), in France efforts were devoted to the dissemination of the national language, French, abroad. It was French as a foreign language (*français langue étrangère*, abbreviated to FLE in the 1980s) which was a driving force in the development of methodologies and at the heart of applications of linguistics.

The development of LA was linked to the policies put into place by France to renew its linguistic and cultural work after the Second World War. The dissemination of French abroad was one of the key instruments of a policy whose aim was to re-affirm the position of France in international relations. New constituencies were identified: foreign executives and technicians. New aims were defined: to focus on oral practice and to prove that French is a useful language. The efforts were concentrated primarily on the development of new methods and textbooks based on data carefully selected and analysed. *Le français fondamental*, produced between 1951 and 1954, represents the first major work of *linguistique appliquée*, providing a selected lexis and a basic grammar from statistical studies of ordinary spoken language. This work informed 'Voix et Images de France', an audio-visual course produced for FLE which was 'the first product of modern methodology' (Galisson and Coste, 1976: 40). Another element of this French policy was the appearance in 1961 (with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) of the first issue of *Le français dans le monde*, a journal whose aim was to 'make French language and culture known throughout the world' (editorial of the first edition).

The applications of linguistics to the teaching of French as a foreign language, supported by official policies, coincided with a spectacular expansion of linguistics in France in the 1960s. Major journals were founded: *Langages* in 1966, *Langue française* in 1969. Linguistics dominated the human sciences and it was the golden age of LA. This success was evident in numerous ways. The first major centres of teaching and research devoted to French took the designation of LA (CLA, Centre de Linguistique

Appliquée de Besançon, created in 1958; CLAD, Centre de Linguistique Appliquée de Dakar in Senegal, created in 1963); the journal *Études de linguistique appliquée* was founded in 1962; the first international conference on LA took place in Nancy in 1964, marked by the creation of **AILA** (Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée) and of **AFLA** (Association Française de Linguistique Appliquée) whose presidents were both French linguists (B. Pottier and A. Culioli).

Reflecting the dominance of structuralism, the methods of FLE gave much emphasis to the notion of structure in the 1960s and at the beginning of the 1970s. However, the applications of linguistics were different from what took place in the United States with the **audiolingual method**. France has a particular methodological tradition in language teaching (including the **direct method**). The **audio-visual method** emphasised the use of the language in communication situations and the importance of meaning. This led to criticism of the batteries of structural exercises as too focused on the manipulation of forms. Structural exercises were successful in France but their role was generally limited to the reinforcement of constructions first worked on in context. **Contrastive analysis** was also applied in a more limited way than elsewhere, used above all in the development of phonetic exercises and scarcely present in the textbooks produced in France for French as a foreign language. These were materials used in a policy of large scale dissemination throughout the world, addressing an international public without distinction of linguistic origins.

### The mid-1970s: a period of change

The changes which marked this period were not specific to France. What was in fact noticeable from the 1970s was the **internationalisation** of problems related to language teaching. Thus in France as in other European countries, work was influenced by American thinking. First came the (belated) discovery of **Chomsky** (translated into French in 1969) and his definition of learning as a creative act of the individual; then there was in 1975–76 the dissemination of the ethnography of communication, the success of the concept of

communicative competence, introduced by Hymes, and the spread of the philosophy of language, with its key notion of **speech act**. Finally, it is important to take into account an important linguistic current in France, *l'analyse de discours*, which is interested in questions of meaning and the conditions of production of what is written or said.

Language pedagogy entered a period of change in the middle of the 1970s. What was a pedagogy of teaching gave way to a pedagogy centred on learning, and the learner. Language teaching distanced itself from **linguistics**, considering it to be too hegemonic, and turned towards other disciplines: sociology, **psychology**, education and others. The challenge to LA came from specialists in French as a Foreign Language (*Français Langue Etrangère*), members of institutions such as **CRÉDIF**, BELC (*Bureau pour l'Enseignement de la Langue et de la Civilisation Françaises*) and the CIEP (*Centre International d'Études Pédagogiques de Sèvres*), who took over from linguists and pulled language teaching from under the dominance symbolised by LA.

As a consequence LA and methodology, which had until then been seen as one, were defined as two complementary disciplines. The role of LA was to help in the selection of linguistic elements for teaching and learning, from a perspective open to cultural and social dimensions. In this approach, the choice of contents was determined by the needs of the learner. The new descriptions were developed in the context of the Council of Europe's **threshold level**, 1975, and *Un niveau seuil*, 1976. Methodology has a role to play at the level of 'how to teach and learn, to whom and why'. Its role was to develop techniques and pedagogical frameworks adapted to a specific learning public and its purposes in learning, by borrowing from a pluridisciplinary domain in which linguistics certainly had an important but not exclusive place. The idea of direct application had gone; little by little the languages domain became independent and constituted a discipline in its own right: language didactics (*didactique des langues*). There was much interest in sociolinguistic research and work on the varieties and uses of French both in France and in the wider francophone world. This work stimulated passionate discussions on a very

'French' topic, the norm to be taught and attitudes towards 'local' Frenches.

### From the end of the 1980s

With the development of research, notably in interactionism and cognitive sciences, two major orientations are characteristic of this period with respect to the relationships between 'language didactics' and 'language sciences', a term which covers linguistics and associated disciplines such as psycho- and socio-linguistics, ethnolinguistics, socio-phonetics and others. The first of these involves studies on the acquisition of language which emphasise the processes and the strategies of learning. The second involves an interactionist perspective which focuses on verbal and non-verbal exchanges in the language class.

The priority in language didactics has become that of seeking to better understand how teaching and learning a foreign language takes place in a given context and situation of learning. The complexity of the task requires interdisciplinary research bringing together, among others, linguists, psychologists, didacticians and specialists in educational technology. Is it therefore still possible to talk of LA? In France LA remains associated with negative connotations (synonymous with dogmatism, with a dependency relationship of language pedagogy) and is scarcely still used. The history of the sometimes difficult relationships between linguistics and didactics is not finished but from now on it will be as a function of the problems raised by the teaching and learning of languages that linguistics will be involved. AFLA still exists as an association of specialists, the journal *Études de Linguistique Appliquée* is still published, but *linguistique appliquée* is no longer an active designation for the field of language learning.

**See also:** Applied linguistics; *Didactique des langues*; French; *Fremdsprachendidaktik*; Linguistics; Teaching methods

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## Listening

Listening involves processing phonetic language information and constructing a message from a stream of sounds, based on listeners' syntactic, phonetic, and semantic knowledge of the language. That is, listeners can receive messages conveyed to their ears as sound waves pass through the medium of auditory organs. However, if they do not know the semiotic system of the language, even though a message is conveyed to the brain, listeners cannot decipher the message. Listeners cannot reconstruct speakers' messages and understand the messages until they come to possess a semiotic system like that contained in the speakers' language, with which to communicate mutually. In this way, listening is a very active behavior, and is quite different from 'hearing', which is the activity of just receiving sound waves.

### Linguistic structures

The factors of which listening is composed include a knowledge of linguistic structures (syntactic structure, phonetic structure, etc.), prior knowledge, attention, and memory. This can be illustrated from English with respect to linguistic structures. **English** is an SVO (subject–verb–object) language. This means that, in the case of learners whose first language is an SOV (subject–object–verb) language, their knowledge of SOV word order can

interfere with the processing of SVO linguistic information. For instance, **Japanese** is an SOV language, so when Japanese learners comprehend English language, they tend to process incoming discourse word by word, and 'back-to-front reading' (*kaeriyomi* in Japanese, meaning an explication of an English sentence according to Japanese word order) that is, generally, from later sections to earlier sections. In the case of learners who acquire a foreign language with a different structure from their first language, it is very important to have the skill of information processing in English word orders as well as a knowledge of grammar to grasp the syntactic structure more precisely.

Second, when the numbers of vowel and consonant phonemes in a language are different from those of the learners' first language (for example, Japanese has few vowel and consonant phonemes, compared with English), the difficulty in listening is partly caused by the number of phonemes. However, even though learners understand individual sounds, they cannot always pay attention to every sound. The sounds that we hear in **authentic** situations are not determined by their presence in individual words, but by the speech which is created when words are connected. Words are individually pronounced differently than when used in speech. In speech, neighboring sounds affect one another and their phonetic characteristics change. For example, in English there are phonetic phenomena such as liaison, glide, assimilation, the dropping of sounds, and weak forms, which affect pronunciation and therefore recognition of words.

The characteristics of rhythm are also different, depending on the language. In the rhythm of English, there is a tendency for stress to occur almost regularly regardless of the number of weak syllables interposed between other syllables. This is called stress-timed rhythm and the characteristics of this rhythm are that stress controls time. Such a characteristic in English rhythm is the same as those in **German** and **Russian**. On the other hand, the rhythm of syllables that occurs regardless of stress, such as in Japanese, French and Tamil, is called syllable-timed rhythm. Thus in listening to English, learners whose first language is syllable-timed rhythm, must identify linguistic information

according to a stressed-timed rhythmic pattern. This difference can cause difficulty for some EFL learners.

Another factor is intonation, which is expressed in various forms, depending on the stream of discourse, and has several important functions, as Crystal (1995) noted, as follows: (1) emotional (speakers' attitudinal meaning), (2) grammatical (grammatical structure of an utterance), (3) informational (a higher pitch in the case of marking important information), (4) textual (helping large chunks of discourse contrast or cohere), (5) psychological (chunking information into units which are easier to deal with), and (6) indexical (used by certain people, such as preachers, as a sort of identifier). Intonation carries important semantic information and the speaker's focal center of attention, therefore it plays an important role in listening comprehension. Learners' understanding of intonation differs according to their first language. For example, as Ogata (1993) mentions, in the case of learners whose first language, such as Japanese, tends to be constructed of monotonous intonation, it is not easy for them to get used to several kinds of rising intonation, such as in non-monotonous intonation patterns. Ogata gives examples on this point as indicated below.

In comparing these examples, 1 is more difficult for the Japanese to listen to than 2. Thus Japanese

learners have to get used to several kinds of rising intonation, such as non-monotonous intonation patterns.

### Prior knowledge

In comprehending speech, listeners compare and collate the speakers' linguistic information with their own structured knowledge, or prior knowledge (including not only linguistic but also paralinguistic information). The linguistic information that can be collated with prior knowledge is integrated into the listeners' comprehension structures. In other words, those who cannot adapt their prior knowledge easily, cannot understand speech properly. For example, when listening to difficult lectures involving complicated language, those listeners who know something about the contents of the lecture beforehand and have prior knowledge of the subject, find listening comprehension easier. They have existing schemata which help them to organize the information they are hearing and assimilate it to their prior knowledge.

In addition to having proper prior knowledge, listeners also need to acquire processing efficiency, that is, to be able to activate the knowledge efficiently and retrieve the knowledge instantly, so as to comprehend phonetic information. Also, listeners are required to infer cohesion and coherence in the stream of discourse; listeners who have imperfect or no prior knowledge may be forced to try and comprehend the speaker's utterance by activating various kinds of limited knowledge such as logic or cultural knowledge as well as linguistic knowledge.

### Working memory

In considering phonological processing in language information, an important part of language processing is how information fades away as soon as new information is received. Phonological information is received in chronological order. Previous information can be superseded by subsequent information, underscoring the importance of temporarily storing the earlier information to enable the later comprehension of a meaningful chunk of information. In this sense, functions and systems of working

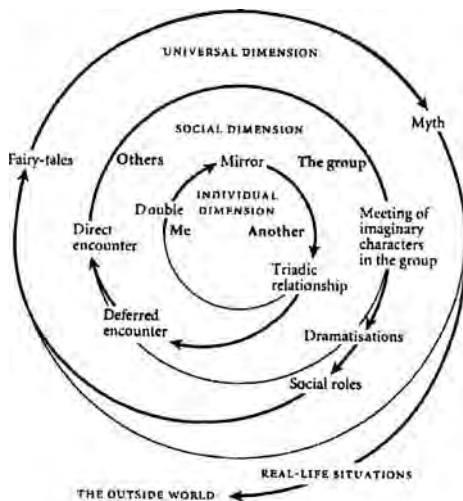


Figure 11 Spiral evolution in LPD

memory (Baddeley, 2000), retain information temporarily, then process, retrieve, and verify various kinds of knowledge from the long-term memory storehouse, which is important in considering the function of language comprehension processing.

When listeners encounter unknown words, phrases, or topics, they guess at their meanings by retrieving existing knowledge from long-term memory and then apply their ability to infer meaning. A 'central executive function' is a very important component of working memory because it controls attention and is involved in all mental activities that involve coordinating storage and mental processing (Gathercole and Alloway, 2008). The phonological loop plays an essential role in language acquisition and in the storage of information that can be expressed verbally, such as numbers, words, and sentences.

Working memory is essential to online processing for all languages, especially foreign languages, because when we process information in our first language, we unconsciously perform this online processing of the visually or auditorily presented linguistic information at amazing speeds. On the contrary, when processing foreign languages, although there will be individual differences depending on foreign language ability, the processing is conscious and linguistic information processing efficiency is lower. A number of differences (syntactic structure, phonological structure, logic, etc.) between the first language and the foreign language make it difficult to conduct this processing instantaneously. This is especially true for auditorily presented language information, which fades away at once, and for which processing efficiency is lower than for written language information (Sakuma, 2001).

Working memory capacity is different depending on each individual. This capacity is mostly fixed in many occasions. It is also different depending on the age of the individual and it increases as younger children grow older. One of the reasons is that they become more efficient at carrying out mental process (Gathercole and Alloway, 2008). Still, people with higher working memory capacities in the first language tend also to have higher working memory capacities in the second and foreign languages; this shows that higher effective use of working memory resource affects not only the first

language processing efficiency but also the non-native languages' ones, that is, higher effective use of the working memory resource in the first language positively transfers to that of the non-native language, though this efficiency is affected by language frequency and language ability level (Osaka, 2002).

The relationship between listening comprehension and working memory capacity is correlated. Sakuma (2004) administered an English language proficiency test and a listening span test to measure working memory capacity for phonological language information, for Japanese university students who were EFL learners. The results reported that 'participants with higher working memory capacities also have higher English abilities (especially listening and grammar abilities)' and showed that paying attention to and focusing on important points accurately led to improved processing efficiency. It is clear that poor English abilities limit the quantity of linguistic information which can be processed at one time, which makes working memory capacity remarkably limited. As a result of listening to incoming discourse with an insufficient working memory resource, learners come to listen to input separately word by word and infer the content of discourse, making it impossible to combine many pieces of information to construct a perfect understanding of the discourse.

Therefore, it is necessary for us to bear in mind that listeners' working memory capacity could be different from ours, and to modify the speed and the levels of language at which we deliver our speech, bearing in mind the characteristics of listeners – their individual differences relating to age, relationship to the language (native or non-native language), etc.

**See also:** Communicative language learning; Language laboratories; Schema and script theory; Skills and knowledge in language learning; Speaking

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YASUYUKI SAKUMA

## Literary texts

The use of literary texts in the foreign language classroom is disputed. Those who are interested in literature argue that literary texts should not simply be used as springboards for foreign language learning. In their opinion, foreign language learning should remain subordinated to the study of literature. For those primarily interested in learning

foreign languages, literary texts are unsuitable for several reasons. First, the language of literary texts is not important for mastering practical situations in the foreign culture. Furthermore, the **reading** of literary texts is often class-related and thus presents a disadvantage for lower-class students. Finally, it is not motivating for foreign language learners to have to identify **stylistic** and structural characteristics of literary texts. Yet, is such a critique of literary texts adequate? What is their potential for foreign language learning and education?

### Literary texts in the foreign language classroom

Before turning to the justifications, it might be necessary to say what is meant by literary texts. What is characteristic of them? What distinguishes them from other texts? There are critics who claim that literary texts are marked by a special use of language. Yet others argue that it is impossible to distinguish between literary and non-literary language (see Lott, 1988; Gilroy and Parkinson, 1997). Another attempt to distinguish literary from non-literary texts does not start with the text itself but with our **attitudes** towards it. Sinclair distinguishes between a fictional and a nonfictional attitude. In nonfictional talk we assume 'that the speaker or writer vouches for the accuracy of what he utters, and that he is in a position to do so'. In fictional talk, however, the speaker or writer is free to arrange his or her world. From such a distinction we can infer the following consequences for reading literary texts: 'We are no longer concerned with absorbing and evaluating the individual statements in direct line with our experience, but instead are constantly placing ourselves in direct relation to the events portrayed, identifying with characters, reacting to what happens as if we ourselves might have been involved. We are not evaluating the truth or falsehood of the statements because they are offered to us as not factually relevant' (Sinclair, 1982: 18). We shall see below Rosenblatt's distinction between 'efferent' and 'aesthetic' reading, which is also based not on inherent characteristics of texts but on our attitude towards them.

It is difficult to come up with a general definition of literature if one considers the range of texts –

from fables, fairy tales, short stories and poems, to plays and novels – and the various disciplines – **psychology, anthropology, linguistics**, literary history and literary criticism – which highlight different aspects of literary texts. The definition of what literature is and what it can achieve becomes further complicated when we take the learner's abilities into consideration. In the context of foreign language learning, four ways of justifying the use of literature are important.

### ***Contribution to foreign language learning***

Literary texts in the foreign language classroom must contribute to language learning. Therefore the question of justification seems to be simple. If students enjoy reading literary texts and like to speak and write about them, they are justified. If there are other pedagogical goals involved in reading literature, they are welcome but not necessary. Duff and Maley seem to have such a justification in mind when they write in the introduction to *Literature*: 'The primary aim of our approach is quite simply to use literary texts as a resource ... for stimulating language activities ... What we are interested in is engaging the students interactively with the text, with fellow students, and with the teacher in the performance of tasks involving literary texts' (Duff and Maley, 1990: 5).

If emphasis is placed solely on practical situations such as buying a ticket, ordering a meal, or asking for directions, students will not be sufficiently motivated to learn a foreign language. They need interesting topics to read, write and talk about. Literary texts offer such topics. Yet it is not only the content of literary texts which makes them valuable for foreign language learning but the possibility they offer for developing a variety of tasks which also include creative **writing** in various forms. If literary texts play an important role in the foreign language classroom today, it is mainly due to the tasks which have been developed in connection with literary texts for **beginners** (Ellis and Brewster, 1991; Garvie, 1990) and Wright, 1995, 1997), beginners and intermediate learners (Morgan and Rinvulcri, 1983) and intermediate and advanced learners (Carter and Long, 1991; Collie and Slater, 1987, 1994; Collie and Porter Ladousse, 1996; Duff and Maley, 1989, 1990; Lach-Newinsky

and Seletzky, 1990; Lazar, 1993; and McRae and Boardman, 1984a, 1984b).

### ***Stylistic analysis of literary texts***

Those who argue for a stylistic-linguistic analysis of literary texts question the belief that we learn foreign languages by reading and talking about interesting topics. We must gain an insight into the use of language if we want to improve the learner's 'expressive ability' (Sinclair, 1982: 19). A criticism expressed by Bernard Lott is that the teaching of literature often concentrates on the topics of literary texts and the biographical and historical background knowledge, but does not give a thorough analysis of its language: 'when the text itself is reached it is generally treated in a rather perfunctory way, and its distinctive nature as literature and as a display of language put to special uses, seems often to be lost sight of' (Lott, 1988: 9).

The stylistic analysis of literary texts can unite literary studies and foreign language learning: 'For teachers such methods may result in literature lessons which are also language lessons and language lessons which are almost indistinguishable from the study of literary texts' (Carter, 1982: 50). The stylistic analysis will also increase the learners' **motivation** because they will enjoy reading literary texts when they become aware of how language is used in them. This insight is an essential presupposition for appreciating literary texts.

Yet critics of the stylistic approach doubt that one will learn a foreign language by analysing the style of literary texts and that a stylistic analysis will be conducive to the learners' enjoyment of literary texts. Gower asserts that stylistic analysis turns the literary text into an object and reduces the distinction between analysis and reading: 'The impression is given of literature as an object, something inert, something you do something with, something that exemplifies the language system, to – well – analyse. What it *isn't*, is something you read and something which has an effect on you' (Gower, 1986: 126). Stylisticians claim that their methods are objective but Fish points out that the stylistic features only make sense if readers attribute meaning to them. Hence the meaning which results from the interaction between reader and text

is necessarily subjective: 'meaning is not the property of a timeless formalism, but something acquired in the context of an activity' (Fish, 1980: 89).

Yet one should not overlook what a stylistic analysis can achieve. It is often combined with the tasks mentioned in the previous section and uses justifications for reading literary texts discussed in the section that follows. Impressive examples of stylistic analysis are **Widdowson's** *Stylistics and the Teaching of Literature* and *Practical Stylistics: an approach to poetry*. **Poetry** demands from its readers special attention to the language, but this is only the first step in reading; the next one is that readers have 'to find relevance in the way language is textually patterned'. Since they have to 'make poems their own by individual response', the result is a variety of divergent interpretations (see Widdowson, 1992: 56). A variety of aspects which are relevant for teaching literature in the foreign language classroom are covered in the anthology *Literature and Language Teaching*, edited by Brumfit and Carter (2000).

### ***Aesthetic-pedagogical justifications***

One form of justification can be called 'aesthetic-pedagogical' in order to indicate that it is not imposed on literary texts from the outside but is developed from an analysis of the aesthetic experience. Bleich (1975, 1978), Fish (1980), Iser (1987) and many others have described how readers are involved in making sense of the text. Reading as interaction stresses that the reader is not studying or analysing an object while he is reading, but is moving in the text. Sartre (1986) defines reading as 'guided creation' (*création dirigée*) and points out that readers put their prior experiences as well as their thoughts and feelings at the text's disposal. For Mukařovský and Dewey the literary text is only 'an artefact' or 'an art product' which needs the reader to turn it into an 'aesthetic object' or 'a work of art'. 'Without an act of recreation the object is not perceived as a work of art' (Dewey, 1958: 54; cf. Bredella, 2010). In a similar way, Bakhtin writes: 'One must enter as a creator into what is seen, heard, or pronounced' (Bakhtin, 1990: 305). But for Bakhtin it is not enough to be

involved. It is also necessary to reply to what we have experienced in understanding the work of art.

I have to answer with my own life for what I have experienced and understood in art, so that everything I have experienced and understood would not remain ineffectual in my life. But answerability entails guilt, or liability to blame.  
(Bakhtin, 1990: 1)

Without the answer the reception of literary texts would be an irresponsible act because literary texts intend to convince us of a certain world view and some might attempt to make us see others as inferior. But even we identify with the world view of the literary text it is our decision to do so. This is meant when Bakhtin speaks of answerability.

With reference to Dewey's aesthetics, Rosenblatt distinguishes between 'aesthetic' and 'efferent' reading. The latter mode directs our attention to the information given in a text. This is an important form of reading, but it ignores our interaction with the text. When we read aesthetically, however, we are attentive to what we experience while we are reading. As already indicated, aesthetic reading is not based on characteristics inherent in the text but on an attitude towards it. Each text can be read 'efferently' or 'aesthetically'. Yet literary texts merit aesthetic reading more than other texts do (see Rosenblatt, 1981). Aesthetic reading is pedagogically significant because it allows the learner to explore the thoughts and feelings elicited by the text. It comprises both involvement and detachment.

For Bruner, literary texts are important because they direct our attention to the 'narrative mode of thought' which is neglected in our culture. This narrative mode is comprised of 'the landscape of action', which includes 'agent, intention or goal, situation, instrument', and 'the landscape of consciousness', which highlights what 'those involved in the action know, think, or feel' (Bruner, 1986: 14). In stories our world is 'subjectivised' because the intentions, feelings and thoughts of the characters become important, and it is 'subjunctivised' because we experience the world from different perspectives so that we can no longer be so sure of what is right and wrong. When we read about the

experiences of others, we may also ask ourselves what we might have felt, thought and done in their situation. Therefore the reading of literature can touch the deepest layers of our personality (see Mukařovský, 1979: 75). The emphasis on the significance of the experiences presented in literary texts for the learner's personality is important because texts used in foreign language classrooms are often shallow.

### ***The significance of literary texts for intercultural understanding***

Literary texts are significant for intercultural understanding in a number of ways. They contribute to intercultural understanding because they encourage readers to imagine a world different from their own and to respond to it. The response comprises two perspectives: The perspective from within prevents us from subsuming others under our categories, schemata and values and enables us to see others with their own eyes. The perspective from without prevents us from accepting uncritically the others' views and values and enables us to decide whether we approve or disapprove of them. This underscores that intercultural understanding is dialogical. Understandings of others cannot be separated from understanding ourselves (see Bredella, 2002 and 2010).

Literary texts can prevent us from regarding others as mere products of their cultures because they present them as individuals who are able to reflect on their situation, distance themselves to some extent from their culture, negotiate contradictory values and find creative solutions to their problems. In the aesthetic experience we regard characters not as objects but as subjects with whom we can identify.

Literary texts produce different readings with different readers. A conversation about such different readings in the foreign language classroom can make learners aware of their prior knowledge, their expectations and the **stereotypes** they bring to the text. Thus they can become conscious of what guides them in the background, a critical insight essential for intercultural understanding.

Literary texts depict, for example, what it means to be a child, a woman, or a member of a minority,

and what it means to be in love or to experience death in the foreign culture. Such an understanding of literary texts opens up a new perspective for the relationship between literary texts and **cultural studies** or *Landeskunde*. Of special significance for **intercultural** understanding are post-colonial and minority texts, because these often dramatise intercultural conflicts and reveal causes for misunderstanding and misrecognition of others.

### **The reading of literary texts: between guidance and creativity**

There are basically three different attitudes readers can take towards a literary text. Readers find meaning in the text (objective paradigm); create it under the guidance of the text (interactive paradigm); or create it according to their own needs (subjective paradigm). These attitudes have far-reaching consequences for determining what a good reader is and what the educational goals of reading are. In accordance with the objective paradigm, the 'good reader' concentrates on what the text is saying and successfully fends off all other obtrusive thoughts and associations. Yet from the perspective of the interactive paradigm we cannot understand a text without prior knowledge, without being attentive to associations and connotations, without supplementing what the text left unsaid, without developing expectations and hypotheses and without putting our emotions at the text's disposal. We must be involved as a creator and co-author and respond to what we have understood (see Aesthetic-pedagogical justifications).

Proponents of the subjective paradigm devalue the text in order to regard readers as writers. For them the text itself is nothing more than black spots on white paper. Bleich writes: 'To say that perceptual processes are different in each person is to say that reading is a wholly subjective process and that the nature of what is perceived is determined by the rules of the personality of the perceiver' (Bleich, 1975: 3). We may believe that we have created the meaning under the guidance of the text, but in reality we have created it in accordance with our needs. In a similar way, Fish argues that either everything or nothing is determined in a text, and

favours the second possibility (see Fish, 1989). Yet, according to him, it is not the personality of the reader but the interpretive strategies of the community which determines the meaning of the text. Feminist, Marxist, deconstructionist or other such communities define how a text should be read and what is important in it. For their members it does not matter whether they read a poem by Milton or by Eliot; what matters for them is that their basic presuppositions and interpretive strategies are confirmed. For Fish there are no specific texts: 'the notions of the "same" and "different" texts are fictions' (Fish, 1984: 181). Fish welcomes this freedom of the interpretive community pedagogically and politically because it liberates readers from the authority of the text.

Yet the objective paradigm as well as the subjunctive paradigm are problematic in educational terms. The first ignores the reader's activities in creating meaning, and the second one is in danger of becoming solipsistic when readers use literary texts only as a confirmation of their psychological needs and their interpretive strategies.

### **Creative, text-based and response-based tasks**

Creative tasks are important for improving reading competence because they activate the students' prior knowledge, which will help them to become familiar with the topic and to gain criteria for discussing and evaluating it (see Elliott, 1990). Yet they may result in using the text merely as a springboard, which will prevent them from becoming aware of the cultural differences and the specific world view of the text. Collie and Slater have developed a wide variety of creative tasks for Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. One of them is a role play: 'Imagine that on the way home, the Chief Officer decides to investigate what really happened on the island' (Collie and Slater, 1987: 161).

Kramsch criticises this role play because it is based on the assumption that the officer is interested in finding out the truth, whereas the ending of the novel suggests the opposite. The officer is not interested in finding out what happened on the island and is waiting for things to return to their

proper order. For Kramsch the main justification for using literary texts in the foreign language classroom is 'literature's ability to represent the particular voice of a writer among the many voices of his or her community and thus to appeal to the particular in the reader'. Yet some creative tasks counteract rather than support such a goal (Kramsch, 1993: 131). Close reading and creative tasks, however, do not exclude each other if learners compare the message of the role play with that of the ending of the novel.

Besides text-based and creative tasks, we must consider a third category: response-based tasks. It has often been stated that learners do not like poetry. There are several reasons for their dislike, but one is the result of our teaching methodology. Poems are difficult to understand. Their meanings are often considered to be 'elliptical and illusive' (Widdowson, 1992: 11). Yet instead of taking this illusiveness into consideration our methodology explains it away if we come up with only one correct interpretation. If the complex experience of making sense is not part of the meaning of the poem, then learners often feel frustrated and wonder why the poet did not tell them directly what he or she wanted to say. Another problematic approach is to ask learners what they think of the poem after the first reading. They need time to respond. Therefore Benton et al. (1988) invited learners to read a poem several times and make a note of associations and comments in each reading. In a next step they asked the students to talk about their 'story of reading'. From such a perspective the experience of making sense is no longer ignored but becomes part of the meaning of the poem.

Hirvela proceeds in a similar way. With reference to *This is just to say* by William Carlos Williams, he suggests the following questions: 'As you moved from one reading of the poem to another, how did your approach to reading it change? What did you do differently? And what did these changes in approach contribute to your understanding of the poem?' (Hirvela, 1996: 133). Hirvela rejects text-based tasks because they reduce aesthetic reading to efferent reading. We should no longer pay attention to 'the author's text' – this turns reading into 'a passive activity' – but regard



only 'the reader's text' (Hirvela, 1996: 130). However, his approach is one-sided, for we must be attentive to the particularity of the author's text *and* to our responses to it. An important text-based question could be: How would you describe the relationship between the speaker and the person addressed? Hirvela separates what is related. Rosenblatt distinguishes between 'evocation' and 'response', and illustrates them with the following example: 'In our transaction with Dickens's text *Great Expectations*, we, for example, evoke the character of Pip and Joe. We participate in their relationship and at the same time we respond with approval or disapproval to their words and actions' (Rosenblatt, 1985: 39). If we no longer considered the author's text but only the reader's, we would turn the interactive paradigm into the subjective paradigm with its problematic pedagogical implications.

Literary texts in the foreign language classroom are not only important for foreign language learning but also provide it with significant educational goals.

**See also:** Cultural studies; Drama; Literary theory; Literary texts and intercultural understanding; Poetry; Reading; Reading methods; Syllabus and curriculum design

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## Literary texts and intercultural understanding

Literary texts from various cultures are read and enjoyed by readers from other cultures. One does not have to be English in order to understand plays, poems and novels by English authors. Literary texts can extend our sympathies, break down **stereotypes** and prejudices and make us sensitive to the needs of others. In Rorty's opinion it is difficult to maintain the belief that others are inferior or inhuman if we see the world from their perspective and experience the fact that they suffer as we do when they are humiliated and treated unjustly. Thus literary texts can promote the respect and recognition of others (see Rorty, 1991: 204ff.; 1993). There are however some objections to literary texts.

### Stereotypes and other issues

Literary texts, it has been argued, do not break down stereotypes, they confirm them. Even great literary texts such as Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* have lately been accused of propagating degrading and contemptible images of Africans and Indians (Achebe, 1978; Bredella, 2010). A further objection says that it is problematic to expect literary texts to inform us about foreign cultures because this leads us to regard behaviours and events which are only meant to be idiosyncratic as typical of the foreign culture. We also have to take into consideration the fact that actions, events, places and entire cultures take on symbolic meaning in literary texts. **Native speakers** will put them into their proper perspective, whereas foreign-language learners might take them literally (see Echeruo, 1978: 8). Often European novels, for example, use Oriental and African cultures to dramatise European conflicts. Africa, then, appears as the dark continent without history and culture in contrast to Europe, which stands for history, progress and civilisation. Such representations do not illuminate African cultures, they only indicate Europe's pre-occupations. For Chinua Achebe it is an expression of arrogance and ethnocentrism when a whole continent is merely regarded as a stage for Eur-

opean conflicts (see Achebe, 1978: 13). Yet even these texts are important for intercultural understanding because they highlight how we often approach foreign cultures and how we can be made aware of the inherent problems in intercultural understanding. We regard as typical what is only accidental; we project aspects of our culture onto the foreign culture; we construct contrasts between them and us which ignore what cultures have in common.

### Postcolonial and minority literature

Postcolonial and minority literature often depicts intercultural encounters. In *The Empire Writes Back*, Ashcroft et al. emphasise the importance of postcolonial literature for understanding our contemporary world:

More than three quarters of the people living in the world of today have had their lives shaped by the experience of colonialism. It is easy to see how important this has been in the political and economic spheres, but in general influence on the perceptual framework of contemporary peoples is often less evident. Literature offers one of the most important ways in which these new perceptions are expressed and it is in their writing ... that the day-to-day realities experienced by colonised people have been most powerfully encoded and so profoundly influential.

(Ashcroft et al., 1989: 1)

Postcolonial literature highlights a general function of literary texts which makes it relevant for intercultural understanding: It gives certain people a voice and explores how they experience the world so that others can understand what they think and feel. For Nussbaum minority literature is important because it enables its readers 'to identify sympathetically with individual members of marginalized or oppressed groups within our own society, learning both to see the world, for a time, through their eyes and then reflecting as spectators on the meaning of what we have seen' (Nussbaum, 1995: 92). Literary texts allow us to see others as individuals and become aware of their fears and hopes.

One should avoid making general demands on literature. Nevertheless the following criteria for an

award for children's literature set up by the Office of Multicultural Affairs in Australia (quoted in Stephens, 1996: 2) states what we can find in many multicultural texts. It is said that the books should:

1. include insights into a non-Anglo culture within Australia;
2. present a comparison/contrast of an Anglo culture with another;
3. depict an active, conscious integration of cultures;
4. include insights into racism or clash of cultures;
5. include insights into issues of social justice/social harmony;
6. include insights into the immigration experience/loneliness/alienation.

An excellent book which won this award is James Maloney's *Gracey* (see Bredella, 2002: 365–375).

When foreign language learners read post-colonial and minority literature they are confronted with intercultural understanding on two levels. The texts themselves often deal with misrecognition of cultures and can make the learners aware of the complexity and significance of intercultural understanding. On another level the learners themselves have to practise intercultural understanding when they explore how they respond to these texts.

There is an inherent tension in postcolonial and minority discourse about literature. For one group it should depict the achievements of the colonised and minority cultures in order to make their members proud of their culture and to refute the degrading stereotypes imposed on them. Yet writers often criticise their own culture and are therefore accused of betraying it and confirming the stereotypes of the dominant culture (see Bredella, 2002). Some writers explicitly refuse to praise their own culture. When film-writer Hanif Kureishi was asked 'Why don't you tell us good stories about ourselves, as well as good/bad stories? Why are your stories mixed about ourselves?', he said: 'There is sometimes too simple a demand for positive images. Positive images sometimes require cheering fictions – the writer as Public Relations Officer. And I'm glad to say that the more I looked at *My Beautiful Laundrette*, the less positive images I could see' (quoted in Hall, 1991: 60). The

debate about the functions of literary texts in post-colonial and minority discourse makes us aware of a central problem in intercultural understanding. On the one hand the "politics of recognition" has made clear that people suffer and feel humiliated when they are regarded as inferior because they belong to a certain culture, religion, race, and nation and internalize the negative images of themselves. For Taylor it is the thesis of the politics of recognition 'that our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the *mis*-recognition of others, and so a person or group can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves' (Taylor, 1994: 25). Hence it is necessary to fight for recognition, and intercultural understanding gains its relevance correcting the demeaning or contemptible images. But this fight for recognition might become racist if it demands "cheering fictions" and regards other cultures as inferior. It is understandable that postcolonial and minority cultures demand stories of self-assertion but they must also take a self-critical attitude if intercultural understanding is to be achieved. Literary texts contribute to such a self-critical attitude because they present others as members of their cultures *and* as individuals in their complexity.

### Cultural criticism and intercultural understanding

Critics, who are sceptical of using literature for intercultural understanding, point out that literary texts often criticise their respective cultures. They are inappropriate for intercultural understanding because they prevent learners from being interested in such cultures and because they encourage ethnocentric attitudes. Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* makes learners aware of the importance placed on 'positive thinking', 'being popular' and 'being liked' in the American culture, but at the same time the play reveals how illusory and misleading these values are. Ethnocentric readings of literary texts such as *Death of a Salesman* ignore that they are part of the cultures they criticise and that we are often interested in a foreign culture because of its literature that explores conflicts

which are also relevant for our own culture. We regard literary texts as models which can illuminate the readers' world. Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, which deals with events in Salem of 1622, is a model for understanding the McCarthy era in the 1950 for the American audience but it might also be a model for understanding the phenomena of finding a scapegoat in the Nazi era (Bredella, 1992). Miller's *All My Sons* was a great success in China in the 1980s, not because it says something about the United States, but because it says something about corruption in China to a Chinese audience. Such a use of literary texts has far-reaching consequences for the concept of intercultural understanding. It prevents us from defining ourselves in contrast to the foreign culture, rather they encourage us to discover *our own* problems in *their* culture and *their* problems in *ours*. This counteracts the tendency to project onto the foreign culture what is regarded as negative in our own culture.

### Collective and individual identity

Intercultural understanding is the essential goal. Yet such an approach is sometimes in danger of reducing others to their collective identity and ignoring that they are not only Chinese, German or English but have a personal history and can be fathers or mothers, sons or daughters, members of a party and a club, etc. Kwame Anthony Appiah points out that minorities must fight for the recognition of their collective identity, but they should not prescribe 'too tightly' what it means to be a member of this collective identity: 'It is at this point that someone who takes **autonomy** seriously will want to ask whether we have not replaced one kind of tyranny with another. If I had to choose between Uncle Tom and Black Power, I would, of course, choose the latter. But I would like not to have to choose. I would like other options' (Appiah, 1996: 99). We must also consider that many people have multicultural identities so that they cannot be reduced to one collective identity. Kureishi seems to enjoy that his film *My Beautiful Laundrette* undermines any attempt to reduce the characters to one collective identity:

If you have seen *My Beautiful Laundrette* you will know that it is the most transgressive text there is. Anybody who is Black, who tries to identify with it, runs across the fact that the central characters of this narrative are two gay men. What is more, anyone who wants to separate the identities into their clearly separate points will discover that one of these Black gay men is white and the other of these Black gay men is brown.

(Hall, 1991: 60)

Of course, one should also see that many characters in postcolonial and minority literature attempt to develop an identity from the different influences they have been exposed to.

### Reflexivity and creativity

The situation of reception makes it possible that we are involved *and* are able to observe being involved. According to Louise M. Rosenblatt aesthetic reading means that 'the reader's selective attention is focused on *what he is living through during the reading event*. He is attending *both* to what the verbal signs designate *and* to the qualitative overtones of the ideas, feelings, images, situations, characters that he is working out under the guidance of the text' (Rosenblatt, 1981: 21–22). For Turner literary texts are important for intra- and intercultural understanding because they encourage their recipients to negotiate their self-descriptions: 'No society is without some mode of meta-commentary – Geertz' illuminating phrase for a 'story a group tells itself about itself' or in the case of theatre, a play a society acts about itself – not only a reading of its experiences but an interpretative enactment of its experience' (Turner, 1982: 104). The recipients as spectators are in a privileged situation 'where [they] are allowed to think about how they think, about the terms in which they conduct their thinking, or to feel about how they feel in daily life' (Turner, 1988: 102). In the short story 'The Discipline' by Austin Clarke, the protagonist, a Barbadian immigrant to Canada, is accused of child abuse. In court a social worker maintains that the immigrant's violent behaviour is a result of slavery. This explanation deeply hurts

the protagonist because it ignores his individual life with its fears and hopes as well as the lives of his grandmother and mother (Clarke, 1996: 21). Ironically, the protagonist's outburst against such a degrading explanation of his behaviour is interpreted by the judge as a confirmation of the social worker's theory and has him removed from the courtroom. This short story presents us with a situation that enables us to reflect about intercultural understanding as it is impossible in real life.

The anthropologist Anthony P. Cohen sees the danger of **anthropology** and sociology in reducing people to objects and ignoring their self-consciousness. Therefore he recommends approaching foreign cultures like a reader of literary texts who identifies with characters and uses their own experiences of the world to understand them: 'that is also how I begin to do fieldwork among others, others whom my own self-experience and introspection tell me cannot and must not be treated as mere ciphers of a collective and cultural condition' (Cohen, 1994: 188). This should lead us to reconsider our concepts of culture. Culture does not determine and programme people's actions but offers them a frame of reference in which they have to make their decisions and act.

The recognition of the other as an individual is necessary for intercultural understanding. In 'Chinese Talk', an episode from John Steinbeck's *East of Eden* (1995), Lee, a Chinese-American, who was born in the USA and attended the University of California for several years, has to behave like an illiterate 'Chinaman' because Chinese-Americans are regarded as unassimilable. This episode between Lee and Samuel took place at the end of the nineteenth century. A hundred years later Maxine Hong Kingston comes to a similar conclusion when analysing reviews of her book *The Woman Warrior*. Many critics praised her book because it presented the unbridgeable gap between East and West and turned Chinese-Americans into exotic strangers. For Kingston such an emphasis on unbridgeable contrasts justifies stereotypes and ignores our common humanness: 'To say we are inscrutable, mysterious, exotic denies our common humanness, because it says that we are so different from a regular human being that we are by our nature intrinsically unknowable' (Kingston, 1982:

57). The dialectic between the recognition of differences and commonalities is also stressed by Bharati Mukherjee when she says that the one-sided emphasis on multicultural differences 'has often led to the dehumanisation of the different' (Mukherjee, 1997: 459).

### Literary texts and cultural knowledge

Literary texts can contribute to intercultural understanding, but learners also need cultural knowledge in order to understand them. When Delanoy read the short story 'Come to Mecca' with Austrian students, a great number of them could not make sense of what they were reading because of a lack of cultural knowledge. For him it is important that teachers become aware of the cultural, linguistic and aesthetic barriers that their learners will have to cope with (Delanoy, 1993). It is, however, difficult at times to decide whether learners' difficulties with literary texts are due to a lack of cultural knowledge or due to aesthetic barriers. When learners were asked what would have helped them to understand Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* they replied 'knowledge about the Chinese culture'. At the same time it can be demonstrated that the reading difficulties are not so much due to a lack of cultural knowledge but rather to aesthetic challenges which reflect the book's protagonist's uncertainties about how to understand Chinese culture (Bredella, 2002: 352–364). This becomes obvious when we compare *The Woman Warrior* with Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*. Both novels describe similar events, but in the case of the latter novel students rarely ask for cultural background knowledge.

Cultural background knowledge is important, but we should not overestimate it. As **Widdowson** points out, 'there is always some disparity of realities in human communication of any kind. The meanings we achieve are always approximate and never complete'. More than this, in intercultural understanding we are always incompletely informed. Widdowson explicitly rejects the belief that we must provide students with the necessary cultural knowledge before reading a literary text: 'It is not a precondition but a consequence of interpretation' (Widdowson, 1992: 115). In a similar way, Barbara

Herrnstein Smith argues that the provision of cultural knowledge will turn the literary text which is open to different interpretations into a 'determinate' one (Smith, 1978: 34ff). It could be a worthwhile experience for students to develop different interpretations and pursue how specific cultural knowledge changes their interpretations.

In *Teaching Multicultural Literature*, Reed Way Dasenbrock points out that we must learn to ask ourselves when reading multicultural texts why we are not told what certain things mean: 'In other words, the teacher leads the class through the experience of constructing a passing theory; to do otherwise, to annotate the unannotated text, would be to prevent the students from experiencing the meaning of the work. To reverse T.S. Eliot, they would have had the meaning but missed the experience' (Dasenbrock, 1992: 44). Yet we must also take into consideration that the foreign language learner might not know what authors themselves take for granted. Teachers must decide what cultural knowledge their students need for a fruitful interaction with the text. Therefore we should not play off literary understanding and cultural knowledge against each other but should explore how they can supplement one another.

### The significance of literary texts for intercultural understanding

There is an inherent connection between intercultural understanding and the reception of literary texts. Nussbaum writes: 'Narrative art has the power to make us see the lives of the different with more than a casual tourist's interest – with involvement and sympathetic understanding' (Nussbaum, 1998: 88). She points out that in understanding stories we learn more about the thoughts, emotions, attitudes, and values of others than in personal encounters because writers are experts in articulating them: 'It is for this reason that literature is so urgently important for the citizen, as an expansion of sympathies that real life cannot cultivate sufficiently. It is the political promise of literature that it can transport us, while remaining ourselves, into the life of another, revealing similarities but also profound differences between the life and thought of that other and myself and making them compre-

hensible, or at least more nearly comprehensible' (Nussbaum, 1998: 111). In the 'Redemption from Egoism' (and one could add 'Redemption from Ethnocentrism') Rorty argues that novels enable us to experience what appears to be meaningless or appalling from the outer perspective as meaningful and attractive from the inner perspective. Even if we do not approve of the others' self-descriptions, our knowledge about them makes it possible to 'have a more educated, developed and sophisticated moral outlook' (Rorty, 2003: 9).

**See also:** Acculturation; Cross-cultural psychology; Cultural studies; Intercultural competence; *Interkulturelle Didaktik*; Literary texts; Literary theory and literature teaching; Reading

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LOTHAR BREDELLA

## Literary theory and literature teaching

Literary theories collectively have generated new definitions of the **literary text**. The first theoretical movements in the 1960s, often based on **linguistics**, established literary studies as separate from traditional philological studies and consequently language instruction. Since the late 1980s efforts have been made to integrate literary and language studies once again. Specifically, in their mature form, **stylistics**, structuralism, feminist theory and reader response theories have provided new ways of looking at literary texts. In addition, certain theories of language based on metaphor provide a more extensive definition and usage of the 'literary' in the classroom.



## Historical context

Before World War Two, **reading** and **translating** literary texts constituted a dominant approach to language instruction. After the war, literary studies tended to separate literature from language instruction and treated it as an isolated object of study. In France and other European countries, the *explication de texte*, or close, formalised analysis of the text, demanded a reader who was thoroughly knowledgeable in the language and who had a strong grounding in literary history. The practice of close reading also implied that the text had one meaning which the reader was expected to decode. 'New Criticism', as practised in the United States and Great Britain, also demanded sophisticated readers who would look upon the text as a 'well wrought urn' (the title of Cleanth Brooks's famous book of 1947), a precious object outside the realm of everyday experience. The canon guaranteed that literary works would be regarded as part of High Culture, separated from language instruction and popular forms of writing.

## Literary and linguistic theories

Although a number of origins might be found for the new literary paradigm, a logical place is in **structural linguistic** studies, not literature, and in the pioneering work of Roman Jakobson. Two of his articles have profoundly influenced literary thought over the past thirty years. In 'Linguistics and Poetics' (1960) Jakobson proposed that language was composed of six functions: referential, phatic (making contact, as in 'Lend me your ears!'), emotive, conative (the imperative, as in 'Get out!'), metalinguistic (commenting on language) and poetic. Jakobson defined the poetic as metaphor, parallels, repetition, and patterns of similar sounds, or phonetics, over meaning, as in **poetry**. In other words, the poetic for Jakobson is found in those moments in poems, advertisements and everyday discussion where sound leads to meaning. It is significant that he selected examples from the world of everyday language. 'I Like Ike' and 'Oh, that horrible Harry!' stand out, because sounds determined the selection of words. For Jakobson, the poetic function is part of the real

world. In the second article, 'Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasia' (1956), Jakobson was even bolder in his search for a global definition of language. Based on psychological studies (which today would be questioned by professional psychologists), he proposed that language is formed by two complementary processes: metaphor and metonymy. By metaphor, Jakobson meant relationships of resemblance, as well as mental processes of replacement. A banal example would be to refer to a 'bear' market, where the word 'bear' replaces a description of a falling stock market, where profits are devoured and an animalistic force takes over. By metonymy, Jakobson proposed contiguity, either spatial or causal. Spatially, he meant both syntax (the arrangement of words in a sentence) and semantics: the description of various rooms in a house, for example (spatial), or the causal chains that constitute a novel ('he shot the policeman, ran away in his car, was forced to rob a bank ...'). Not content to limit himself to linguistics, Jakobson strongly suggested that various literary genres and film techniques are governed by the rules of metaphor and metonymy. Although criticised as an over-simplification (as is the theory of the binary brain), Jakobson's theory has become an integral part of literary and film studies, as well as significant linguistic research (see Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, and Lakoff, 1987).

One offshoot and direct reaction to Jakobson's theories was the so-called 'New Stylistics'. **Stylistics** as a practice had existed well before World War Two in various forms. Charles Bally in France, who studied the stylistic properties of language in general, and Leo Spitzer in Germany and later the United States, who concentrated on philological textual analysis, were representative names of two divergent yet over-lapping schools. But it was not until the publication of *Style and Structure in Literature* in 1975 (edited by Roger Fowler) that the New Stylistics took shape. Bringing together critics from Great Britain and the United States, the authors set themselves apart from Jakobson by refusing to see literary studies as subordinate to linguistic studies. Instead, they sought to examine literary texts with 'concepts drawn from linguistics and from the linguistic-like sciences treating the structure of communicative systems' (Fowler,

1975: 5). They fully respected the uniqueness of literary texts and refused to create generalisations or abstractions.

Concurrent with the publication of *Style and Structure in Literature*, Widdowson published *Stylistics and the Teaching of Literature*. The book stands as a felicitous marriage of theory and practice. Among various examples of possible exercises, Widdowson juxtaposes different types of discourse (a person's vital statistics, adjectives describing a person, contrastive sets of adjectives) to teach students to infer from context and to analyse the uniqueness of each description. The aim is to prepare students to analyse literary texts in relation to other discourses. Thus the literary stands next to the linguistic, while retaining its individuality.

While the New Stylistics sought to retain the text as a unique object, the deconstruction and dismantling of the literary text as precious object occurred most notably in France after 1960 with the Structuralist triumph. Many names could be cited, but the career of Roland Barthes best describes the shift from literature as an isolated object to the study of literary texts as part of a more global sign system. After his first published work on Racine, the major classical French playwright, Barthes expanded his field of analysis to include almost all aspects of modern life, including automobiles, advertisements, fashion, and even wrestling in *Mythologies* (1986) and *Image, Music, Text* (1977). Recurring ideas in his work which have a direct impact on literature in the language classroom include:

- All encoded systems, whether verbal language, cinema, literature or fashion, are at the same time denotative and connotative. The word 'red' denotes a specific colour, while also connoting (suggesting) danger, passion or love. An advertisement for perfume denotes a specific brand of perfume, while the colour illustration and the words can connote a special world of sensuality and desire.
- No language system is 'natural', although the fashion world, advertisements and newspapers try to make it appear so. Even spoken language is not 'natural' because speakers know when to

switch **vocabulary**, syntax, and rhythm as the situation demands. No one speaks the same way in a job interview and then with a friend over a beer. Thus the literary text, if studied next to other sign systems, is no more artificial or 'inauthentic' than the rest. For purposes of the classroom, it is as **authentic** as any other discourse.

- Literary texts do not have one meaning intended by the author, as previous criticism declared. Literary texts have multiple meanings. The reader is confronted with a variety of avenues to follow and meanings to create. Rather than representing a Grecian urn, the literary text offers to the reader rhetorical avenues to follow.
- Reading is a process in which the reader engages with the text. The text itself is defined by its interaction with the reader, and, as Barthes declared, every detail has a meaning, or nothing has a meaning. Put into concrete terms of the classroom, the most insignificant questions are significant and can point to major aspects of the text.
- Reading is a pleasure. Until 1975, when Barthes published his slim volume *Le Plaisir du Texte* (The Pleasure of the Text), academics looked upon reading as a very serious business. Barthes recalled that literature has existed to be enjoyed and that reading should be a pleasure. By extension, as the Italian theoretician Gianni Rodari (1996) sought to show, literary texts are part of pleasurable games of the imagination, where children enjoy creating verbal associations which become the foundation for imaginary stories. The pleasure of reading is closely related to the pleasures of creating (for example, generating stories from associations created around the words 'pound', 'mound', 'sound' and 'found').

The Structuralists represented a major shift in literary theory, but they did not fully bridge the gap between literature and language within the academic hierarchy. While some texts by Barthes were intended for the general public, most of his contemporaries upheld the view that literary studies were for an élite. Finally, the structuralist movement was for the most part a male movement. While Barthes, Derrida (actually a post-structuralist)

and others represented a revolution within the academy, they, like most of their colleagues in other countries, represented a male reading of texts and did not problematise the exclusion of women writers.

The feminist movement forced recognition of neglected women authors, and thus enlarged the corpus while radically shifting its focus. At the risk of over-simplifying, the feminists have made a major contribution to the redefinition of literature. First, they broke down the walls of the canon, which concentrated on male writers. By demanding that texts by women be taught, feminists demanded that the criteria for 'great literature' be rethought. A debate over 'feminine' writing has led to the recognition that there is not one standard rule of excellence. In large part because of the initial feminist efforts, more marginalised literatures, such as French francophone writers (Africa and the Caribbean) as well as South American authors, have the audience they deserve in the academy.

However, one cannot really talk of a single feminist movement; rather, varieties of the same impulse grew up in the Western world. Catherine R. Stimpson outlines how these movements have redefined our reading practices. We are now sensitive to representations of **gender** and patterns of masculinity and femininity. Feminists have demanded that we be conscious of the 'patterns of masculine dominance' in literature and criticism, and that we redraw new 'maps' of female representation in texts (Stimpson, 1992: 251)

Reader response theory, as advocated by Iser and Jaus in Germany and Tompkins and Fish, among others, in the United States, was a final step in liberating the literary text from close, closed reading (see, e.g., Iser, 1978). Globally, reader response theory shifted emphasis from the text to the readers, who became the principal players in the dialectic between text and reader. Far from advocating a subjectivist theory of reading, reader response proposed focusing on how readers received and deciphered texts, without forcing a meaning on them. In other words, reception was more important than a hidden meaning in the text.

Finally, Deconstruction as articulated by Derrida (1976) argued that, historically, philosophy and more recently linguistics have privileged speech

over writing and reading. According to Derrida, writing has been considered a supplement, an addition to speaking in major philosophical and linguistic works. According to him, writing was considered dangerous by thinkers from Plato to Rousseau, and Lévi-Strauss in our age. His work has revalorised writing, and by implication reading, so that they are not thought of as trivial or dangerous. If we accept Derrida, writing and reading hold places equal to speech in the classroom.

In *Literary Theory*, Eagleton (1983) summarised contemporary movements in literary theory around the practice of rhetoric, which, for him, explains and justifies modern theory:

Rhetoric, which was the received form of critical analysis all the way from ancient society to the eighteenth century, examined the way discourses are constructed in order to achieve certain effects. It was not worried about whether its objects of enquiry were speaking or writing, poetry or philosophy, fiction or historiography; its horizon was nothing less than the field of discursive practices in society as a whole, and its particular interest lay in grasping such practices as forms of power and performance ... Rhetoric, or discourse theory, shares with Formalism, Structuralism and semiotics an interest in the formal devices of language ... and its belief that discourse can be a humanly transformative affair shares a good deal with liberal humanism.

(Eagleton, 1983: 205–6)

Unfortunately, Eagleton does not extend his concept of power and performance into the language classroom, but his synthesis set the stage for seeing how literary theory exists as a rich source for language instruction.

### Potential applications in the classroom

Insights from literary theory have led to fresh approaches to literature in the classroom. Literature finds a comfortable place in foreign language instruction because of the following theoretical insights:

- Because **writing** and reading are on an equal footing with speech, texts have an integral place in language classrooms.
- Because literary language is encoded in ways similar to advertisements, newspapers and everyday language, it can be taught along with other types of sign systems.
- Because the canon no longer exists, literary texts can be chosen not just because they are good but because students can actually understand and enjoy them. Texts need not be 'relevant', but challenging by their uniqueness and seductiveness.
- Because literature is no longer regarded as a closed world to be decoded by the reader, students may read in order to find their own meanings. They may also learn to play with the text.
- Because literature is as 'authentic' as any other type of discourse, it can be sought out as a source of different levels of expression. Poetry teaches the use of metaphor, which permeates all social discourse. Metonymy teaches narrative relationships, how to decipher a story, and implicitly how to tell a story, whether fictive or real.
- Because literature is basically connotative, in its suggestiveness, it teaches students implicitly that all utterances contain a connotative, or second, meaning. After having read a novel entitled *The Red and the Black*, students waken to the simple fact that colours have connotative meanings, whether in a novel or in real life.
- Because we are liberated from an antiquated canon, we can juxtapose texts by women (and other excluded groups) and men in order to teach the importance of gender.

### An outline of practice

As a result of these findings, literature in the foreign language classroom need not be separated from the instruction of 'normal' language. It is a part of other language systems, whether they be popular songs, advertisements, popular tales, short films or even letters. The theories outlined here provide numerous avenues for students to play with and write about texts. However, they do not include the basic approach of pre-reading (although reader response theory hints at it), which comes

from practice in the classroom. Pre-reading might be regarded as the missing link between books and students' everyday lives. Traditional introductions to individual works included either historical or biographical information – important, to be sure, but preventing the student from situating their language and life in relationship to the text. Pre-reading exercises based on literary situations and the use of literary language are the valuable bridge between literature and students' language.

As an illustration of a move from theory to practice, let us imagine the study of a short poem where the poet describes spending an entire day walking across rough terrain to visit his daughter's tomb. Pre-reading exercises develop motifs and themes, as well as situations, that are encountered in the poem. Students are asked to write about a trip they once took which extended from dawn to dusk; they play associative games with key words found in the poem (dawn, dusk, mountains, the sea, seeing outside and 'seeing' within themselves); they describe different ways to walk to express sadness or joy. Questions on the text are open-ended and 'top-down' (global), to encourage students to establish traces or patterns (metaphors, causal chains or key oppositions) on their own. Their readings of the text, albeit far from exhaustive, give them the material to create their general reading or interpretation.

Pre-reading questions also establish the students' contexts and act as bridges between the language of their **textbook** and literary conventions. Kramsch (1993) would argue that students create oppositional contexts in relationship to the text, when they position themselves in front of a text unlike them. But often in Western literature the distance between student and text is minimal and the two are complementary. In any case, by writing before reading, the students establish a strong linguistic and cultural base to lead into reading. In studying the text, the aim is not to account for every word to create a hermetic meaning; rather, students play with linguistic traces or patterns that they perceive in order to draw meanings which they can justify. Readings are personal without being purely subjective, since they are based on specific features in the text (e.g., colour patterns, causal chains, repetitions).

While poetry would favour a metaphorical reading, many texts would also lend themselves to a narrative where students could start by retelling the story; about a voyage, for example. Along the same line of thought, prose narrative usually begins with retelling the story and noting causal links, but not excluding metaphorical relationships, such as resemblances between characters or décor (similar rooms, for example).

### The 'literary' in the language classroom

Recently critics have noted that, while literature is different from other discourses, it is so in degree, not in nature. Above all, literary theory of the past thirty years has taught us that we can distinguish between 'literature' and the 'literary'. Returning to Jakobson's original articles, the 'literary' permeates every aspect of human communication. The work by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) on metaphor and metonymy forcefully shows us that literary language is part of a much larger linguistic and cultural storehouse. In *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things* (1987), Lakoff lists over a hundred ways to express anger, all of them 'literary' or 'poetic' according to Jakobson's definition. By contrast, foreign language textbooks usually teach as though there were just one standard way of expression and only one way to express an idea. There is no reason why semantic fields cannot be expanded as students progress in their instruction. Likewise, foreign language textbooks can be inspired by literature and teach different levels of language expression, such as irony, humour, narratives from daily life, and even hyperbole. If literature is to be a rich source for foreign language instruction, the most accessible texts can be models not just for reading but also for performing language.

**See also:** Cultural studies; Drama; Literary texts; Literary texts and intercultural understanding; Poetry; Teaching methods; Translation theory

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## Lozanov, Georgi

b. 1926, Sofia; d. 2012, Sofia

Lozanov studied medicine at the University of Sofia and then completed specialist training as a psychiatrist. In the 1960s he worked as a psy-

chotherapist and psychiatrist. It was at this time that he began his investigations of suggestion which, in 1966, led to the founding of a state research centre on 'suggestology' in Sofia. Lozanov was the director and the centre remained until 1992 under the Ministry of Education. In 1971 Lozanov wrote a doctoral thesis with the title 'suggestology'. The text was also published in Bulgaria with the same title in the same year. This manuscript marked the founding of '**suggestopedia**', i.e. a *suggestive* pedagogy which was to use the elements of suggestion to develop optimum conditions for learning. Lozanov claimed to have found a method by which immeasurable 'reserve capacities of the brain' could be used. In 1978 there appeared in the West a somewhat altered version of the doctoral thesis with the title 'Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopedy'. Because Lozanov had carried out his experiments in learning with foreign language **vocabulary**, and had apparently demonstrated learning achievements of an average of a hundred lexemes per day, which were retained over a long period, suggestopedia was hailed as a miracle method and was given in its Western commercialised form the name 'Superlearning' or 'Accelerated learning'. However, the amazing Bulgarian results could not be replicated elsewhere, which justified doubts about the empirical **validity** of the Bulgarian experiments (see Schiffler, 1989; Baur, 1990). Despite this, suggestopedia has maintained a place as a so-called 'alternative method' of foreign language instruction, and with its processes and principles (Krashen, 1985) has influenced contemporary methodology.

The canonical sequence of the phases of learning prescribed by Lozanov are in three phases of presentation which, as a coherent complex period of (usually) four hours, make up the 'suggestopedic session' and the 'activation phases':

1. The first presentation of the text (which Lozanov calls the 'pre-session phase'): Learners have a dual-language text book in which on one page there is the target language text and on the other the translation in the learners' **mother tongue**. The target language text is read aloud by the teacher and the **grammar** explained. The teacher reads aloud and explains, the

- learners follow, **reading** silently, or are asked by the teacher to read with him/her.
2. The second presentation: the 'active concert' is an emotional expressive reading of the text. The teacher reads the text aloud a second time whilst fitting his voice in terms of loudness, rhythm and intonation to an emotional expressive music which fills the room at a normal level of loudness; the teacher reads aloud, the learners follow in silence. The accompanying music used is the classical music of Beethoven, Brahms, Haydn, Mozart and Tchaikovsky.
  3. The third phase is called 'the passive concert' by Lozanov. Here the material is read against a background of slow, regular and relaxing baroque music (e.g. Bach, Corelli, Vivaldi). The learners sit in this phase in comfortable arm-chairs, close their eyes and are asked to relax and to concentrate on the text, which is read aloud with the background music; the teacher reads, the learners relax.
  4. The activation phases, also called 'post-session phases' by Lozanov, usually include 6–8 lessons over the following two days. Usually there are **exercises**, which are partly of a traditional kind and partly of a ludic nature and also involve role play. Often these are carried out with musical activities, including singing.

Lozanov published a Suggestopedic Manual with Evalina Gateva in 1981, which was translated into English in 1988.

**See also:** Humanistic language teaching; Silent Way; Suggestopedia

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## MAPRYaL

The *Mezhdunarodnaya assotsiatsiya russkogo yazyka i literatury* is an international association of Russian language and literature teachers whose purpose is to disseminate the Russian language abroad. It was founded in 1967 at an international conference on Russian as a foreign language in Paris, France.

The MAPRYaL is currently present in seventy countries and has a worldwide network of associate members. It is particularly strong in Asia and Europe, and brings together language centres and other institutions in higher education whose main responsibility is the teaching and dissemination of Russian as a foreign language. The MAPRYaL organizes conferences, Russian language festivals, and Russian Olympiads for school students from all over the world. It has its own website, and two major publications. The journal *Russkiy yazyk za rubezhom* appears six times per year with articles from scientists and teachers of Russian from all over the world. In addition, a MAPRYaL newsletter, *Vestnik MAPRYaL*, is published three times per year in an electronic version on the internet and in hard copy.

### Website

[www.mapryal.org](http://www.mapryal.org)

## Materials development

Two distinctive features about materials development are that it is a relatively new area of **applied**

**linguistics** and there is a marked mismatch between what is recommended by researchers and what is typically done by practitioners.

Until the 1990s, materials development tended to be viewed mainly as a practical undertaking and, in the applied linguistics literature, tended to be treated as an aspect of methodology. However, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, books were published on the development, evaluation and selection of materials, the international Materials Development Association (MATSDA) was founded to build bridges between practice and theory, and universities started to give greater recognition to materials development as an academic discipline (see Tomlinson, 2012). Initially many publications relied on the authors' experience of teaching and their reading of applied linguistics literature, but after 2000, books were published (e.g. McGrath (2002), Tomlinson (2003a, 2008, 2011a), Harwood (2010a), Tomlinson and Masuhara (2010, 2012) and McDonough et al. (2012)) recommending ways of applying knowledge about the acquisition of languages. As this knowledge increases, the gap between what we know and what we typically do grows for many reasons, including:

- Much of the literature on applied linguistics is written in a 'language' which is not easily accessible to non-academic practitioners.
- Senior decision-making officials in ministries and institutions were trained many years ago and many have not kept in touch with developments in applied linguistics.



- Commercial publishers dare not take the financial risk of publishing innovative coursebooks, and continue to clone those books which have been bestsellers.
- Students, parents, principals and even teachers have expectations about how languages should be taught based on their own previous experience as learners.

Not all applied linguistic theories have achieved consensus and some are not easily applicable to the realities of classroom teaching and learning. The mismatch between theory and practice has been a focus of many recent publications (including Harwood, 2010a; Nation and Macalister, 2010; Tomlinson, 2011a, 2012). MATSDA ([www.matsda.org.uk](http://www.matsda.org.uk)) is attempting to close this gap through its conferences and its journal *Folio* and Tomlinson and Masuhara (2012) have highlighted research-based applications of theory to practice and practice to theory.

### **Principles and procedures of materials development**

Johnson (2003) and Prowse (2011) have revealed how materials writers tend to rely on informed instinct and on repertoire (i.e. what they feel has worked for them in the past). However other writers, such as Tomlinson (2003c, 2010), Harwood (2010b) and Nation and Macalister (2010) have proposed principled procedures to complement or even replace the procedures typically practised by coursebook writers.

Procedures criticised as unprincipled because there is no research evidence to support them include:

- focusing on language form and concentrating on one form at a time
- using a presentation, practice, production (PPP) approach which in one unit deals with a language form learners have not been exposed to and might not meet again
- restricting learners to short, inauthentic texts often written to focus on a particular structure
- relying on activities which either provide easy and unrealistic practice (e.g. drills, substitution tables, dialogue recitation).

The principled procedures advocated in the literature include:

- providing learners with a rich and comprehensible exposure to language in use through extensive reading and listening and through giving more space in the coursebook to extended, **authentic** texts;
- prioritising meaning over form by getting learners to deepen and articulate their responses to the meaning of texts before any conscious attention is paid to form;
- maximising the likelihood of affective and cognitive engagement by localising and personalising texts and activities, by making use of narrative, by giving learners choices of texts, tasks and learning routes and by replacing the PPP approach with content-based, task-based, problem-based or text-driven experiential approaches;
- getting learners to make connections to previous knowledge and experience, to make predictions, to evaluate, to visualise and to make use of their inner voice in order to make full use of those mental resources which they typically utilise when learning and using their L1 (Tomlinson and Avila, 2007a, 2007b);
- helping learners to notice how features of language are used in the input they have already experienced and responded to;
- providing opportunities for the learners to use the target language in contextualised and purposeful communication.

### **Materials analysis and evaluation**

Much of the literature confuses materials analysis and materials **evaluation**. Materials analysis involves answering questions about what the materials contain and do, whereas materials evaluation involves measuring or predicting the effects of the materials on their users. Littlejohn (2011) presents a detailed framework for teachers to use when analysing materials and argues that it is often useful to do an analysis first and only to do an evaluation if the materials have a reasonably close match with what the target learning context requires.

Much literature on materials development focuses on evaluation, presenting check lists for teachers to use when evaluating and selecting coursebooks (e.g. Cunningsworth, 1995; Sheldon, 1988; Nation and Macalister, 2010). These lists tend to reflect the pedagogic preferences of their authors and are criticised by Mukandan and Ahour (2010), who advocate a multiple instrument approach which makes use of checklists, concordance software and reflective journals. Tomlinson (2003b) offers an alternative approach in which evaluators first develop their own universal criteria based on their beliefs about how languages are best acquired. They then develop local criteria based on their knowledge of the target context of learning and make use of both their universal and their local criteria to evaluate the materials.

Despite the help given in this literature, teachers often still select **textbooks** impressionistically and are over-influenced by design features which publishers spend a lot of money on (e.g. appealing colours, attractive photos, up to date topics and current celebrities).

### Materials adaptation and use

No materials can ever be perfect for every learner and all materials need adapting to satisfy the lacks, **needs** and wants of the particular learners using them as well as to achieve a match with their previous experience, their interests and their intentions. Teachers typically adapt materials by making them easier and/or by making them resemble examinations their learners are going to take. They would benefit from training by experts and guidance from their coursebook authors on how to make principled adaptations to satisfy the universal and local criteria they used in the selection of their coursebooks. Such guidance is offered by Islam and Mares (2003), Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) and McDonough et al. (2012).

Once the classroom door is shut it is the teacher who determines how materials are used but there is little research on what teachers actually do with materials. Zacharias (2005) reports research showing teachers in Indonesia following the materials as a script, Gray (2010) reports teachers in Barcelona

making changes so as not to be seen to be responsible for cultural stereotyping, and Lee and Bathmaker (2007) report research showing teachers using the coursebook as a resource to select from.

### Issues in materials development

Issues discussed in the literature are reviewed in Tomlinson (2012) and include:

- **Authenticity**

Texts are authentic if they are written or spoken, for example, to amuse, inform, persuade or excite rather than to teach. Tasks are authentic if they replicate real-life situations or provide opportunities to use real-life skills. Opponents of authenticity argue that learners are helped by contriving texts and tasks so as to simplify the demands on the learners and to focus on selected features of the language, and most coursebooks (especially at lower levels) contrive their texts and tasks. However, proponents of authenticity argue that learners are best served if they are given a realistic preparation for using language outside and after their course (Mishan, 2005).

- **Reality**

Coursebooks are criticised for being bland, neutral, safe and forever harmonious as well as for presenting an unrealistic image of a world in which everybody is cooperative, agreeable and understanding or else materialistic and successful (Gray, 2010). The lack of realism has been attacked because it deceives learners into a vision of a better world and does not prepare them for the reality of using the language in a world which is sometimes competitive, uncooperative and challenging. It has also been criticised because its bland neutrality does not provide the affective and cognitive engagement required for language acquisition. Learners need to think and to feel in order to acquire and they will only do so if they are stimulated and provoked.

Commercial publishers are wary of being provocative as this could cause offence and lose them customers. Local projects, however, can take more risks as they are more aware of

specific cultural sensitivities. Tomlinson (1995), for example, describes a project in Namibia in which the Ministry of Education gave permission for normally taboo topics such as marital violence and drug abuse to be used in a locally developed school coursebook.

- **Respect**  
Most coursebooks underestimate the ability of their target learners and make sure that teachers (and parents) are not disturbed by students getting low scores when doing their activities. However, most students are aware that the exercises are too easy and are not an adequate preparation for real life communication. They would prefer and would gain more from being set achievable challenges and from sometimes getting things wrong and gaining feedback which would help them in the future (Tomlinson, 2011b).
- **Autonomy**  
The more learners are willing and helped to invest time and energy in doing things for themselves the more they are likely to acquire the target language. Setting individual reading and response tasks, setting project work, getting learners to make discoveries about language use and setting language research and communication tasks outside the classroom are ways of providing opportunities for such personal investment. However, most coursebooks still mainly provide activities which all the learners do for and with their teacher in class.

## **Cultural content**

Coursebooks have been criticised both for focusing exclusively on the culture of the one country where the language is spoken (e.g. the UK or the USA for English) and for including cultural content which is alien and difficult for the learners. The prevailing view in the literature is that cultural richness is to be encouraged in materials, providing that the learners are helped to relate unfamiliar cultural content to their own cultural experience and that the associated activities aim to help the learners to increase their intercultural competence. Few coursebooks have as yet attempted to do this.

## **The future of materials development**

The increasing use of electronic means of delivering materials will lead to even more courses making use of DVDs, CD ROMS, computer programs and the internet. The interactivity of Facebook, Twitter, blogs, Skype and mobile phones will also be exploited even more. Ironically, there are some countries where learners do not have access to books and to teachers but do have access to mobile phones (e.g. Bangladesh, Ghana and India). Materials can be downloaded on mobile phones and make use of the capacity of a mobile phone to facilitate interaction with a number of other learners and with an expert monitor. The potential for the development of principled procedures for electronic delivery of materials is enormous, but then so is the risk of schools and learners being exploited by expensive materials which do nothing any better than their paper equivalents. See Kervin and Derewianka (2011) and Motteram (2011) for reports and predictions on the electronic delivery and exploitation of materials for language learning.

Blended learning approaches combine the use of a coursebook with the use of electronic materials, and will become the norm. The coursebook remains the core and the supplementary materials available electronically provide enrichment. This is ideal, providing that the cost of the materials and the restricted availability of the supplements does not create elites of language learners who are more successful than those who do not enjoy privileged access to additional learning opportunities. Many language learners throughout the world, though, will still not have easy access to electronic delivery of materials and will have to rely on paper materials. The hope for them lies with projects in which a ministry of education, an institution or a foundation funds and organises the development of locally appropriate materials which apply what is known about how best to facilitate language acquisition.

**See also:** Dictionaries; Emotions and language learning; Evaluation; Reference works; Syllabus and curriculum design; Task-based teaching and assessment; Teaching methods; Technologies for language learning; Textbooks; Vocabulary

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- wider application in contexts of (for example, industrial) strife or (for example, military) conflict. In the latter cases, the mediator attempts to resolve dispute to the satisfaction of all parties involved by remaining neutral and making evident to the disputants where they have common ground and a means of taking action together. The characteristics required of a professional mediator, described on the basis of a job analysis survey (Herrman et al., 2001) include thirteen skills and eighteen knowledge areas, such as knowledge of various models and techniques of mediation, problem-solving techniques, and knowledge of various cultural issues. The skills include correcting one's own errors, managing the relational dynamics, and also communication and information gathering. Language **competence** is not specified but taken for granted since in many cases the disputants speak the same language and, where this is not the case, a **lingua franca** is used.
- In language teaching, by contrast, the focus is on the competences needed to overcome problems experienced as a consequence of two or more parties not speaking the same language. The emphasis is on the language competences of the mediator. The **Common European Framework of Reference** in fact refers not to the mediator but to the 'intermediary':
- In mediating activities, the language user is not concerned to express his/her own meanings, but simply to act as an intermediary between interlocutors who are unable to understand each other directly – normally (but not exclusively) speakers of different languages.
- (Council of Europe, 2001: 87)
- Examples given include interpretation, translating, summarising and paraphrasing, with the implication that meanings can be unproblematically transferred from one language to another or from one register of the same language to another register of that language.
- However, these forms of **transfer** of meanings cannot take account of the complexities of language in context, of the connotations of words or the social functions of discourses, and additional competences are required beyond those which are

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## Mediation

Mediation is a term used in descriptions of the objectives of language teaching but also has a

usually referred to as communicative competences: grammatical, phonological, discourse, strategic, sociolinguistic. **Intercultural competences** are required, including the ability to understand the viewpoints of the different parties, the origins and influences of those viewpoints on how they are expressing their meanings, and how they believe they in turn understand the viewpoints of the other parties. Sometimes this leads to over-compensation by one party trying to present themselves in ways they think are helpful to the other party, and thereby creating more complexity and confusion. The mediator then needs the skills of comparative analysis of the perspectives of those involved and of explanation of complexities and confusions that they realise are not perceived by those for whom they are mediating. This is far more than the transfer of meanings by interpretation, translation, paraphrase or summary.

Mediation is as yet seldom included in language curricula. Where it does exist, it does not go beyond the scope of the mediation activities suggested by the **Common European Framework of Reference**. In Germany, the term ‘Sprachmittlung’ is used instead of ‘Mediation’ and is present in language teaching curricula as one of the objectives of language teaching. Definition of the term focuses on distinguishing this activity from formal translation, and examples given emphasise the need to develop authentic tasks where learners are to provide help in real-life situations to people who cannot understand a particular language (Kolb, 2010). An alternative approach focuses on ‘cultural mediation’ as an objective of language teaching and emphasises the potential of the language learner as an agent for social cohesion (Zarate et al., 2004).

Another perspective would combine the linguistic and intercultural competences learnt in the foreign language classroom with tasks similar to those of professional mediators and requiring some of the characteristics mentioned above. Language teaching has, however, not taken into account the richer notions of mediation present in the wider context of industrial or other types of mediation, even though conflicts of interest and understanding arise in many everyday situations which language learners might encounter.

**See also:** Intercultural competence; Interpreting; Translation

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## Medium of instruction

‘Medium of instruction’ refers to a means to enhance levels of final attainment in language **competence** by using a second language to teach non-language subjects like geography, history, biology, etc. This form of language provision goes under several names, including **bilingual education**, immersion, **content-based instruction**, **content and language integrated** classrooms. Although sharing many features with special education provision for minority

groups (sometimes known as language shelter or **heritage language** programmes), immigrant populations (sometimes known as transitional bilingual programmes), professional and vocational **needs (languages for specific purposes)**, the target population is primarily conceived of as being the average schoolgoer operating in a **monolingual** education environment. The role of the second language as a medium of instruction varies enormously according to the context in which the school operates, and there is no ideal model for universal application.

The use of a second language (whether indigenous or foreign, totally unknown or partially known by some of the pupils at the onset of schooling), for learning non-linguistic content-matter subjects has a longer history than is reflected by research. Throughout the ages, children with a different first language from that of the predominantly monolingual education systems of the world have received content-matter instruction through a different language, with varying degrees of success. Education through the medium of a second language only became a major focus of research interest when the inadequate results of second and foreign language instruction for majority children became apparent, leading to a quest for alternative paths towards higher second language proficiency among larger numbers of school-leavers. In spite of far-reaching shifts in language teaching, from the discredited **grammar–translation** method, through a wide range of theoretically founded alternatives (**audio-visual**, pattern–drill, **communicative language teaching**, **total physical response**, **notions and functions** syllabus, etc.), for the majority of children receiving education in a monolingual school environment, levels of attainment in a second or foreign language are still poor and not commensurate with the time and effort devoted to language in the **syllabus**.

### Immersion programmes

The growth and development of Canadian immersion programmes in the 1970s, under parental pressures, gave the impetus for a new approach to second or foreign language enhancement through education. Because of the increasing importance of

**French** in Canada, a group of anglophone parents in Montreal were worried that their English-speaking children might lose out in the job market where knowledge of both French and **English** was required. They obtained support for an education system where initial learning would start in the unknown target language, French, with a gradual introduction of, and switch over to, predominantly English education as the children progressed into secondary school. This led to the development of early total immersion in French for anglophone children, where initial **reading** and **writing** and all other school activities except English lessons were taught through French. Hence, the content matter of primary school education, including the introduction to mathematics, elementary science, social studies and the standard primary syllabus, were taught through a different language. As the children progressed, subjects in English were introduced, in preparation for transfer to predominantly or totally English-medium secondary schooling. Alternative programmes were later developed, known as early partial immersion, where French was not the exclusive medium, and late immersion, where French was introduced for non-language subjects after the foundations of schooling had been encountered in English. Careful monitoring of results revealed that children compared well with English-speaking control groups on knowledge of English and on content-matter, e.g. mathematical skills, and fared far better on knowledge of French than those in English-medium schools who had only received French as a subject (Swain and Lapkin, 1982).

The impressive research on immersion led to adaptations in different parts of the world, often in circumstances totally different from the original Canadian context. At times the immersion model was misappropriated, when the methodological implementation of education through a second language was taken over, with insufficient awareness of the theoretical principles underlying the Canadian success story. This was particularly the case when foreign-speaking immigrant children were immersed in the host environment target language and did not obtain satisfactory outcome results, either on the target language or the content matter of the curriculum (Hernández-Chávez, 1984). The

primary reason for failure in this misappropriation was neglect of the immigrant children's first language and an inadequate appraisal of the out-of-school environment (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1984; Cummins and Swain, 1986).

More successful adaptations were made in Catalonia and the Basque Country in attempts to promote bilingual proficiency in Castilian/Catalan and Castilian/Basque, by offering varied permutations of contact with the two languages important in their regions, both as subjects and as vehicles for non-linguistic content-matter (Artigal, 1993). Since the 1990s there has been an upsurge in movements towards the implementation of using a second/foreign language for teaching non-language subjects.

The major distinction between Canadian early total immersion programmes and content-based programmes lies in the fact that, in content-based second/foreign language teaching, there is no radical shift from the child's primary language to the use of a second for non-language subjects (Baetens Beardsmore, 2009). In most cases the second language is first taught as a subject, as in traditional language lessons, before being used as the vehicle for other subjects like biology, geography or history. In most cases the switch to the use of a second/foreign language for content-matter occurs in **secondary education**, when the primary language has been well established and there is a sufficient foundation in the second language for rapid take-off and progress. In almost no cases does the second/foreign language take over as exclusive medium of instruction in the curriculum. Nor does the use of a second language for content-matter subjects imply that language teachers become redundant – on the contrary, most programmes maintain second/foreign language lessons in parallel to the use of the second language medium for content-matter lessons. This point is highly significant and accounts in part for the high levels of linguistic accuracy in productive **skills of speaking and writing**. In most cases there is some form of selection for pupils embarking on content-matter learning through a second/foreign language, either on a volunteer basis or via proficiency testing. In most cases final examinations are taken through the second/foreign language on the subjects that were taught through that medium.

## Variations and models

There are, however, many significant variations which can best be illustrated from concrete examples. Two countries with great experience in this area outside Canada are Germany and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Luxembourg represents the most radical example, where all children start education in the national language, Luxemburgish, and gradually move to using **German**, followed by French, for different subjects.

The process operates on the principle of introducing the child to schooling in the home L1 (Luxemburgish), followed by a related, but distinct L2 (German) as a subject, but not a medium of instruction in grade 1. The L3 (French) is introduced as a subject in the second semester of the second year of **primary education**, in preparation for its use as a medium in secondary education.

In primary education, teachers ensure that the switch from the exclusive use of Luxemburgish to the exclusive use of German occurs by the end of the cycle (except in language lessons), but are free to make the transition gradually. Writing is taught through German from the third year of primary education, but at this point in the curriculum more units are devoted to teaching French as a subject than German.

In secondary education most classes are taught through the medium of German in the first three grades, except for French as a subject, and mathematics, which is now taught through the medium of French. The further a pupil progresses in secondary education the more lessons are taught through the medium of French.

In Germany, certain secondary schools have a so-called bilingual section where volunteers can follow three subjects, usually art, geography, history, politics or biology, through the medium of a foreign language (mainly English and French, but also Dutch, **Spanish** and other languages, depending on location) from the middle of secondary education. Art is considered suitable, since it creates concrete situational functions where verbal communication is relatively free. Geography or biology carry a referential, information-giving function which allows for a fairly simple beginning phase in the second language. Politics, or civics, covers the



partner-oriented and affective functions of language usage, with much greater linguistic subtleties.

Volunteers who opt for this programme receive two extra lessons of the target language as a subject for two years prior to entering the bilingual section. Usually one non-language subject is introduced for three hours per week in the seventh year of education, e.g. geography, followed by a second subject, e.g. politics, in the eighth year. The following year one of the subjects will be replaced by a new subject, e.g. history, to limit the use of a foreign language to two content-matter subjects. The German model explicitly takes into account the need for pupils to be capable of handling the content-matter in both the target language and German, particularly in terms of specialised lexis, and final examinations may be taken in either or both languages. On exit from the programme, inadequacies in knowledge of the content-matter will be sanctioned but not inadequacies in the use of the second language for the subject in question. On the other hand, high levels of competence in the second language will be credited with a 'bilingual mention' on the final diploma, where the fact of having followed a subject through the medium of a foreign language is seen as a plus-point (Mäsch, 1993; Christ, 1996).

Other European countries have initiated similar variants of the German experience (Marsh et al., 2002), though few have gone as far as Luxembourg. The European Schools (Swan, 1996) operate a model similar to that of Luxembourg, where the further a pupil progresses through secondary education the more contact hours are followed using a second or third language for non-language subjects (Baetens Beardsmore, 1995). Austria, Finland, France, The Netherlands, Sweden and the UK are all increasing the availability of content-matter learning, partially through a foreign language (Fruhauf et al., 1996). (Further examples from all over the world can be found in García, 2009.)

### Achievements and problems

Results on both language proficiency and knowledge of content-matter are striking. All programmes claim superior linguistic skills compared with those

resulting from language courses alone. Although the majority of existing programmes have an element of pupil selection, which could account for these superior results, the case of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, where the entire school population undergoes content-learning through two foreign languages, reveals that selection is not a necessary criterion for success. In Luxembourg it is true that not all school-leavers attain the same levels of trilingual proficiency, but all achieve higher levels than in countries where foreign languages are taught solely as subjects.

Outcome achievements on language proficiency can be explained by a variety of factors. The amount of contact with a second or foreign language is considerably increased when used for content-matter lessons. The nature of linguistic activities becomes highly focused, depending on the subject being studied, and less artificial than in many, even the best designed language lessons, where **authentic** materials rarely serve the natural function of language, i.e. to achieve some non-linguistic communicative goal. Teachers claim that using a second or foreign language for content-matter subjects enhances pupil concentration, which may well slow down the progress of lessons in initial stages but which is compensated for later. Teachers and pupils attest to the fact that having acquired high levels of proficiency in a second language through content-based lessons eases their acquisition of a third language (Mäsch, 1993; *Intertalk*, 1997). Follow-up studies of people who have gone through such programmes all reveal great satisfaction and ease at functioning professionally in more than one language.

Problems arising from the sudden expansion of programmes using a second language are manifold. The shortage of teachers proficient in a foreign language and with the specialist subject qualification is a major difficulty. Germany and Austria are fortunate in having teacher training programmes where candidates can obtain certification in both. Coordination between language teachers and subject teachers is important, yet insufficiently provided for in most teacher training courses, leading potentially to a lack of harmony in supplying the specific linguistic needs for the efficient exploitation of studying content-matter through a

second language. Few programmes, apart from those developed in Germany, take sufficient account of the need to develop specialised linguistic skills (particularly in the lexis) in the first language, which may not have been used to cover significant parts of the curriculum. There is a dearth of suitable course **materials** in the second language which take into account the local syllabus and course content requirements, causing many teachers involved to improvise. Imported **textbooks** may have linguistic, cultural and content assumptions specific to the country in which they were produced but unsuitable for the needs of pupils studying for local examinations through a foreign language. Finally, examination criteria may constrain the expansion of the use of a second language for content-matter learning. Luxembourg has adapted its examination system to take the multilingual programme into account; Germany allows for double certification, which enables pupils to take German or foreign recognised examinations; in Britain, special dispensations have been negotiated to allow for secondary examinations to be taken through the foreign medium; while in The Netherlands, Dutch is the compulsory medium for final examinations, whatever the language of instruction.

In spite of such issues, the use of a second language for learning non-language subjects is gathering momentum, strongly supported by the European Commission, the **Council of Europe** and many forward-looking education authorities.

**See also:** Bilingual education; Bilingualism; Content and language integrated learning; Content-based instruction; Medium-oriented and message-oriented communication; Mother-tongue teaching; Second language acquisition theories

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## Medium-oriented and message-oriented communication

This is a distinction between two main levels of communication in the foreign language classroom, both of which are necessary. In medium-oriented communication the focus is on form rather than on content. The underlying speech intention is for the teacher to give pupils an opportunity to build sentences, to show how they can handle the language, to demonstrate their verbal skills and to display their linguistic **competence**. Pupils fill in gaps or give answers which the teacher knows already. Dictation, imitation, **pronunciation** and grammar drills as well as language corrections are usually unequivocal medium-oriented acts. Here the medium is the only message. However, when the speakers involved satisfy immediate non-linguistic **needs** and really mean what they say – for instance: ‘How can we prepare for the test tomorrow?’ or ‘In my view the British electoral system is undemocratic’ – they transmit real messages, i.e. they are message-oriented. All classroom management is purely message-oriented (Butzkamm and Dodson, 1980).

Other terms for what is basically the same distinction are ‘rehearsal language versus performance language’ (Hawkins, 1981) and ‘analytic versus

experiential use of the language’ (Stern, 1983). In Germany the distinction has become known as *sprachbezogene versus mitteilungsbezogene Kommunikation* (Black and Butzkamm, 1977). Since the same utterance may serve a variety of functions, many **speech acts** in language lessons lie on a continuum between pure message-orientation and pure medium-orientation. Do the speakers take their utterances to be a real warning, a praise or promise, a real request for necessary information, etc., or are these functions merely incidental to the language-teaching function?

The distinction can be used to assess the communicative quality of classroom interactions. Both anecdotal and statistical evidence show that message-oriented communication is often conspicuously absent in the foreign language classroom. ‘There is increasing evidence that in communicative classes interactions may, in fact, not be very communicative at all’ (Nunan, 1987: 144). Mitchell (1988) found that a content vacuum was apparent in many lessons.

**See also:** Bilingual method; Content-based instruction; Medium of instruction; Monolingual principle; Reading; Syllabus and curriculum design; Teaching methods

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## Mental lexicon

From the myriad of definitions of the lexicon in the literature, in this article the definition proposed by Eve Clark in her book on the lexicon in **acquisition** is adopted: 'The lexicon of a language is the stock of established words speakers can draw on when they speak and have recourse to in understanding what they hear' (Clark, 1993: 2). Over the years, the importance of the mental lexicon to linguistic theories and across language science disciplines has varied considerably. Early versions of generative **grammar** emphasized the importance of phrase structure rules and down-played the lexicon, while Lexical Functional Grammar viewed lexical-functional information as the basis of syntactic structures. In more recent years, the mental lexicon has again become more central to theories of language. The perspective taken here is a processing one, rather than a formal linguistic one, in which the lexicon is the collection of word forms and meanings that are combined through grammatical rules to construct phrases and sentences.

### The acquisition of lexical items

How is the mental lexicon formed? Serious word acquisition in the first language starts in the second year of life and, by age 6, children have acquired about 14,000 words. This means that around 10 new words per day are acquired during those 4 years. Nagy and Herman (1987) estimate that

children between 6 and 10 acquire about 3,000 words a year, and from age 10–11 about 10,000 new words a year. In later phases of acquisition children encounter an estimated 85,000 words, most of which they will acquire to a certain extent. Defining what it means to 'know a word' is notoriously difficult, as Nation (1993) points out. There are many facets of meaning, form and use that can be acquired, and there will be considerable variation with respect to the depth of knowledge of individual words.

In first language acquisition, children must first learn to identify words in the speech stream, which is quite a complicated task. Then they have to map meanings onto forms, i.e. they have to link words they hear with objects, actions and entities in their surroundings. Children start from the assumption that there is a one-to-one relation between forms and meanings, and will only gradually allow for multi-mappings. Clark (1993, 16) argues that 'Transparency, simplicity and productivity, in conjunction with conventionality and contrast ... account for when and how children build up a repertoire of word-formation devices for extending their **vocabulary**.'

### The bilingual lexicon

What happens to the structure of the mental lexicon when more than one language is being learned? A lot of research has been done to answer the question of how the bilingual lexicon is organised ever since Kolers's work in the early sixties. For Kolers, the question was simply 'Are the words of two different languages stored in one big container or in two separate ones?' The answer to this question is not simply 'one' or 'two', because various factors appear to play a role in the way in which words are stored. Now the question is no longer whether the systems are separated or not, but under what conditions and for which parts of the lexicon they are separated (see Hernandez, Li, and MacWhinney, 2005). Based on neurolinguistic research with bilinguals, Paradis (1987) proposes the 'Subset Hypothesis', which assumes the use of a single storage system where links between elements are strengthened through continued use. This implies that, in general, elements from one language will

be more strongly linked to each other than to elements from another language, which results in the formation of subsets that appear to consist of elements from the same language, and that can be retrieved separately. At the same time links between elements in different languages will be just as strong as links between elements in one language in bilingual speakers who employ a 'code-switching mode', and who live in a community where code-switching is a normal conversational strategy. In line with Paradis, Grosjean (2001) proposes that the bilingual is on a continuum of language activity, continually moving between a monolingual mode and a bilingual mode. Movement on this continuum is controlled by factors such as knowledge about the speaker to whom the bilingual is speaking, the context of the conversation, and even the relative value of each of the languages in the language community.

### **Word selection in processing**

Oldfield (1963) estimates that average 18-year-olds in Great Britain have a passive lexicon of about 75,000 words at their disposal. Although the number of words we actively use is smaller, the active lexicon may still consist of about 30,000 words. The language user continually has to make the right choice from this enormous collection of words. When we consider that the average rate of speech is 150 words per minute, with peak rates of about 300 words per minute, this means that we have about 200 to 400 milliseconds to choose a word when we are speaking. In other words: two to five times a second we have to make the right choice from those 30,000 words. And usually we are successful; it is estimated that the chance of making the wrong choice is one in a thousand.

This is relevant for the hypothetical unilingual speaker. The situation is even more complex for the bilingual speaker. Even if we assume that the bilingual's lexicon is smaller for each language than the unilingual's lexicon, and that a proportion of the words are the same in different languages, the total lexicon, even the active lexicon, could easily contain more than 60,000 elements. In order to get an idea of the complexity of the task, one might think of someone who has to find a specific

marble of a particular colour in a container with 60,000 different marbles 2 to 5 times a second.

Obviously, it is not the case for the word selection process that each individual lexical item is looked at to see if it is suitable every time a choice has to be made. There is no doubt that our brain is a very powerful calculator, but this is probably too demanding a task. The lexicon must be organized in such a way that a choice can be made quickly and accurately. There is convincing evidence that one way words are ordered is according to frequency, making highly frequent words easier to retrieve than less frequent ones. This makes intuitive sense, since we usually use frequent words because we talk about a limited number of topics. The context of the word also influences the speed with which it can be retrieved, such as whether it was accessed recently, or if it was preceded by a word similar in meaning or sound. Such orderings make lexical searches far more efficient.

The main questions to be answered with respect to bilingual processing in general and lexicon in particular is: 'How are the words from the right language selected?' One possibility is that, for the bilingual, the lexical items from one language can be retrieved as a separate set. The question is how this is achieved. Early models of bilingualism suggested the equivalent of a mental switch that could turn the intended language on or off. Contrary perhaps to intuition, however, both languages of a bilingual are active even when the bilingual hears, speaks, or reads one language alone. The intention to speak one language does not inactivate the other language. So for instance, when an English-German bilingual is asked to name the picture of a dog in English, the bilingual's semantic system activates both the word "dog" and "Hund". This view of bilingual lexical access is by now widely accepted.

More debated, however, is the possibility that activating both languages in the mental lexicon may cause competition between the two lexical entries. In other words, there may be a measurable cost to a bilingual's speech production due to this cross-language activation. The fact that fluent bilinguals are effectively able to communicate in either of their languages suggests that if there is competition, there must be some way for the bilingual to efficiently resolve the competition

before speaking. According to Green (1989), alternatives that are activated in the other language must be reactively inhibited. Other researchers, however, maintain that inhibition may not be necessary because these alternatives are not considered viable candidates for selection in the first place (Costa and Santesteban, 2004). Regardless of whether inhibition is involved or not, recent research suggests that a lifetime of negotiating competition between two languages confers cognitive benefits to bilinguals later in life, specifically in tasks that reflect attentional control (Bialystok, Craik, and Freedman, 2007).

### Learning and teaching words

While direct implications for teaching and learning have yet to be drawn from the psycholinguistic knowledge that has accumulated so far, those models do inform us about what it means to know words and how that knowledge is structured. It is obvious that ‘knowing a word’ is not a simple matter: knowing the translation of a word is only a part of what there is to be known. Both the semantic/conceptual part of a lexical item and the syntactic properties, the form-related characteristics, will gradually develop through extensive exposure, most of it through incidental rather than intentional learning. In early stages of L2 acquisition, learning of words in the L2 will proceed through mediation of the L1, but gradually it will diverge from that and the L2 lexicon will become an independent part of the cognitive system (see Kroll and Stewart, 1994): for the beginning learner of French, a ‘jardin’ may be the same as a ‘garden’, but the more advanced learner will come to appreciate the different nuances between the two words.

**See also:** Applied linguistics; Bilingualism; Contrastive analysis; Disorders of language; Generative principle; Lexicography and lexicology; Linguistics; Native speaker; Neurolinguistics; Vocabulary

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SUSAN BOBB  
KEES DE BOT

## Migrant and heritage languages

Languages are media of social practice, but at the same time constitute this practice. Linked with reifying ethnic concepts, languages are often characterized and categorized as if they were fixed and distinct entities. The naïve question, how many languages exist within a territory, is normally based on such reifying notions. The construction of differences between languages and their categorization are a product of social construction and are therefore dynamic and susceptible of change (Maas, 2008: 66). This applies in a particular way to the classification of languages or varieties of languages into categories such as *migrant languages*, *immigrant languages*, *minority languages*, *heritage languages*, etc., but also *standard languages*, *dominant languages* or *vehicular languages*. These distinctions are not primarily based on linguistic criteria, but instead on politico-economic criteria, on historical political developments and related configurations of power (Fairclough, 1989). The categorization of a language as for example a *standard language* is always linked to a power struggle that has already taken place. At the same time, the way languages are categorized often undergoes processes of naturalization: Depending on the language ideologies in specific societies, it is considered as self-evident that a language 'as such' and by nature, is a *migrant language* or a *minority language*.

Due to post-colonialism, globalization and migration, the boundaries between languages have been shifting consistently – especially within recent decades. Old categorizations and word inventories do not correspond anymore with the multilingual and hybrid complexities in modern societies (Hu,

2005). The traditional terminology is often based on a mindset that emanates from dichotomies between own and foreign, inner and outer, sedentary and migrant. From the biographical perspective of multilingual subjects though, these thought patterns are becoming noticeably disputable.

The phenomenon of migration itself constitutes a challenge for modern societies, and problems of definition ('Who is a migrant?') are obvious (Anderson and Blinder, 2011). The designation of languages that have spread beyond their original region into other societies through migration and globalization, also poses a challenge. This can be illustrated through the multiplicity of existing terms often used as synonyms in this domain: *migrant languages*, *immigrant languages*, *immigrant minority languages*, *community languages*, *LOTE (Languages other than English)*, *heritage languages*, *additional languages*, *non-territorial languages*, *less commonly taught languages*, *native languages*, *primary languages*, *allochthonous languages*, *home languages*, *languages of origin*. Although most terms originated from the English-speaking area, other languages also display similar terminological problems, such as *Migrantensprachen*, *Herkunftssprachen* and *Einwanderersprachen* in German or *langues de la migration* or *langues d'origine* in French.

In different regions throughout the world, the consideration of *migrant languages* varies according to the specific historical configurations. Thus, in the US, the use of the terms *heritage languages* or *immigrant heritage languages* (in order to distinguish from *indigenous* and *colonial heritage languages*) is common (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003). Fishman defined heritage language simply as 'a language of personal relevance other than English' (Fishman, 1999, quoted in Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003: 216), failing to consider that any language could be claimed as a language of personal relevance by someone, but need not necessarily be a heritage language.

Using the label *heritage* itself has been challenged by many and has been regarded as extremely negative – even offensive – by some and counterproductive by others:

The danger of the term 'heritage language' is that, relative to powerful majority languages,

it points more to the past and less to the future, to traditions rather than to the contemporary. The danger is that the heritage language becomes associated with the ancient cultures, past traditions and more 'primitive times'. [ ... ] These terms may fail to give the impression of a modern, international language that is of value in a technological society.

(Baker and Jones, 1998: 509)

Another potential problem is that *heritage* is a relative term that is socially determined and constructed. As Van Deusen-Scholl points out (2003: 216), **Spanish**, for example, is considered a heritage language in the United States (i.e. an immigrant language), but is, of course, at the same time a major world language in its own right, and the same goes for **Arabic**, **Chinese** and others: 'There is a risk, then, that the terminology will affect the perceived status of the language within a particular linguistic context and detract from its larger, global function' (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003: 216).

In other countries, e.g. in Australia, the term *community language* is much more frequent. As Clyne mentions (1991: 3), the term has been used in Australia since about 1975 to denote languages other than English and Aboriginal languages employed within the Australian community. It legitimizes their continuing existence as part of Australian society.

Turning to the Asian context, in China there is not really an equivalent for *migrant* or *heritage languages*. The term *liu dong ren kou* ('flowing population') refers to migrant workers within China, who move usually from the countryside, but also from minority dominated regions into the big cities, and is mostly connotated with social problems caused by this kind of migration. In education, there are some writings about assimilation and integration of the migrants' children into local schools, but the languages they bring with them are seldom, if ever, discussed. The term *shao shu minzu yuyan* does exist, but it corresponds to indigenous minority languages, opposed to *han yu* (Standard Chinese) (Feng, 2011).

In the European context, different terms are in use. In German, for example, the term *Herkunftssprache*

is commonly used in the context of schooling. Yet, akin to the term *heritage language*, this term is questionable because it refers very much to the past. Another commonly used term is *Migrantensprachen*. Likewise, this term is far from being unambiguous because many a time, *Migrantensprache* is notably used to designate the labour migrants' languages, i.e. *Migrantensprachen* is tacitly associated with low socio-economic status. The colloquial use of the term *Migrantensprache* and for that matter, referring to 'migrants', 'migrant children' or 'children of migrant background' is prone to being discriminatory. Meanwhile, there are a large number of linguistic surveys such as studies by Pfaff (1991), in which characteristics of migrant languages (e.g. code switching, **fossilizations**) were analysed by empirical methods. Recently, a new trend can be observed towards refraining from merely analysing the deficiency of migrant languages from the point of view of standard language and towards highlighting the specific competences of multilingual individuals instead (Maas, 2008: 99).

In works and projects that have been submitted in the context of the **Council of Europe**, a trend can be observed towards using more comprehensive categories that are not discriminatory and including as many languages as possible. Accordingly, the project 'Valuing All Languages in Europe' (European Center for Modern Languages 2007) opted for the term *Europe's additional languages*. The authors adopt this term to refer to *all* languages in use in a society, apart from the official, national or dominant language(s). They include regional or minority languages, migrant languages, non-territorial languages (like Romani and Yiddish) and sign languages. The authors believe,

that there is much to be gained in adopting the inclusive definition [ ... ], because, across Europe, individuals, families and communities using additional languages, as well as the dominant language(s) of the state in which they live, have important characteristics in common. They are, by definition, *plurilingual* – using two or more languages in their daily lives – and for this reason, have to make decisions about the



best way to educate their children, in order for them to acquire formal competences in both or all their languages.

(European Centre for Modern Foreign Languages, 2007: 7)

Extra and Gorter (2001) simply speak of *the other languages of Europe* and refer to all those languages apart from the official languages that are ignored in the public and official activities in the EU (Extra and Gorter, 2001: 1).

Also in the *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe: From Linguistic Diversity to Plurilingual Education* (Council of Europe, 2007: 15), there is a clear effort to implement holistic and inclusive policies: 'All language varieties, whether "national", "indigenous", "(im)migrant" or "non-European" need to be recognised as "languages of Europe" and their presence in whatever form in compulsory schooling and beyond assured.' In this view the acquisition of **plurilingual** competence leads to a greater understanding of the plurilingual repertoires of other citizens and a respect for language rights, not only those of minorities and for national languages less widely spoken and taught.

Beyond the problems of categorization and perception of different language varieties, the so-called *migrant languages* present a challenge to education systems with regard to teaching the official language(s) and the foreign languages (such as English as a Foreign Language). Language policies must therefore not only ensure that children of migrant background can master the language of schooling, but at the same time support language maintenance for functional or humanistic reasons. Furthermore, language learning and teaching must be understood as plurilingual processes, where transfer and cross linguistic influence play an important role.

**See also:** Council of Europe Platform for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education; Mother tongue; Mother-tongue teaching; Plurilingualism; Standard language;

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ADELHEID HU

## Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT)

Developed in a 5-year psychometric study by Carroll and Sapon at Harvard University and first published in 1959, the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) assesses how fast and easily an individual can learn a foreign language in a given time span. The MLAT was primarily applied as a means of selecting students for governmental language programmes and as a placement test in universities. Additionally, it has been used for the diagnosis of learning disabilities.

The test battery consists of five parts: I Number Learning, II Phonetic Script, III Spelling Clues, IV Words in Sentences, and V Paired Associates. The whole test battery can be conducted in about 60 minutes. A short version of the MLAT consisting of parts III–V (thus leaving out the aural subtests) takes 30 minutes to administer. Each subtest is supposed to tap one or more cognitive skills that facilitate foreign language learning: Phonemic Coding Ability, Grammatical Sensitivity, Rote Learning Ability and Inductive Language Learning

Ability. These components have been inferred from the subtests by Carroll and used to define the concept of foreign language aptitude.

In contrast to earlier language aptitude tests, the MLAT clearly measures traits more closely related to language learning than those measured by general intelligence tests. The MLAT proved to be a highly reliable measure of language aptitude, reaching correlations with learning success between .4 and .6. These results were found in audiolingual classes, the predominant teaching method at the time of development. The question whether the test battery mirrors the cognitive skills demanded in other learning environments has not yet been sufficiently answered. The MLAT, as well as single subtests, are still used as a measure of foreign language aptitude in studies today (e.g. see Erlam, 2005). Aside from other language adaptations of the original MLAT, there is both a version of the test for school children, class 3–6 (MLAT-E) and a computer-based test (CB-MLAT).

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KERSTIN ZIMMERMANN

## Monitor model

A monitor model is a model for second language learning advanced by Stephen Krashen in the late

1970s to account for problems that second language learners encounter in the formal classroom. Krashen made a strong distinction between language ‘acquisition’ and language ‘learning’, and argued that what is consciously ‘learnt’ is only available to learners as a means of monitoring, or checking on language which has already been ‘acquired’ through an unconscious process. Language that we pick up through the process of communication – language learnt unconsciously – can be *modified* by formally learnt knowledge, but the acquisition of the basic system does not benefit from conscious attempts to learn it. Thus the ‘monitor’ is only useful as a means of fine tuning what has already been acquired.

This view became very popular in the 1980s, partly because it seemed to offer an explanation of why language learners in formal classrooms so often fail to achieve fluency in the target language. It also reflects the trend associated with de-schooling movements in the 1970s of questioning the role of explicit teaching and an organised curriculum. Teachers, the model implied, did not help learning when they used long-established techniques such as formal presentation and correction. Much teaching could be regarded as negative interference in the natural process of language acquisition. At the same time, its emphasis on ‘natural’ procedures for learning linked it with the contemporary **communicative language teaching** movement. (For basic exposition of his views, see Krashen, 1981, 1982.)

The ‘monitor’ was only one part of an ambitious attempt to build a theory of **second language acquisition**, but its influence was so great that it was often detached from other parts of the theory, and Krashen himself referred to the whole theory as the ‘monitor model’. The model rests on five claims.

First, language which is acquired is stored in the brain separately from language which is consciously learnt. This claim is contentious, and from the beginning was challenged by psychologists who maintained that it could have no scientific status as it was impossible to test. It was also claimed that the model depended on a separation of conscious and unconscious language use which was unrealistic (as all language use involves a combination of these), and counter-intuitive (as

many learners believe themselves to have benefited from conscious memorisation). Certainly the strong claim that ‘learning cannot become acquisition’ never achieved widespread acceptance among theorists (McLaughlin, 1978, provides early and cogent criticism; McLaughlin, 1987, and Mitchell and Myles, 1998, provide more recent surveys, placing Krashen’s work in the context of later ideas).

The second claim has also already been referred to: ‘learning has only one function, and that is as a Monitor or editor’ (Krashen, 1982: 15). Learning fine tunes what acquisition has already established.

The third claim is that the rules of language are acquired in a predictable order. This is less contentious, for there is empirical evidence for some degree of ordering of the acquisition of morpheme sequences, for example, and linguists who believe languages share a **universal grammar** have found regularities in the acquisition of syntactic patterns. But it is risky to present evidence from a limited number of studies as a justification for too strong a claim. Any language can be described by an enormous number of interacting rules. Only a few of these have been studied. And no studies have established that all rules can be fitted into a neat order. Indeed, there is evidence of some individual variation in the route of acquisition.

The fourth claim is that our language development is caused by ‘comprehensible input’, i.e. exposure to language which is a little beyond our current knowledge in its complexity. Again, critics feel that this formulation is unhelpful, because there is no mechanism for defining exactly what an individual’s current level is, nor for determining what it means to provide language a little beyond that level. The statement is arguably true enough as common sense, but is impossible to test because the terms are indefinable.

Finally, the model depends upon the ‘affective filter’ hypothesis: learners have to be willing and able to allow comprehensible input to act on their minds. Learners may be mentally unable to respond to the language to which they are exposed, and this, Krashen suggests, accounts for why some learners fail to learn in spite of being in a satisfactory environment. This fifth claim, like its predecessor, makes general sense but proves difficult to formalise so that it can be explicitly tested or falsified.

Krashen was a persuasive communicator, and set himself the ambitious task of providing a comprehensive model of second language learning/acquisition. His five hypotheses were undoubtedly stimulating for language teachers, who often used them to devise activities and **materials** aimed at overcoming the affective filter, or providing appropriate comprehensible input, for example. He himself promoted a variety of pedagogic techniques drawn from his ideas, including a method, 'the natural approach', which he devised with Terrell as co-author (Krashen and Terrell, 1983). Overall, though, psycholinguists and pedagogic theorists remained cautious, feeling:

1. that too much of the model is either untestable in principle or falsified by empirical evidence;
2. that too much of the model is inexplicit or confusing (for example, on the definition of 'learning');
3. that it conflicts in crucial parts with the intuitions of successful language learners;
4. that it is often simply a description of teacher perceptions, with no explanatory powers.

Certainly, formal learning still retained its place in pedagogy long after the height of popularity of the monitor model.

**See also:** Acquisition and teaching; Emotions in language learning; History: after 1945; Inter-cultural competence; Learning styles; Second language acquisition theories; Silent way; Speaking; Teaching methods; Untutored language acquisition

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CHRISTOPHER BRUMFIT

## Monolingual principle

The monolingual principle espouses the exclusion of the native language (or other, previously acquired languages) from the classroom, the target language being both the object and the sole medium of teaching. In particular, it prescribes the strict avoidance of the **mother tongue** for meaning conveyance and, less often, for explanation of grammatical rules. The use of **translation** and **interpreting** as valuable **skills** in their own right is generally considered to be a separate issue. This article focuses on the acquisition of meaning.

Language is concerned with the communication of meanings, and it is meaning-conveyance that first comes to mind in any consideration of language teaching. On hearing an unfamiliar utterance, our first reaction is to wish to know what it means, and the most natural way to satisfy this desire would be through a mother-tongue version, unless, of course, we had already made much progress in the foreign language. Up to the second half of the nineteenth century, the mother tongue was generally seen as the most obvious and direct means for the transmission of meanings. It was an undisputed resource, and bilingual techniques for demonstrating meaning are usually identified as the oldest language teaching techniques. They include interlinear versions, translations in parallel columns,

individual word glosses, and, later, bilingual **dictionaries**. Modern bilingual phrase books for tourists and travellers may be added to the list.

On the other hand, it has always been understood that, quite apart from any consideration of how the meaning of new material is to be established, ample provision must be made for practice and communication without the intrusion of the mother tongue. The monolingual principle emphasises a general law of learning: we learn what we practise. So we should practise the precise function to be developed. The monastery schools, while using translation in the classroom, stipulated that only Latin be used outside the classroom, and boys caught using the vernacular were punished.

Foreign language teachers have long been fascinated by the apparent ease with which children learn their mother tongue. Since there is no other language for them to fall back on, foreign languages should also be taught without recourse to another language. This point was forcefully made by the proponents of the **direct method** in the late nineteenth century. 'Direct' meant direct association between concepts and the new language, without interposition of the mother tongue. Even today, in the teaching guidelines issued by education authorities of many countries, there is a clear taboo against using the mother tongue – evidently an echo of the **Reform Movement** of more than a hundred years ago.

However, it was soon pointed out by some of the reformers themselves (including, somewhat later, **Palmer**) that a distinction should be made between a quick, initial grasp of meaning and the subsequent acquisition of fluency in using the new language items, the latter requiring considerable time and effort. Among the terms used to characterise the distinction were *Verstehen* versus *Aneignung*, interpretation *versus* assimilation, identification *versus* fusion, recognition *versus* integration (Butzkamm, 1973/1978). 'This important distinction was forgotten when the pendulum swung in the 1960s to **audio-visual** methods ... Insecure teachers, anxious to be in the fashion, were to be seen going through every kind of contortion ... trying to get precise meanings across to their class without letting slip a word of English' (Hawkins, 1981: 133).

A serious flaw in the direct method argument is that it uses first language acquisition as a point of reference. If it is true that language teaching should model itself as far as possible on learning in the nursery, then it should be the bilingual nursery that provides that model. This was self-evident to the great Czech reformer **Comenius**. When he discussed foreign language teaching, he referred to the development of natural bilinguals, not only to infants learning their mother tongue. Modern studies in the bilingual upbringing of children all point to the fact that developing bilinguals use their dominant language as a point of reference through which they successfully extend their linguistic **competence** in the weaker language. This natural strategy unfolds in several ways. Bilinguals ask for the equivalent expression in the language, which is not being used for communication at the time. They request translations from their interlocutor, to extricate themselves from a **vocabulary** problem or sometimes simply to satisfy their curiosity. They create clarity of meaning and order their linguistic worlds by contrasting equivalent expressions (Saunders, 1995).

Moreover, research has shown that **successful language learners** cannot help but see the new in terms of the familiar. The new language must be firmly linked to the universe of things and events which learners have, for the most part, already experienced through the mother tongue. Their task is to establish new links and draw on their total language experience, not cut old links off. Successful learners capitalise on the vast amount of both linguistic skills and world knowledge they have already accumulated via the mother tongue. For the most part, they need not reconceptualise their world in the new language. 'Thousands of concepts, both simple (sweet/sour) and complex (true/untrue) already learned must be carried over into the new language, with any necessary cultural adjustment or refinement. At later stages of learning (assimilating, emancipating what has been presented) the mother tongue is rightly avoided ...' (Hawkins, 1981: 175). It is hard to imagine how someone could comprehend the French *anniversaire* without making the connection – overtly or covertly – with birthday. Only students from cultures where birthdays are not celebrated would

need additional explanations, and might even have to be taught the modern concept of the calendar. But most children today will have acquired a working concept of chronology in their mother tongue and be fully equipped to deal with such problems.

Foreign language explanations, demonstrations, actions, pictures and realia can enliven teaching, but can clarify meanings satisfactorily only if teaching texts are carefully graded and selected. The danger of a content vacuum, especially in **beginner** classes, is obvious (Mitchell et al., 1981: 66). Moreover, experiments have shown that the mother tongue generally is by far the quickest, safest and most precise means of getting the meaning across (Dodson, 1967/1972). Only language is rich, nuanced and supple enough to explain language. Sometimes a combination of idiomatic and literal translation can be highly effective, as it clarifies both what is meant and how it is said:

Why have you marked this word wrong?

Warum hast du dieses Wort angestrichen?  
(clarifies the meaning)

Warum hast du dieses Wort falsch markiert?  
(renders the structure transparent)

This technique provides immediate access to a complete meaning – the principle of dual comprehension (Butzkamm and Caldwell, 2009). From the start, learners have a total survey and feel assured that they understand what they hear and know what they are talking about – and this may do much to maintain their confidence and self-esteem. They are now in a better position to practise the phrase (and its variations) and to try it out in personal communications.

From the second half of the nineteenth century to this day, the issue of the use of the mother tongue has been a veritable battleground. The mother tongue has mostly been portrayed as a hindrance, not as a help. Conventional wisdom has only managed to achieve a weak compromise: use the mother tongue as little as possible, usually only as a last resort. **Translation** is allowed when no easy alternative suggests itself. Instead, we have to re-define the functions of the native language as a major resource in foreign language learning and teaching.

The monolingual principle underlines the necessity of establishing the foreign language as the language of interaction for all classroom routines and activities. Teachers should not restrict the foreign language to the **textbook**, but should also include informal social interactions with students as early and as far as possible. Teachers should be consistent in their use of the language and equip their students with the verbal means of reciprocating in the target language and of participating in classroom management. They should be able to anticipate their students' comprehension difficulties and employ a wide range of simplification techniques to forestall them. A positive target language working atmosphere must be sustained throughout.

Thus, the monolingual principle is best understood as a warning against the persistent temptation for pupils and (tired) teachers alike to fall back on their first language. And, admittedly, avoidance of indiscriminate use of the native language is a top priority. But a deliberate and well-calculated use of the mother tongue as a support is, in the final analysis, teaching from strength, not from weakness. Paradoxically, learners are best weaned from dependence on their first language not by the teacher ignoring it, but by using it in proven bilingual techniques. The native language, along with the concepts acquired through and in it, is the greatest resource a child brings to school.

**See also:** Bilingual method; Direct method; Generative principle; Grammar–translation method; History: the nineteenth century; Medium of instruction; Mother tongue use in the foreign language classroom; Reform Movement; Speaking

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- *home language*, the language used within the home for everyday interactions;
  - *family language*, the language most frequently used within the family or the language used as a lingua franca between family members;
  - *heritage language*, the language which is frequently a means of establishing and reaffirming consolidation with one's origins, though linguistic proficiency is not a prerequisite;
  - *community language*, the language spoken by the immediate community which may be identified as the mother tongue if the mother tongue is a vernacular and less widely used or perceived as of lower status;
  - *dominant language*, a phrase used to acknowledge that in the course of childhood and throughout life, the language a person feels most proficient in can change.

WOLFGANG BUTZKAMM

## Mother tongue

'Mother tongue' is an historical term, coined to conceptualise a person's early language development. It was based on a number of presumptions: that a person's first language would be the one normally spoken in the home by the primary care-giver; that this would be their mother; and that this learning would be a naturalistic process, by assimilation rather than overt teaching. Linguistic researchers who use empirical data as evidence for their descriptions of language have suggested refinements.

Synonyms for mother tongue now include:

- *first language*, the first language the child learns to speak and understand;

While these terms do reflect attempts to broaden the original concept, and to offer a more detailed and comprehensive understanding of early language development, they too lack focus and definitive boundaries. The terms are frequently used by linguists and non-specialists, alike, as if interchangeable. While useful in reflecting current thinking, these terms also serve to emphasise the complexity of the aspects that contribute to understanding language development. In later years, the mother tongue may not necessarily be a speaker's only language, nor even the dominant language, or the one most frequently used in everyday life. The mother tongue may be the language on which the speaker relies for intuitive knowledge of language, its form, structure and meaning; or for those who are bilingual and multilingual, mother tongue may be the preferred language for some complex cognitive reasoning. However, the term is best understood in historical perspective for the contribution made to understanding language development in the early days of linguistic study. As a descriptor for child language use in the twenty-first century, it is partial and hence conceptually flawed.

In an evolutionary perspective, furthermore, it appears that the languages which more likely to be maintained and passed on to future generations are those of the males in social groups and in this sense

we can speak of the importance of the ‘father tongue’ (Forster and Renfrew, 2011).

### Difficulties encountered in identifying the mother tongue

Irrespective of the definition adopted, identification of a person’s mother tongue remains complex because it rests not solely on linguistic definition. Other factors, including an increase in individual geographical mobility; changes in social practices such as marriage and child-rearing, and the introduction of formal national **language planning** policies in countries around the world, also contribute. Globalisation and geographic mobility, combined with political events, mean that it is increasingly the case that many children learn more than one language simultaneously, even within the home. Hence the designation of just one language as the mother tongue is difficult.

There are two established approaches to designation of a mother tongue: *self-ascription*, whereby an individual makes their own choice or, in the case of very young children, their family acting on their behalf and *official designation* when the choice is made by others. The Indian censuses are an example of the former, while Singapore policy is an example of the latter. Both approaches have faced difficulties that can lead to the imprecise labelling of individuals and this in turn can distort large-scale national survey data.

To illustrate the dilemmas faced when designating a mother tongue, consider the following example. Child A’s mother is a native speaker of language *a* while the father speaks language *b*. They live in Hong Kong with the parental grandmother who speaks a dialect of language *b* and maternal grandfather who speaks a dialect of language *a*. From birth, our imaginary child is looked after by a maid from the Philippines, educated in Filipino *c* and English *d*. If this child were required to identify a single mother tongue for official purposes, a number of questions are raised:

- (a) Which language would the parents, jointly or individually, nominate for their child?
- (b) Which language would the child itself (eventually) choose?

- (c) Is the choice in any way related to the child’s proficiency in the chosen language?

This imaginary situation is complicated further if the child is in fact a twin, learning to communicate with the twin sibling.

It may be easy to dismiss this scenario as hypothetical but it is a linguistic sketch not uncommon in multilingual societies. Difficulties arise because identification with a language is more than the ability to speak and understand that language. The speaker’s **competence** and proficiency are rarely taken into account in the designation of the mother tongue. Affiliation with any language, including the mother tongue, is bound up with aspects of personal **identity**, affinity, group identity and sense of self. Linguistic affiliation can be claimed through cultural, social or religious identity. This sense of solidarity or belonging to a group goes beyond an individual’s linguistic competence. Indeed, the link between an individual’s ability to speak and understand a language and their affinity with a particular ethnic group or mother tongue is tenuous.

For complex political and historical reasons individuals may not always speak the language of the group with whom they claim close affinity and shared identity. Although second or subsequent generation migrants may no longer speak the language of their forebears, some would still claim that language as a heritage language, as a way of consolidating their sense of belonging to that group and as a way of reaffirming an element of their ethnicity. Under such circumstances the choice of mother tongue is a symbolic attachment closely linked to an individual’s sense of self, identity and belonging. These factors complicate the identification of the mother tongue.

As populations change in composition, so too do their claims to linguistic and other kinds of heritage. For example, in the USA’s 1970 census, 33 million people (17 per cent of the population) claimed a mother tongue other than English. This represented a 71 per cent increase since the 1960 census. The change was even greater in the 2010 census. This increase may be accounted for by changes within the population but it is equally likely that people, when given the opportunity, will change their identity and with that the designation



of their mother tongue. It may be that the longer migrants live away from their land of origin or homeland, the more likely they are to reinforce their sense of attachment to it through statements of symbolic identity, and one way is through statements about mother tongue. Language is just one facet in the composition of individual identity.

If the choice of mother tongue is difficult for individuals, the dilemma encountered is multifold when compiling national data. Pattanayak (1998) chronicles some of the difficulties encountered with census surveys of mother tongue(s). These difficulties include political, pragmatic and philosophical dimensions which assume greater significance when the information gathered is to be used as the basis for the subsequent formulation of public policy, particularly (mother tongue) education.

### **The future of the concept of 'mother tongue'**

The twentieth century witnessed an unprecedented growth in geographical mobility. It can no longer be taken for granted that people will continue to live in the place of their birth throughout their lives. The degree of personal choice individuals can exercise in this cannot be taken for granted either. Natural disaster and political factors, as well as individual aspiration, are all influential. Geographical boundaries are created (e.g. partition of the Punjab region); re-created (e.g. Palestine, Kuwait); new nation states are established and new languages designated (e.g. Bangladesh, Slovakia, Montenegro) while established nations re-create themselves (e.g. the Russian Federation).

The motives for mobility are complex. They include political, economic, as well as personal factors. Such changes have brought about migration on a scale that ranges from the lone individual on the move to whole communities of peoples being displaced. Recent patterns of migration have obliged governments to rethink public policy, not least in the field of the type of education they can provide. Changing populations have caused governments to consider alternatives to the monolingual, assimilationist approach to education as a means of achieving national unity and nation building. As a result, different forms of **mother-tongue teaching** have been introduced.

**See also:** Bilingual education; Bilingualism; Migrant and heritage languages; Native speaker; Neurolinguistics; Plurilingualism; Standard language

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LINDA THOMPSON

## **Mother-tongue teaching**

Any discussion of mother-tongue teaching (MTT) is inextricably embedded in definitions of **mother tongue**, a concept that has proved controversial, varied and dynamic. Yet the impetus for introducing mother-tongue teaching has come from sources as diverse as governments, parents, educators and transnational agencies. The urgency for debate around the topic has increased considerably in the twenty-first century and seems likely to grow in parallel with increased globalisation and mobility of peoples.

Support for the introduction of mother-tongue teaching in the initial stages of schooling is based on the assumption that providing some continuity

of language experience facilitates the transition from the home to mainstream schooling and is therefore of educational, intellectual and emotion benefit to young learners (c.f. Baker, 2011; Cummins, 2000). This is regarded as being particularly important for very young children who, in some contexts, begin school at 4 years or even earlier, and who are still in the process of learning a first language. However, this is more controversial than it may at first appear, since the difference between the language used at home and the language of school is not unique to multilingual contexts. Different social contexts, purposes, functions and people mean that the language of one social context, the home context, is necessarily different in form, function and structure, from that of any other, including the school. **Variation in language**, different styles of speaking, vernacular, registers and varieties are used to achieve differing social functions. This may be regarded as the inevitable dimension of socialisation and central to all new learning and mobility: going to school, college, shopping, work, etc. Or it may be perceived as problematic. Where programmes in the USA have been established to teach literacy in the home language as a bridge to learning to read and write, these programmes have been criticised because they devalue the mother tongue. It is a shift that has simultaneously been perceived as devaluing the speakers of these (other) languages. As such it remains contentious. There is no consensus that the mother tongue is per se the preferred medium for primary education, particularly if it does not enjoy parity of status with the contact language(s). In these contexts MTT could be marginalising, impacting upon individual access to society's power structures and benefits. In contrast, some (c.f. Cummins, 2000; Phillipson, 1996) regard the denial of access to MTT as a breach of **human rights**. In short, there is no one, single solution. Such ideological issues can be resolved over time. However, to be successful, it is imperative they do not become an externally imposed mandate.

### Influences on policy

Parental opinion has been one influence on mother-tongue teaching policy. As second and third

generation migrants change their status from temporary resident to permanent citizen, so too do their educational aspirations for their children. Growing awareness of civil rights issues, equal opportunities, social justice and equality, together with recognition of the economic potential of being bilingual, or even only monolingual in the dominant societal language, increases parental demand for their children to be taught languages at school. However, consensus has not been established. Parental opinion varies between those in favour of mother-tongue teaching and those who believe that the best opportunities for their children lie within learning the mainstream, societal language and gaining academic qualifications in that way. The counter argument is that MTT to the exclusion of the dominant societal language can leave some pupils marginalised, economically vulnerable and hence further marginalised and disadvantaged.

Pupils' educational underachievement has also influenced the MTT debate. In English-language dominant contexts including, the UK and USA, mother-tongue teaching was introduced in the belief that this would raise pupils' self-esteem and nurture a positive sense of identity and this in turn would improve success in school learning and public examinations. But education policies can change and be changed by the societies that create them. In June 1998 the state of California in the USA decided by referendum to discontinue bilingual education programmes for Hispanic pupils after 18 years of provision.

A variety of factors combine to add support for the introduction of mother-tongue teaching. In those contexts where it is decided to proceed there remains a number of practicalities to be resolved. Mother-tongue education is closely linked to economic, political and other social factors, and the range and types of mother-tongue teaching provision are not constant. They reflect the societies which they serve and change or are changed over time by internal and external influence.

The linguistic composition of a society is only one of the factors that influences policy makers and their decisions on mother-tongue teaching. Having decided to formulate a policy the next step is to consider issues related to mother-tongue teaching.

### **Which language(s) should be taught as mother tongue(s)?**

Societies with large populations and small societies where several different languages are spoken, face this issue. In formulating a policy it may not be possible to give all of the languages spoken equal recognition within the school system. This is the dilemma being faced by the government of South Africa in formulating its education policy. Which of the eleven recognised languages should be included in the curriculum?

Scott and Tuin (2007) provide an account of the changes undertaken by Taiwan (ROC) in reviewing its mother-tongue teaching and language education. Their discussion of the transition from Mandarin-only to Mandarin-plus and teaching three Sinitic languages raises more general issues about language rights, status, resources and identifies the complex impact MTT has on wider societal debate. The simultaneous power and limitations of the decisions about which languages to teach or exclude resonate in other contexts.

In contrast Clyne (2011) describes how some secondary schools in Australia actually prevent newly arrived students from studying a third language, preferring them instead to concentrate on ESL. This is despite the research that demonstrates there is cognitive advantage from the increased metalinguistic awareness that knowing many languages can bring.

It is inevitable that even a national MTT policy cannot always include all languages. Where the curriculum is broadened the implanted languages are not always universally welcomed. It is clear that decisions made in the formulation and introduction of MTT can replace linguistic boundaries with other hegemonies of power and exclusion. Some mother tongues will not be taught. In those contexts consideration will need to be given to the question: is it better to have some rather than none or is parity best achieved through teaching the official national language only? Even in societies that aim for a policy that includes several languages, like Singapore for example, where there are four official languages – English, Malay, Mandarin and Tamil – this choice leaves other languages excluded. This is a particularly delicate issue when world

languages, for example Arabic, Chinese, English and Spanish, are being considered alongside lesser spoken languages like Korean and Japanese. In July 1998 the government of Algeria legislated to make Arabic the official language in public life, leaving the indigenous Berber peoples (and others, including the older generation of French speakers), marginalised. The new politics in North Africa, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt will inevitably bring further linguistic change and controversy.

### **The status of vernaculars and language varieties with no written form or orthography**

An alternative way of asking which languages are to be included in a national policy for mother-tongue teaching is to consider which languages are to be excluded and the reasons for this. Should only recognised languages be considered for inclusion or should equal consideration be given to dialects, non-standard varieties of language, and languages that have no standard written form? Discussions in the USA have explored issues relating to the introduction of Ebonics in the school curriculum. Similar consideration has been given to **creoles, pidgins** and varieties that are still in the process of establishing an alphabet and orthography. Such varieties are frequently perceived as low status in comparison with already established languages. Some argue that teaching the new varieties as school subjects cannot help pupils if it does not lead to better examination results and qualifications. Within the school curriculum these newly introduced languages and varieties remain low status in comparison with other school subjects, for example, mathematics or science, and languages that are already well established as part of the school curriculum (these are known as foreign languages). Parents who are themselves speakers of these varieties have been among those to express these concerns. This issue is closely linked to the centrality of literacy within education systems.

### **Which language skills should be taught: speaking listening, reading or writing?**

Literacy is seen as central to the school curriculum. National standards of literacy are taken as measures

of the relative success of government policy on education. The amount of time dedicated to mother-tongue teaching in the school curriculum determines what it is feasible to teach with limited time and teaching resources. If the emphasis of mother-tongue teaching is to be the teaching of literacy (or biliteracy) this will preclude some mother tongues that do not have a standard written form or orthography. Also, if mother tongues are to be taught for examination subjects, learning to read and to write the language will assume greater significance. If the school curriculum is to be expanded to include mother-tongue teaching, is this to be in addition to existing subjects or will it replace them, and how will this be decided? Much foreign language teaching within the school curriculum emphasises proficiency and **competence** in the target languages. This ignores other aspects of education in these languages, including the academic study of the language, that is a study of the structure, form and functions of the language; the literature written in the language; as well as cognitive language-related skills, such as thinking in the language and using the language to perform complex cognitive reasoning. Language learning also demands learning appropriate **intercultural competence**. All of these aspects need to be considered when designing a balanced mother-tongue teaching curriculum. Yet there are practicalities to be considered and a balance to be maintained within an already overcrowded school timetable limited by funding and time constraints. The additive bilingual programmes in South Africa, for example, have to consider the practical possibilities for the implementation of mother-tongue medium of instruction, given their eleven official languages.

### **Are suitable curriculum materials available to support mother-tongue teaching?**

Central to the teaching of all school subjects is quality teaching **materials** and resources. If the language to be taught as a mother tongue is not already being taught somewhere in the world, then suitable curriculum materials may not be readily available. Many materials produced by small publishers or by classroom teachers may not be easily

available to others. This will apply particularly to minority languages with small numbers of native speakers. For example, Frisian and Gaelic would fall within this category.

High quality teaching materials are not only expensive to produce but they take time to develop and prepare. Publishing is a commercial enterprise and publishers may be reluctant to embark upon projects where demand for the products is limited to a specialist group, especially if that group has limited financial resources for the purchase of publishers' products. Mother-tongue teaching materials, when they are available, may be expensive. The language of the text is just one consideration. It is equally important that the materials be of cultural significance to the context in which they are being used. This is particularly the case for global languages, such as Arabic, Chinese, English, etc.

### **Where should mother-tongue teaching take place: the school or the community?**

Not all teaching needs to take place in school and not all learning does. In some instances mother-tongue teaching has been accommodated within the school curriculum, while in others pupils attend classes outside of school time, in the evenings, at weekends or at summer schools held during the school vacations. School premises, community halls or even local places of worship are all used as teaching venues. It is not just a question of where to hold these classes but who has control over the MTT provision. In some instances, for example, the teaching of Arabic for studying the Koran, the content and direction of the curriculum and mother tongue provision, has been assumed by parents and representatives of the community. When teaching takes place outside the school and of the control of education authorities and government, it is predictable that patterns of provision will remain uncoordinated and perhaps inconsonant with mainstream practice. This devolution may make national provision less easy to achieve and to monitor. However, the results achieved by teachers in Saturday clubs in the United Kingdom with children of Caribbean heritage has surpassed those achieved via the traditional school route.

### To examine or not?

Alongside issues of curriculum content and teaching materials comes the question: Should mother-tongue teaching replicate approaches to other school subjects or should it be different? If the aim is to establish parity of status for the subject and recognition for the qualities of the pupils who have studied this subject, it is difficult to argue against examinations comparable with those for other curriculum subjects. The case may be clearer in primary schools where in most countries there is less emphasis on public examinations. However, **secondary education** is almost exclusively focused on preparing pupils for public examinations as a means of selection for entry to higher education and future employment. Officially recognised examinations and qualifications are not readily available in all mother tongues.

### Teacher supply and training

Mother-tongue teaching is dependent on skilled and well-trained teachers who are proficient in the language, but is this enough? Being a **native speaker** is not sufficient qualification. Teachers also need to be professionals who have undergone training and who hold qualifications. In some contexts, difficulties remain in finding and training adequate numbers of teachers to meet the local demand. Also, since training takes time, there is inevitably a discrepancy between the demand and supply of suitably qualified mother tongue teachers.

### Current provision

From the range of education policies that exist it is possible to identify five different approaches to education provision for teaching mother tongue. They are ordered here by the degree of commitment demonstrated to the concept, and range from monolingual education systems through to bilingual, trilingual or multilingual education programmes.

1. *Monolingual education systems* where there is only one language recognised as the medium of instruction. This is usually the dominant societal language. In these systems other languages

may be taught as part of the foreign language curriculum.

2. *Mother tongue maintenance* aims to acknowledge the mother tongue(s) spoken by the pupils. However, there is no official recognition of these languages within the school curriculum. The use of the mother tongue(s) may be permitted in the school and even classrooms for informal interactions. In addition there may be library books in some or all of the mother tongue(s) spoken by the pupils. Mother tongue maintenance aims to foster pupils' self-esteem and respect for the mother tongue(s) by allowing pupils to use the languages they know. However, in these contexts the mother tongue(s) are not used for any official purposes, or for teaching, and since it is unlikely that there will be teachers who can speak and understand the languages, the pupils are unlikely to develop their competence in any way. These programmes are frequently a pragmatic response to linguistic diversity amongst the school population. They are not dependent on additional resources and are rarely supported with formal policy statements.
3. *Mother tongue support programmes* aim to provide opportunities for pupils to use their mother tongue(s) within the curriculum to support their learning. They go beyond merely allowing the use of mother tongue in school. They encourage and promote the use of mother tongue for a variety of purposes. The aim is not just to develop the children's proficiency in the mother tongue but to actively promote its use for informal and formal purposes in the classroom. Approaches vary but are dependent upon having teachers or adult helpers who are sufficiently proficient in the mother tongue to provide the children with guidance and support in oral and written communication. However, since the mother tongue is not the language for teaching, these adults do not necessarily need to be qualified teachers. These programmes may rely on translation as well as the use of the mother tongue for consolidating children's understanding. Frequently the mother tongue is the language of both informal and official communication between the pupils' homes and the school.

4. *Mother-tongue teaching* where one or more of the mother tongue(s) are taught within the school curriculum. In these situations the mother tongue(s) enjoy the same status as the other subjects of the curriculum. They will be taught by qualified teachers, with appropriate curriculum materials and syllabus to inform the teaching as well as opportunities to take public examinations. In some contexts pupils may be able to continue to study the mother tongue(s) beyond secondary education at tertiary level and thus earn high status qualifications for specialised professions. The drawback to mother-tongue teaching is that the range of mother tongues being taught is restricted. Hence, not all of the mother tongue(s) spoken by the pupils may be offered within one school. This will be particularly true in those contexts where there are several languages spoken within the society and where pupils are speakers of a number of languages. As Tollefson (1991) points out, in planning language we may simply be planning inequality. Mother-tongue teaching does not necessarily lead to greater parity.
5. *Bilingual education* is when the pupils' mother tongue(s) are both taught and used as a medium of instruction within the school. In these programmes pupils are expected to achieve a high level of proficiency in speaking, understanding, reading and writing mother tongue as well as at least one other language. A number of established bilingual education programmes exist, each designed to meet local social and economic needs. (e.g. in Southeast Asia: Ho Wah Kam and Wong, 1998).

### The way forward

Language is dynamic. Language policy and mother-tongue teaching need to reflect this reality. Looking forward it is impossible to imagine how the vision of an interconnected multilingual world can exist without more language learning. The ways in which this will be achieved will evolve and be very different from the models and practices currently familiar. Hélot and Ó Laoire (2011) provide a glimpse of these possibilities with their

description of a pedagogy of the possible. Central to their vision are possibilities to educate for social equity and plurilingualism. They do not argue for the top-down model associated with most language education policies, instead they explore possibilities in the ecology of classrooms through the agency of teachers and students. This is but one scenario. Many others will be created.

**See also:** Bilingual education; Council of Europe platform; Migrant and heritage languages; Medium of instruction; Mother tongue; Native speaker

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LINDA THOMPSON

## Mother tongue use in the foreign language classroom

The question of what contributions (if any) the learners' mother tongue (MT) can make to foreign language (FL) learning is a controversial issue in language pedagogy. At one extreme, the '**monolingual principle**' (that the MT should be totally excluded except as a last resort) has been enshrined in many teaching methods and national policies. At the other extreme, many teachers make such

extensive use of the MT that learners' exposure to the FL is reduced to little more than the samples printed in the textbooks.

Many teachers agree that in contexts where the teacher is the learners' main or only source of FL input, it is important to create a classroom in which the FL is dominant. On the other hand, they see that a policy of total exclusion does not work in practice and indeed question whether it is advisable. After all, the students' first language is a rich source of support in understanding the new language and a powerful instrument for creating learning situations.

### What proportion of MT do teachers use?

Studies from around the world have revealed an immense range of variation in teachers' use of the MT, even amongst teachers in similar teaching situations and even when the teachers are **native speakers** of the FL. For example:

- When Turnbull (in a study reported in Turnbull, 2001, and Turnbull and Arnett, 2002) analyzed the discourse of four teachers of French in Canadian secondary schools, he found that their use of the MT (English) ranged from 28 per cent to 76 per cent.
- In the discourse of seven native-speaker secondary-school teachers of Japanese, Korean, German and French in New Zealand, Kim and Elder (2005) found a range of MT use from 12 per cent to 77 per cent.
- In Korean high schools, Liu et al. found that MT words made up between 10 per cent and 90 per cent of the words in the lessons of thirteen EFL teachers.

Mitchell (1988) reported a similar situation in modern foreign language teaching in the UK. In interviews, many teachers agreed that the FL should be used as much as possible and felt a sense of guilt in 'confessing' to using so much MT. Other studies report similar feelings. Why, then, do so many teachers – even native-speaker teachers – fall so far short of this goal? The next section will look at some of the purposes that the MT has been observed to serve.

### Why do teachers use the MT?

A group of fifty Hong Kong and Mainland Chinese students (reported in Littlewood and Yu, 2011) recalled that their EFL teachers used the MT mainly for (a) talking with a student about a personal matter; (b) explaining a difficult grammar point; and (c) dealing with a serious discipline problem. Similar purposes have been found in other studies: the teachers of French in Macaro's (1997) study in the UK liked to use the MT for relationship building, explaining difficult grammar and disciplining; Mitchell (1988) and Liu et al. (2004) found that explaining difficult grammar and meanings were the two most common reasons. These purposes cover three key dimensions of pedagogical communication – establishing positive relationships, ensuring understanding and maintaining discipline – and it is therefore not surprising if teachers use the MT to carry them out. On the other hand, they also have the greatest potential to provide a context for FL use motivated by immediate communicative needs. If some teachers exploit this potential but others do not, often in spite of the sense of guilt mentioned earlier, why is this so?

Many studies mention contextual factors such as pressure of exams or class size, but the factor mentioned most frequently (e.g. in the studies of Mitchell, 1988, Macaro, 1997, and Liu et al., 2004) is the students' low language proficiency. Many studies also mention the *teachers'* low proficiency. More positively, some also mention the psychological reassurance that the MT can provide, especially for less proficient students, in what may seem a disorienting foreign environment (e.g. Meiring and Norman, 2002).

### Towards a principled approach to using the MT

In developing a principled approach, we need to balance the MT's potential to support learning against the danger that over-use of the MT may result in the FL being largely excluded as a means of regular communication. Here we will consider such an approach within the framework used by Kim and Elder (2005), who distinguished between

the 'core goals' of the language lesson, which are related directly to learning the FL (e.g. explaining, organizing practice), and 'framework goals', which refer to creating a context for this learning (e.g. establishing relationships, classroom management).

### *Using the MT to achieve core goals*

Many valuable teaching techniques exploit the MT as a stimulus for learning. For example:

At the presentation stage, the MT can enable students to progress more quickly to the stages of internalization and active use. The most obvious example is providing MT equivalents for FL vocabulary items. Another is the 'sandwich technique' for introducing dialogues by presenting each new utterance in the sequence MT – FL – MT (Butzkamm, 2003).

At the practice stage, MT utterances can provide effective stimuli to elicit FL equivalents. In the 'bilingual method' (e.g. Dodson, 1972; Butzkamm, 2003), equivalence should lie not at the word level but at the level of meaning: meanings are implanted into the learner's mind and re-expressed through the FL. As in other kinds of translation, the MT 'makes demands on the learner's meaning system' and creates a need to expand his or her language repertoire (Munro, 1999: 7).

At the production stage, MT situations can serve as input or stimuli for FL use. For example, students may interview friends or family in the MT and produce written portraits for a TL readership; brainstorm ideas for a story in the security of the MT and later write it in the FL; or write about their own lives first in the MT and then in the TL. Such activities serve as a natural bridge between the MT and the FL, as well as a source of security and ownership over learning.

Further ideas on how the MT can be used constructively at different stages of learning can be found in Duff (1989), Atkinson (1993), Deller and Rinvulcri (2002) and Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009).

### *Using the MT to achieve framework goals*

Reference has already been made to the psychological support that the MT can provide. This aspect



is highlighted especially in ‘majority-language’ learning contexts such as ESL in Australia (Wigglesworth, 2002) or the USA (e.g. Auerbach, 1993) but is also relevant to other contexts.

In choosing between the MT and FL for purposes such as discussing personal problems or maintaining discipline, there are conflicting criteria. From a psychological perspective, there will be many situations where the MT seems advisable. But these same situations also offer precisely the stimuli for real communication that the classroom often lacks. The choice must depend on the nature of the specific situation, topic and learner(s), including the latter’s proficiency and the extent to which they feel ‘at home’ with the language.

These considerations apply also to the use of the MT for routine classroom management. Using it for complex management issues may become overwhelming and seem time-consuming, especially at early stages and with less proficient learners. On the other hand, many teachers recognize that this is a domain in which the FL has real communicative value and should be used as soon and as often as possible.

### **Strategic and compensatory use of the MT**

With respect to both core goals and framework goals, a distinction is sometimes made (e.g. by Cameron, 2001) between ‘strategic’ and ‘compensatory’ use of the MT. Strategic use refers to using the MT to facilitate learning in deliberate ways. Compensatory use refers to unplanned use of the MT to deal with an unexpected problem. The distinction is mainly a matter of whether the teacher has actually planned to use the MT or uses it in an ad hoc way, and we may expect that with increasing experience, awareness and planning, the proportion of strategic use will also increase.

### **Conclusion**

It has been said that the MT can be ‘the single biggest danger’ (Atkinson, 1993: 13) in the foreign language classroom, if it threatens the primacy of the FL, or ‘the most important ally’ (Butzkamm, 2003: 30), if it is used in principled ways. In Butzkamm’s words, pp. 32–33, the MT ‘launches, as it

were, the pupils’ canoes into the foreign-language current’, but the goal remains to establish the FL as the main means of classroom communication.

It lies outside the scope of this entry to discuss strategies for working towards this goal of maximal FL use, but there is general agreement that a key factor is simply a teacher’s determination to work towards this goal, even when he or she is tired, whilst remaining sensitive to the psychological and pedagogical support that the MT can provide (Crichton, 2009). Future exploration needs to seek ways of doing this as well as illuminate further the role that the MT can usefully perform.

**See also:** Content-based instruction; Mother tongue; Native speaker; Non-native speaker teachers; Objectives in language learning; Syllabus and curriculum design

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WILLIAM LITTLEWOOD

## Motivation

Motivation is one of the two key learner characteristics that determine the rate and the success of foreign language (L2) learning (the other being **aptitude**). Motivation provides the primary impetus to embark upon learning, and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process. The general psychological literature contains a great number of different (and often contradictory) definitions and conceptualisations of human motivation (see **Motivation theories**), and L2 motivation is a highly eclectic and multifaceted construct encompassing all those emotions and cognitions that initiate language learning and energise the language learning process. However, research into language learning motivation, for a very long time, concentrated on a narrow range of issues and it is only in recent years that the scope of inquiry has expanded in a way that begins to capture the full complexity and richness of the subject.

### The social psychological origins of L2 motivation theory

The systematic study of L2 motivation goes back to the late 1950s when two social psychologists in Canada, Robert Gardner and Wallace Lambert, launched a series of studies examining how language learners' **attitudes** towards the L2-speaking community affected their desire to learn the L2 (Gardner and Lambert, 1972). The researchers followed a social psychological approach, focusing on the influences of the social context and the relational patterns between the language communities, as measured by means of the individual's social attitudes. The original hypothesis that 'students' attitudes towards the specific language group are

bound to influence how successful they will be in incorporating aspects of that language' (Gardner, 1985: 6) received ample empirical support in investigations carried out both by Gardner and his Canadian associates, and by other researchers in different parts of the world. A key tenet of the social psychological approach was that L2 learning is qualitatively different to the mastery of other subjects. Knowing an L2 involves the development of some sort of 'L2 **identity**' which has a pronounced sociocultural angle and, therefore, in addition to the environmental and cognitive factors normally associated with learning motivation in current educational **psychology**, L2 motivation also contains a social dimension.

As a result of the empirical investigations conducted, Gardner and his associates developed a comprehensive theory of L2 motivation. According to Gardner (1985), motivation subsumes three components: motivational intensity, the desire to learn the language, and attitudes toward learning the language. Thus, in his view, 'motivation' refers to a kind of central mental 'engine' that subsumes effort, want/will (cognition) and task-enjoyment (affect). This motivation engine can be switched on by a number of motivational stimuli, such as a desire to communicate with members of the L2 community or the prospects of a good job that requires L2 proficiency. However, Gardner considered these 'triggers' to be mere motivational antecedents rather than motivation itself. Unfortunately, and much to his chagrin, Gardner's theory has been commonly misinterpreted as a dichotomy of 'integrative motivation' (associated with a positive disposition toward the L2 group and the desire to interact with and even become similar to valued members of that community) and 'instrumental motivation' (related to the potential pragmatic gains of L2 proficiency, such as getting a better job or a higher salary).

Applying a social psychological approach, Gardner and his associates did extensive research during the 1970s and 1980s on a variety of issues related to L2 learning and teaching, such as the effects of the social milieu, parental influence, language anxiety, the classroom environment, instructional techniques, and attitudes towards the language teacher and course (for a review, see

Masgoret and Gardner, 2003). These studies came to define both early understandings of L2 motivation and its research agenda.

### **The 'motivational renaissance' of the 1990s**

By the 1990s, researchers in various parts of the world were perceiving a growing gap between general and L2 motivational theories, and the desire for increased convergence engendered a 'motivational renaissance' (Gardner and Tremblay, 1994: 526), which led to a flourish of both empirical research and theorising (for a review, see Dörnyei, 2001).

A key concern of much L2 motivation research of this period was to pay more attention to the motivational processes underlying instructed language learning (rather than L2 acquisition in natural contexts or **untutored language acquisition**). A prime example of this trend was Crookes and Schmidt's (1991) pioneering study that distinguished between various levels of motivation and motivated learning (micro, classroom, **syllabus/curriculum** and extracurricular levels), and which set the tone for a number of future studies. This trend was accompanied by a general endeavour to develop extended motivational paradigms that complemented the existing social psychological approach with cognitive concepts imported from mainstream psychology. Important illustrations of this trend can be found in Clément's (Clément and Noels, 1992; Clément et al., 2001) theory of *situated linguistic identity* and attempts – primarily through the work of Noels (Noels et al., 2000, 2001) – to apply a *self-determination theory* perspective to L2 motivation theory.

### **New directions – leaving the social psychological framework**

#### ***Post-modernist perspectives***

Some scholars believed that attempts to modify or improve the existing social psychological framework were essentially futile, as such endeavours entailed preserving some of the inherent flaws of that framework. One such criticism came from a post-modernist perspective. For example, Norton

(2000) argued that traditional interpretations of L2 motivation were rooted in notions of an individual isolated from social context. Norton proposed an alternative concept of *investment* in an attempt to develop a comprehensive theory of identity integrating the language learner, the language learning context, and how the learner attempts to understand his or her relationship to the world. Drawing on notions of social, cultural, and symbolic capital, Norton considers language learners' behaviour as a function of the power relationships between speakers.

A common theme amongst post-modernist scholars (see also, Pavlenko, 2002; Kramsch, 2009) is a rejection of what they perceive to be the simplistic, linear explanations offered by social psychologists for what are actually highly complex, often unpredictable phenomena.

### ***Sociocultural perspectives***

Sociocultural theory (SCT) has become an increasingly influential concept in educational psychology, and this influence has extended to L2 motivation theory. A key departure for researchers considering L2 motivation from an SCT perspective (see Kim, 2009) is how they perceive the relationships between the individual and context. In traditional research paradigms these contextual variables have been separated from the individual and analysed in terms of cause–effect relationships. However, from a sociocultural perspective, the individual and the context are inseparable. The individual is both a product of and a producer of that context; motivation can only be fully understood with reference to the individual in context.

### ***The challenges of time and context***

The social psychological origins of L2 motivation research not only shaped the focus of the research agenda but also prescribed its methodology. For a very long time, L2 motivation research was dominated by cross-sectional quantitative studies examining cause–effect relationships. As the research agenda began to expand in the 1990s, there was a growing awareness that motivation is not a fixed entity within an individual, that it is dynamic and changing across time and social

context and that, in order to explore these issues fully, new methodological approaches had to be considered.

In a small-scale but highly influential longitudinal study of Irish learners of French, Ushioda (1998) made a major contribution to the challenge of understanding the temporal nature of L2 motivation. Ushioda conceptualised motivation as an ongoing process rather than as a cause or product of learning. She found that many learners defined their motivation to learn a language in terms of their experience of learning and using the target language as opposed to specific future goals. Ushioda identifies both causal and teleological dimensions to L2 motivation, showing that for some learners (Learner A in Figure 12) motivation is shaped by positive experiences, and goals play only a minor role. However, for other learners (Learner B in Figure 12) motivation is primarily goal directed.

Perhaps equal to the theoretical contribution of this study was the powerful case it made for qualitative inquiry into L2 motivation, showing that great insights into the dynamic nature of motivation could be gained from small-scale qualitative investigations.

The temporal aspect to motivation was also explored by Williams and Burden (1997), who made a key distinction between initiating motivation and sustaining it, pointing out the dangers of conflating these separate concepts under the convenient umbrella term of motivation and the need to theoretically and pedagogically distinguish between the two. Williams and Burden's contribution was also important in that it represents a significant attempt to describe L2 motivation through the language and concepts of mainstream educational psychology rather than conventional L2 motivation theory.

The temporal dimension to L2 learning motivation was further pursued by Dörnyei and Otto (1998) in their *Process Model of L2 Motivation*. The process model outlines three distinct stages of motivation: the preactional, actional, and postactional stages. The preactional stage is also referred to as choice motivation as it concerns the choices individuals make in setting goals. The actional stage can also be referred to as executive motivation as it relates to how motivation is maintained and efforts are sustained in the pursuit of those goals set at the

preactional stage. The postactional, stage is also termed motivational retrospection, and concerns the individual's evaluation of the execution of a particular task and this evaluation, in turn, feeds into the preactional stage of a subsequent action.

In contrast to previous psychometric models of L2 motivation, the process-oriented approach recognised that for most individuals motivation is a complex, evolutionary process consisting of distinct phases, such as goal-setting, action implementation and outcome evaluation. Motivation is not constant, it ebbs and flows over the course of time and in a long-term endeavour such as language learning, we are likely to observe significant fluctuations in enthusiasm and commitment.

**English, globalisation and integrativeness**

A growing awareness of the role of English as a global lingua franca presented a further challenge

to the concept of integrativeness, and the whole social psychological paradigm. The idea of integrativeness, based around notions of group affiliation and identification with the speakers and values associated with a particular language, was becoming increasingly anachronistic (see Lamb, 2004; Coetzee-van Rooy, 2006) for learners of a language with no geographically defined community. In a study conducted in Hungary, where very few learners have direct contact with native speakers of English, Kormos and Csizér (2008) found the construct of integrativeness problematic. They concluded that learners' attitudes and motivation are shaped indirectly through media products and the perceived importance of contact with foreigners, as opposed to any desire to integrate with a target culture. Based on research from Japan, Yashima (2002) presented *international posture* as a revised notion of integrativeness that was more appropriate to the current status of English.

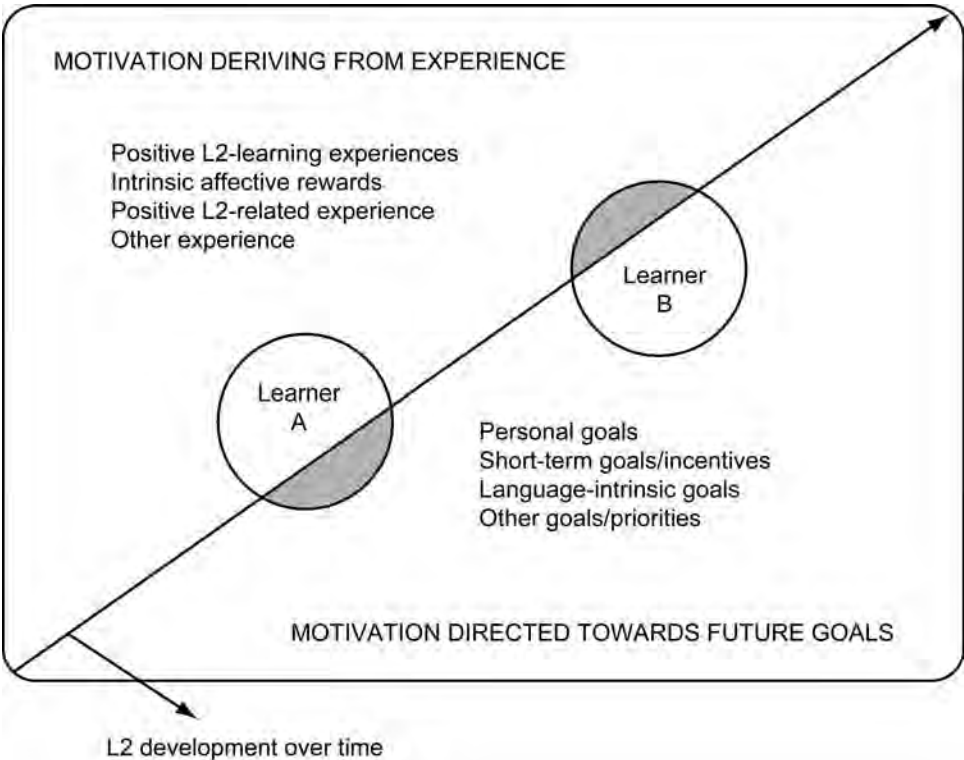


Figure 12 Ushioda's (1998) framework of learner conceptions of motivation

The challenge posed to established L2 motivation theory by the global nature of the English language was rendering a model of motivation based on membership of fixed language communities obsolete. New concepts or terminology were no longer sufficient; new research paradigms were sought.

### Socio-dynamic approaches

In recent years there has been a pronounced move away from linear models of motivation towards an appreciation of the complexity and unpredictability of human behaviour. In line with contemporary trends elsewhere in **applied linguistics** (Ellis and Larsen Freeman, 2006; de Bot et al., 2007), L2 motivation research has begun to consider emergentist or dynamic systems approaches.

### *Dörnyei's L2 motivational self system*

It is possible to consider Dörnyei's *L2 Motivational Self System* (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009) as something of a bridge between traditional approaches to L2 motivation and the newer socio-dynamic perspective. Dörnyei's framework fuses two aspects of self psychology theory: possible selves (see Markus and Nurius, 1986; Oyserman et al., 2006) and self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987). Possible selves represent visions of the self in some possible future state; these visions reflect the individual's assessments of his or her potential, expectations, hopes and fears. The L2 motivational self system proposes two principal sets of self guides: the Ideal L2 self and the Ought-to L2 self. The 'Ideal L2 Self' represents the attributes that an individual would like to possess, including mastery of an L2. The learner also develops an 'Ought-to L2 Self', which represents the individual's perceived obligations and responsibilities to others as a language learner. A third, experiential, component, the L2 Learning Experience, is included and this is largely derived from the learning environment and learners' perceptions of their language learning successes and failures. A significant part of the motivation to learn a language comes from the individual's constructions of these self guides, and especially where there is a discrepancy between a person's perceived actual condition and an 'Ideal L2 Self'. Dörnyei

argues that the power of imagination and the intensity of these visions of the self are crucial in initiating and sustaining learning. He also outlines a number of conditions that are essential for the activation of these self guides (Figure 13).

### A person in context relational view of motivation

Ushioda (2009) argues for the need to consider learners as real people rather than as theoretical abstractions and warns of the dangers of looking at L2 motivation in isolation. Language learners do other things besides learn languages; they could be actively involved in sport, passionate artists, devoted parents, or rebellious teenagers. Aspects of these available identities are likely to be relevant to the motivation to learn a language at some point. According to Ushioda, a theory of motivation should seek to understand how language learning relates to other ongoing behaviours and not attempt to detach the language learner from the whole person.

The person in the context relational view of L2 motivation gives some indication of just how far the focus of the research agenda has shifted. No longer is the unit of analysis the individual 'language learner', whose motivation to learn a foreign language derives from attitudes to an external language community. It becomes the 'person in context', a real person situated in a specific context and whose motivation to learn a language evolves through interaction with that context.

### Summary

The study of L2 motivation began as a research field independent of mainstream psychology, attempting to address some of the special issues associated with acquiring a second language. Over the years, the focus of L2 motivation research has expanded and diversified. Although the expansion of the research agenda has been substantial and rapid, it is possible to identify clear trends. One trend is that researchers are accepting the multifaceted and complex nature of L2 motivation rather than attempting to simplify it and reduce it into generalisable models. A second trend is that L2 motivation research is gradually moving away from

Figure 13 Dörnyei's conditions for the activation of future self guides

**A future self image ...**


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|                                                       |                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ... is sufficiently different from current self       | If there is no perceivable gap between the current and possible selves, then no additional effort is required.                    |
| ... is elaborate and vivid                            | Self images without the necessary specificity may not be able to evoke motivated behaviour.                                       |
| ... is plausible                                      | Possible self images must be realistic, not pure fantasy, in order to produce a motivational response.                            |
| ... is not comfortably within reach                   | The learner must believe that the desired future state will not be achieved automatically and that additional effort is required. |
| ... is in harmony with social environment             | If social norms clash with the future self image, then it is likely to be in conflict with the ought-to self                      |
| ... is regularly activated                            | The future self image must be a part of the individual's working self concept.                                                    |
| ... is accompanied by procedural strategies           | Learners need a 'roadmap' consisting of plans and self-regulatory strategies                                                      |
| ... is offset by a corresponding feared possible self | Learners need to be aware of the possible negative consequences of not realising the desired state.                               |

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its origins as an independent area of research, aligning itself ever more closely with mainstream psychology.

**See also:** Attitudes and language learning; Identity and language learning; Learning styles; Motivation theories; Psychology; Teacher thinking

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## Motivation theories

Motivational psychologists have traditionally tried to understand why humans think and behave as they do. This is an immensely complex issue and the number of potential determinants and influences is very large. Therefore, a substantial amount of effort in motivation research in various sub-fields of **psychology** has been *reductionist* in that it has sought to identify a smaller set of key variables that would subsume or mediate other interrelated factors, thus explaining a great deal of the variance in people's behaviour.

Motivation theories have highlighted several different principal components as 'fundamental' to human behaviour and, if we look at the whole body of motivation literature, it becomes clear that the number of motivational factors is extremely extensive. As a preliminary, therefore, we must note that none of the available theories in psychology offer a completely comprehensive overview of all the relevant motivational forces and conditions.

Although different conceptualisations of motivation show considerable variation, both in terms of their scope and their level of analysis, most researchers would agree that motivation theories in general attempt to explain three interrelated aspects of human behaviour: the *choice* of a particular action, *persistence* with it, and *effort* expended on it. That

is, motivation is responsible for *why* people decide to do something, *how long* they are willing to sustain the activity, and *how hard* they are going to pursue it.

Early theories considered motivation to be a function of a narrow set of drives, where human behaviour is driven by responses to psychological deficits relating to hunger, thirst, sex and the avoidance of pain. In the latter part of the twentieth century motivational psychology came to be dominated by cognitive approaches, which focused on patterns of thinking that shape motivated behaviour (for a review from an educational perspective, see Pintrich and Schunk, 2002). However, in recent years, there has been a clear move towards theories of motivation that explain behaviour as more than simply an outcome of individual cognition.

### Key cognitive theories of motivation

An early and highly influential cognitive model of motivation was Atkinson's *achievement theory* (Atkinson, 1964). The essential premise of the achievement motivation literature is that achievement is a basic human need, and when people with high achievement needs fail at a given task, their motivation to succeed increases; on the other hand, when individuals with low achievement needs fail, their motivation to succeed decreases. The motive to succeed is complemented by a desire to avoid failure and this fear of failure also plays an important role in how individuals approach certain tasks.

In recent years, the concept of achievement has been criticised as being theoretically vague and limited in its applications, culturally based and often associated with individual success in specific domains such as education or sport. Elliot and Dweck (2007) have reframed the concept of achievement as *competence*, arguing that **competence** represents a more theoretically robust basic psychological need that connects to a wide range of psychology research and can be applied across age groups and cultures.

Achievement theory is a prime example of an *expectancy-value theory*. Expectancy-value theories have been highly influential in the development of motivational theory and they comprise a number of different constructs that are based on the principle that motivation to perform various tasks is the

product of two key factors: the individual's *expectancy of success* in a given task and the value the individual attaches to success at that task (see Wigfield and Cambria, 2010). Broadly speaking, if people perceive the task outcome to be valuable and feel that completing the task is within their abilities, they are likely to initiate action. The expectancy component is determined by multiple variables and there have been various sub-theories that focus on these; examples of these sub-theories are *attribution theory* (e.g. Weiner, 2007), which is centred around the way individuals process past experiences (successes and failures) and *self-efficacy theory* (e.g. Bandura, 2002), which analyses the causes and consequences of how people judge their own abilities and competence.

Another key cognitive concept in motivation is the goal. *Goal theories* are based on the assumption that human action is caused by purpose, and for action to take place, goals have to be set and pursued by choice. In goal-setting theory' (Locke and Latham, 1994) the main goal variables include the specificity, difficulty and intensity of the goal, as well as goal commitment on the part of the individual. 'Goal orientation theory' (Ames, 1992) centred around two qualitative types of goal as defined by their success criteria: *mastery goals* focus on learning the content, and *performance goals* focus on demonstrating ability, getting good grades, or outdoing other students.

*Self-determination theory* (Deci and Ryan, 1985; 2002) was originally based on the well-known distinction of *intrinsic/extrinsic motivation*. Intrinsic motivation deals with behaviour performed for its own sake, for example, to experience pleasure or to satisfy one's curiosity. Extrinsic motivation involves performing a behaviour as a means to an end, i.e. to receive some external reward (e.g. good grades) or to avoid punishment. Gradual refinements to the theory suggest that it is more appropriate to perceive internal and external regulation as a cline rather than a dichotomy, with various types of motives existing along a continuum according to the degree of internalisation of extrinsic goals.

The primary concern of many theories of human motivation has been the 'choice' or the 'why' aspect. However, from an educational perspective this is only of limited relevance, since in instructional

contexts many of the decisions and goals are imposed on learners by the system. In such contexts, the effort and persistence dimensions of motivation (the 'how hard' and 'how long' aspects) are more pertinent, with key motivational issues involving maintaining assigned goals, elaborating on sub-goals, and exercising control over other thoughts and behaviours. Such 'volitional' or 'executive' issues began to receive increasing attention in the final years of the twentieth century (for a review, see Heckhausen and Heckhausen, 2008). A central theme within this approach is the analysis of various control strategies that the learner can apply in order to maintain, protect and enhance the initial motivational impetus.

### Integrating non-cognitive factors

*Self-regulation theories* (see Boekaerts et al., 2000) are concerned with the individual's capacity to change his or her own behaviour. Self-regulation theory is of particular interest in that it has both a cognitive dimension – beliefs and knowledge, and an affective dimension – moods and emotions. Self-regulation also incorporates concepts such as *metacognition*, understanding one's own cognitive skills, and *self-efficacy*.

Self-regulation is a dynamic concept that explains behaviour in terms of a triadic relationship between personal factors (both cognitive and affective), behaviour and environment. It also emphasises the agency of the individual; behaviour is not simply determined by the environment since the individual's behaviour also impacts on that environment. According to self-regulation theory, the thinking processes that learners engage in are amenable to change, they are not fixed traits. Learners are able to develop their self-regulatory capacity through practice and the acquisition of a repertoire of beliefs and strategies that may facilitate successful learning.

Concurrent with the increased interest in the role of affect and emotion, there has been a growing recognition of the need to integrate the cognitive paradigm with an understanding of its interrelationships with contextual factors. Underlying this trend is a belief that motivation is more influenced by both the classroom context and by the broader

sociocultural context than had previously been assumed. Historically, cognitive theories of motivation regarded context as one of many factors that influence motivation within the individual. However, clearly influenced by *sociocultural theory*, many motivation researchers (see Hickey and Granade, 2004) no longer regard context as external to the individual, but rather their concern is to explore the dynamic interactions between that context and the individual. Particularly influential in this area were studies conducted by McCaslin and colleagues (for an overview, see McCaslin and Lavigne, 2010) which identified the source of motivation as the relationships that students developed and highlighted how thinking processes originate in the negotiation of goals and norms among students and those around them, such as teachers, peers or family members.

An increasingly influential, theoretical development that illustrates the movement away from portrayals of motivation as a function of individual cognition is that of complex dynamic systems (see Lewis, 2000; Lewis and Granic, 2002). The dynamic systems perspective reveals how far the focus of motivation theory has shifted, and provides some indication for the direction of future research. A dynamic systems approach rejects linear causal relationships and conceives of human behaviour as a complex system in constant flux. This system is self-organising and, from a dynamic systems perspective, it makes no sense to isolate or simplify individual components of the system; in order to understand human behaviour we need to look at the complex system as a whole and the interactions of various components such as motivation, cognition, affect and context.

**See also:** Aptitude for language learning; Attitudes and language learning; Autonomy and autonomous learners; Cross-cultural psychology; Psychology; Strategies of language learning; Teaching methods

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STEPHEN RYAN

# N

## Nationalism

Against a background of awareness of the importance of globalisation for studies of language it is relevant to take a look at the role of ‘the national’ in language teaching and learning – a topic that has received astonishingly little attention in scholarly investigation.

The core of language subjects has for many years been the study of a target language and culture conceived in a national perspective, focusing on a national language in conjunction with its associated national culture (literature, history, ways of life, values). However, languages as school subjects do not have to be nationally oriented. The present national orientation took place in connection with the establishment of nations in Europe and the rest of the world, particularly in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Not until the latter half of the nineteenth century did language subjects acquire the aim of conveying a uniform image of the various national states. As an example of a pre-national textbook, **Comenius**’ Latin primer *Ianua linguarum reserata* (Comenius, 1649), had a universal and encyclopaedic content divided into 100 chapters on topics such as the elements, the earth, the body, the economy, grammar, music, geography, history and angels. It was translated into several languages and also appeared in multilingual editions with reading passages divided into, for example, a Latin, a Greek and a French column.

Language subjects, however, gradually became nationalised and included in the general shaping of

populations to a nationally structured view of the world. A geographical division of labour developed between the languages as school subjects that involved a narrowing and focusing in terms of content: the subject English looked towards England, the English and the English language; the subject French looked towards France, the French and the French language, etc.

Language subjects thus became examples of what has been called ‘banal nationalism’ (Billig, 1995) which finds expression in the many everyday things and statements that remind us that the world is divided into national states, and that presuppose that this is common sense – for example, the flag hanging on official buildings, or the political map showing countries that are clearly demarcated by different colours. Billig also refers to Anderson’s influential theory of the nation as an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 1991).

Within nationality theory a distinction is often made between two different conceptions of the national: the ethnic and the political (Smith, 1986). The ethnic (‘German’) conception takes its point of departure in the (imagined) unity of a people with a particular history, culture and language, and emphasises that the nation should be based on this unity (also called the nation-to-state model). Whereas the political (‘French’) conception takes its point of departure in the state and its territory, and emphasises that the building up of the nation consists in creating a common citizenship and a common political, legal and economic system within this state (also called the state-to-nation

model). The two models may be mixed in real life – Spain, for example, can be said to comprise both a Spanish nation (the political conception) and a Catalan and a Basque nation respectively (the ethnic conception). In language studies the ethnic conception is often seen to pervade (associated with the language–culture–nation equation), but at times the political conception seems to come to the foreground, for instance in studies of (intercultural) citizenship.

Since around 1990 we have seen a growing problematization of the national paradigm and its tendency of national stereotyping, a problematization that is in principle relevant for all languages, but currently perhaps most evident for studies of **English** as an international language or lingua franca. Kramsch has called for a poststructuralist and discourse-analytical view of language and culture (Kramsch, 1993); Holliday has called for a change of focus from ‘large cultures’ to ‘small cultures’ (Holliday, 1999); and Risager has conducted a comprehensive analysis of the international history of the cultural dimension in language and culture pedagogy, focusing on changing discourses on the relationship between language, culture and nation. She calls for a shift from a national to a transnational paradigm in language and culture pedagogy in which language and other forms of culture are seen as transnational flows (partly because of widespread migration), resulting in local linguistic and cultural landscapes of great complexity (Risager, 2007).

**See also:** Global education; Human rights; Intercultural competence; Internationalisation; Linguistic imperialism; Standard language

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KAREN RISAGER

## Native speaker

Native speakers can serve as a model for language learners only if their distinguishing features have been identified. Who, then, is a native speaker? A native speaker is traditionally defined as someone who speaks a language as their native language, also called ‘**mother tongue**’ or ‘first language’. The trouble is that all the criteria for determining ‘native speakerness’ are fuzzy and controversial, including birth, the most oft-cited prerequisite (Davies, 1991; Medgyes, 1994; Stern, 1983). While it is generally true that a person who was born in an English-speaking country is a native speaker of English, this is not always the case. What about the girl, for example, who was born in the USA but at the age of 1 moved to Switzerland after she had been adopted by Swiss parents? Anyway, which countries belong to the English-speaking world? Can Pakistan or South Africa make that claim?

## The linguistic and sociolinguistic perspective

The case of **English** is one of the most complex but also best researched, and can be used here to identify the issues. Similar points could be made about

other international and former colonial languages, particularly **French**. Recognising the difficulty of setting up a division line between English- and non-English-speaking countries, Kachru (1985) arranged countries into three concentric circles. The 'inner circle' includes nations where English is the primary language (e.g. the UK, the USA, Australia). The countries in the 'outer circle' were historically affected by the spread of English, often as colonies (e.g. India, Uganda, Singapore); in these multilingual settings English is the second language, the major intranational means of communication. The 'expanding circle' involves nations which have accepted English as the most important international language of communication (e.g. Japan, Hungary, Argentina), and teach it as a foreign language. However, in Kachru's visual representation 'the distinctions are not watertight' (Crystal, 1995), and countries in each circle exhibit a great deal of variation and internal mobility.

It is on the basis of the three-circle model that Kachru (1985) went on to classify countries according to norms of English usage. The countries in the 'inner circle' use 'norm-providing' varieties. In the 'outer circle' are the 'norm-developing' varieties, which are not deficient but merely different or deviant from standard norms (Davies, 1989). The varieties in the 'expanding circle', however, are 'norm-dependent', in the sense that learners follow some norm-providing variety; they are, to use Kachru's metaphor, 'linguistic orphans in search of their parents' (1982: 50). These categories should not be viewed as closed sets, because under suitable conditions norm-developing countries can become norm-providing ones, and norm-dependent countries can turn into norm-developing ones.

Since the 1980s, the concept of **standard language** norm has come under repeated attack. The linguistic argument against it is that, as Ward succinctly put it, 'No one can define [Standard English], because such a thing does not exist' (cited in Kachru, 1982: 34). Standard English, British or any other, is an idealisation, an amalgam of assumptions about rules and norms to which learners attempt to adhere with varying degrees of success.

In EFL contexts, on the other hand, the suggestion that Standard British or American should be

superseded by English as an International Language can be heard with increasing frequency (Jenkins, 2005; Seidlhofer, 2004). One argument for this suggestion is that non-native users of English today vastly outnumber native users (Crystal, 1995; Graddol, 2006). In our age of globalisation, Fishman's remark that 'the sun never sets on the English language' (1982: 18) rings more true than ever. English is the unrivalled **lingua franca** (Crystal, 1997) and thus native speakers should not be regarded as final arbiters of quality and authority.

As a matter of fact, it is no longer the native speakers of English who set the pace; non-native speakers have become the primary agents of language change (Brutt-Griffler, 2002). This is no surprise in view of the fact that an ever-growing proportion of interaction in English takes place in the absence of native speakers (Nelson, 1995), and English is increasingly used as a vehicular language among people who do not speak one another's language. Pickering (2006) further suggests that there are frequent conflicts between native and non-native speakers of English in terms of negotiating understanding. Whilst acknowledging that English as a *lingua franca* may be regarded as a code in its own right, Elder and Davies (2006) warn that not until ELF has been properly described should it be recommended for consumption in the classroom.

## The educational perspective

The native speaker model is not only the concern of linguists and sociolinguists but an issue which has fuelled debate among language educators as well. In countries where English is spoken as a first or second language, those who still favour the teaching of Standard British or American English for instruction have often been accused of **linguistic imperialism** (Phillipson, 1992), implying that the acceptance of any exclusive model would engender discrimination against those who come from non-standard backgrounds.

The controversy in ELT circles has become particularly acrimonious over the distinction between the native and the non-native speaker; the rancour of the polemic is well rendered by the title of Paikeday's (1985) book, *The Native Speaker Is*

*Dead!* The non-native epithet is less vehemently rejected on the grounds that it implies a linguistic deficit. Holliday uses the derogatory label ‘native speakerism’, which he defines as ‘an established belief that “native-speaker” teachers represent a “Western culture” from which spring the ideals of both of the English language and of English language teaching methodology’ (2005: 6). Holliday goes on to say that native speaker speech is often parochial owing to the abundance of idioms, slang phrases and idiosyncratic uses of grammar – features considered unsuitable and irrelevant for people who speak English for international communication. In Graddol’s (2006) view, today native speakers are not the source of a solution, but rather part of the problem.

Although several new terms were recommended to stress ‘WE-ness’ instead of the ‘us and them’ division (Kachru, 1992), none of them have stood the test of time, and the binomial ‘native’ versus ‘non-native’ is as widely used today as ever in the jargon of both teachers and researchers. But why is this distinction so impervious? The handy, and somewhat cynical, answer is that the native speaker is a useful term, precisely because it cannot be closely defined (Halliday, cited in Paikeday, 1985). To this Davies added: ‘The native speaker is a fine myth: we need it as a model, a goal, almost an inspiration. But it is useless as a measure; it will not help us define our goals’ (1995: 157).

Indeed, what are these goals? For the overwhelming majority of language learners the ultimate aim is an effective use of the target language. But can any learner hope to achieve full mastery of a language, with all its linguistic subtleties and cultural allusions? This is a question offering no easy answers. Davies (1991) pointed out, with a degree of stoicism perhaps, that membership of one or the other category is not so much a privilege of birth or education as a matter of self-ascription. Kramsch, a non-native educator, agreed that anyone who claimed to be a native speaker was one, with the proviso that they were accepted ‘by the group that created the distinction between native and non-native speakers ... More often than not, insiders do not want outsiders to become one of them, and even if given the choice, most language learners would not want to become one of them’ (1997:

363f.) – an argument echoed by Coulmas when he writes: ‘The price of becoming “a facsimile of a native” is a change of one’s personality. Everyone may not be ready to pay this price’ (1981: 365). Indeed, very few learners want and manage to metamorphose into native speakers of the language they are learning. After all, ‘everyone is potentially, to a greater or lesser extent, a non-native speaker, and that position is a privilege’ (Kramsch, 1997: 368).

**See also:** Cultural awareness; Intercultural competence; Mother tongue; Non-native speaker teachers; Reference works; Standard language

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PETER MEDGYES

## Needs analysis

### Concept

Needs analysis (NA), or needs assessment, refers to the systematic collection and analysis of all relevant information necessary to satisfy the language learning requirements of students within the context of the particular institutions involved in the learning situation (Brown, 2001: 21). It involves target situation analysis (TSA), the process of gathering and interpreting information on the uses to which language learners will put the target language (TL) following instruction, present situation analysis (PSA), what the learners will need to do in the learning situation in order to learn the TL and learning situation analysis (LSA), the subjective and affective needs of the learners (Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998). In language programmes, the results of needs analyses serve as the basis for developing a curriculum in terms of goals and **objectives** which, in turn, can serve as the basis for developing tests, materials, teaching activities and **evaluation** strategies, as well as for re-evaluating the precision and accuracy of the original needs assessment (Brown, 2001: 35).

### Development

Before the 1970s NA was generally very informal and little research was done as language teachers based their teaching on "some kind of intuitive or informal analysis of students' needs (West, 1994: 1). The concept of NA in language learning came to prominence during the 1970s in the context of the **Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project** (Trim et al., 1973). The first model of NA proposed by Richterich (1972) was based on a set of categories for establishing learners' communicative requirements in the future context of language use.

TSA was also closely identified with the Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) movement which emerged during the 1960s and 1970s in response to educational or occupational demands (Chambers, 1980). The most influential model of TSA was John Munby's Communicative Needs Processor (Munby, 1978), a complex tool that allowed course planners to build up a profile of a learner's communication

needs, which were then translated into a list of language skills and micro-functions, as the basis of the target syllabus specification. During the 1970s and 1980s, critics questioned the complex and time-consuming nature of the analysis involved in the TSA model and the failure of the model to take account of real life constraints such as the availability of resources (West, 1994).

Subsequent approaches to needs analysis broadened the focus of data collection to include not only objective data of the kind obtainable from TSA, but also information on:

- learners' current deficiencies
- learners' preferred learning strategies
- learners' wants and expectations of the course
- the environment in which the course is to be conducted.

(Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998)

In line with developments in learner-centred instruction, contemporary approaches to NA emphasize the active role of the learner in identifying needs. Thus, while TSA may be used to specify provisionally the language content of the course, PSA and LSA also become important in curriculum development with the **syllabus** and methodology remaining open to modification on the basis of ongoing negotiation and dialogue between the teacher and the learners. Used in this way, needs analysis can be seen as a way of raising learners' awareness of their own needs and goals and hence of developing their autonomy.

While learners' needs have been the focus of many scholars in NA, a number of other researchers argue that attention should also be given to teachers' needs when developing a language programme (Doll, 1996; Richards, 2001; Philips et al., 2008; Inceciy and Inceciy, 2010). Doll (1996) speaks of the necessity of the teacher's involvement in every phase of the curriculum development such as identifying objectives, planning and implementing (see also Ornstein and Hunking, 1998).

## Types of needs

Different types of needs are sought after according to the purposes and perspectives involved, indicating

different aspects of the nature and content of needs analysis.

Hutchinson and Waters (1993) distinguish target needs: what the learner has to know in order to function effectively in the target situation); lacks (the gap between target and existing proficiency of the learner), and wants (the learners' view on their needs); and learning needs: factors connected to the process of learning like **attitude**, **motivation**, awareness, personality, **learning styles** and **strategies**, social background, etc.

Brindley (1989) sees NA as having both process-oriented (narrowly interpreted, objective, target-language-situation centred) and product-oriented (broadly interpreted, subjective, learner-centred) activities in systematic curriculum building.

Robinson (1991) generalizes second language learners' needs into four types: (1) goal-oriented needs that relate to the expected academic or job requirements of a language course; (2) individual-oriented needs that reflect the expected outcome desired by the students themselves from a language course; (3) institutional-oriented needs, or what broader social institutions regard as necessary outcomes from second language instruction; and (4) process-oriented needs, which reflect what students need to do in order to actually acquire the language.

Brown (1995/2001) identifies three dichotomies of needs:

- *Situation versus language*: information centering on the programme's human aspects – the physical, social, and psychological contexts in which learning takes place – versus information about the target linguistic behaviours that the learners must acquire.
- *Objective versus subjective*: clear-cut, observable data about the situation – the learners, their present proficiency, and so forth – versus 'wants', 'desires', 'expectations' or other psychological manifestations of lack (Brindley, 1984).
- *Content versus process*: what students need to learn in linguistic terms versus what students must learn from a situation needs perspective, which 'tend to be more subjectively analyzed needs in the affective domain, such as motivation and self-esteem' (p. 41).

Deutch (2003) makes a distinction between global needs and individual needs when researching English courses for Israeli law students. Global needs originate from both the historical and social contexts (such as past indebtedness to English law and present influence of common law legal systems). Individual needs include short term needs, dictated by the academic requirements, and long term needs, which are reflected in the use of the English language by the professionals.

## Procedures

Brown (2009) provides a most general outline of the procedures of NA:

1. Get ready to do NA: planning (what information to collect? Why find out such information? How to find out such information?);
2. Do the NA research and use the NA results. Three steps are usually taken in doing NA;
3. Collect the data (the sources of information include: the students, the teaching establishment, the user institution, that is, the place of work, sponsoring body, etc.);

A variety of instruments are used to collect information for needs analysis:

- questionnaires which may be administered to language learners themselves and/or to other people who are familiar with the context in which learners need to use the language;
- structured interviews (often used in conjunction with questionnaires) involving a series of set questions relating to needs;
- collection and linguistic analysis of **authentic** spoken and written texts which are typically found in the future context of language use;
- language tests and assessments;
- case studies of individual learners;
- data in government documents or from public organizations;
- **class observation**;
- informal or formal seminars.

Whatever procedures or methods are taken, the types of questions asked in NA are largely of four

kinds (Brown, 1995/2001): (1) questions to identify learners' problems; (2) questions about priority concerns for all those involved in the programme under investigation; (3) questions to test learners' language ability when entering the programme; (4) questions addressing attitudes and opinions of the resource group.

## Philosophies and approaches

According to Stufflebeam (1977, cited in Brown, 1995/2001, pp. 38–39), four types of philosophies can arise in NA: the discrepancy, the democratic, the analytic and the diagnostic. The discrepancy philosophy views needs as differences or discrepancies between desired performance by the students and what they are actually doing. The democratic philosophy defines NA as any change that is desired by a majority of the group involved. In the analytical philosophy a need is whatever the students will naturally learn next based on what is known about them and the learning processes involved. A diagnostic philosophy proposes that a need is anything that would prove harmful if it was missing.

Under different general philosophies, different approaches have been adopted in NA. Kaewpet (2009) summarizes the five most influential approaches:

- a sociolinguistic model (Munby, 1978), associated with the 'sociolinguistic revolution' in the development of the notional/functional syllabus of the Council of Europe;
- a systemic approach (Richterich and Chancerel, 1977), where learners' needs are diagnosed by examining information before and during the course by the learners themselves and by 'teaching establishments' such as their place of work and sponsoring bodies (Jordan, 1997);
- a learning-centred approach (Hutchinson and Waters, 1993), with a distinction between 'perceived needs' as seen by experts and 'felt needs' as viewed by learners, between the more objective, product-oriented interpretation of data and the more subjective, process-oriented interpretation of data;
- learner-centred approaches (Berwick, 1989; Brindley, 1989), focusing on how learning needs

involve numerous factors, including who the learners are, their socio-cultural background, learning background, **age**, **gender**, background knowledge of specialized contents, background knowledge of the language, attitudes towards the language, and cultures of the English speaking world and studying English;

- and a task-based approach (Long, 2005; Kaewpet, 2009). Tasks are the units of analysis and ‘samples of the discourse typically involved in performance of target tasks’ are collected; the approach is particularly effective for TENOR (Teaching English for No Obvious Reason) programme development ‘as the specified target tasks can practically work as a basis for organizing focused, goal-oriented instruction in a context’ (Lambert, 2010: 99).

Two other approaches to NA are the critical approach and the economic approach. Benesch (1996) considers NA as a political and subjective process and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classrooms as a site of struggle and language classes as agents for social change – an approach aligned with the rise of critical theory approaches to discourse studies and pedagogy (Pennycook, 2001). Benesch offers the term ‘rights analysis’ to indicate the political and negotiable nature of the critical approach to NA.

The economic approach (Brecht and Rivers, 2005) involves specific description of the elements involved and the correlation of cost and benefit. The major role of the economic considerations (Grin, 2006), is to help social actors make principled and transparent choices about language policy on the basis of assessment of the pros and cons of different choices (for applications of this see Vaillancourt (1996) on language and socio-economic status in Quebec; and Vaillancourt and Grin (2000), on choice of language of instruction in distance learning courses on language instruction.

## Problems and principles

Although NA has been recognized as an integral part of curriculum development and has been widely adopted in LSP/ESP, LAP/EAP and TENOR programmes, needs analysts have to tackle problems

of choosing and balancing between different decisions, ranging from the coverage of information and cost in data collection and analysis to the types of needs to be analyzed, to the procedures and approaches taken and to the consideration of individual and institutional constraints, as well as social and contextual parameters that define the product and process of NA.

Kaewpet (2009) highlights six general principles useful in overcoming problems in analysis: (1) giving first priority to communication needs, (2) giving equal importance to learning needs, (3) taking ‘context’ into account, (4) inviting multiple perspectives, (5) employing multiple data collection methods, and (6) treating needs analysis as an ongoing activity. Philosophies, approaches and principles are interrelated and complementary, differences are a matter of perspective, and keeping balance between them will lead to a more comprehensive and multidimensional profile of the needs under investigation.

Today, NA is moving beyond the development of language curriculum. Besides its value in the academic, educational, institutional and professional contexts, the social and political significance of NA is also gaining currency. NA is likely to play a more important role at the societal level in the age of globalization as the social goals of language education are closely associated with language planning at the local and national levels, which in turn can either strengthen or weaken ‘national security’ and ‘social justice’ (Long, 2005).

**See also:** Adult learners; English for specific purposes; Evaluation; Language for specific purposes; Syllabus and curriculum design

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SONG LI AND ZHAO YUQIN  
GEOFF BRINDLEY

## Neuro-linguistic Programming

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) is about excellence, and how people act, interact and communicate. It is to do with how their brains work, the language they use and their ability to change, and as such it has a strong relevance to teaching and learning.

'Neuro' refers to the ways in which information is taken in through the five senses (referred to in NLP as VAKOG: Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic, Olfactory, and Gustatory), and how it is processed

by the brain. This processing is done through the internal senses (visualisation, the inner voice and feeling responses) and through 'filters' known as metaprograms. The premise is that every individual has a unique approach to the world – and to learning.

'Linguistic' clearly relates to language. The language people use, both to themselves and to others, reflects how they are thinking. Typically, they might use phrases such as 'that sounds right' or 'that rings a bell with me', if they are in auditory mode, or 'I can't get to grips with it' if they are in kinaesthetic mode, etc, where the verbal metaphor reflects the internal experience of the speaker. The precise language people use also affects how the intended message is received. If one uses 'artfully vague' metaphorical language, listeners will tend to understand very different things based on their own individual perception. Conversely, the choice of specific **vocabulary** or grammatical structures can have a very strong effect on the listener (or one-self): if you call something a 'problem', it immediately acquires negative connotations, while the same situation sounds much more appealing and open to resolution if described as a 'challenge'.

'Programming' implies flexibility and change. The brain works in certain ways depending on one's predisposition and experience. NLP maintains that it is possible to 'reprogramme' the brain's habitual responses, largely by manipulating the 'modalities', i.e. the inner pictures, sounds (e.g. the inner voice) and feelings that are involved in all decision-making. The manipulation involves changing the 'submodalities', which are the individual variations in each modality. When people visualise, for example, the internal pictures they see might be clear or foggy, in colour or black and white; they may see themselves from the outside (dissociated), or they may visualise from within (associated), etc. The inner voice and feelings can similarly be defined – and manipulated – very precisely. Simply changing the internal dialogue, from criticism and negativity to kind words spoken in a gentle, accepting tone, can make a profound difference to people's self perception, self confidence, and hence their ability to act effectively and successfully. Different people process things in different ways, and individuals may process things differently at different times, for example if they are thinking of

a pleasant or unpleasant experience, the future or the past, etc.

NLP techniques and suggestions for action are based on a series of ‘presuppositions’ about the nature of human behaviour. It is not considered essential to believe them or believe in them. Simply acting as if they are true can affect behaviour. The presuppositions include:

- Communication is **non-verbal** as well as verbal.
- Communication is non-conscious as well as conscious.
- Mind and body are interconnected.
- The map is not the territory (we all have different perceptions of the world according to our inner ‘maps’).

The ‘core concepts’, also known as the ‘four pillars’ of NLP, are:

- **Rapport:** successful communication or the possibility of influencing others depends on empathising with them;
- **Outcomes (goals):** NLP is very much an achievement-oriented technology, based on the belief that knowing precisely what you want helps you to get it;
- **Sensory acuity:** this involves using your senses to notice everything another person is communicating, often non-verbally and non-consciously; it means observing carefully, not making assumptions or judgements;
- **Flexibility:** having a range of skills and techniques gives you choices and options in the way you act.

## History

NLP originated in the early 1970s. Two Americans, Richard Bandler (then a psychology student) and John Grinder (a professor of linguistics), started looking for ‘the difference that makes the difference’ between what people who are excellent in their chosen field do most of the time and what all of us are capable of doing, and are probably already doing, some of the time (Bandler and Grinder, 1979). By imitating excellent people (NLP calls it ‘modelling’) anyone can learn to be

excellent. As well as studying behaviour in relation to the chosen area of excellence, a full modelling project might look at what the subject does in their spare time, what they eat for breakfast, how many hours a night they sleep – and other, more personal details. This may include their beliefs and values, how they use and understand language, how they ‘talk to themselves’, how they process information, and so on.

NLP has been developed by numerous practitioners, some of the most influential being Leslie Cameron-Bandler, Judith DeLozier, Steve and Connirae Andreas, and Robert Dilts. It is still developing. Bandler himself has extended the ‘programming’ area of NLP into something he calls HDE (Human Design Engineering). Michael Grinder (brother of John) has worked specifically on NLP in education.

## Relevance to language teaching

NLP has direct relevance to education in general, and language teaching in particular, in the following respects:

- **learning styles:** if both teachers and students are made aware of the range of different learning styles, both can play to their strengths and improve areas in which they are less strong; teachers can also make sure that they present and practise material to suit a range of learning styles.
- **learning to learn:** students can be taught those aspects of NLP which will help them learn more effectively.
- **Communication skills:** in addition to grammar and vocabulary, students can be taught the skills of effective communication, which will make them more effective users of the target language.
- **Approach to language:** NLP adds other dimensions to language learning, by taking metaphorical meanings literally, and also focusing on the intention behind the words.
- **Teaching skills:** the personal development aspect of NLP can be applied directly to enhancing the skills of teachers.
- **NLP techniques:** there are techniques and activities specific to NLP (e.g. the NLP spelling technique, which involves visualising words) which can enhance language learning.

**See also:** Adult language learning; Humanistic language teaching; Motivation; Neurolinguistic; Silent way; Teacher thinking; Teaching methods

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SUSAN NORMAN

# Neurolinguistics

Neurolinguistics is an area of research that focuses on the neurological instantiation of language in the human brain. **Linguistics**, cognitive **psychology** and neuroscience contribute to an interdisciplinary approach to modelling language behaviour in relation to the brain functions, which subserve it. The underlying mechanisms of **listening** and **speaking**, and of language **acquisition**, are investigated with reference to neurological **disorders of language**.

The goal of this area of research is to investigate the brain bases of language and speech. Research focuses on elucidating the neural and cognitive architecture underlying the **mental lexicon** (word processes) and **grammar** (phrase and sentence processes) for language comprehension (parsing) and production that allow humans to combine phonemes and morphemes to form words, and to combine words into larger words, phrases and sentences in a meaningful manner. Research interest

extends from the auditory-verbal aspects of spoken language to the visual-gestural aspects of **sign languages**, as well as the visual and motoric aspects of **reading** and **writing**. This analysis of input and output modalities allows for the possibility of analysing the linguistic processing components independent of speech to develop a richer view of human communication.

The neurological bases of lexicon and grammar are investigated by employing a range of methodological techniques and subjects:

1. developmental studies of language acquisition in normal and disordered children (e.g., specific language impairment, William's syndrome);
2. experimental psycholinguistic studies of language processing in normal adults, neurological studies of brain-damaged adults (e.g., aphasia, dementia);
3. electrophysiological recordings and functional brain imaging studies of normal adults (e.g., event related potentials, direct cortical recording and stimulation, and functional magnetic resonance imaging, positron emission tomography, magnetic stimulation).

The findings from these various neurolinguistic studies suggest that language processes function in a modular fashion and that the system in the brain processing linguistic behaviour is distinct from other cognitive processes.

Neurolinguistic research integrates knowledge of the structural properties of human language with the methods and models of cognitive neuroscience to develop an understanding of how linguistic behaviour arises neuropsychologically. Within the discipline of linguistics, the object of inquiry is seen as a particular kind of knowledge, an aspect of the organisation of the minds of speaker/hearers. The manner in which this knowledge is represented and utilised in the physical organisation and function of the brain is the theoretical goal. Neuropsychological studies of the relation between brain damage and the resulting functional deficits in linguistic capacity serve as evidence which bears on questions of the organisation of language (grammar) and speech (extralinguistic) and **non-verbal communicative** behaviours. Techniques which



functionally map activity in the brain, are used to verify and support clinical studies of language disorders from the past two centuries. This evidence provides a basis for our understanding of the architecture of the underlying system of linguistic processing.

Within the broader domain of cognitive science, the pursuit of understanding general memory systems, perception and action has primarily relied upon experimentation with linguistic tasks. Language behaviour is amenable to observation, elicitation, experimental manipulation and analysis. Detailed and explicit linguistic theories exist at a variety of levels of abstraction. These are used to derive explanations at the physiological level of description, for developmental processes of acquisition, and for disordered behaviour. Cognitive neuroscientists have been attracted to the study of language, while at the same time linguists have pursued the neurological underpinnings of human language. The convergence of these two efforts has created the field of Neurolinguistics.

Recently, a great deal of interest addressed research questions surrounding the neurolinguistics aspects of **second language acquisition** and multilingualism. Although previously neurolinguistic research had been focused primarily on monolingual speakers of European languages, cross-linguistic research has been carried out to explore the language specific properties of non-European languages which embody different typological properties. In addition, there is a growing body of research into the neurolinguistic features of speakers who know and use more than one language.

**See also:** Applied linguistics; Cognitive linguistics; Disorders of language; Grammar; Linguistics; Mental lexicon; Neuro-linguistic programming; Non-verbal communication; Psychology; Sign languages

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MARJORIE PERLMAN LORCH

## Non-native speaker teacher

A non-native speaker teacher is a foreign language teacher for whom the foreign language they teach is not their **mother tongue**; who usually works with monolingual groups of learners; whose mother tongue is usually the same as that of their students. To give an example, a Brazilian teacher of **French** who teaches French in Rio de Janeiro to a group of Brazilian school children is a non-native speaker teacher of French, just as their French colleague teaching French to the same group is a **native speaker** teacher of French. They are often referred to as non-native and native teachers.

However, this definition has some flaws. First, non-native teachers do not always work with monolingual groups – there may be a few foreign students in the group. Second, the teacher may take up work abroad, in which case teacher and learners will not have the same mother tongue – the Brazilian teacher of French may move to work in South Africa. Third, and most important, the existence of the term 'non-native teacher' is legitimate only if the existence of its superordinate, the 'non-native speaker', can be justified. In fact, the concept of dividing the world into native and non-native speakers has stirred heated debate amongst linguists, sociolinguists and educators alike.

Traditionally, the focus of educational research was on the native teacher. Most English language teaching studies, for example, on the prototypical English teacher analysed problems specific to the native teacher working in some private school of a country where **English** was the primary language. Generally speaking, little attention was paid to state education, let alone state education in non-English-speaking countries. As for non-native teachers, the need to examine their distinguishing features was virtually overlooked. This neglect may be explained by financial constraints, as well as by the fact that most research was – and still is – carried out by researchers who were native speakers themselves (Holliday, 2005). Similar concerns were voiced by Phillipson in *Linguistic Imperialism* (1992).

It was not until the late 1980s that this ethnocentric attitude began to change, and an interest in the non-native teacher gained momentum. This recognition was long overdue, especially since there are far more non-native teachers in the world than native teachers, and the gap between the two groups is rapidly growing (Graddol, 2006). According to recent estimates, 80 per cent of **English** teachers worldwide are non-native teachers (Canagarajah, 2005), the majority of whom are employed in their home countries.

Nevertheless, apart from a number of articles and a collection of papers written on the non-native teacher (Braine, 1999), in the 1990s only one full-length book was wholly devoted to an analysis of the features that distinguish native teachers from their non-native counterparts, with the emphasis placed on the latter group (Medgyes, 1994).

In *The Non-native Teacher*, Medgyes claims that native and non-native English-speaking teachers, or NESTs and non-NESTs as he calls them, are ‘two different species’ (1994: 27). This statement rests on four hypotheses:

- NESTs and non-NESTs differ in terms of their language proficiency;
- they differ in terms of their teaching behaviour;
- the discrepancy in language proficiency accounts for most of the differences found in their teaching behaviour;
- they can be equally good teachers.

In an attempt to confirm these hypotheses, Medgyes conducted a series of surveys, including a total of 325 participating teachers from eleven countries. The results of these self-reports suggested that, indeed, native and non-native teachers differed in terms of both their language proficiency and their teaching behaviour and, furthermore, the relationship between these two variants proved to be significantly strong (Reves and Medgyes, 1994). The native teacher’s linguistic superiority was offset by several weapons in the non-native teacher’s arsenal – Medgyes identified six such competencies. Non-native teachers can:

- provide a better learner model for imitation (Cook, 1999; Lee, 2000);
- teach language learning **strategies** more effectively (Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2002);
- supply learners with more information about the English language (Liu, 1999; Widdowson, 1992);
- anticipate and prevent language difficulties better (McNeill, 2005);
- be more empathetic to the needs and problems of learners (Nemtchinova, 2005);
- make use of the learners’ mother tongue (Hancock, 1997).

In comparing the results, neither group was found better in terms of teaching qualities; in the final analysis, their respective strengths and weaknesses balanced each other out. Hence the conclusion that ‘Different does not imply better or worse’ (Medgyes, 1994: 76). This being the case, language teachers should be hired solely on the basis of their professional virtue, regardless of their language background. All other things being equal, the ‘ideal’ native teacher is the one who has achieved a fair degree of proficiency in the students’ mother tongue, and the ‘ideal’ non-native teacher is the one who has achieved near-native proficiency in the target language.

Medgyes’s book was criticised for over-emphasising ‘the linguistic deficit of nonnative professionals while neglecting other equally significant factors related to professionalism’ (Samimy, 1997), such as relevant teaching qualifications and length of experience. Seidlhofer reiterated this

point: 'There has often been the danger of an automatic extrapolation from competent speaker to competent teacher based on linguistic grounds alone, without taking into consideration the criteria of cultural, social and pedagogic appropriacy' (1996: 69). Indeed, an issue waiting to be studied is the complex relationship between different aspects of professionalism.

Despite the anti-discriminatory recruitment policy statements issued by major ELT organisations such as **TESOL** and **IATEFL**, many language schools still consider native teachers the 'proper' models and therefore advertise teaching jobs for native English speakers only. School administrators often defend their 'natives only' employment practice by referring to their obligation to satisfy the customers' demand for native teachers (Clark and Paran, 2007). This seems to be a tenuous argument in view of the ambivalent results produced by research studies that investigate learners' preferences for native or non-native teachers (Benke and Medgyes, 2005; Moussu and Llurda, 2008).

The new millennium has witnessed a surge of interest in exploring the distinguishing features of non-native teachers. In addition to scores of articles on the subject, several collections of essays and studies (Braine, 2005; Kamhi-Stein, 2004; Llurda, 2005) and a single-authored volume have been published (Braine, 2010). Signalling the strengthening of the non-native voice, in 1998 the Non-native English Speakers Caucus was established within TESOL, which 10 years later transformed itself into an Interest Section.

Compared to the focus of research in the 1990s, three new developments deserve a mention. First, non-native teachers are no longer treated as a largely homogeneous group; lately more heed has been paid to exploring the differences within the group. It has been found that, in addition to target language skills and professional training, several other factors, such as the country of origin, ESL or EFL setting and L1 background, have a significant bearing on the teaching behaviour of non-native teachers.

Second, whereas research in the past was aimed at non-native teachers who were employed in language schools and universities, today the focus of attention is shifting towards teachers who work in

state schools at primary and secondary level. This is a welcome development in view of the fact that the overwhelming majority of non-native teachers come from the state sector in non-English speaking countries.

Third, past research was largely based on data drawn from teachers as they perceived themselves, on the one hand, and from students as they viewed their teachers, on the other. However, neither form of investigation was concerned with a comparative analysis of the matches and mismatches between perceived and actual teaching practice. Today increasing efforts are being expended to analyse teachers at the chalkface (Árva and Medgyes, 2000).

**See also:** Content-based instruction; Medium of instruction; Mother tongue; Native speaker; Teacher education; Teacher thinking

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PETER MEDGYES

## Non-verbal communication

### Definitions

In order to distinguish non-verbal communication and non-verbal signs, a brief terminological explanation is first necessary.

From a semiotic perspective, the non-verbal refers to all cultural products of a non-linguistic nature. This ranges from non-verbal semiotic systems (pictograms, systems of mathematical notation or musical notation), to artistic products of all kinds (painting, mime, dance, music, cinema), and from body language and the language of clothing to the use of space in everyday life.

From an ethological perspective (the study of human and animal behaviour) the non-verbal is communication established by other means than linguistic and which uses the sensory channels of vision and hearing, but also in proximity communication, the channels of olfaction, touch and heat. Cosnier and Vaysse (1997) refer to the *total utterance*, being the utterance composed of audible signals corresponding to the articulation of the verbal message, accompanying vocal signals and bodily movements which occur with it. Similarly, Poyatos (1992) speaks of 'the *basic triple*

structure of human communication' which mixes *language*, *paralanguage* and *kinesics*.

Certain authors include within non-verbal communication auditory elements coming from the voice (prosody and vocal features) whereas others assign a particular status to these and speak of *vocal communication*, *paraverbal communication* or *paralanguage* (Poyatos, 1992).

In the present case we shall define non-verbal communication as *the entirety of bodily movements produced by participants in the course of their interaction, whether or not accompanied by speech, and which realise the visual signs of a kinetic origin* (gestures, facial expression, changes of posture and of gaze direction, proxemic movement of contact and distancing).

### Non-verbal communication and multi-modality in spoken communication

Building on Duncan (1969), we can distinguish three approaches to the study of non-verbal communication:

- *the approach by external variables* used in **psychology** and which seeks to establish correlations between non-verbal channels and variables such as age, sex, culture or ethnic belonging;
- *the structural approach*, coming from the **anthropological** tradition, which uses methods from ethology and **linguistics**, and seeks to describe bodily movements which have a communicative purpose;
- *the multimodal approach*, a cognitive version of the preceding one, which focuses exclusively on non-verbal channels and their relationship to speech. The object of this approach is language in its multimodal aspects rather than non-verbal communication itself.

If verbal communication usually appears to be intentional and conscious, non-verbal communication is on the other hand presented as neither necessarily intentional nor conscious, even when it supports an important part of the information – though variable and difficult to measure objectively – presented in the course of communication

with the other. Body language escapes the control of its emitter: 'One cannot not communicate' (Watzlawick et al., 1967), and the impression that one gives of oneself is seldom identical with the expression that one wishes to give. When taken independently of its role in spoken communication and the intercomprehension between speakers, non-verbal communication has multiple functions which the approach by external variables makes evident: social attribution and social categorisation, the expression of emotions, of feelings and of mental states (attentiveness, reflection, doubt, etc.), the marking of affiliative relationships (attachment, love, hate) and of social relationships (attraction, seduction, dominance, submission), or the regulation of intimate space (access to personal space and regulation of inter-individual distance). Non-verbal channels depend on multiple factors including age and sex of the person, their social membership, their personality, their relationship to the other, the context of the communication or their culture (for a synthesis see Knapp and Hall, 2007).

As the structural approach has shown, bodily movements also play a very important role in the course of spoken communication. Researchers on gesture have drawn attention to the density and narrowness of relationships between language and bodily movements which are thus called *co-speech movements*. Co-speech gesture (above all head gestures, hand gestures and facial expression) is for the most part synchronous with speech and serves the following functions (according to Ekman and Friesen, 1969; McNeill, 1992; Cosnier and Vaysse, 1997; Kendon, 2004):

- the identification of referents (objects of discourse), by direct pointing when they are present and localisable in the situation, or by abstract pointing in the opposite case;
- the representation of objects of discourse by means of gestures which trace in space, mime or symbolise concrete and abstract referents;
- the expression of emotions, of mental states and of current **speech acts** such as salutation or greeting;
- the structuring of linguistic production, on all levels, by the emphasis and/or segmentation of its constituents (syllable, word, clause, sentence, etc.);

- discursive cohesion through gestural anaphora and the marking of connections between clauses and sentences;
- synchronisation between interlocutors and adjusting their behaviour in the course of their interaction.

On the semiotic level, speech and representational gesture are two complementary modes of communication (McNeill, 1992):

- the linguistic signals of speech are essentially conventional and arbitrary and of a combinatory and analytical nature (words combine to form sentences and can be segmented into smaller units), and can be interpreted outside their context (every word has a generic meaning);
- whereas representational gestures are essentially idiosyncratic based upon iconicity, and are not of a combinatory nature (except in mime), functioning in a synthetic mode (each gesture represents one referent at a time and cannot be segmented into smaller units), and not susceptible of interpretation outside their context (with the exception of emblematic co-speech gestures).

The analysis of representational gesture produced during narration, explanation, debate and conversation led to the statement that gesture does more than illustrate speech. It makes more precise the referent of the linguistic message, expresses the point of view of the speaker on the event being related, and contributes to marking discourse cohesion (McNeill, 1992; Kendon, 2004); and thanks to its metaphorical properties, it offers a visual representation of abstract concepts (Johnson, 1987; Calbris and Porcher, 1989; Cienki and Müller, 2008). Applied to the whole of co-speech gesture, this analysis shows that gestural information:

- repeats, reinforces or amplifies linguistic information (e.g. nodding the head approvingly, more or less vigorously, to accompany a yes answer);
- complements linguistic information (e.g. the gesture of pointing which accompanies a deictic expression as in 'Our car is *there*');

- adds new information (e.g. the gesture indicating the direction of movement associated with an utterance which expresses the movement without direction 'She has left');
- contradicts linguistic information (e.g. ironic facial expression which cancels out the meaning of the utterance 'It is nice here', to express the opposite);
- replaces the linguistic message (e.g. the gesture of telling someone to be quiet replacing the utterance 'Don't make any noise').

The multimodality thesis of spoken communication (e.g. McNeill, 1992) postulates that information coming from both (linguistic and gesture) sources are used together, as complementary means of expression by the speaker when producing language, and as means available for interpretation by their interlocutor when processing language receptively. Sustained by the preceding observations but also by data coming from clinical analysis of aphasia and the neurosciences (Gentilucci and Dalla Volta, 2007), this approach has led to new models of the relationships between language and thought (McNeill, 2000; Kita and Özyürek, 2003), and to major discoveries concerning the acquisition and learning of language.

Thus the evolution of the production and understanding of gestures in the course of the first 2 years of life allows us to predict early language acquisition with respect to lexicon and syntax (Iverson and Goldin-Meadow, 2005; Volterra et al., 2005). In older children, there is a parallel development of co-speech gesture and linguistic and cognitive skills (Colletta, 2004; Colletta et al., 2010). Finally, with respect to mathematical learning, it seems that gesture allows the learner to express new knowledge before he is in a position to verbalise it, as if awareness has to be realised first in bodily experience before being susceptible to being formalised (Goldin-Meadow, 2003).

## Implications for teaching and learning

Learners of a foreign language, whether in the language classroom or the target language country, are above all confronted by foreign 'speech'. However, in speech, language is never presented naked but

on the contrary always clothed in the suit of the speakers' voice and the overcoat of their attitudes, gestures, facial expressions and gaze patterns.

All aspects of speech may vary from one culture to another. This variation concerns not only language and its use in context, but also the non-verbal codes: conventional gestures or *emblems* (people do not agree to each other in the same way in France, in Mali and in Thailand), facial expressions, gaze, the channels of touch and proximity, the use of which are regulated by unnoticed yet operational social norms (for syntheses see Poyatos, 1988 or Matsumoto, 2006). Thus the facial expressiveness of some Westerners meets the facial neutrality which is customary for certain Easterners, and the habits with respect to inter-individual bodily contact and distance during social encounters vary according to whether one is from the north of Europe or the Mediterranean basin.

This variation should be the subject of teaching, as Poyatos argues (1992), with respect to the non-verbal aspects of the production of speech acts in daily life. However, we do not at the moment have a complete inventory of the differences in non-verbal communication codes, and it is unrealistic to think that we could make an inventory of all the particularities. Furthermore, the **intercultural communication**, which is the ultimate purpose of learning a foreign language, influences and neutralises in part these particularities in its very dynamic (de Nuchèze, 2004). On the other hand, because these particularities are necessarily present in the multilingual and multicultural language class, they can be observed by learners themselves and used by the teacher to make learners aware of matters relative to non-verbal communication codes.

New perspectives emerge from the data coming from the multimodal approach to spoken communication. The analysis of learners' gestures appears to be a window onto their representations, and bodily experience seems to be a cognitive resource for the child engaged in mathematical learning (Goldin-Meadow, 2003; Gerofsky, 2010). These results are in accord with the thesis of *embodied cognition* (Varela et al., 1993; Barsalou, 2003; Gibbs, 2006) and support teaching approaches which emphasise action and the anchoring of learning in concrete experience.

With respect to linguistic learning, the use of gesture and of multimodality in the presentation of knowledge to be acquired appears in the proposals of certain pedagogical theorists. For example in Borel-Maisonny's (1966) *gestural method*, phonemes are symbolised by configurations of the hands which have emblematic value (the gesture for [a], the gesture for [m], etc.). In Gattegno's (1966) approach to learning reading ('Words in colour') and '**the silent way**', a method for the learning of foreign languages, phonemes are represented by coloured rectangles and identified with the help of gestural pointing. In 'Grammar in colours', inspired by the same approach (Laurent, 2004, 2009), the words of spoken language are symbolised by visible frames that represent their grammatical class or function, and they are identified by pointing. In the 'Dynamique naturelle de la parole' (Coquet, 2006 for a presentation), phonemes and syllables are represented by painting and graphics. In keeping with what is observed in babies, most of whose cognitive acquisitions come from their capacity to establish intermodal links, all these teaching methods help learners to profit from the exploration of all perceptual and motor modalities in order to develop new knowledge (metaphonological, alphabetical, grammatical and others). It is still necessary to study in more detail the effects and the ways of adapting multimodal teaching approaches to the groups of learners concerned.

**See also:** Communicative language teaching; Conversation analysis; Intercultural communication; Neurolinguistics; Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis; Signed languages; Speech act theory; Strategic competence; Total Physical Response

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JEAN-MARC COLETTA

## Notions and functions

A description of language in terms of its notions and functions derives from attempts to categorise language according to its meaning and use rather than through its forms or structures. These attempts comprise part of wider movements, both in **linguistics** and in language teaching, to take a broad view of language as a system of human communication. In linguistics this might be loosely termed a functional approach, in language teaching a communicative approach. Whilst among foreign language teaching methodologists there is general agreement on how the two terms are defined, in linguistics they may refer to different phenomena, which can sometimes be a cause of confusion.

### Definitions

The term *notion*, first used in connection with ‘notional **grammar**’, reflects a description of language based on various general concepts. In one use of the term, these concepts are of a grammatical nature, such as tense, mood, **gender**, etc., but more usually notions denote abstract concepts which reflect general, and possibly universal, categories of human experience, such as time, space, quantity, location, etc. It is in this sense that notions are defined in foreign language teaching.

As with notions, the term *function* also shows a meaning-based view of language, but while notions refer to categories of human thought and experience, functions are based on human behaviour. The various uses of the term all reflect the view that language is to be seen as a form of *action*, used to achieve a *communicative purpose* in *interaction* with other people. In its broadest sense, which has its roots in the works of British linguists such as J.R. Firth and M.A.K. **Halliday**, a language function

may be stipulated in terms of general functional domains, such as an ‘instrumental function’, ‘regulatory function’, ‘representational function’ (Halliday, 1973). However, in language teaching a more specific perspective is taken, which derives from linguistic theories of **speech acts**, formulated principally by J.L. Austin (1962) and J.R. Searle (1969), who provided a theoretical framework for analysing and categorising utterances as various types of action. One category of this framework is that of *illocutionary acts*, which can be defined as a speaker’s (or writer’s) purpose in making an utterance, including the effect that it is intended to have on the listener (or reader). This category has entered language teaching under the label of language or speech function, often shortened to ‘function’. Functions are usually specified in English by a gerund phrase, or in other languages by an infinitive: ‘greeting’, ‘offering help’, ‘accepting an invitation’, etc. The corresponding words which can be used to express, or *realise*, the respective function – ‘hello’, ‘shall I help you’, ‘I’d love to’ etc. – are referred to as an *exponent* of the function. In a nutshell, it could be said that notions categorise *what* people can talk about in general; functions, *why* they say things in a particular context. In linguistics, this difference is reflected to an extent in the distinction between semantics and **pragmatics**.

### Syllabus design

Since the mid-1970s, functions – and to a lesser extent notions – have represented an important category of **syllabus** and **materials** design. The first attempts to provide a notional–functional description aimed at foreign language learners were made by **Council of Europe** language experts in the early 1970s and subsequently developed, in particular by Wilkins in his *Notional Syllabuses* (1976), and in the **threshold level** (van Ek, 1975 and 1980; van Ek and Trim, 1991), though these influential publications used the terms in slightly different ways (see Johnson, 1982: 38). For Wilkins, ‘notional’ is an umbrella term for a semantic or **communicative** approach to language description, which he further subdivides into three general categories: ‘semantico-grammatical categories’,

'categories of modal meaning' and 'categories of communicative function.' It was left to the Threshold Level to provide the clear distinction between, and definition of, notions and functions in the way that is now generally accepted in foreign language teaching.

In his introduction to the *Threshold Level*, van Ek distinguishes between 'language functions which he [*sic* – the learner] will have to fulfil', also defined as the 'purposes [for which] the learner will have to use the foreign language (1980: 7) and notions: 'he [the learner] will need to refer to things, to people, to events etc., and to talk about them. In order to do this he will be able to handle a large number of *notions* in the foreign language' (1980: 8). A further distinction is made between *general notions*, which are general abstract categories such as 'identification', 'duration', 'shape', 'colour'; and *specific notions*, which are 'topic-related' and which can be of a lexical or a grammatical nature. Some specific examples corresponding to the general notions referred to in the last sentence are: 'name', 'length', 'round', 'red'.

There are various difficulties connected with this rather abstract form of notional categorisation. In some cases, there is no clear dividing line between them. For example, 'suasion' and other modal categories can be seen from a notional or a functional perspective. Also there is overlap between certain categories, such as 'specific notions' and 'topics'.

Following the publication of the *Threshold Level*, the concept of language functions found broad acceptance in syllabus and materials design and in foreign language teaching in general, which is confirmed by a glance at the contents pages of modern **textbooks** and by many national **syllabuses**. Initial reservations that replacing grammatical structures with language functions would lead to a 'phrase-book' approach to language learning, in which the **generative** base of language was denied to the learners, tended to fade with the realisation that functions could supplement existing categories rather than replace them. The communicative approach provided appropriate classroom techniques for learning language functions as well as grammatical categories.

As far as 'notions' are concerned, however, the influence on language teaching has been comparatively small. Whilst language functions represented a concept which can be easily understood by teachers and students and filled an obvious gap in language description, there proved to be various problems connected with taking and implementing a notional approach to syllabuses and materials. Principal among these was the fact that a notional approach sought to redefine lexical and grammatical categories. However, not only did lists and descriptions already exist for these, but since a notional specification had by necessity to be formulated in rather abstract and sometimes unwieldy terms, the resulting categorisation tended to be regarded as somewhat inaccessible to teachers and learners. For an international, multilingual organisation such as the Council of Europe, working from notional categories, which are non-language specific, has an obvious ideological appeal and practical application, as the many versions of Threshold Level have subsequently proved. However, for writers of materials and syllabuses in specific languages, it was convenient to by-pass a notional description and simply to work from checklists of **vocabulary** items or grammatical structures. Within the area of lexis, **corpus analysis** has, in the meantime, provided an alternative route to lexical specification and grading, which is arguably more scientific and more efficient than the 'brainstorming' approach of using notional checklists (Willis, 1990).

### Relationship with grammar

As far as grammar is concerned, notional descriptions did not fulfil their early promise and failed to provide the close and comprehensive specification of grammatical meaning that **pedagogical grammar** requires. Some reference grammars (e.g. Leech and Svartvik, 1975) make use of general notional categories, but otherwise the influence has remained relatively small. As a result of these problems, the initial interest in the notional axis of the 'functional-notional approach' subsequently faded, and it was noticeable that textbooks soon tended to describe themselves as 'functional-structural' (see, e.g., Cunningsworth, 1995).

Perhaps the most important legacy of a functional-notional description of language is that, as part of a wider communicative approach to both language description and language learning, it helped methodologists and teachers to move away from a form-based view of language and to see it more in terms of a user-based communication system.

**See also:** Communicative language teaching; Competence and performance; Council of Europe Modern Languages Projects; Grammar; Pedagogical grammar; Syllabus and curriculum design; Text and corpus linguistics; Textbooks; Universal grammar; Vocabulary

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## Objectives in language learning and teaching

The setting of aims and objectives is a general pedagogical principle, intimately linked to curriculum development, syllabus design and subsequently to the **evaluation** and **assessment** of learning outcomes. Increasing professional mobility has led to a need for greater transparency in the description of language proficiency. As a consequence, transparent curricula and clearly stated outcomes of language and intercultural learning have become an important goal in educational policy. This is reflected in the harmonisation strategies in Europe, especially the **Common European Framework of Reference** (CEFR) defining ‘common reference levels’ of proficiency in different aspects of communicative competence.

### Aims vs. objectives

The distinction between aims and objectives is not always clear. Both describe expected, ideal outcomes of the learning and teaching process (ASDIFLE, 2003) ; as Richards (2001) points out, objectives should be precise, feasible and consistent with the curriculum aim. In order to define the scope of aims vs. objectives, it may be helpful to use the distinction of curriculum levels as suggested by van den Akker et al. (2010). In this classification, aims belong to the macro level (system, society, nation or state) whereas objectives belong to the meso (school, institution, programme) and to the micro level (classroom, group, lesson). In a more operational perspective, a

distinction can be made between general (aims), intermediate (teaching sequences of several lessons) and specific objectives (of one or two lessons at most; Raynal and Rieunier, 2007). In **French** and **German** speaking cultures, it is common to stress the activity of the learner, which explains the use of terms like *objectif d'apprentissage* and *Lernziel*. But as Krumm (2007) mentions, ‘learning objectives’ are truly instructional objectives. Only learners with well developed **autonomy** are able to set their own goals.

### Functions of aims and objectives

At the different curriculum levels, the functions of aims and objectives vary depending on the different professional groups and stakeholders involved. At the institutional level, they contribute to the quality of education by assuring comparability and transparency of expected learning outcomes. Furthermore, they are essential for communicating and documenting targeted and attained learning outcomes in education policy, as well as for schools, teachers, parents and students. In the classroom, objectives help to plan, organise and pace teaching and learning processes and to inform teachers and learners about progress. They also guide teaching decisions, whether in the development or choice of teaching materials or between methodological options.

### Formal characteristics and types of objectives

In general pedagogy, the discussion about objectives was strongly influenced by the work of B.S.

Bloom and colleagues (Bloom et al., 1956), presenting a classification of educational objectives in three domains (cognitive, affective, psychomotor) and, most important, a hierarchically organised taxonomy of the cognitive domain. This was very successful because it allowed teachers to formulate their objectives explicitly and precisely in order to assess them efficiently. It has since been revised (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001) and the affective and psychomotor domains of learning have been explored (Krathwohl et al., 1973; Harrow, 1972). These taxonomies have also been important for the development of mastery learning, which consists in precise formulation of objectives fine-tuned to the individual capacities and needs of learners (Raynal and Rieunier, 2007). As Bloom's taxonomy is focussed on the cognitive domain, mentalist verbs such as *understand* or *interpret* can be used to describe learning outcomes.

In the 1970s, teaching by objectives became a major trend in pedagogy, influenced by the work of Robert F. Mager (1962) with the constraint of admitting only observable behaviours as learning outcomes. There was a belief that this would result in a transparent and just pedagogy. Mager (1962) gives three elements of definition for behavioural objectives: description of expected performance, conditions of realisation of this performance, and definition of a criterion for acceptable performance. This definition clearly shows the link between objectives and assessment. Specifically for the field of language teaching and learning, Findlay and Nathan (1980) provide a definition of operational objectives; referring to the *threshold level* developed in the late 1970s by the Council of Europe, they insist on a functional perspective. Language needs derive from the necessity of being able to function verbally in specific situations; this perspective is very close to the descriptors found in the CEFR-levels. For Findlay and Nathan (1980), a behavioural objective must meet the following criteria:

- the student must be the subject;
- behaviour or performance to be learned must be defined by an action verb;
- conditions must be described under which the student will demonstrate what is learned;

- a minimum level of performance required after instruction must be indicated, as specified by a criterion-referenced measurement strategy.

Behavioural conceptions of objectives thus only accept observable actions as learning outcomes. This could lead to a merely technical perspective on language teaching and learning and to an atomised view of language learning and use. Behavioural objectives should be complemented by other instructional objectives relating to open attitudes, motivation, strategies and general engagement in language and cultural learning; special learning opportunities and experiential objectives should be provided, for example by establishing direct contacts with speakers of the target language communities and by linking languages among each other and to other, non linguistic subjects (cf. Beacco et al., 2010). The assessment of this type of objective is yet a difficult question.

### Content aspects

Depending on the understanding of the nature of language and its acquisition and of the general aims of education, the content of aims and objectives changes.

In addition, the general philosophy underlying education at a given time or place must be taken into account since it influences the way the roles of the teacher (e.g. model of knowledge or facilitator of the learning process), the learners (constructing their language competence or receiving and assimilating knowledge and skills, for example) and teaching materials are conceived. Richards (2001) calls this 'ideology of the curriculum'; these ideological aspects are also tied to different learning and teaching traditions in different cultures or periods.

As the *Dictionnaire de didactique du français langue étrangère et seconde* (2003) points out, objectives in language teaching have been mostly grammatical and lexical, which reveals a mechanical and atomistic perspective on language and language learning. Some teachers nonetheless prefer this and they may find it an easy way to structure language learning in small portions. In this perspective, behavioural objectives are very

interesting and can induce new practices since they are highly compatible with the action-oriented perspective on language learning.

The aim of ‘communicative competence’ is important for each foreign language taught at school, and the overall goal is to help students develop their individual **plurilingualism** and intercultural competence. In this view, each language is part of the global, holistic, plurilingual and **intercultural competence** of the individual. Therefore, plurilingual competence will normally imply heterogeneous profiles of proficiency in different languages according to (assumed) individual and communicative and cognitive **needs** (Beacco et al., 2010: 9). In order to foster this overall competence, metalinguistic capacities such as **language awareness** become important aims and must be converted into instructional objectives.

In a similar way, existential competences (‘savoir-être’), as described in the **Common European Framework of Reference**, involve the entire personality of the learner even if they are difficult to convert into measurable objectives. A merely ‘technological’ view of objectives would fall short of this overall goal of language learning. The CEFR illustrates these difficulties by mentioning existential competences as part of the general competences of an individual, but the descriptors of the different reference levels of communicative competence remain almost exclusively behavioural. The publication of *CARAP – Framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures* (Candelier et al., 2007) shows a growing concern for the existential competences and **skills** necessary for successful **intercultural communication**. While the importance of pluralistic approaches (intercultural approach, awakening to languages, **intercomprehension** of related languages and integrated didactic approaches to different languages) is widely recognised, the formulation of functional and operational objectives in this field remains a major challenge.

### Objectives in everyday learning and teaching

When implementing a curriculum, general objectives or aims must be broken down into intermediate objectives which must be further divided into

specific objectives (Raynal and Rieunier, 2007). In that top-down process, it is important to constantly verify consistency with the general aims of the curriculum. In everyday teaching, teachers mostly have to work with **textbooks** written for a broad public and not specifically geared to the concrete curriculum, teaching situation and the learners they work with. In such situations, it is the responsibility of the teacher to select relevant material and teaching points, or develop their own, in order to cater to the specific needs of their learners; objectives then provide the necessary guidelines. The ideal scenario of language teaching is that of a specifically elaborated curriculum, based on a **needs analysis**, resulting in a direct link between needs, aims and objectives. In such situations, teachers and learners engage in a transparent contract with shared responsibilities; objectives can be fully endorsed by the students. In the context of compulsory education, this is rather the exception; but teachers can make use of motivational teaching strategies in order to help learners take responsibility and consider objectives as their own. Teachers will always have to evaluate the degree to which their objectives are attained and adjust their teaching as well as the objectives in a cyclic revision process.

**See also:** Assessment and testing; Behaviourism; Common European Framework of Reference; Communicative language teaching; Evaluation; Needs analysis; Planning for foreign language teaching; Syllabus and curriculum design; Textbooks

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# P

## Palmer, Harold Edward

b. 1877, London; d. 1949, Felbridge, UK

Harold E. Palmer worked tirelessly between the two World Wars to establish a principled basis for English language teaching (ELT). Given the subsequent influence of his ideas, he deserves greater recognition as the ‘founding father’ of (British) ELT. However, it is in Japan (where he spent the years 1922–36) that he is best remembered today.

Palmer first taught in Belgium, in a language school run along Berlitz lines. He then began to develop his own more systematic, less dogmatically monolingual version of **direct method** teaching, which he later termed the ‘Oral Method’ (Palmer, 1921b; see also Palmer and Palmer, 1925). He joined the **international phonetic association** in 1907, and took on board the ideas of **reform movement** theorists such as Henry **Sweet** and Otto **Jespersen**. In his subsequent work, Palmer brought together the direct method and Reform Movement traditions: his overall significance lies in the way he attempted systematically and consistently to relate practice to theory, thus foreshadowing **applied linguistics** as constituted in the post-World War Two era (see in particular Palmer, 1917, 1921a, 1924a).

Palmer’s best-known works on language teaching and learning theory were written during an extremely productive spell in Daniel Jones’s Department of Phonetics at University College London (1915–21). There, Palmer also developed wider interests in English intonation and grammar,

as reflected in a classic **pedagogical grammar** (Palmer, 1924b) which he completed following his move to Japan in 1922.

Outside Japan, few teachers are aware of Palmer’s achievements as ‘linguistic adviser’ to the Department of Education and founder of the Institute for Research in English Teaching (IRET), the first such centre in the world. However, Palmer’s legacy continues to be valued by Japanese members of the Institute (now known as IRLT).

Palmer’s output was considerable, and he devoted great energy to the provision of guides for teachers and innovative textbook materials (see IRLT, 1995; Smith, 1999). In the 1930s, he increasingly focused on issues of **vocabulary** control and text simplification, and his collaborative lexicological work with Michael West is relatively well-known internationally. After returning to England in 1936, he seems to have suffered from the absence of an organisation comparable to IRET, and it was largely due to the mediation of A.S. **Hornby** (his successor as leader of research in Tokyo) that Palmer’s ideas became influential as ELT established a base in post-war Britain.

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## Pedagogical grammar

Pedagogical grammar, which we may define as a grammar developed for learners of a foreign language, draws on two separate but interrelated areas of theory. First, there are descriptive models of grammar, which can be incorporated into pedagogical reference grammars and teaching **materials** and formulated in ways which make the description accessible to the learner. Second, there are theories of **second language acquisition**, which will provide the basis for classroom methodology.

### Pedagogical and linguistic grammars

There has been considerable discussion (see Dirven, 1990; Chalker, 1994) about the differences between pedagogical and linguistic **grammar**, variously termed 'theoretical' or 'scientific', in particular concerning the extent to which a pedagogical description should have a theoretical basis and what this basis should be. Despite the large

number of reference grammars on the market and the important role which grammar rules play in many classrooms, there appears to be relatively little coherent theory underlying rule formulation. This is somewhat surprising since, as Dirven (1990: 8) points out, 'learners can be and are misled into all kinds of wrong generalisations by the inaccurate rule formulations in their **textbooks**'. Some grammarians have attempted to give a theoretical basis to their rules: for example, Leech and Svartvik (1975) draw on the linguistic model of functional/systemic grammar; Swan (1994) outlines his 'design criteria' for rule formulation. Yet on the whole the area of rule formulation is one that is relatively unexplored (see Westney, 1994).

The main issues discussed in pedagogical grammar are:

- the aims of grammar teaching (knowing about grammar or using grammar; manipulating sentences or free production);
- the categorisation of grammar (form, meaning, use) into units which will form a **syllabus** or teaching **objectives**;
- the extent to which grammar should be dealt with separately from other aspects of language;
- the use of rules, in particular in how far a conscious focus on grammar rules assists acquisition;
- the type of grammatical **exercises** and activities which will lead to automatisation.

### Types of pedagogical grammars

In modern grammar teaching the influences of the following approaches are most strongly discernible or influential.

#### *Traditional grammar*

Grammar is defined primarily as a set of forms and structures, which comprise the main focus of the textbook syllabus. Whilst grammatical meaning plays an important role, it is dealt with in an unsystematic way. The sentence is the main unit of analysis, and emphasis is placed on the student's ability to form correct sentences. The usual classroom methodology is based on presentation, explanation, practice. Learning is seen largely as a

conscious process and grammar rules are used deductively, i.e. they are explained by teacher or textbook prior to the practice stage. The most common forms of exercise type are gapped sentences, pattern drills and sentences for transformation, reflecting a form-based, rather uncontextualised view of grammar. Grammatical competence is measured according to the student's ability to manipulate sentences, rather than being performance-oriented.

### *Communicative grammar*

Here, language is seen as the process of communicating messages between human beings in actual contexts, grammar being a means of expressing certain types of meanings – **notions and functions** – through grammatical forms. Grammatical objectives are thus defined in terms of notions rather than forms – ‘referring to present activities’ through the present progressive, ‘expression intention’ through going to, etc. (see van Ek and Trim, 1991). As far as grammatical rules are concerned, the distinction between knowing ‘about’ grammar and knowing ‘how’ to use it, referred to as declarative versus procedural knowledge (see Johnson, 1994), led to a shift of focus in methodology from analysis and controlled practice to use-based activities. Rules tended to be dealt with inductively, i.e. understanding emerges from use, rather than the other way round. Various important features of **communicative language teaching** can be applied to grammar; in particular, a ‘learning-by-doing’ approach based on small-group oral activities (information gap and similar communicative games), which is reflected in a number of grammar practice books (e.g. Ur, 1989). Whilst the communicative approach brought certain benefits in the area of methodology, its failure to integrate grammar in a coherent way led to a widespread but quite false ‘grammar versus communication’ dichotomy.

### *Acquisition-based approaches to grammar*

In the 1980s, various factors led some methodologists to take a quite different view of grammar. At the core of this movement was an increasing interest in the psychological processes underlying first

language acquisition and the belief that many of these processes could apply to second languages if suitable learning environments and conditions were provided. The best-known proponent of this view was Krashen (1981), who distinguished between learning – with a conscious focus on grammar (explicit rules, terminology, etc.) and automatic, unconscious **acquisition**. It was only through the latter that students could achieve communicative competence. The proposed method entailed providing learners with what he termed ‘comprehensible input’ and allowing the intake process to function automatically, following an innate acquisition order for which the learner's brain was already ‘wired up’ and which could not be influenced by structuring the input.

### *Cognitive approaches to grammar*

Various views of grammar learning and teaching can be located under the general heading of ‘cognitive’. Common to all is the recognition that there are fundamental differences between first and second-language acquisition processes and that a conscious focus on grammar can be beneficial. They reject, however, the passive view of learning inherent in traditional ways of teaching grammar. Earlier approaches centred on the notion of **language awareness** – that learners should be guided towards focusing on aspects of language and be encouraged to use various cognitive strategies to explore for themselves how language works. Thus, grammar rules explained by the teacher give way to consciousness-raising or discovery techniques and tasks given to students (see Rutherford and Sharwood Smith, 1988; Bolitho and Tomlinson, 1995). More recently, theories from cognitive linguistics and cognitive psychology have extended the scope of these approaches in three ways. First, the focus on the nature of grammatical meaning provides theoretical support to the notional grammar found in communicative language teaching (see Holme, 2009). Second, a comprehensive analysis of cognitive processes which underlie learning – attention, memory etc. – provides a theoretical foundation which can feed into the design of grammar activities (see Robinson, 2001; DeKeyser, 2007). Third, the stage model view of learning initially proposed

by Anderson (1983) has the potential to bridge the gulf between competence and performance (see Johnson, 1996; Newby, 2008). Various pedagogical models based on cognitive linguistics have been proposed (see Skehan, 1998; Littlemore, 2009). Though still in their infancy, cognitive approaches, particularly in tandem with a communicative view of language, provide a theoretical framework which has important applications in grammar teaching.

It would probably be true to say that many classrooms reflect a variety of approaches. Whilst there is almost uniform rejection of traditional grammar among methodologists, the security its structured practices offer to teachers and learners is obviously appealing. A traditional core, with bits of communicative methodology and awareness-raising activities superimposed, is not an uncommon classroom scenario.

**See also:** Communicative language teaching; Cognitive linguistics; Competence and performance; Grammar; Grammar–translation method; Language awareness; Monolingual principle; Objectives in language teaching and learning; Syllabus and curriculum design

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## Pidgins

A pidgin is a simple, auxiliary language that is a consequence of contacts between people who do not share a **mother tongue**. It is often the result of trade and, since it is no-one's mother tongue, it tends to have a small **vocabulary** and a grammar that is sufficient for the expression of simple commands and statements. Rudimentary pidgins are found throughout the world in contact situations where non-complex ideas are being exchanged. The speech is generally slow and supported by mime and gesture; the vocabulary is basic and taken mostly from the language of the dominant group; functional morphology is discarded; and the **grammar** has much in common with 'foreigner talk' and 'motherese'.

### Restricted pidgins

Restricted pidgins can develop rapidly when communication **needs** arise between people who do not share a language. If a restricted pidgin proves useful, it tends to be elaborated and thus, linguistically flexible. If it becomes a mother tongue, it is expanded to fulfil all its speakers' linguistic needs. Such mother tongues are known as '**creoles**'.

Restricted pidgins have developed on all of the world's trading routes and in the contacts brought about through war. Such pidgins developed in Japan, Korea and Vietnam between American soldiers and sections of the local populations. Elaborated pidgins are most likely to be found in multilingual communities where they serve an invaluable role as a **lingua franca**. We find such pidgins in Papua New Guinea, for example, where there are over 700 languages for a population of 6.6 million, and in West Africa where as many as one fifth of the world's languages are found.

### Pidginisation

Pidgins are not a rare phenomenon, but the underlying principle of pidginisation is even more widespread. Pidginisation is a process of linguistic accommodation in which speakers utilise an innate ability to simplify their language or dialect in order to communicate with people who do not share their

mother tongue. Each pidgin, like each language, is of course unique but the majority of them share certain grammatical characteristics, including:

- a fixed word order: S P (O) (A)
- little or no inflection: *tu han* (two hands); *a go / i go* (I go / she goes);
- a simple system of negation: *No go* (Don't go); *yu no bin go* (you didn't go);
- no irregular nouns: *tu fut / man* (two feet/men);
- no irregular verbs;
- no passives;
- no verb inflections; verbal nuances of time and aspect carried by small set of auxiliaries;
- small vocabulary but maximally used by exploiting:
  1. multifunctionality, e.g. *bad* may function as adjective, adverb, noun and verb
  2. reduplication, e.g. *ben* is 'bend'; *benben* is 'crooked'
  3. semantic widening, e.g. *han* can be 'arm', 'hand', 'sleeve';
- local idioms, metaphors and proverbs calqued from original mother tongues: thus Atlantic pidgins and creoles have *big ai*, 'covetous', possibly from Twi *aña uku* (eye big).

It seems likely that pidgins have existed as long as trade. Evidence suggests that there were pidginised versions of Latin that creolised into **French** and **Spanish** and there was certainly a medieval *lingua Franca* in use between Muslims and Christians during the Crusades. Pidgins that derived from European languages developed extensively in the wake of maritime expansionism from the fifteenth century. Pidginised forms of **Portuguese** and Spanish were the earliest to develop but were followed by pidginised forms of **English**, French, Dutch and, to a lesser extent, Italian, Swedish and **German**.

Many theories have been advanced to explain the structural similarities of the world's pidgins. They have been regarded as the result of 'baby-talk'. They have been described as 'maritime media'. It has been suggested that the similarities can be explained because all pidgins with European lexicons result from the relexification of pidginised Portuguese. The most likely explanation is that

pidginisation involves the utilisation of linguistic universals. In contact situations, where communication is essential, speakers intuitively make use of the linguistic programming that is part of every human being's biological blueprint.

The origin of the term *pidgin* is uncertain. There are a number of possibilities:

- It may come from a seventeenth-century reference to 'Pidian', meaning 'South American Indian'. In 1603, the English attempted to establish a colony on the northern coast of South America. The English of the Pidians would thus have been 'Pidian English'.
- It may be a Chinese modification of 'business'.
- It may be a form of Portuguese *pequeno*, meaning 'small'. Pidginised forms of Dutch and French have been called *baby holland*s and *petit nègre*.
- It may be derived from a Hebrew word *pidjom* meaning 'barter'.

The life cycle of a pidgin depends on sociological rather than linguistic factors. However, the following sequence is generally applicable:

- A marginal pidgin may develop within hours of contact. It is reinforced by gesture and mime; its vocabulary is drawn mainly from the dominant group; it survives as long as it serves a need.
- An elaborated pidgin may develop in a multi-lingual area to serve as a lingua franca. Such a pidgin may be linguistically sophisticated but tends to be no-one's mother tongue.
- A creole may develop out of necessity – as when millions of Africans were transported as slaves. They often had no option but to pass their pidgin on to their children, who creolised it. A creole may also come into being because of a pidgin's usefulness. Many urban dwellers in both Africa and Papua New Guinea use the local pidgin as a home language and children grow up speaking it as one of their mother tongues.
- A post-creole continuum may develop between the creole and the **standard** form of the language with speakers varying between basilectal,

mesolectal and acrolectal variants. An example from West Africa may help to illustrate this. A speaker may say:

Mi, a di go mi fain dat ma man pikin dem.

A di go luk my boys dem.

I'm going to find/look for my sons.

- The creole may merge with the metropolitan standard language.

Knowledge about pidgins can be of linguistic value in that they can shed light on language change, language loss, glottochronology and linguistic universals. They can be of assistance, too, to the teacher in that they may be regarded as examples of **interlanguages**.

Pidgins have proved useful in permitting communication where previously none existed; they have been found adequate for the writing of creative literature, parliamentary debates and for translations of Shakespeare and the Bible. If they develop into creoles, then they become as finely tuned to the needs of their speakers as any other mother tongue. If they die out, it is because they have outlived their social value, not because of any intrinsic linguistic weakness.

**See also:** Acculturation; Bilingualism; Creoles; Esperanto; Lingua Franca; Mental lexicon; Mother tongue; Native speaker; Sociolinguistics; Universal grammar; Untutored language acquisition

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TINEKE BRUNFAUT

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## Placement tests

Placement tests aim to identify variations in students' abilities so that they can be grouped for teaching, either in terms of the level of difficulty of the course they attend or in terms of the general ability of the class in which they are placed. The content of these tests may be based on the **syllabus** to be taught or on more general material. Some institutions assess the students' relative development in each skill and place them in different groups according to their abilities in these **skills**. So, it is possible that a student might be in the top class for **reading** but a slower class for **speaking** (or vice versa).

In order to make placement decisions it is important that the placement test spreads students out as much as possible across a range of scores so that distinctions can be made between them and decisions can be made more easily. Consequently, test writers attempt to include items across a wide range of difficulty. Placement tests differ from **achievement** and **proficiency tests** in their use rather than in the language that they sample. They are usually considered to be low stakes tests because the students' test results do not have serious consequences for them, such as excluding them from a programme for which they have applied.

**See also:** Assessment and testing

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## Planned languages

Spoken or written languages that have evolved on the basis of written projects, usually with the goal of facilitating international communication, or, sometimes, clarity and precision of thought. The idea of deliberately improving on existing languages for philosophical purposes goes back to Descartes, and invented languages have been used in literature for even longer (Eco, 1995); it was not until the second half of the nineteenth century, however, that projects designed for actual use began to multiply, numbering several dozen by the turn of the century (Couturat and Leau, 1979) and over a thousand by the 1980s (Blanke, 1985; Haupenthal, 1976; Large, 1985). Very few of these acquired a significant number of users. Most constructed language ('conlang') projects of the present day are motivated by aesthetic or intellectual goals and are not intended for widespread use. For a contemporary view, see Okrent (2009).

By far the most widely learned and taught planned language is **Esperanto**, based on an 1887 project by L.L. Zamenhof. The reasons for Esperanto's relative success are partly linguistic, partly sociohistorical, and partly ideological or strategic (Blanke, 2009). Projects of some historical interest include Volapük (1879), the invention of Johan Martin Schleyer, which underwent a brief vogue in parts of Europe before the movement lost cohesion; Latino sine Flexione (1903), a simplified form of Latin developed by mathematician Giuseppe Peano; Ido (1907), a reformed version of Esperanto developed by philosopher Louis Couturat; Occidental/Interlingue (1922), a naturalistic project by the Estonian engineer Edgar de Wahl; Novial (1927), designed by the Danish linguist Otto Jespersen; Basic English (1930), a simplified form of English developed by philosopher Charles Kay Ogden; Interlingua (1951), a project of the International Auxiliary Language Association led by Alexander

Gode; and Loglan/Lojban, two derivatives of a 1960 project by James Cooke Brown, intended to maximize logical consistency and linguistic neutrality and thereby to test the relationship between language, thought, and culture.

A wide range of claims have been made for various planned languages, including ease of acquisition, logical structure, lack of ambiguity, suitability for human or machine translation, internationality or neutrality, propaedeutic (or ‘transfer of training’) effects, broader effects on language awareness, and so on. Evaluating these claims is one of the objectives of interlinguistics, a discipline which investigates the design and function of international planned languages, and **language planning** for international or intercultural communication. The two major orientations to interlinguistics are the semiotic, exemplified by Eco (1995) and Sakaguchi (1998), and the sociological, exemplified by Blanke (1985) and most of the contributions to Schubert (1989) and Tonkin (1997). In practice nearly all of the work in the sociological tradition has focused on Esperanto.

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## Planning for foreign language teaching

**Language planning** concerns the making of arrangements for the use of human language(s) in a number of different social domains of language use. Systematic attention for the planning of language teaching, in particular of foreign language teaching, is of fairly recent date. Planning of foreign language teaching requires careful consideration both of the planning **objectives** and of the many factors which are at play in the context of the planning process. Such factors are not only linguistic in kind, or psychological, sociological and educational, but they also pertain to the basic question with whom in each particular case the planning authority lies.

## General language planning

In planning for foreign language teaching, the concern is with educational arrangements for the

learning and teaching of one or more foreign languages. Foreign language teaching planning is not the same as, although it may be included in, the **language planning** by a country of the use of its language(s) or, for that matter, of its general approach to foreign languages. In such plans, for example, the use, the position or the preservation of a country's native and/or national and of its foreign languages are regulated and, possibly also, the rights of those citizens whose native language has not been designated one of the country's official languages.

In the general language planning literature, little separate attention is devoted to foreign language teaching planning, even when the focus is on a 'language policy for the European Community' (Coulmas, 1991). A specific and vivid interest in foreign language teaching planning arose in the early 1990s. International conferences specifically devoted to the topic were organised, a special issue of *The Annals* was devoted to it (Lambert, 1994), and a monograph on the subject appeared (Christ, 1991). A number of countries made notable progress, either in the awareness of the planning issue (for the USA, see, for example, Moore and Morfit, 1993; Brecht et al., 1995; for France, see Arrouays, 1990), or in actually developing plans for foreign language teaching (for The Netherlands, see van Els and van Hest, 1990; Lambert, 1997).

Besides the term 'language planning' one often comes across 'language policy' or 'language policy-making'. There is a preference for 'language planning' over 'language policy-making', and for 'language policy' when reference is made to the outcome of the planning process.

### Planning for foreign languages

In all foreign language planning exercises there are a great many questions on which decisions have to be taken; all such questions must be clearly stated and defined beforehand. In essence, the questions can all be grouped under three major topics: 'what is to be learned/taught?'; 'how is it to be learned/taught?'; and 'what context-factors have to be taken into account?'

Of great importance, too, is another more or less preliminary point: the issue of 'who is to decide?'

Decisions as to 'what?' and 'how?' and the context-factors need not all be taken by one and the same authority or person; they may lie at different levels. The planning authorities or persons may be the individual learners, their parents or the teachers involved; they may be the school board or the head of the school, but they may also be local or national or international bodies. The authority to plan is usually shared between these various 'levels', usually differently balanced for each specific case. Thus, the number of languages to be offered – and which exactly – and the number of languages each individual pupil is to learn, may be the prerogative of the central government to decide, but the decision as to which of these offered languages each individual pupil is to learn is often left to the pupils themselves. The resulting policy, which is only partly 'centralised' in the full sense of the word, may, on the other hand, still be said to be 'national'. A foreign language teaching policy is 'national' not because all decisions are taken at the national level, but when the policy covers all aspects of the planning process and, moreover, also holds a decision at what levels the authority lies to decide on the various relevant questions.

The scope of foreign language teaching policy statements tends to be limited, i.e. they often deal with only a particular segment of the educational system. Many focus exclusively on (general) **secondary education**, or they are restricted to the so-called lesser-taught languages. A truly national policy is national not only in the sense just indicated, but also sets out to be all-encompassing. It encompasses the full range of the demand for foreign languages, i.e. it deals with the need for foreign languages of all sub-sectors of the population and not only with the demand of, for instance, the academic world. It also encompasses the full supply range, which means that not only the facilities provided in secondary education are considered, but also the whole gamut of all educational sectors, including non-government-funded private language instruction.

In cases where a policy statement is restricted in scope, for example, to the sector of secondary education, a requirement is that it should also take into account how this particular sector is related to all other provisions. Otherwise the possibilities



may be overlooked that other sectors hold for at least partly supplying to meet the demand in cases where an increase in demand surpasses the capacity of the secondary school timetables.

'Diversification' is a hotly debated issue in the discussions about what, how many and which foreign languages ought to be offered to, and/or should be chosen by, pupils in primary and especially secondary education. It is a big issue in many European countries (Arrouays, 1990: 15–16; Christ, 1991: 39–40; Phillips, 1989). 'Diversification' always refers to expanding the number of languages offered and generally implies extending the freedom of choice of the pupils. Diversification may apply to both the obligatory and the non-obligatory part of the foreign language curriculum. As for the former, in England and Wales, for example, there is an obligatory foreign language for every pupil, but a number of approximately 20 languages, i.e. all the national languages of the European Community and a number of 'languages of commercial and cultural importance', may be offered by schools for pupils to choose from.

In some countries the increasing demand for more foreign languages is translated into an expansion of the number of languages pupils are free to choose from for their first (obligatory) language. In other countries the policy is rather to extend the number of obligatory languages and, often in combination with that, to restrict the freedom of choice of the pupils with respect to the obligatory languages. In The Netherlands, for example, in general secondary education there is a fixed list of three obligatory languages for everyone (**French, German, English**), and when in upper secondary education some freedom of choice is granted, the list of languages pupils may choose from is very limited (van Els, 1994: 39–40; van Els and Tuin, 2011). There is little evidence to show, so far, that greater diversification has led to an increase – often hoped for – of the total foreign language competence of a country (Phillips, 1989: xi; Lambert, 1997: 82–4).

### Planning what to teach and learn

Foreign language teaching planning, even if, in principle, it covers the three major topics of 'what

to learn/teach?', 'how to learn/teach?', and 'under what conditions to learn/teach?', usually restricts itself to policy statements with respect to 'what?'. Consideration of 'how?' very seldom leads to explicit policy statements on the topic, although, on the other hand, it regularly contributes to qualifying the choices made regarding the 'what?' topic. Thus, the respective (perceived) difficulty of learning and, therefore, of teaching different languages may lead to a well-reasoned choice of which languages to offer or of the sequence in which the languages are to be offered in the curriculum (Oud-de Glas, 1997).

The broad question 'what to learn/teach?' holds a number of sub-questions, the main ones of which are: 'what language(s) to learn/teach?'; 'to learn by/teach to whom?'; 'when to learn/teach?'; and 'what of the language(s) to learn/teach?'. The question of what particular situations and levels of language use the learner has to be prepared for is usually subsumed in policy statements on 'what to learn/teach?'. However, the more detailed aspects of the 'what?' topic are normally gone into in **syllabus** and curriculum design, such as the specific **objectives** to be achieved regarding communicative and sociocultural competence, including also cultural and intercultural communicative skills.

### Needs analysis

The analysis of the learner's foreign language needs plays an important role in finding answers to all the 'what?' questions. How needs can be investigated is dealt with under **needs analysis**. Here their typology and, also, their weight in foreign language teaching planning will be discussed.

Arguments for the learning and teaching of foreign languages are of many different kinds, but in one way or another they are all statements of underlying needs. Surprisingly little principled discussion has been devoted to their typology so far (van Els, 1994: 37–9). It is not uncommon to divide needs into polar pairs, like 'individual' versus 'societal' or 'national'. But the opposition is hardly useful in a planning exercise, for it is evident that societal needs cannot be separated from individual needs: societal needs are always reducible to – i.e., they have been derived from – the

individual needs of (a number of) members of that society. In essence, all needs are individual. On the other hand, not all individual needs are also societal. They only take on a societal dimension when society declares needs of (groups of) individuals important enough to take them into account when formulating a national policy for foreign language teaching.

Other such common polar oppositions one finds represented in 'non-utilitarian', 'cultural' or 'formative' versus 'utilitarian', 'directly useful' or 'capitalisable'. There is no clear-cut distinction between such pairs, in part also because there is no fundamental opposition between, for example, 'cultural' and 'directly useful'. Moreover, talking about the issues in these terms also leads people to carelessly equate 'utilitarian' with 'political' and 'practical'.

When needs have to be weighed one against the other with a view to formulating a foreign language teaching policy, the distinctions proposed so far are very inadequate. A more helpful criterion to distinguish needs for foreign language learning lies in the degree of communicative competence required to fulfil that need (van Els et al., 1984: 162). On the basis of that criterion, three broad categories of needs can be distinguished:

1. *Communicative needs* one wants to be competent in a particular foreign language in order to be able to communicate effectively with speakers of that language.
2. *Language competence-related needs* one wants, for example, to become familiar with the culture, way of life, and, more specifically, the literature of another nation. **Competence** in the language in which that culture is embedded or the **literary texts** are written, is not a prerequisite to fulfil needs of this kind.
3. *Needs distantly, or not at all, related to language competence* one wants to develop particular social and/or intellectual **skills** of a general nature. Such a general objective may be pursued through the learning/teaching of a variety of school subjects, among them foreign languages.

The relation between needs and foreign language competence becomes more indirect and diffuse as one proceeds down this list of three categories.

With needs of the first category, there is no way around providing for the learning/teaching of the particular language(s) required. It is possible, however, to cater for some needs in the second category, such as a need for a better understanding of speakers of other languages in general, by providing for the learning/teaching of just one foreign language, no matter which, and even through the instruction of the native language. In the third category, the relation between needs and foreign language competence is even more tenuous.

The weight that these different categories of needs carry in foreign language teaching planning will differ from country to country. In a country like the USA, all arguments are equally valid or convincing: its inhabitants are in a position to use their native tongue in large parts of the world; when abroad, they are likely to cope without any competence in any other language. However, in most countries the question is not 'Should we learn a foreign language?', but rather 'Which languages, how many of them, and which skills should be learned to what levels of competence?' In such cases, where policy choices have to be made between the learning/teaching of a foreign language(s) and of other subjects, or for the learning/teaching of one foreign language against another, arguments related to the first category of needs carry much more weight than those relating to the other two categories.

It should be noted that, when under those circumstances a choice for the learning/teaching of a particular language(s) is based on needs of category one, this fact as such does not require or for that matter justify that, in the actual learning/teaching of the language(s) chosen, needs of categories two and three should be overlooked.

### Other factors

Besides the obviously important needs factor, other factors have to be taken into account in foreign language teaching planning, either because they have an intrinsic value of their own or because they present some kind of obstacle or other to the achievement of a particular objective. These other factors are numerous and very diverse, but four broad categories may be distinguished:

### **Psychological factors**

Aspects of the processes of **bilingualism** and foreign language learning may be decisive when decisions have to be taken regarding, for example, which language to learn/teach first, whether more foreign languages can be learnt/taught simultaneously – and, if so, how many – and what is the optimal **age** for starting learning/teaching. The inherent and/or perceived difficulty of a foreign language and all other **motivational** considerations of learners are other such factors.

### **Linguistic factors**

The linguistic relations between the native language and the foreign language(s) to be learnt/taught on the one hand, and the relations between the foreign languages to be learnt/taught on the other, may justify the choice of one particular foreign language over another. For example, should there be room for (only) one more foreign language in the curriculum, a choice for French over Japanese might be argued for on the basis of the close relationship of French with other Romance languages (Italian, **Spanish**) for which the learners might also feel some need. Another point to consider when little room for the learning/teaching of foreign languages can be claimed, is the possibility of opting for a **lingua franca** or for one of the international languages like **Esperanto** (Christ, 1997: 130–2).

### **Educational factors**

Obvious educational factors that in foreign language planning have to be paid attention to are the restrictions of the timetable, and the availability of suitable teaching **materials** and adequately trained teachers. In many countries the foreign language needs cannot possibly all be satisfied in secondary education alone, and other sectors of the educational system will have to be considered to take their share.

The teaching of foreign languages cannot claim any special function when it comes to instilling into learners particular general educational objectives, such as ‘**learning to learn**’ or **autonomous learning**.

Claims for a special role are equally invalid when such attitudes are at stake as ‘developing a stable system of ethical values’ or ‘accepting people with different social and ethnic backgrounds, avoiding rigidity and stereotyping’ (Wilkins, 1987: 24). All the same, foreign language learning/teaching will have to make its contribution, together with other subjects, in realising objectives of a general educational nature.

### **Language policy factors**

The international situation of a country may make it desirable to make special provisions for the languages spoken in neighbouring countries, independent of the international status of those countries or of their languages (Christ, 1997: 132–4). Similarly, the international organisations a country belongs to and, in particular, the language policy pursued by those organisations may have to be taken into account. As for the internal language situation, a special case in point may be constituted by the country’s policy regarding minority languages (Broeder and Extra, 1997).

**See also:** Evaluation; Languages for specific purposes; Language planning; Needs analysis; Objectives in language teaching and learning; Syllabus and curriculum design

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THEO VAN ELS

## Plurilingualism

Plurilingualism is a concept developed by the Council of Europe, especially in the **Common European Framework of Reference** (Council of Europe, 2001). It refers to the capacity of individuals to speak, read and write two or more languages or language varieties to differing degrees and for changing purposes throughout their lives. Plurilingualism may be a consequence of institutional language teaching and learning or of biographical experiences in multilingual environments. It is related to cultures and identities and

should be linked to ‘**intercultural competence**’, i.e. the ability to move and mediate among people of different languages and cultures (see also Coste et al., 2009). The innovative power of this concept lies in the emphasis on the individual as a social agent in a multilingual society and on the concept of a plurilingual repertoire that is not an accretion of languages each stored separately, but a complex and composite competence which includes first languages/‘**mother tongues**’ and second languages, but also the languages taught in educational institutions, often called ‘foreign languages’. For the traditions of ‘foreign language teaching’, this new concept represents a major challenge, especially in schools and universities.

### Foreign language teaching

In many countries, the learning and teaching of foreign languages in the sense of languages which are not spoken in one’s own country has a long tradition. The concept of *foreign language* (as opposed to ‘mother tongue’ or second language) is known in many cultures, e.g. *Fremdsprache* in German, *langue étrangère* in French or *waiyu* (exterior language) in Chinese. The idea behind this concept was and still is that each country has a dominant/official/national language and that additional, so called ‘foreign languages’ are taught, to which economically or culturally a particular value is attached. In many cases, **non-natives** are foreign language teachers – at least in state-funded or public schools – i.e. a foreign language is taught by teachers who themselves have learned and studied the language as a foreign language.

Typically, foreign language teaching is still focused on the so-called ‘target language’ or, in the context of *landeskunde* or *civilisation*, on the ‘target culture’. This means that the focus lies on the **standard** norm, which has prevailed over different varieties or minority languages within a country, and the idea of cultural homogeneity within a linguistic or cultural area is based on the typical, the collective aspect and on a rather homogenizing concept of culture. This goes hand in hand with the fact that the plurilingualism and pluriculturalism that already exist in pupils very often play only a marginal role. Traditional foreign language teach-

ing that is based on the concept of a collective and homogeneous national language did not take plurilingualism into account and it is still the case today that foreign language teaching often disregards developments in intercultural learning (within linguistically and culturally heterogeneous learning groups) and migration-based plurilingualism in pupils (Hu, 2003).

### Migrant and heritage languages

At the same time, in recent decades, the interconnectedness of languages in the language learning process has been increasingly emphasised in the fields of migration pedagogy, intercultural pedagogy and research on multilingualism. Research on **transfer** in the field of language learning has demonstrated to what extent not only the first language but also further learned or acquired languages influence the learning of another language. Research dealing with the academic success of children with an immigrant language background emphasises the importance of developing the first language, especially with regard to identity construction (Cummins, 2011). These findings have led to the development of **bilingual** schools and innovative teaching concepts allocating specific importance to the development of the first language in pupils with an immigrant background (Budach et al., 2008).

For a long time, these two domains of language learning, classical foreign language teaching and approaches promoting plurilingualism in the context of **migrant languages** and the language of schooling – usually not including the so called foreign languages – have seldom been related to each other. It is only recently that the role of migrant languages for the learning of third/fourth languages has begun to be investigated (Hu, 2011).

### Research

As far as research on plurilingual development is concerned, there are initial fruitful approaches and research findings. For instance, it has become apparent that success in the acquisition of L3 in bilingual pupils depends among other things upon whether the L1 is being used in the society and

school as a language of communication or language of instruction, whether it is a language less socially valued or a language spoken in a limited context (Rauch et al., 2010). Surveys conducted in German schools have shown that pupils who grow up with a multilingual background have a small, significant advantage in English as a foreign language in comparison with their classmates who grew up in a monolingual German environment (Hesse et al., 2008). It is assumed that this is due to the fact that the plurilingual pupils apply learning strategies gained during L1 or L2 acquisition and that they have a higher **language awareness**, which has a beneficial effect on the L3 acquisition.

With regard to the interdependence of competences in several languages, Rauch et al. (2010) found that, with respect to reading competencies in Turkish, German and English of German–Turkish bilingual pupils, there is apparently no significant influence of their Turkish-reading competence on their German-reading competence, but nonetheless noticeable positive influence on their English-reading competence. This can be explained by the fact that while English is being taught in a formal foreign language teaching manner, the German class presupposes existing knowledge of the German language.

### Language education policy

Recent developments of language policies and curricula in Europe reflect an ambivalent situation. For instance, the **Common European Framework of Reference** has laid the foundations of the concept of plurilingualism but in the final analysis has itself unintentionally contributed to a marginalization of the specific *plurilingual* competences and the interconnectedness of languages by defining levels and partial competences in *specific* languages – an aspect that has had a huge influence worldwide (Byram and Parmenter, 2012; Hu, 2012). Meanwhile, however, new proposals have been elaborated in response to the objective of strengthening plurilingual and intercultural competences (Candelier, 2007; Council of Europe, 2007) and represent an integrative perspective on language learning and teaching. The **Council of Europe Platform for Plurilingual and Intercultural**

**Education** connects all types of language learning closely to each other. However, the question remains to what extent, for example, foreign language teachers take this work into consideration and above all, refer to it in their own concrete teaching. Thus, the education and training of language teachers, especially foreign language teachers, plays a key role in fostering and ensuring an integrative plurilingualism. Whether or not and how plurilingualism will be included in the classroom reality depends not least on the knowledge, the methodical and pedagogical competences of teachers, and above all on their convictions and attitudes towards language diversity and multilingualism as values. It is therefore important to analyse critically whether the existing structures of teacher education meet the requirement to promote integrative plurilingualism. A stronger networking of teachers representing all the languages in schools, in the structures of teacher education as well as in the different research disciplines, must be encouraged to a greater extent than hitherto. Only then will research and educational policy understand and promote plurilingualism in a comprehensive, integrative sense as a potential benefit for individuals and for society. As long as traditional foreign language teaching remains one of the most important organizational forms of language teaching and learning, it will be of crucial importance to place greater emphasis on encouraging this group of language teachers to develop a higher awareness of plurilingual language learning processes, learning strategies and identities, as well as of the role and the potential of the first and second languages for further language learning.

**See also:** BICS and CALP; Council of Europe Modern Languages Project; Mother-tongue teaching; Teacher education; Teaching methods; Third language learning; Transfer

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ADELHEID HU

### Poetry

Teaching poetry can take one of three forms: a **literary** approach with a focus on accessing key cultural texts and acquiring literary competence; a

linguistic approach using poetry as a language text; and a creative approach encouraging students to write their own poetry, where language is personally owned. Poetry offers an alternative language and discourse, often engaging learners' emotions, and encourages **language awareness** and enhanced language memorisation contexts.

Three significant factors in the wider context are: the local/national teaching context; attitudes to 'poetry' in general; and priorities in foreign language teaching.

Local and national teaching contexts will influence the value in general placed on poetry and the age of the students (which in turn may affect attitudes to poetry). Adults are often the clients in an EFL context, where the use of poetry in the classroom can be welcomed. Another factor in a local context is **assessment**, which can have a washback effect if poetry **skills** are being tested. Students' and teachers' existing constructs or images of poetry will affect their reactions to poetry in the foreign language classroom. Writers on **mother-tongue teaching** have identified poetry-related problems: difficulties of meaning, **vocabulary**, metalanguage, allusion and teachers' and pupils' negative attitudes (e.g. Lockwood, 1999). On the other hand, positive links to poetry exist in the enjoyment of rhythm in everyday life with advertising jingles, nursery rhymes, etc., and the turning to poetry for special occasions. In the classroom, making unexciting language items into raps or rhymed snippets can use this potential source of excitement to make learning more enjoyable and memorable for students.

Current priorities in foreign language teaching can also be influential. Poetry can be in conflict with a communicative **syllabus** where the focus is on functional and utilitarian language, although discussions about poetry *can* be communicative. There may also be a similar discontinuity with a structural or grammatical syllabus.

### Poetry as part of a literary syllabus

Foreign language teachers may be required to teach poetry as part of their literature syllabus with sometimes little choice of text and probably with advanced learners. Many significant issues here

relate to **literary theory and literature teaching** in general. Two key outcomes can be identified as important: access to an identified canon of respected literature; and the development of literary competence.

Texts selected in a literary syllabus often represent key works in a culture. In studying these, students will be accessing the 'cultural capital' of a country (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977) and thus can share some common reference points with target culture members. One can object that such a canon may not represent diversity, and Carroli in this vein points to 'the multiple languages and voices of a language community' (2008: 183).

The skill of literary competence has also been highlighted. Maley points to the need for students to be 'progressively introduced and sensitised to the devices through which literature achieves its special effects' (2001: 181). Students may need to locate a text in terms of the writer's biography, the **genre**, the topic, any relevant literary movement, and its historical context. The particular focus will depend on the critical approach adopted by the teacher. This choice of approach will be affected by that favoured in assessment and/or by the teacher or foreign languages department. To attain literary competence, students will also need to hone or develop skills in appreciating features of an author's style, particularly the recognition of pattern, and in foreign language poems the understanding of the special cultural freight of symbols.

### Poetry as a language text

In the late 1980s and early 1990s there was a growth of interest in using literature texts, particularly for language purposes. With this approach, texts can be used with students of different ages. Many different kinds of text can be used and a teacher is also not restricted to choosing poems within a 'canon', since it is not the literary merits of the poem which are in question.

One important objection raised regarding the focusing on language in poetry (and this relates to poems in a literature syllabus as well), may be that the language of poetry is regarded as deviant (Lazar, 1993), offering pupils an unsuitable model. Counter-suggestions have been identified to overcome this



objection. Lazar suggests that deviance can itself become the focus of discussion (1993); Littlemore and Low (2006) refer to the usefulness of poetry in developing figurative thinking skills and Pirrie points to positive aspects of a different form: 'Many ... pupils ... experience a relief that few words are required and welcome the security provided by pattern and structure' (1987: 80).

Other positive aspects also suggested include improvement of language awareness; engagement with students on an affective, personal level; improved memorisation of vocabulary; opportunities for performance and practical advantages, since poems 'don't look daunting to students' and can be analysed in one lesson (Abbott, 2004: 17–18).

Poetry can aid language learning because 'a poem focuses attention on parts of speech, voice and tense' (Pirrie, 1999: 211). Another possible benefit for language learning is the enhanced context for memorisation. Barton (2003) and Cheater and Farren (2001) focus particularly on the usefulness of repetition in poetry for younger learners of foreign languages. 'Sound' values of poetry can make it a suitable vehicle for choral or individual performance and thus help to develop students' **speaking** skills.

A highly significant aspect is the involvement of learners' personal feelings. Poetry often deals with themes left untouched by other school texts (love, death, emotional experiences, and so on). These are not only non-trivial but can also engage learners and increase **motivation**. Poems can promote positive intercultural relationships by emphasising universal experiences, which can transcend cultures.

A wide range of different kinds of language activity can be used with poems: role-play, letters, guessing games, jigsaw tasks and so on, which will engage learners and capitalise on the benefits mentioned here. Poetry tasks can involve all four language learning skills and are particularly suited to collaborative learning with pair work or **group work**.

### Teaching poetry-writing

The third way that poetry can be used in the classroom is by encouraging creative **writing**. This can be done either by using an existing text as a model,

or by encouraging students to write 'poems' using a variety of stimuli, such as poems in particular forms or shapes or poetry written in response to pictures or music.

Benefits of creating poetry include facilitating **authentic** discussions where students decide on suitable language formulations. It also offers the chance for students to own both the topic and the language of their communication, unlike many functional activities in a communicative syllabus; and, finally, it fosters student confidence in having produced 'poems', particularly where these are word-processed and/or accompanied by illustrations and then displayed or entered into writing competitions. Students can pitch the writing at their own level and may experience a degree of distance and release which derives from writing in another language.

**See also:** Authenticity; Drama; Literary texts; Literary theory and literature teaching; Teaching methods; Translation theory

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## Politeness

Politeness in interaction has been equated with “interpersonal harmony and face-threat mitigation” (Watts, 2005: xxvi). It is often understood intuitively in terms of normative notions of appropriateness. According to this view, linguistic politeness refers to language usage which enables smooth communication between conversational participants according to the norms of social interaction in a particular context within a given speech community. Politeness may be achieved through the appropriate choice of verbal and **non-verbal communication** strategies, although no linguistic expressions themselves should be considered inherently polite. Defining linguistic politeness, however, remains a highly contested issue for politeness researchers due to the cultural and historical relativity of the term (Watts, 2005: xxvii). A huge literature on politeness has emerged over the last decade which includes critiques of earlier pragmatic approaches to politeness, debates on the notion of ‘face’ and reflections on impoliteness, relational work and power in language (Eelen, 2001; Watts, 2003, 2005; Locher and Watts, 2005; Christie, 2004;

Bousfield and Locher, 2008; Culpepper, 2008). Watts (2005: xiii) contends that “politeness will always be a slippery, ultimately indefinable quality of interaction which is subject to change through time and across cultural space” and, as a result of the instability associated with the term, it remains a problematic concept to theorise.

Early work on linguistic politeness was influenced by sociolinguistic and **pragmatic** approaches to language. For example, the social indexing inherent in the use of honorifics is an aspect of linguistic politeness which has been examined within the field of **sociolinguistics**. Linguistic politeness has traditionally been associated with indirectness in **speech act** studies and principles of linguistic politeness have been developed by linguists working within the field of **pragmatics**, most notably Lakoff (1973, 1975, and 1989); Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) and Leech (1983).

Claims regarding the universality of these principles have attracted attention within the field of cross-cultural pragmatics. Studies suggest that the universal concept of politeness results in pragmatic concerns to realise particular speech acts according to suitable levels of formality with regard to participant, situation and extent of imposition. Cross-linguistic equivalence in the realisation of particular speech acts in terms of form and usage, however, is shown to vary considerably (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989). It is crucial for language learners to be made aware of this in order to minimise the likelihood of cross-cultural misunderstandings and to avoid incorrect judgements being formed concerning their communicative intent.

The most influential and comprehensive theory of linguistic politeness can be attributed to Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987). Drawing upon Goffman’s (1967) definition of ‘face’, their model describes how particular linguistic strategies are adopted to counteract the threats to face which particular speech acts, such as requesting or inviting, involve. Face is defined as the ‘public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself’ (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 61). It consists in two dimensions: ‘positive face’ and ‘negative face’. The former is linked to the desire to be appreciated and win approval: ‘the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others’

(1987: 62). Negative face is concerned with ‘freedom of action and freedom from imposition’ (1987: 61) – the want that one’s actions be unimpeded by others. Maintaining face is perceived as a basic human desire which involves the employment of certain politeness strategies – the choice of which is contingent upon the estimated risk of face loss to the participants in the interaction. Factors such as Social Distance (D), Relative Power (P) between interlocutors and Absolute Ranking (R) of impositions within a particular culture are all said to contribute to the degree of threat posed by an ‘FTA’ – i.e., a ‘face-threatening act’ (1987: 60).

Brown and Levinson’s framework has attracted considerable critical attention. Ide (1989) claims that it fails to offer a precise definition of linguistic politeness which is necessary to allow more fruitful cross-cultural research. In addition, the universality of the proposed constituents of ‘face’ have been questioned with regard to non-Western contexts (Mao, 1993; Nwoye, 1992) and, more specifically, with regard to the Japanese language and culture (Matsumoto, 1988; Pizziconi, 2003). According to Mao (1993: 455), Brown and Levinson present face as ‘an individualistic, “self”-oriented image’. Although this may be an accurate description of face in Western society where social interaction is based upon individualism, it is deemed problematic in non-Western contexts. Matsumoto (1988), for example, claims that it is the acknowledgement and maintenance of the relative position of others, rather than the preservation of an individual’s ‘proper territory’ (1988: 405) which governs all social interaction in Japan. She illustrates this with reference to the expression ‘*doozo yoroshiku one-gaisimasu*’ (literally: ‘I ask you to treat me well’) which directly requests favourable treatment from the addressee, whilst functioning as a greeting in an initial encounter. Rather than signalling imposition and constituting a ‘face-threatening act’, Matsumoto (1988: 410) argues that ‘deferent impositions’ can enhance the face or good self-image of the addressee in Japan by elevating the recipient and revealing the speaker’s humble position. Ide (1989: 241) similarly claims that, in societies such as Japan where group membership constitutes the basis of social interaction, the role or status defined in a particular situation through appropriate choice

of linguistic form and behaviour is the key element in polite social interaction.

More recent criticisms of Brown and Levinson’s model of politeness have focussed on the speaker bias that is assumed within a production model of language usage and on the model’s failure “to articulate an adequate conception of context, despite the key importance of context in judgements of politeness” (Culpepper, 2008: 18–19). Similarly, Watts (2003) claims that because politeness involves an evaluative act which is locally negotiated within a specific, historically determined, socio-cultural setting, a predictive model of linguistic politeness is problematic. As a result, Watts calls for a break with Brown and Levinson’s (1978, 1987) dominant research paradigm, and for politeness to be redefined as “a dynamic concept” (Watts, 2003: xii). Watts proposes a discursive approach to politeness where the hearer’s evaluation of an utterance as an act of politeness becomes relevant to identifying and theorising the construct itself (Watts, 2003). This view distinguishes between first and second-order politeness. First-order politeness equates with the various ways that polite behaviour is perceived and talked about by members of a socio-cultural group, whilst second-order politeness is “a theoretical construct, a term within a theory of social behaviour and language usage” (Watts, Ide and Ehlich, 2005: 3). Watts ultimately appears to reject the possibility of second-order politeness because he claims that objectified, scientific notions of politeness cannot be incorporated in a study of social interaction (Watts, 2003:11; see also Pizziconi’s (2006) discussion of this point). Watt’s situated view of politeness thus does not attempt to provide an explanatory theory of politeness and has been criticised on this basis (Culpepper, 2008; Terkourafi, 2005).

Following Eelen’s (2001) watershed publication, ‘A Critique of Politeness Theories’, new research agendas have emerged within politeness studies. These include theorising face in relation to identity in interaction (Spencer-Oatly and Ruhi, 2007); examining the conflation of politeness with face (Haugh and Bargiela-Chiappini, 2010), and exploring an alternative theory of face, referred to as ‘Face Constituting Theory’ (Arundale, 2010) which draws upon social constructivism and interpretivism.

There has also been interest in theorising the concept of impoliteness (Bousfield and Locher, 2008), and the impact of impoliteness research has been considered in relation to second language pedagogy (Mugford, 2008). The numerous special issues of the *Journal of Pragmatics* (2003, 2007, 2010) dealing with themes related to linguistic politeness and face, and the launch of the *Journal of Politeness Research* in 2005 attests to the burgeoning status of politeness research.

Despite the aforementioned deficiencies in pragmatic approaches to politeness and on-going attempts to theorise politeness in more critical terms, the immense body of research on politeness has had a significant impact upon the fields of cross-cultural communication and language teaching (Meier, 1995; Takahashi, 2005; Haugh, 2007; Mugford, 2008). It has been recognised that some languages, such as Javanese, have complex systems of politeness which result in distinct speech styles being necessary in particular situations (Crystal, 1987). Researchers have explored how linguistic politeness may be encoded in formulaic expressions which occur in greetings, partings, pleas, thanks, excuses, apologies and smalltalk (Laver, 1981: 290), and in honorific forms which are essential for showing politeness in languages such as Japanese. The use of such expressions varies cross-culturally and, therefore, poses particular challenges for the language learner. Certain linguistic routines are culture specific. In Japanese, for example, it is customary to say *itadakimasu* (literally: 'I receive') before eating, whilst no corresponding expression exists in **English**. According to Slama-Cazacu (1991: 400), such lack of correspondence between particular conversational routines may induce learner anxiety. It may be unclear to the language learner when it is appropriate to employ particular formulas. The scale of fixity of particular expressions may also prove troublesome. This certainly suggests that the impact of culture on this aspect of language usage should receive significant attention in the teaching of foreign languages.

The 1990 revision of **threshold level** has incorporated a section on politeness conventions due to their significance in the **acquisition** of sociocultural competence. Learners are encouraged to adopt

non-verbal politeness strategies, involving body language, facial expression and eye-contact, in accordance with target language norms because this may compensate for deficiencies in their linguistic repertoire with regard to politeness strategies. The revised edition also aims to raise learner awareness of general principles of politeness in the target language in the belief that this will aid language learners to make informed choices regarding appropriate linguistic expressions whilst taking into account contextual variables such as the age, status and relationship between the participants in the interaction. To facilitate this process, sub-maxims of politeness are offered, such as 'Do not be dogmatic' and 'Do not force the partner to act', and particular linguistic strategies are suggested, including 'add please', 'avoid imperatives' to mitigate imposition (van Ek and Trim, 1991: 105–6). Advice is also offered on how to decline invitations and how to apologise, and attention is directed to the crucial role which intonation plays in conveying a particular message.

**See also:** Competence and performance; Cross-cultural psychology; Culture shock; Discourse analysis; Intercultural communication; Non-verbal communication; Notions and functions; Objectives in language teaching and learning; Sociolinguistics; Speech act theory; Text and corpus linguistics

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JULIE E. NORTON

## Portuguese

The teaching of Portuguese As a foreign language (PLE: *Português como Língua Estrangeira*) has developed considerably in recent decades, although there is a tradition of imparting the Portuguese language abroad which goes back centuries to the court of Charles II and his Portuguese queen Catherine of Braganza, who were married in 1662. The language spread with the navigators of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and was often learned by other nations in later eras to facilitate trade and commerce. The large numbers of immigrants or returning emigrants and their children to Portugal is another factor which influences the teaching of Portuguese within the country. Late-twentieth and early twenty-first-century developments are largely due to increased interest in research into methodology and to the initiatives of teacher associations and the government, implemented to a large extent by the Camões Institute to promote its language and culture within Portugal, in other lusophone countries and across the world. In 1986 Portuguese became an official language of the European Union when Portugal joined the Common Market. In 1996 the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP: *Comunidade de Países de Língua Portuguesa*) was formed to increase cooperation between Portugal and its

former colonies and to facilitate cultural and linguistic exchange. With the **translation** of theoretical texts in the late 1970s and 1980s, pedagogical research and interest in innovative methodology have flourished in Portugal. Increasing numbers of original **textbooks** and multimedia packages are being published every year.

### Teaching methods and approaches

The first manuals designed for teaching PLE took a traditional grammatical approach. In the late 1980s more original textbooks and **audio-visual** packages began to be published, such as *Vamos Aprender Português*, Jorge Dias de Silva et al. (Plátano, Lisbon, 1988), *Dia a Dia*, by Isabel Leiria et al. (Universidade Aberta, Lisbon, 1988), and *Português Sem Fronteiras*, by Isabel Leite and Olga Coimbra (Lidel, Lisbon, 1989), marking interest in a more interactive teaching approach. These courses included audio-visual **materials**, books for teachers and pupils, cassettes and slides.

The 1990s saw a huge growth in the publication of manuals and textbooks by a large number of the prominent Portuguese publishing houses such as Porto Editora and Lidel, but also from Brazil, Macau and from other European countries. Currently there is an extensive range of teaching materials available for teachers of Portuguese, from **grammars** and self-teaching texts to CD-ROMs and computer packages. A useful bibliography of manuals, textbooks and other educational resources (*Recursos Educativos*), can be consulted via the website of the Association of Teachers of Portuguese (APP – *Associação de Professores de Português*).

### The establishment of state institutions

#### *The Camões Institute*

The **Camões Institute** was founded in 1992 with the aim of fulfilling two main objectives: to promote and disseminate the Portuguese language and culture, both in Portugal and on an international scale. These tasks are implemented in various ways: first, via a network of 57 cultural centres; second, through the Institute's coordination of

leitores (language lecturers/assistants) working in colleges and universities in 69 countries; and, finally, by the award of various grants to Portuguese and foreign students for undergraduate and postgraduate studies and the sponsorship and support of publications and cultural events.

### ***The Ministry of Education***

The National Agency for Community Programmes (ANSOCLEO: Agência Nacional para os Programas Comunitários Sócrates e Leonardo da Vinci), works from within the Ministry of Education to oversee European Union initiatives (the SOCRATES and LEONARDO DA VINCI programmes, EURO-PASS, TEMPUS III) within Portugal. Another branch of the Ministry, the General Management of Innovation and Curriculum Development (DGIDC: *Direcção-Geral de Inovação e de Desenvolvimento Curricular*), is involved in Portuguese and European projects including studies of the teaching and learning of foreign languages, but is also concerned with **teacher education**, the improvement of levels of literacy and, as its name states, the development of curricula. It publishes works dedicated to educational research, an online Bulletin (*Boletim*) and the journal *Noesis* (also accessible online).

The Brazilian Ministry of Education is also actively involved in developing policies on language learning and teaching, ranging from basic literacy programmes like the *Programa Brasil Alfabetizado* to the expansion of courses available in higher education establishments. Within the Ministry, there is also a Committee on the Teaching/Learning, Research and Promotion of the Portuguese Language (COLIP: *Comissão para Definição da Política de Ensino-Aprendizagem, Pesquisa e Promoção da Língua Portuguesa*). Since 2004 it has made available on its website a virtual library called *Domínio Público* (Public Domain), from where works of literature, music and videos can be downloaded.

### ***Diplomas in Portuguese as a Foreign Language***

Most Portuguese universities (including those in Madeira and the Azores) run PLE courses and

provide appropriate evaluation and certification. Since 1999, students can also take online courses run by the Camões Institute and the Centre for the Evaluation of Portuguese as a Foreign Language (CAPLE: *Centro de Avaliação de Português Língua Estrangeira*), based at the University of Lisbon. These courses can be examined at designated locations around the world. There are five levels of proficiency ranging from the Initial Certificate in PLE (CIPLE) to the University Diploma in PLE (DUPLE).

Brazilian universities also offer diploma courses. The Certificate of Proficiency in PLE (CELPE-BRAS: *Certificado de Proficiência em Língua Portuguesa para Estrangeiros*), first offered in 1993, is awarded to those who pass the examination designed and run by the Ministry of Education.

The Faculty of Arts at the University of Oporto organises a postgraduate diploma course designed mainly for foreigners (including students from Portuguese-speaking countries), intending to teach PLE. The course began in 1994 and has trained students from as far afield as Japan, Cuba, Hungary and Mozambique.

### ***The universities***

The first university summer course for foreign students to learn Portuguese was inaugurated in 1934 in the Faculty of Arts of the University of Lisbon. Due to popular demand, a course to last the academic year was created in 1956, under the auspices of the Instituto de Alta Cultura.

Throughout the 1990s, with the investment in new universities and the creation of private universities, the teaching of PLE became a commonplace in **higher education** in Portugal. Almost all of these institutions run language courses, during the summer and the rest of the academic year, and most are also involved in the ERASMUS **exchange** programme.

Various Brazilian universities offer language courses for foreigners, including a PLE teacher training course at the Pontifícia Universidade Católica (Catholic University) in Rio de Janeiro and a Masters course in PLE at the Universidade federal Fluminense (Fluminense federal University), also in Rio de Janeiro.

The University of Brasília has offered courses in PLE since 1989, and has developed a whole Programme of Teaching and Research into Portuguese for Speakers of Other Languages (PEPPFOL: *Programa de Ensino e Pesquisa em Português para Falantes de Outras Línguas*). The department of Applied Linguistics at the same university runs a course in the History of the Teaching of Languages in Brazil (HELB: *História do Ensino de Línguas no Brasil*) and publishes a journal with the same name.

As part of a project investigating the usefulness of multimedia language learning tools, researchers at the Universidade Estadual Paulista in São Paulo have created Teletandem, a system whereby university students who want to learn other languages can find a partner and chat online, using Windows Live Messenger or Skype. There are even ways the exchange can be evaluated and the participants receive a certificate, if they reflect on the experience and its effectiveness.

The Institute of Portuguese Studies at the University of Macau offers summer language courses and a teacher training course.

### **National and international associations and conferences**

The Association for Teachers of Portuguese (APP), an independent non-profit-making organisation, was formed in 1977. It offers in-service training courses, coordinates research and resources, organises annual conferences and publishes texts and its own journal, *Palavras*. The APP is mainly involved with the teaching of Portuguese to nationals but is also concerned with PLE.

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation provides grants for international exchange projects, and funds the publication of technical research and theoretical texts. It runs its own programme to promote the Portuguese language and culture (*Programa Gulbenkian de Língua Portuguesa*), which also awards grants to cultural and artistic projects, publications and academic research that further the same objective.

The newspaper *Jornal de Letras, Artes e Ideias* publishes a monthly education supplement which provides information on and presents debates about the education system in Portugal.

Since 1989, the Society for Language and Cultural Exchange (SILC: *Sociedade de Intercâmbio de Línguas e Culturas*) has organised EXPO-LINGUA, an extensive annual exhibition, trade fair and conference which brings together people and institutions from the world of language teaching and learning. The event usually takes place in Lisbon and each year features a different guest language.

The International Society for the Teaching of Portuguese as a Foreign Language (SIPLE: *Sociedade Internacional de Português como Língua Estrangeira*) was formed in Brazil in 1992.

The society organises annual conferences and/or seminars, which offer its members a forum for the exchange of ideas, experience and research.

In 2002, the International Institute for the Portuguese Language (IILP: *Instituto Internacional da Língua Portuguesa*) was formed by the CPLP as an organisation that promotes Portuguese as a language of culture and communication, via international conferences, publications and a website based in Cape Verde.

The Museum of the Portuguese Language (*Museu da Língua Portuguesa*) was opened in São Paulo in 2006, with the aims of highlighting the importance of the Portuguese language to Brazilian history and culture, enable exchanges between different lusophone countries and make visitors aware of the history of their language, through the organisation of exhibitions, courses, seminars and other events.

**See also:** African languages; French; German; Language planning and policy; Linguistic imperialism; Spanish; Syllabus and curriculum design; Tandem learning; Teaching methods

### **Websites**

The Portuguese Ministry of Education: <http://www.min-edu.pt/>

The General Management of Innovation and Curriculum Development, part of the Portuguese Ministry of Education: <http://www.dgicd.min-edu.pt/>

The Brazilian Ministry of Education: <http://portal.mec.gov.br/index.php>



The Centre for Evaluation of Portuguese as a Foreign Language: <http://www.fl.ul.pt/unidades/centros/caple/>

The Association for Teachers of Portuguese: <http://www.app.pt>

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation: <http://www.gulbenkian.pt/>

The International Society for the Teaching of Portuguese as a Foreign Language: <http://www.siple.org.br/>

The International Institute for the Portuguese Language: <http://www.iilp-cplp.cv/>

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## Pragmatics

A subfield of **linguistics** developed in the late 1970s, pragmatics studies how people do things with words (Austin, 1962). Whereas 'doing things' is tantamount to communication, 'with words' denotes the use of linguistic resources (Verschueren, 1999) available for 'doing things' or communication. Put another way, pragmatics studies how people comprehend and produce verbal acts or utterances in concrete speech situations which are usually conversations (hence **conversation analysis**). It distinguishes two intents or meanings in each utterance or act of verbal communication: the informative intent or sentence meaning, and the communicative intent or speaker meaning (Leech, 1983; Sperber and Wilson, 1986; 1995). Appropriately or contextually comprehending and producing communicative acts are often referred to as pragmatic competence, which includes interlocutors' knowledge about the cognitive environment of the conversation they engage in, subject matter of the conversation, social distance and social status between interlocutors, socio-cultural constraints such as **politeness** underpinning the conversation, and linguistic knowledge both explicit and implicit, all issues which are important in **communicative language teaching**.

### Focus and content

Pragmaticians generally study the following aspects of language use:

- *Non-natural meaning/speaker meaning*: meaning assigned by the speaker to something that does not conventionally bear that meaning, as in 'Those three rings on the bell mean that the bus is full', where 'three rings' could have been 'four rings' (Grice, 1957).
- *Deixis*: meaning which 'points to' something. In verbal communication, deixis in its narrow sense refers to contextual meanings of pronouns, and in its broad sense to what the speaker means by a particular utterance in a given speech context.
- *Presupposition*: logical meaning of a sentence or meanings logically associated with or entailed by a sentence.

- *Performative*: implying that by each utterance a speaker not only says something but also does certain things: giving information, stating a fact or hinting at an attitude. The study of performatives led to the hypothesis of **speech act theory**, i.e. a speech act embodies three sub-acts: locution, illocution, and perlocution (Austin, 1962).
- *Indirectness and implicature*: indirect or implicit meanings of an utterance, derived from context that is not present from its conventional use, such as metaphor, irony, and humour.
- *Logic of conversation*: exploring the ‘logic’ in conversation to reveal why conversations continue, and how interlocutors successfully converse with one another by obeying certain principles. One is the cooperative principle, which assumes that interactants cooperate in conversations by contributing to the ongoing speech event (Grice, 1975). Another is the politeness principle (Leech, 1983), which contends that interlocutors behave politely to one another due to their mutual respect of ‘face’ (Brown and Levinson, 1978). ‘Relevance theory’ (Sperber and Wilson, 1986, 1995) provides a cognitive explanation for social interactive speech communication: people try to be relevant to what they intend to say and to whom an utterance is intended.
- *Information structure*: analysing the structure of conversations in terms of turns, pre-sequence, new information, old information, and moves (Sacks et al., 1974).

## History

Although the word pragmatics dates back 2,000 years – *pragmaticos* in Greek and *pragmaticus* in Late Latin, both meaning ‘of being practical’ – modern use of the term is credited to influences of American philosophical pragmatism. For instance, by adopting a pragmatic interpretation of semiotics and verbal communication, Morris (1938) neatly expounded differences of mainstream enterprises in semiotics and linguistics. For Morris, pragmatics studies the ‘relations of signs to interpreters’, while semantics studies the ‘relations of signs to the objects to which the signs are applicable’, and

syntactics the ‘formal relations of signs to one another’.

Several events helped elevate pragmatics to an independent discipline: Austin’s William James Lectures at Harvard University in 1955, which appeared in his posthumous pamphlet *How to Do Things with Words* in 1962; Searle’s remedial discussions of Austin’s works (Searle, 1969; 1975); and Grice’s William James Lectures at Harvard University in 1967, published as ‘Logic and Conversation’ in 1975. But it was the *Journal of Pragmatics* published in 1977 that signalled the birth of pragmatics as a separate field of learning, whose role under linguistics was consolidated by subsequent publications: Levinson (1983), Leech (1983), Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1995), Verschueren (1987), Green (1989), Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), Davis (1991), Kasper and Blum-Kulka (1993), Mey (1993), Thomas (1995), and Verschueren (1999).

Practical concerns of meanings started from word-level analyses aiming at understanding polysemic meanings or dynamic meanings of words. Studies on deixis (Bar-Hillel, 1954; Fillmore, 1971), lexical pragmatics (Wilson, 2003), and analyses of little words (Leow et al., 2009) are typical examples.

Practical concerns also led to conversation-level understanding of contextual meanings, with pragmaticians’ endeavouring to explaining naturally occurring conversations and searching for the ‘logic’ behind them. Grice (1975) distinguished natural and non-natural meanings, and suggested that pragmatics centre on the more practical dimension of meaning, namely the conversational meaning. The cooperative principle (Grice, 1975), the politeness principle (Leech, 1983), the relevance principle (Sperber and Wilson, 1986, 1995), and the adaptational principle (Verschueren, 1987, 1999), each added explanatory power to the process behind interlocutors’ communicative acts. Subsequently, Green (1989) explicitly defined pragmatics as natural language understanding. This was echoed by Blakemore (1990) and Grundy (1995).

Researchers then began to employ cross-linguistic and cross-cultural perspectives. A cross-cultural understanding of pragmatic principles is premised on the notion that pragmatic principles we abide by

in one language often differ in another, leading to examining how people in various languages observe pragmatic principles. Interestingly, related studies report that what is considered polite in one language is often not in another. Contrastive pragmatics also considered cultural breakdowns and pragmatic failure, for example, as components of cross-cultural pragmatics.

Another terrain of research is learner language or **interlanguage**, hence interlanguage pragmatics, which discusses how non-native speakers comprehend and produce speech acts in a target language and how their pragmatic competence develops over time (Kasper and Blum-Kulka, 1993; Kasper, 1995; Liu, 1997, 2010).

Over the years, researchers' adoption of multiple lenses in research enabled pragmatics to shift from one focus to another, and three mainstream traditions developed: Anglo-American micro pragmatics, European Continental macro pragmatics, and the Asian-Pacific Rim tradition that is characterised by cultural and interlingual explorations of language use. Ultimately, several branches of pragmatics emerged to claim their own research territories: pragmatolinguistics, sociopragmatics, cognitive pragmatics, cross-cultural pragmatics, interlanguage pragmatics, developmental pragmatics and experimental pragmatics, among others (Liu, 2011).

### Criticisms and applications

A longstanding criticism has been that pragmatics does not have a clear-cut focus, and in early studies there was a tendency to assort those topics without a clear status in linguistics to pragmatics. Thus pragmatics came to be known as something of 'a garbage can' (Leech, 1983). Other complaints were that, unlike **grammar** which resorts to rules, the vague and fuzzy principles in pragmatics are not adequate in telling people what to choose in face of a range of possible meanings for one single utterance in context. An extreme criticism from John Marshall (Shi, 1989) was that pragmatics is not eligible as an independent field of learning, since meaning is dealt with in semantics.

However, there is a consensus view that pragmatics as a separate study is more than necessary because it handles those meanings that semantics

overlooks (Leech, 1983). This view has been reflected both in practice at large and in *Meaning in Interaction: An Introduction to Pragmatics* by Thomas (1995). Thus, in spite of the criticisms, the impact of pragmatics has been colossal and multifaceted. The study of speech acts, for instance, provided illuminating explanation into sociolinguistic conduct. The findings of the cooperative principle and politeness principle also provided insights into person-to-person interaction. The choice of different linguistic means for a communicative act and the various interpretations for the same speech act elucidate human mentality in the relevance principle, which contributes to the study of communication in particular and cognition in general. Implications of pragmatic studies are also evident in language teaching practices. Deixis, for instance, is important in the teaching of **reading**. Speech acts are often helpful for improving translation and **writing**. Pragmatic principles are also finding their way into the study of literary works as well as language teaching classrooms.

**See also:** Communicative strategies; Conversation analysis; Cross-cultural psychology; Culture shock; Discourse analysis; Linguistics; Politeness; Speech act theory; Strategic competence; Text and corpus linguistics

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SHAOZHONG LIU

## Primary education

The discussion of the purpose and practice of foreign language teaching in primary education has for a long time suffered from terminological confusion. Very often, the term *primary education* was used with varying meanings in different educational contexts. To avoid misunderstandings arising out of this variety, the **Council of Europe** introduced, in its extensive Modern Languages Project (1989–97),

a clear although somewhat arbitrary definition, namely: the school education of children from age 5/6 to 10/11. As a rule this education is practised without external differentiation and – as its main function – has to lay the foundation for all subsequent education in secondary schools. The definition has found many adherents and is also used in this article.

Since the 1960s an increasing number of educationists have demanded that primary education should include the teaching and learning of foreign languages. At first the arguments for such an inclusion were mainly taken from **psychology** and **psycholinguistics**. The great flexibility of the human brain during childhood and the high **motivation** of young children to engage in verbal activities were seen as the main reasons for the introduction of primary foreign language teaching. However, the revival of systematic educational thinking at the end of the twentieth century led to a more genuinely pedagogical argumentation. The reasoning is as follows. If the central task of primary education is fundamental in the above-mentioned sense, then the foundations for all the main subject areas must be laid in it. Foreign language teaching and learning is one of these areas and should therefore become part of the core curriculum in the primary school.

The environment in which most children grow up today is no longer monocultural. They have contact with members of other cultures and direct experience of foreign influences from an early age onwards. Their local environment is often multicultural already; their peers come from different backgrounds; the objects which they work and play with come from distant places; the shop products which they see or buy are of foreign origin, etc. Therefore the old dichotomies of Here and There, of Near and Far, do not hold any more. If it is the purpose of all education to help the individual to function well in their society and, if this society is multicultural already, then such help cannot be postponed to the secondary level of education but must be given from the earliest stage of formal education, i.e. from the primary school onwards.

Many national governments have subscribed to this reasoning and have consequently introduced foreign languages in their primary school curricula.

The question is no longer *whether*, but *how* foreign languages can be taught effectively at the primary level. The discussion concentrates on six issues that can be expressed in the form of dichotomies, each of which represents a theoretical opposition. In practice, teaching will often follow a path that lies somewhere between the opposing concepts; but the dichotomies can nevertheless serve as the cornerstones of a framework for the individual realisations and can help teachers in their orientation.

The six dichotomies are:

- Integration versus separate subject;
- Systematic course versus occasional teaching;
- Language learning versus linguistic and cultural awareness;
- Communicative competence versus sensitisation;
- Class teacher versus subject teacher;
- Part of the core curriculum versus optional activity.

### Integration versus separate subject

This first dichotomy refers to the *position* of the foreign language in the curriculum. Will it be integrated into the existing areas of the curriculum, or treated as a separate subject? The advantages of the latter solution are the better chances for a clearly definable linear teaching programme with its own body of contents and its own distinctive **objectives**, but it has the definite disadvantage of separating the foreign language from all other areas of teaching and thus violating an important principle of primary education: the holistic approach to learning. The numerous adherents to this approach, therefore, favour the first solution, namely an integration that allows children to relate the foreign language to concepts about the world that they already possess or are actually acquiring through their **mother tongue**. This solution enables the teacher to make various connections, those between the foreign language and practically all other fields of learning, whether in the area of mathematics, social and environmental studies, expressive arts or the study of the mother tongue. In its strongest version this teaching takes the form of *embedding*, where the foreign language is inserted in the

traditional subjects whenever this is appropriate. Thus it is not taught as an additional subject, but as an added dimension of the existing ones.

### Systematic course versus occasional teaching

As to the *organisation*, there are two alternatives: either to proceed systematically from the basic language items to more special ones, from easy to difficult, from simple to complex; *or* to choose a more occasional approach and to teach the foreign language whenever the opportunity presents itself.

Embedding contains the danger that the language is not taught systematically enough. The progression is topic-centred and the acquisition of the language can easily become a by-product. There is no predefined body of contents and no built-in progression of **vocabulary** and **grammar**. These important qualities can only be ensured in a systematic course, which provides repetition, consolidation and continuity in a coherent way. On the other hand the holistic organisation of teaching in the primary school is a definite asset and does not allow for a dominance of the principles of progression of one particular area of learning.

The obvious way out seems to be a compromise between the two alternatives. Although difficult to achieve, the best solution would be a coordination of **content-based** and language-based principles of progression. The experiences of **bilingual education** provide a good example, and certainly primary foreign language education (FLE) can profit from an application of the notional–functional approach proposed by the Council of Europe (van Ek, 1986) which attempts a logical deduction of the linguistic items to be learnt from the notions and functions that the learner has to acquire.

### Language learning versus linguistic and cultural awareness

The third dichotomy represents the *function* that FLE in the primary school is to fulfil. Should it be directed at language learning proper, or should it serve the purpose of acquiring **language awareness** and **cultural awareness**? The advocates of the first alternative argue that a concentration on

the essential part of language education, namely the foreign language, would benefit the learners most. The adherents of the second alternative maintain that linguistic and cultural awareness must logically precede language learning, which they would therefore assign to **secondary education**.

The experts seem to agree that the close relationship between language and culture forbids an exclusion of one of the two, and that, therefore, the function of FLE cannot be the furthering of linguistic **skills** alone. It should try to contribute to the wider task of **intercultural communicative competence**. This competence has at least three dimensions: pragmatic, cognitive and attitudinal. Byram and Zarate (1997) speak of

*savoir-faire* (skills)  
*savoir* (knowledge) and  
*savoir-être* (**attitudes**)

and they suggest that any foreign language teaching should comprise these three dimensions. This general proposition applies naturally to FLE at the primary school in particular (Doyé, 1999). In the early projects, primary school teachers concentrated on enabling their children to gain linguistic competence. They aimed at a certain level of achievement in the basic skills such as **listening** comprehension and **speaking**, and at a later stage **reading** comprehension and **writing**; and if the children were able to produce well-formed utterances in the foreign language and to understand such utterances, this was regarded as satisfactory. Little or no attention was paid to the cognitive and attitudinal dimension. However, a better understanding of communicative competence and the changes in the political reality of our modern world have led to a different concept of the purpose of primary FLE.

For many young children, contact with members of other cultures is no longer an event that might occur in the distant future, but an immediate possibility in their present-day lives. They actually meet people of a foreign culture with a foreign language and consequently have to learn to cope with the situations arising out of such encounters. The task of the school and of FLE in particular is to help them in their learning, i.e. in the acquisition of the required **skills**, knowledge and **attitudes**. Only

through this unified approach can primary school teachers make their contribution to the intercultural education of their pupils (see also *Interkulturelle Didaktik*).

### Communicative competence versus sensitisation

The *aims* of primary FLE must be seen in close connection with the accepted functions of this education. Two opposed options are discussed and practised in different educational systems: the promotion of communication competence up to a well-defined basic level; and the sensitisation for language in general and the language(s) to be studied in particular.

The advocates of the first option see primary FLE as the initial stage of a continuous process of learning, the purpose of which is to lay a solid basis for communicative competence. It profits from the readiness of young pupils to engage in various language activities and uses it for the establishment of a narrow solid foundation for future learning. Experiments have shown that – under favourable conditions – this approach can provide tangible results: the young learner acquires considerable basic communicative abilities in speaking and listening and thus gains a lasting superiority with regard to those of their peers who started their first foreign language in the secondary school. One of the conditions for this superiority is, of course, continuity. The teaching at the secondary level is to be conceived and practised as a second phase of instruction that builds on the achievements in the first. On no account must the pupils be treated as **beginners**. Wherever, in projects of the past, the primary linguistic experience of the learners was disregarded, this had a strong demotivating effect. Such an effect can only be avoided through the close cooperation of primary and secondary school teachers.

The need for continuity is much smaller with the second option. As the principal aim is to sensitise children for the nature of language and linguistic phenomena in general and not yet to master basic representations in specific languages, there is no necessity for the secondary school to build on any previously acquired competence of the pupils.

The restriction to sensitisation and the avoidance of language learning proper, however, has serious disadvantages. It neglects the potential and the readiness of young children for linguistic learning and does not consider the societal desirability for many citizens to acquire early basic communicative competence in (at least) one foreign language.

### Class teacher versus subject teacher

In the primary school, a class (or form) teacher is an educator who is responsible for the education of a whole class of pupils and therefore teaches all subjects to them. To put this person in charge of foreign language teaching, too, has an obvious advantage: the class teacher can integrate the new area of learning much better into the curriculum than a subject teacher, who meets the children two or three times a week to teach them the foreign language and nothing else. The former model can realise the holistic approach to learning much more easily.

The reason why, in spite of all plausibility, many educational authorities hesitate to apply the class teacher model is that they consider foreign language teaching such a specialised subject that they do not want to entrust it to persons who might have a good general training but no special preparation for the highly complex requirements of FLE. Therefore it is common practice in a lot of countries to employ specialist teachers, often from secondary schools, to teach the foreign language. That most of them have no qualification for primary education is considered to be of less importance than the thorough preparation in their particular discipline, but in practice this is not the case. These specialists often find it difficult to communicate with young children appropriately and to ‘make the match between the language and the children’ (Curtain and Pesola, 1994). The obvious solution is to organise courses of studies that provide a combination of primary education with foreign language pedagogy. The need is for teachers who are well qualified in both fields. As primary school experts they are familiar with the conditions and the framework into which, as foreign language experts, they can integrate the language and culture of other countries.

However, a strict application of the class teacher model would mean that all primary school teachers would have to qualify for FLE as well, and serious doubts about the desirability of such an arrangement have been raised. These doubts have led some critics to the radical consequence of giving up the idea of an all-round teacher who is competent in all areas of teaching in the primary school and replace it by a more differentiated model. The concept of *moduli didattici* as practised in many Italian primary schools is the result of such reflections (Torchio, 1999). A *modulo didattico* consists of a group of three teachers who are assigned to two closely associated classes in which they work as a team. Besides establishing new social relationships between teachers (team teaching) and pupils and teachers (the children can refer to three educators instead of one), the new arrangement offers clear advantages in terms of teacher competence. It intelligently combines the positive qualities of the two original options: the pupils have close contact to a small group of 'significant others' who are together responsible for their educational progress and they profit from the united competence of three teachers who – having intensively studied two subjects each – provide the required expertise in six areas of teaching. In practice, this means that FLE can be introduced into the primary school, even if only one third of the teachers are qualified to teach the foreign language.

### Part of the core curriculum versus optional activity

The sixth dichotomy is the least controversial of all, as the case for including the foreign language(s) in the core curriculum is so strong: if FLE is of such great importance, as we have established, then it must become part of the core curriculum; if it offers one of the essential educational experiences of primary school children, then it has to be included in the obligatory course of studies of all pupils.

The English word 'core' is derived from the Latin word *cor* meaning 'heart'. Applied to the curriculum it means those types of experience that are thought to be at the heart of the learning of all children in order to develop the competencies required in their society. The logic is clear: intercultural

communicative competence is needed for effective living in modern society. It can be acquired through foreign language education. Therefore this education has to become part of the core curriculum.

This logic is not new. It is inherent in the works of the protagonists of early foreign language learning from the beginning (e.g. Stern, 1969), and it is present in all the relevant documents of the 1990s (e.g. Felberbauer and Heindler, 1995). The only sustainable argument for making FLE an optional activity is that authorities of any democratic country should leave as many educational decisions to the discretion of the parents as possible. And if they make FLE part of the core curriculum, they – as a rule – also make it compulsory. Then there is no freedom of choice left for the parents. The children *have* to take part.

This argument deserves respect, but can also quite easily be contradicted. There is the danger that parents who underestimate the potential of their children shy away from any optional field of learning. They want their children to concentrate on the 'really important subjects' and, if FLE does not belong to them, these children do not get the chance to participate. Therefore education authorities who believe in the importance of foreign language education in primary schools will have to make this education part of the core curriculum of these schools.

**See also:** Bilingual education; Content-based instruction; Council of Europe Modern Languages Projects; Cultural awareness; Early language learning in formal education; Evaluation; *Interkulturelle Didaktik*; Mother-tongue teaching; Objectives in language teaching and learning; Syllabus and curriculum design

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## Proficiency movement

A combination of national, state, local and commercial initiatives to interpret, implement and institutionalise **communicative language teaching** and **assessment**, particularly of oral **skills**, in foreign language classrooms in the USA, the proficiency movement began with the publication of the *ACTFL Provisional Proficiency Guidelines* in 1982. Federally funded workshops, designed to train university foreign language faculties to conduct and score oral proficiency interviews (OPIs) led to the widespread dissemination of the *Guidelines*, the design of language programmes and curricula, the development of pedagogical approaches and activities, and the publication of **textbooks** purported to bring learners to functional or communicative language ability. Taken together, these activities constitute the proficiency movement in language teaching in the United States.

### Components

The proficiency movement includes the following elements:

- the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines*, adapted from scales of L2 proficiency used by US government agencies, which describe speech from Novice ('respond to simple questions on the most common features of daily life') to Superior ('participate fully and effectively in conversations in formal and informal setting'); although scales were initially developed for the four skills and for culture, at present only the **speaking** scale is widely used; use of the writing scale has increased since the guidelines for writing were revised in 2001;
- the oral proficiency interview (OPI), a face-to-face, interview-style performance test that elicits a speech sample that can be rated according to the levels of the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines*; adaptations have emerged in the last two decades, including the Modified Oral Proficiency Interview (MOPI), limited to the lower levels of the speaking scale and intended for early-stage language students; and the Simulated Oral Proficiency Interview (SOPi),

an audio-mediated version suitable for large-scale testing; and two computer-based tests, the Computerized Oral Proficiency Instrument (COPI), available for Modern Standard Arabic and Spanish, and the OPIc (Oral Proficiency Interview by computer), available for English and used mostly in business contexts;

- the popularisation through conference presentations, journal articles and methods texts of pedagogical activities claimed to enable students to develop communicative ability from the beginning stages of instruction, such as role plays and other pairwork or **group work**, and **task-based** activities; these are intended strategically to transform teacher-centred classrooms into ones in which students assume a greater share of classroom talk;
- approaches to classroom testing, including oral testing, that aim to integrate linguistic knowledge with communicative skill; such instruments have been termed 'prochievement tests' (Gonzalez Pino, 1989);
- **materials**, particularly commercially produced textbooks for the elementary and intermediate college market, that purport to lead students to communicative language ability; such textbooks are characterised by periodic reintroduction of grammatical structures for increasing control (termed 'recycling' or 'spiralling'), emphasis on high-frequency, everyday situations to develop **sociolinguistic competence**, use of **authentic** texts for **reading** and **listening**, and activities that practise grammatical forms in communicative contexts (Hadley, 2001).

## Origins

The roots of the proficiency movement can be traced to US President Jimmy Carter's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies, which recommended in its 1979 report the establishment of 'language proficiency achievement goals for the end of each year of study, with special attention to speaking proficiency' (p. 15). The *ACTFL Provisional Proficiency Guidelines* (1982) were developed in response to this recommendation. Intended for academic use, the *Guidelines* were based on the US government's Federal Interagency

Language Roundtable (FILR) skill-level descriptions, which in turn were an outgrowth of the rating scale developed at the Foreign Service Institute of the US Department of State in the 1950s to measure whether US diplomatic personnel had attained a level of proficiency in a foreign language sufficient to handle routine representation requirements and professional discussions within one or more special fields. The *ACTFL Guidelines* introduced modifications of the FILR rating scale: the expansion of the lower end of the scale to provide additional benchmarks to measure the proficiency attained by students in high school and college language classrooms, the reduction of performance distinctions at the upper end of the scale (the near-native range), and the coining of descriptive labels (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Superior) for the levels. Subsequent editions of the *Guidelines* (1986, 1999) have revised wording of some levels. In 1999, additional benchmarks were created within the Advanced level.

Workshops to train foreign language instructors to conduct and rate OPIs have been offered by ACTFL since 1982. ACTFL maintains a certification programme for OPI testers and trainers in commonly and uncommonly taught languages, as well as ESL. Language Testing International, the ACTFL testing office, conducts OPI tests for academic and commercial clients either face-to-face, by telephone or via computer. Since the late 1980s, ACTFL has offered workshops on curriculum and teaching approaches under the umbrella of the proficiency movement ([www.actfl.org](http://www.actfl.org)).

## Criticisms and developments

The proficiency movement was the subject of considerable controversy in the 1980s, much of it aimed at the *ACTFL Guidelines* and the OPI. In a 1989 article, Freed synthesised objections to the *ACTFL Guidelines*, the OPI and proficiency-oriented instruction. The *Guidelines* were criticised for lacking an empirical foundation, and for their failure to incorporate notions of communicative competence. Criticism was also directed at the wording of the *Guidelines* and the failure of promoters to define terms clearly, particularly the notion of the idealised educated **native speaker**,

conceived as the standard against which non-native speech was judged. The ‘communicative competence’ criticism – i.e., that the *Guidelines* represented a highly reduced and artificial type of speech – was paired with attacks on the **validity** of the *Guidelines* on psychometric grounds, namely that the OPI confounded the competence to be measured with the method of assessment. It was also argued that a single procedure, such as an oral interview, was insufficient to elicit a representational sample of an individual’s language, and advocated the use of multiple oral interactions to assure valid test design.

On the teaching side, critics of the proficiency movement claimed that its emphasis on grammatical accuracy at early stages of instruction contradicted both Second Language Acquisition research findings and the movement’s goal of encouraging spontaneous language use. At the other extreme, others criticised functional language proficiency for teaching mainly survival, tourist-type language to undergraduate students, at the expense of extended or abstract discourse. Critical discussions of proficiency-oriented instruction were clouded by confusion over interpretations of terms. An early article by Higgs and Clifford (1982) that aimed to differentiate ‘proficiency’ from ‘communicative competence’ led to polarisation and failure to recognise points of contact. Textbook publishers in search of market segmentation furthered this polarisation by publicity that sought to distance ‘communicative’ materials from ‘proficiency-oriented’ ones (Bachman, 1988; Bachman and Savignon, 1986; Barnwell, 1996; Lantolf and Frawley, 1985; Shohamy, 1988; VanPatten, 1985).

The impact of the proficiency movement on language teaching has been widespread. On a concrete level, respondents to a survey of secondary and college-level supervisors of foreign language programmes conducted by Birckbichler and Corl (1993) stated that the proficiency movement had greatly influenced their choice of classroom activities and **teaching methods**. When asked to indicate the degree to which particular activities and activity types reflected a proficiency orientation, the following surfaced as highest on the list: partner/small group activities; role plays/simulations; information gap activities; cooperative learning; free **writing**;

and cultural units. On a more global scale, Swaffar, Arens and Byrnes (1991) assert that the *ACTFL Guidelines* and the OPI initiated a paradigm shift in language instruction. In the new model, the focus shifts away from linguistic accuracy as an independent goal and toward ‘communicatively effective classrooms’ in which student language production ‘depends as much on ...cognition and communicative interaction as it does on language **competence**’ (1991: 9).

The proficiency movement has also inspired the *National Standards in Foreign Language Learning* (1996), which have served as the basis for numerous state curriculum frameworks. The criticisms of the validity of the *Guidelines* and the OPI have inspired research on the validity and on the nature of learner language elicited in OPIs and other types of proficiency tests.

A recent development is the creation of an international working group of language experts from the United States and Europe to explore correspondences between the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages** (CEFR) on theoretical and empirical grounds. The group has held an annual conference since 2010.

**See also:** Assessment and testing; Autonomy and autonomous learners; Communicative language teaching; Graded objectives; Motivation; Planning for foreign language teaching; Proficiency tests; Syllabus and curriculum design

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## Proficiency tests

Like **achievement tests**, proficiency tests are used for selection purposes such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) that is taken primarily by students wishing to study on an English-medium programme. However, proficiency tests diverge from achievement tests in that the content of proficiency tests is not based on a prescribed curriculum. Instead they attempt to make global measures of language proficiency and to take a representative sample of the real language demands upon people, particularly in the contexts for which the test is used as a selection device. Proficiency tests are also similar to **placement tests** in that they are designed to spread students out across a wide proficiency range. However, the stakes are much higher in the case of proficiency tests because placement tests simply assign students to different levels of ability but do not exclude them from the teaching programme. The results of proficiency tests, however, are used to determine whether, based on the score they have received, students can be accepted onto programmes of study or employment.

A persistent problem, however, is deciding the cut-off score below which students cannot be accepted on the course they have applied for because they do not have an adequate language proficiency. Indeed, the relationship between test-takers' proficiency test scores and their eventual performance on the programmes to which they are admitted on the basis of those scores remains worryingly tenuous. Educational institutions such as universities, therefore, find it virtually impossible to establish a coherent admissions policy with respect to language proficiency scores.

**See also:** Assessment and testing; Proficiency movement

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### Progress tests

Since they are also based on a defined curriculum, these tests are very similar to achievement tests. The difference between the two lies in the amount that is tested and in the stakes involved. Progress tests assess small amounts at a time. They are usually conducted as part of regular teaching, the purpose being to check how successfully a particular topic or section has been learned. This information is used to plan the next teaching phase. There is no risk to the students if they perform poorly on a progress test since the results are unlikely to be used to make decisions about their future. Consequently, progress tests are lower stakes than achievement tests.

**See also:** Assessment and testing

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### Pronunciation teaching

The aim of pronunciation teaching is to teach students to achieve meaning in contexts of language use through the perception and production of the sound patterns of the target language. These comprise segmental (i.e. individual) sounds and suprasegmental aspects such as stressed and unstressed syllables, and the ‘speech melody’, or intonation.

Other factors, such as voice quality, speech rate and overall loudness also influence the realisation of these sound patterns. Pronunciation teaching ranges from conscious analysis and practice of specific sounds to holistic approaches allowing learners to acquire sounds by use.

As native speakers of our first language(s), we have a predisposition for perceiving certain sounds – the distinctive sounds, or phonemes – as significant, and others as not. That is to say that we have acquired a kind of ‘first language filter’, which creates a problem for foreign language learning in that it predisposes us to hear other languages in terms of our own. While this tendency may not be an obstacle for some learners who are gifted mimics and do not need to analyse unfamiliar sounds in order to produce them, there are other learners (probably the majority) who feel unable to utter the sounds of the target language without consciously understanding how they are produced. For teachers to help such learners with pronunciation, some knowledge will be required of how we talk about the speech sounds we produce, and how we can compare the speech sounds of different languages. For this, a framework is needed which allows us to describe the systematic sound pattern of the (foreign) language we teach and, ideally, to contrast it with our students’ first language(s). This entails understanding how these speech sounds are produced as physiological and acoustic events (the domain of phonetics) and how they are utilised, organised into a system of sounds in the particular language concerned (the domain of phonology) (see Roach, 2001).

Thus phonetics enables us to say, for instance, how vowels and consonants are produced: with consonants, where and how the airstream gets obstructed and with how much energy the sound is produced, and with vowels, whether the lips are rounded or unrounded, and what the position of the tongue is. Phonology, on the other hand, enables us to describe the speech sounds of particular languages systematically, to say what the phonemes are that make up the sound pattern of a language, and how that system (say, of our L1) is different from another (say, that of the target language).

In any use of spoken language, all aspects of pronunciation are present simultaneously – even in

minimal utterances such as ‘yes’. In that sense, all teaching involving **listening** and **speaking** is also pronunciation teaching (Bygate, 2009; Thornbury, 2005). Nevertheless, in its narrower sense of concentrating on speech sounds as defined above, pronunciation teaching has evolved as an area in its own right, its status and methodology varying across different overall approaches to language teaching.

For **communicative language teaching** (Byram and Méndez García, 2009), pronunciation presents something of a dilemma: on the one hand, intelligible pronunciation is recognised as a crucial component of communicative competence. On the other, the shift from drills to communicative activities based on meaningful interaction directs learners’ attention away from language form and towards the messages they want to communicate. This is problematic since for language items to be learnt, they have to be noticed and therefore highlighted, which, in turn, is difficult to do if the language used should be as communicatively ‘authentic’ as possible. This fundamental problem is one that communicative language teachers will have to confront when planning their pronunciation teaching, and for which there are no universal solutions.

### Methodological issues

The absence of one particular methodological orthodoxy (see Levis, 2005; Setter and Jenkins, 2005) can also be seen as an opportunity for teachers to make choices which are most appropriate for the specific learners they are working with, and it is probably no accident that the diversification of methodological options has coincided with a diversification of learning goals. The role of widely-used languages, notably English, as **lingua francas** and more positive attitudes towards different native and non-native varieties, including accents, lead to a reconsideration of what students are learning languages for, and what norms are appropriate to their purposes.

It is important to recognise that pronunciation plays a crucial role in our personal and social lives: as individuals, we project our identity through the way we speak, and also indicate our membership of particular communities. At the same time, and

sometimes even in conflict with this identity function, our pronunciation is also responsible for intelligibility – whether or not we can get our meaning across. The significance of success in L2 pronunciation learning is thus far-reaching, and matters are complicated by the fact that many of these things happen subconsciously and so are not readily accessible to conscious analysis and intervention.

Prior to any specific methodological decisions, then, there are large-scale issues that need to be considered, of which the questions of learner variables, learning purpose and setting are likely to be the most important ones. Celce-Murcia et al. (2010: Ch. 2) summarise the most important learner variables and also offer suggestions for **needs analysis** by means of student profile questionnaires. The factors they highlight are age, exposure to the target language, amount and type of prior pronunciation instruction, aptitude, attitude and motivation, and the role of the learner’s first language. There are also issues relating to general learning theory which need to be taken into account, such as the tenet that perception needs to precede production, and achievability, i.e. success in little steps, is important to counter the insecurity that many learners feel when speaking another language (see Hewings, 2004 for a wide range of activities).

### Teaching procedures

Actual **teaching methods** can be arranged on a continuum from communication tasks through analytic, cognitive exercises to fairly mechanical practice. This continuum relates to the fundamental issues of ‘communicating vs. noticing’ and ‘innocence vs. sophistication’ in pronunciation teaching as discussed in Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994: ch. 10) and to Rivers and Temperley’s (1978) general distinction between ‘skill-getting’ and ‘skill-using’ activities.

### Pronunciation learning strategies

These involve learner training with the aim of fostering learner **autonomy** and enabling students to develop strategies for coping on their own and for continuing to learn. Ways of working towards these goals include awareness-raising questionnaires (e.g.

Kenworthy, 1987: 55f.), learner diaries, recording of learners' production, and self-evaluation. Of particular significance are strategies that are closely tied in with listening and speaking skills, such as dealing with incomprehensibility and employing metalinguistic strategies such as soliciting repetition, paraphrasing, and monitoring feedback. The significance of working towards purposeful, active listening can hardly be overstated (see e.g. Field, 2008; Lynch, 2009), and learners will also benefit from being exposed to a variety of accents. A further area with enormous scope for individual pronunciation work is the use of the increasingly sophisticated and user-friendly computer software, e.g. for getting instant audiovisual feedback for the sounds and intonation contours the learner produces. Examples of such software packages are Praat (Boersma and Wennink, 2009) and Streaming Speech (Cauldwell, 2002). But low-tech tools such as mirrors and kazoo whistles can also be extremely effective (see Gilbert, 2008).

### **Global, holistic activities**

While many techniques can contain a game-like element, there are activities which are primarily focused on a particular communicative purpose or outcome, such as mini-plays whose interpretation depends entirely on the learners' use of voice quality and intonation (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994: 162), or many of the games in Hancock (1996). Whole brain activities are intended to activate the right brain hemisphere and often involve music, poetry, guided fantasies, relaxation techniques such as yoga breathing, and kinaesthetic experiences (e.g. Laroy, 1995).

### **Analytical activities**

Many learners, particularly more mature ones, welcome some overt explanation and analysis. There is a wide range of methodological options, such as

- discussing stereotypic ideas about 'correct' and 'sloppy' speech for introducing assimilation and elision as features of connected speech;
- phonetic training: explanations of how particular sounds are articulated, with the help of

head diagrams, vowel space charts or videos, and conscious exploration by learners how they themselves articulate L1 and L2 sounds;

- teaching learners phonemic script: controversial, but appreciated by many students as it better enables them to conceptualise the L2 sound system, to use pronunciation dictionaries, to record pronunciation themselves, and to draw comparisons with their L1;
- giving rules;
- comparison of L1 and L2 sound systems: since learners tend to hear the sounds of a new language through the filter of their L1, it can be very helpful for them not to be taught just the articulation of the new sounds, but the system of phonemes, i.e. the relevant oppositions;
- analysis of sounds in texts: for instance, dialogues not designed for pronunciation work can be used for awareness-raising of the functions of stress and intonation, e.g. pitch height for smooth turn-taking.

### **Sounds for meaning contrasts**

There are numerous ways in which otherwise drill-like exercises can be modified to make them more meaningful for the learner while retaining a focus on sounds. Most contemporary textbooks offer such variations which endeavour to relate linguistic form to pragmatic meaning and action. This can be achieved through more active involvement on the part of the learner, a clear specification of purpose, and an element of choice. Minimal pairs (pairs of words distinguished by one phoneme only) can be embedded in sentences such as 'Please SIT in this SEAT'. The same principle can be applied for teaching how to employ pitch height for contrast. Similarly, chunking into meaning units can be practised with information gap activities such as arithmetic pair practice, where the correct answers depend on correct grouping, as in

' $(3 \times 3) + 5 = 14$  – three times three plus five equals fourteen'  
vs.

' $3 \times (3 + 5) = 24$  – three times three plus five equals twenty-four'

(Gilbert, 2008: 133)

Peer dictation activities also challenge learners as both listeners and speakers.

### Ear training

Asking students to listen out for sound contrasts, e.g. by reading contrasting sounds or words aloud to a class and asking them to decide what has been uttered. This can take the form of a bingo-like game, as in Bowen and Marks' 'sound discrimination exercise' (1992: 36f.) or Taylor's 'yes/no game' (1993: 87). An interesting variation of this particularly suitable for monolingual classes is 'bilingual minimal pairs' (Bowen and Marks, 1992: 21), which asks learners to listen out for differences in articulatory postures in lists of L1–L2 word pairs such as German 'Bild' and English 'build', or French 'flot' and German 'Floh'.

### Local, fairly mechanical exercises

'Listen and repeat' is a time-honoured technique in which learners imitate chunks of language provided by the teacher or a recording, still widely used in coursebooks accompanied by CDs, and particularly popular as a **language laboratory** exercise (see Vanderplank, 2010). Drills often practise sound patterns without apparent communicative reason and without offering learners an opportunity for making motivated choices of sounds, stress patterns, etc., such as manipulation of stress for prominence:

'Would you like to go OUT with me tonight?  
Would you like to go out with ME tonight? Would  
you like to go out with me toNIGHT?'

For individual sounds, tongue twisters of the 'she sells sea shells on the sea shore' kind have been proposed.

### Models for pronunciation

Though seldom explicitly addressed in textbooks, a crucial factor for any specific pronunciation **syllabus** is whether it is designed for a foreign language or second language setting, or even for lingua franca communication. Apart from the obvious influence that the surrounding linguistic environment will have on teaching procedures, the whole

complex question of target norms and intelligibility as an objective hinges upon the student's learning purpose and the setting. Thus many second language learners will strive to become comfortably intelligible to the native speakers around them in order to integrate with the native speaker community. In contrast, in foreign language teaching the **objectives** may be more varied: while some learners may wish to sound as similar as possible to native speakers, others – mainly in the case of languages with a fairly global spread, especially English – may primarily be interested in using the language as a lingua franca instrument for communication in international settings. This will often involve a variety of other non-native speakers, where sounding like a native speaker may actually be irrelevant and counter-productive. It is therefore essential for teachers to be familiar with the increasingly lively discussion about the range of different models for L2 pronunciation learning, and the socio-economic and socio-psychological factors which make intelligibility an inevitably relative notion (see Jenkins, 2000; Walker, 2010). Whatever the setting, social and situational appropriacy is likely to be a more valid criterion of success than 'correctness', and the overall 'philosophy' of pronunciation teaching is evolving from the concept of reduction or eradication of a foreign accent to the notion that learners can add an accent to their (L1-based) sound repertoire.

**See also:** Contrastive analysis; IPA; Linguistics; Listening; Native speaker; Non-native speaker teachers; Silent Way; Speaking

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## Psychodramaturgy for language acquisition

Psychodramaturgy for Language Acquisition (PDL from the French 'PsychoDramaturgie Linguistique') is an approach to teaching foreign languages initiated by Bernard Dufeu and Marie Dufeu, of the Centre de Psychodramaturgie in Mainz, in 1977. It owes its name to psychodrama and dramaturgy. From psychodrama, it has borrowed the basic concepts of the encounter, creative spontaneity, and the action ('drama' means 'action') and some basic techniques like doubling, mirroring, and role-reversal, adjusting them to suit the foreign language class. From dramaturgy, it has taken basic principles such as the concept of dramaturgical forces, used in the build-up of exercises and choice of texts.

Originally developed for adults, PDL is used today also with children and adolescents. Conceived for groups, it is now also applied in one-to-one teaching.

### A pedagogy of being

In the conventional language class, learners are usually trained to master future hypothetical situations (a future orientation) but the present life in the classroom with the group's themes, processes and relationships may be mostly ignored. Instead of preparing them for a future being, PDL takes into account what they already *are* – a present orientation.

Life and learning should be a unified whole and hence PDL characterises itself as a pedagogy of presence. Dufeu views textbook-oriented teaching as belonging to a 'pedagogy of having' that has as its main goal the learning of linguistic and cultural knowledge; its content is determined beforehand and from outside by textbook writers and editors. This leads to a double estrangement. It is not the participants' mother tongue (the first estrangement) and they are not their words, as they are required to talk about subjects that do not necessarily interest them, do not correspond to their wish for expression (the second estrangement). This double estrangement hinders the acquisition and learning process, reducing the participants' interest, motivation, receptivity, and retention.

In contrast PDL is a 'pedagogy of being'. It is participant- and group-oriented, and consequently does not predetermine what the participants should say or learn, or in which order they should appropriate linguistic and cultural content. This leads to a different conception of the foreign language class and syllabus, and of the teaching and learning process.

### Some characteristics

The acquisition of language does not only involve the participants' intellect, but also their physical, affective, social and spiritual (i.e. conception of life, human values, etc.) lives. It is therefore important not just to impart superficial content (pronunciation, lexis, syntax and intercultural knowledge), but also the deeper goals on the behavioural levels (mindsets, attitudes, capabilities and skills) that enable and facilitate foreign language acquisition (e.g. presence, concentration, listening skills, empathy, creative spontaneity, flexibility, reproductive ability, etc.). 'having' is thus subordinated to 'being' in PDL.

Since every participant is unique, this uniqueness also pervades the acquisition and learning process; this means that each participant has their own wish for expression, response to the language offered, goals, and learning rhythm. Every participant and every group contributes with their (internal) programme. Participants advance most effectively when following their own acquisition and learning rhythm and making their own way in the foreign language.

There is no compulsion to learn, no standardisation of the acquisition process, only respect for the individual and the group. Participants determine the language content and express themselves and their wish for expression, developing an **autonomy** and 'being themselves' in the foreign language. They are continuously accompanied and supported by the trainer in this process.

Participants' autonomy and individuality is important, but so is their awareness of constructive interdependence and solidarity. Several exercises help to develop, for instance, an attitude of empathy, listening and support. Differences in the participants' levels are used positively; everybody learns from everybody else.

Psychodramaturgy is a relational pedagogy, in which language is a means to meet and relate to the other participants instead of being essentially the objective of the language course. Contact with the language develops naturally out of the contact with other participants, out of the wish to express oneself in encounters in the real or imaginary world. The 'encounter' is one of the main themes of Jacob Levy Moreno (1914), the founder of psychodrama. The encounter is based on listening to and empathising with other participants. Language becomes a tool to relate to the others in situations set up by the trainer and developed by the group.

### In practice

When starting off in the foreign language, each participant is first gently and individually introduced to the rhythm and melody of the foreign language. This phase, which encompasses the doubling and mirroring exercises (for a description of this exercises see [www.psychodramaturgie.org](http://www.psychodramaturgie.org)), allows the participant to develop a sensitivity to the prosodic aspects of the foreign language, and to acquire a basic core of language which can then be used in the exercises that follow. The foreign language and its characteristic pronunciation becomes familiar and thus loses a part of its foreignness, thereby reducing the first estrangement.

The neutral masks (an idea taken from actor training) used in the first four days of an intensive course not only have a protective function but also enhance concentration and allow the participants to hear their own and the trainer's voice more precisely.

The participants then begin to encounter each other in pairs, supported in various phases by the other participants. Progressively, more and more take part until the activities involve the entire group. The progression of the exercises is primarily of a relational nature.

The structural progression of the **exercises** is usually as follows:

- The trainer offers an open frame activity that stimulates the participants' wish for expression, and imagination (Step 1). The participants determine the content themselves. The trainer

and/or the other participants offer the language the protagonists lack when the need arises.

- After participants have more or less expressed themselves (Step 2), there often follows the 'charging phase' (Step 3), i.e. the sequence is repeated, expanded and deepened using, among others, the doubling and mirroring techniques. Participants may take whatever of the language offered fits the personal desire for expression.
- The situation is then modified by changing one of the parameters, and then replayed ('retake technique', Step 4). This change can occur in the setting, e.g. the protagonist encounters the same character but played by another participant, or it can be a situational change, e.g. a personality trait is changed.
- The last phase is for reflection, for questions related to particular corrections, or for an explanation the trainer considers appropriate to facilitate the language acquisition and learning process (Step 5).

### The pedagogical consequences of PDL

The above procedure leads to a different acquisition and learning process than that in a standard language class. As the participants co-author the language in the course, there is a correspondence between the speakers' wish for expression and their utterances, between what they wish to say and what they actually say. This facilitates the acquisition and retention processes, and boosts interest and motivation. Participants share the responsibility for the course content and development. When texts or documents are employed to generate an encounter, these are selected on the basis of the participants' needs, and/or the current themes in the group (resonance principle).

The language is primarily relational, with expressive, communicative and symbolic functions, other functions being subordinated. It is acquired in and through action, interaction and relation, being a means to express oneself and communicate authentically; to talk 'to' somebody and not 'about' something.

The language becomes functional when, for example, particular work-related situations need to

be mastered. In these cases, the approach is not linguistic but situational. It does not revolve around learning and memorising the expressions and phrases needed to master the situation; the language arises out of the situation.

Communication is as a consequence **authentic**. The participants genuinely express themselves and usually really do listen to each other. Questions are asked out of genuine interest and curiosity.

The trainer develops an empathic rather than a hierarchical relationship with the participants. As a language guide, the trainer accompanies and supports rather than controls, listening to the participants and their wish for expression, following instead of leading. PDL offers a pedagogy of proposition instead of imposition.

PDL is most effective when used in its complete form, but most exercises can be taken and used in more conventional language classes to make these more participant- and group-oriented. It offers a path to language acquisition and is an enriching stepping stone (among others) in the development of foreign language teaching.

**See also:** Acquisition and teaching; Drama; Humanistic language teaching; Motivation; Neuro-linguistic programming; Silent Way; Suggestopedia; Teacher thinking; Teaching methods

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BERNARD DUFEU

## Psychology

As a broad generalisation, one turns to **linguistics** for insights in describing the 'what' of language learning (the language itself) and to psychology for insights into the 'how' and the 'why' (ideas about learning and teaching, and **motivation**). However, when dealing with language, in contrast to learning most other **skills** or areas of knowledge, the 'what' and the 'how' are interlinked in at least two ways. First, language is itself a crucial part of what defines us as humans, so the study of linguistics can and does claim to be a source of explanations about how the human mind works. Second, Chomskyan linguistic theory has developed to a point where identifying the universal rules that govern all languages is equated with a theory of acquiring language – any language – through access to pre-existing knowledge of the grammatical core of all languages. Thus, there are controversial advances in understanding **second language acquisition** from a number of traditionally independent points of view. These points of view – linguistic, psychological, socio-linguistic, social psychological, and also educational – have their own traditions of theory building, rules of evidence and methods of data gathering, so it is not surprising that there is lively debate between them as to where the truth lies, and that there is stiff competition for the attention of teachers of foreign languages.

Consequently, the role of psychology will be here given a deliberately wide interpretation, and presented under eight areas, together with a consideration of how we find out the relevant information.

In talking about language learning we should be careful not to assume that all learners are the same,

or that all learning environments are the same. There is a danger of universalism: i.e., of assuming without evidence that every learner (young or old, learning their first or their tenth foreign language, learning where the language is spoken or thousands of miles away in a group who speak only their own language, learning by picking up the language ‘naturally’ or in a designed, instructed classroom environment) employs the same processes and performs in the same way. The fact that everybody grows up to be a **native speaker** of some language (unless they are severely and tragically disabled from birth), whereas there is a wide range of achievement in learning a second language, should alert us to the dangers of universalism.

### The nature of second language learning

Views of how second languages are learned vary from general cognitive approaches based on the analogy between language and skill development, more specific cognitive approaches, including the notion of different kinds of strategy, and independent cognitive approaches involving linguistic theory.

General cognitive approaches tend to explain the internalisation of **grammar**, **vocabulary**, **pronunciation** and social rules of language use essentially in information-processing terms usually used for learning to perform psychomotor skills. McLaughlin (1987: Ch. 6) and Johnson (1995), in particular, have attempted to analyse and explain developmental patterns, error patterns, attention focus and cognitive load in these terms, drawing on the skill **acquisition** literature. Thus they distinguish between declarative and procedural knowledge, automatic and controlled processes, discuss routinisation, and present a sequence of processes to explain various features of skilled performance, like smoothness, responsivity to feedback, release of attentional capacity, and the trade-off between speed and accuracy in performance. This approach has taken new life in the guise of ‘connectionism’ (see Dörnyei, 2009; Ellis, 2008).

Specific cognitive approaches use much of the same general orientation but concentrate on **strategies** used by language learners to solve problems of language in use and understanding and remembering new features of the language that are

encountered in classroom instruction, private language exposure, **dictionary** look-up, **reading** and **listening** (Cohen, 1998; McDonough, 1995; Oxford, 1996(b)). Much strategy research is directed at understanding how learners become **autonomous** or can be empowered to be autonomous (Wenden, 1991).

Independent cognitive views see a significant part of language learning as having nothing to do with other kinds of skill learning but being driven by an independent language faculty, recapitulating in the second language case the interaction of exposure to language and maturation of innate language principles which is considered to produce native speakers. According to this approach, second language learning requires some kind of access – automatic access – to **universal grammar**, at least for the core principles, and information from language exposure about ‘idiosyncrasies’ of the new language (Cook, 1989; Gass and Schachter, 1989; Towell and Hawkins, 1994). This approach goes far beyond the simplistic opposition in **contrastive analysis** between the native and the target language, drawing on the sophisticated theoretical apparatus of generative grammar for explanatory power (Hawkins, 2001). A great deal of information from other sources about language use is also learned, but, according to the usual version of this view, is not relevant for the internalisation of the grammar of the language. An early and popular, but under-specified, version of this view was Krashen’s **monitor model** of 1981. Krashen’s model, and many subsequent ones, relied on ‘comprehensible input’, viz., interaction of internal information and input from encounters with the new language. A controversial issue is the role of comprehensible output: in other words, how the need to organise some self-expression in the new language forces the internalisation of its rules. An issue that divides the different cognitive approaches is the role of conscious awareness: much strategic behaviour seems to be conscious and voluntary, whereas the operation of the innate language faculty is assumed to be automatic and not available for conscious inspection. Schmidt (1995) has explored the implications of the voluntary mental acts of ‘intention’, ‘attention’, ‘noticing’ (awareness) and ‘understanding’ (control) for language learning, and there

is a growing experimental literature on this topic (Hulstijn and Schmidt, 1994).

### Interactive learning

A further approach holds that second languages are learned particularly through interaction in the language, essentially a social psychological view. If communication is the primary use of language, then communication in ways that are most familiar to learners in their native languages may be the primary avenue for learning a new language. Allwright (1988) has traced the history of **research** on classroom interaction and produced his own interpretive model of some of the crucial dynamics. Pica and Doughty (1985) and Gass and Varonis (1985) have investigated the nature of **classroom language** use by learners in various kinds of interaction, comparing language used between groups of learners with that used between teachers and students. One abiding research issue here has been the 'naturalness' of classroom interaction, specifically concerning the use and benefits of display and referential questions (Pica and Doughty, 1985; Banbrook and Skehan, 1990). Another has been the attention paid to topics raised by different participants in 'uptake' (Slimani, 1989; Ellis, 1995). Williams and Burden (1997: Ch. 9) have explored how theories of the structure and nature of the classroom environment from educational psychology can illuminate what goes on in language classrooms.

### Mediation

The general focus on the learner, the development of learner autonomy, and in particular the challenge of the universal grammar approach, have left language teachers to some extent wondering what their role is. If the teacher is not an instructor, then there are many other roles which, following Williams and Burden (1997), might be subsumed under the heading of mediator. The teacher provides samples of the language, manages the interaction, gives advice on learning, helps the students to become autonomous, provides and manages the learning resources, offers feedback on their own performance (see Gass and Selinker, 2008, Chapter 10, for a succinct summary). Studies

of teachers and learners in classrooms have attempted to analyse many of these crucial aspects of the teacher's cognitions and behaviour, in particular the teacher's modes of structuring the lessons, the provision of feedback and oral error correction, coaching in **writing**, writing feedback to students. Learning teaching has also been studied; the psychology of the trainee teacher is just as important as that of the novice bilingual. See, for example, the papers by Tsui, Borg, and Waters in Johnson (2005).

### Differences in language learners

Language learners have classically been sub-categorised by various test-oriented dimensions: intelligence, **aptitude**, cognitive style (or learning preference), personality, motivation. Skehan (1989) provided a book-length treatment of the whole issue and the difficulties inherent in the concept of individual differences. Gardner and Macintyre (1992, 1993a) present a review of the developments. Beyond the classical categories, modern work has unearthed consistent patterns of difference in modality preferences (Reid, 1987), classroom activities (Willing, 1985), beliefs about learning (Wenden, 1987, Horwitz, 1987) and **age** (Harley, 1986). The significance of individual differences for teaching is probably obvious: different customers respond to different treatments, prefer different kinds of classroom activities, and different forms and levels of participation. **Teaching methods** can be criticised on the grounds that they may not be flexible enough to cater for the variety of learners, as **audiolingualism** was by **Rivers** (1964) and **community language learning** by Brown (1977). Their significance for learning is less clear-cut. Individual differences like these show up in difference of learning rate (either inhibiting or facilitating learning) but do not appear to affect basic processes and therefore the way in which people learn, the route of learning.

Relevant individual differences warrant attention in investigating specific learning situations. An example is Carrell, Pharis and Liberto's (1989) study of pre-reading **exercises**, which showed that the students who differed on a test of **learning style** (deep and shallow processing, and elaborative processes) responded differently to the two metacognitive

strategy training methods employed ('semantic mapping' versus 'experience-text-relationship'). Finally, individual differences in learning are not set in stone, so theories of instruction have to allow for the twin facts that learners change as a result of their experiences, and that teachers also try to change their learners, sometimes successfully. Dörnyei's (2009) Chapter 5 presents an original and comprehensive account of individual variation in learning.

## Reasons for learning

An enduring interest in this field has been the reasons why people learn a foreign language and how those reasons, and the strength of feeling associated with them, affect the learning process and the level of achievement. Approaches to **motivation** were dominated for thirty years by the concept of 'orientation to language' introduced by Gardner and Lambert in 1959, contrasting instrumental and integrative orientations, of which the socio-cultural preference for integrating with the target speech community was originally shown to be the more effective for language learning in the majority of empirical studies. Later results (Gardner and Macintyre, 1993b) showed this to be false, or at least no longer true. This mainly factorial approach to motivation, involving large numbers of students answering questionnaires privately, was challenged but never rivalled by the beliefs about the cause of the differences. However, in the 1990s a fresh challenge to the statistical study of motivation has grown out of the work of Crookes and Schmidt (1991), to take into account how language teachers conceive of a 'well-motivated student' and how they are likely to participate in actual classroom work. Important work in this 'new agenda' has been provided by Oxford (1996a) and Dörnyei (1994). This whole area of research is analysed by Ellis (2008) in Chapter 13.

## Second language use

Crucially important in a comprehensive psychology of second languages is the issue of second language performance. How people actually use their second language has been investigated in various areas of L2 use since at least Tarone's

(1977) initial opening-up of the question of how learners compensate for acknowledged, foreseen, or encountered failures of communication in conversations. There has been an explosion of research on language use strategies in all areas of language skill: **speaking, reading, writing, listening**, test-taking, classroom participation (Cohen, 1998; Cohen and Macaro, 2008; McDonough, 1995, 1999). At stake is detailed knowledge of how people function in a second language, to feed into theories of performance, to inform theories of learning (since in many cases there is a relationship between what people do and how they learn), and to inform theories of teaching.

## Two or more languages

The theme of the previous section can be broadened to encompass the exciting question of the psychology of **bilingualism** and **plurilingualism**. There are many interesting questions to do with becoming and being bilingual, which focus on how the two languages interact with each other:

- How do we stay in one language and not flit between all available?
- What governs code-switching?
- How are the words stored – separately or together?
- Is there a limit on the number of languages we can learn?
- Is one language involved in the processing of the other?

on how the languages interact with cognition and thought:

- Is there a cognitive deficit or advantage in having two or more languages available?
- What language do bilinguals use to formulate thoughts in?

and how and why the users want the languages:

- To do specialised jobs (like **English** for Air Traffic Control)
- To interact normally in a multilingual society (like Belgium or the Cameroons)

- To gain competitive advantage in international commerce

and so forth.

Cook (1991: ch. 7) expands on these and other themes, quoting international and national sources. Closer to the immediate concerns of the foreign language classroom, research has also investigated how (perhaps against the spirit of much teaching which insists on L2 use at all times) L2 users and learners use L1 when accomplishing tasks in the L2. For example, Cohen and Hawras have worked on L1 when reading in L2 (reported in Cohen, 1998: 179–86), and Cohen has worked on students doing maths problems in immersion L2 classes (1998: 186–210). In both cases the use of L1, for structuring comprehension and handling numbers respectively, followed consistent goals and contributed to smooth performance in L2. L1 use in planning writing in L2 has been investigated for compositions of particular types by Friedlander (1990), who found that writing was advantaged when the plans were drawn up in the language in which the topic was first encountered. A great deal of research interest is devoted to the phenomenon of language thresholds in L2 reading. There exists the possibility that the skills and strategies for reading and writing which the learner commands in their L1 become available to them for use in the L2 when their level of L2 proficiency reaches a certain critical level (Hulstijn and Matter, 1991). When the nature of this threshold is understood, it may well be shown to exist in other skill areas as well, for instance writing and listening.

## Culture and context

An important aspect of the psychology of second languages, and one which shows the limits of the universalist approach mentioned at the beginning of this article, is the cultural dimension. We all belong to different cultures, indeed often to several, and while cultural boundaries are not the same as linguistic ones, the psychological effects of culture can be quite dramatic. Steffensen and Joag-Dev (1984), for instance, have highlighted the breakdown of comprehension caused by wrong beliefs about the significance of black and white for American

and Indian readers (white being the colour of marriage in one culture and that of death in the other). Cultural misunderstandings like these are difficult to prepare for, because, unlike other kinds of communication breakdown, for which anticipation and repair strategies can be developed, the individual never knows when a cultural misunderstanding is going to happen, nor, often, that it has happened. Pritchard (1990) has shown how members of different cultures process their own languages differently in reading comprehension, and, more importantly, how cultural presuppositions and misunderstandings interfere with comprehension strategies. Readers reading about foreign cultural rituals (in his case, American and South Sea Islanders' funerals), even in their own language, failed to make connections between sentences and therefore failed to construct any kind of meaning for the passage as a whole.

Cultural presuppositions also affect the context of learning dramatically, both as a result of large-scale concerns, as in Schumann's **acculturation** theory (1978), and also in terms of traditions of classroom discourse, openness to innovation, distribution of power in the classroom, and preferred **learning styles**. A dramatic illustration of the point was given by Politzer and MacGroarty (1985), who showed that notions of what 'good language learners' did to learn and behave inside and outside classrooms were heavily culture-bound, with many people from different cultures performing very well without doing the things expected by Western ideas of 'good language learners'. Another topical case in point is the argument about learner autonomy, which is widely regarded as a necessary stage in the pursuit of high achievement in the West but strongly questioned in the East, at least on the Western model (Aoki and Smith, 1996).

## The research base

It will be evident from the broad approach described above that, though strictly anchored in empirical data, the psychology of second language learning and use pursues a great variety of research types to obtain that data. Experiments, quasi-experiments, observations, surveys, case studies, action research, questionnaires, introspection, diary studies, using both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis, all



feature. This variety has developed because different kinds of problems require different kinds of attack. It is inadequate to argue that only one data source is legitimate with a subject matter as varied as this: no one method is employable in all situations. Since, however, **research methods** tend to define fields as much as topics do, there have been several discussions of what is appropriate and what criteria of **validity**, generalisability, falsifiability, replication, etc., can be upheld (see, e.g., Johnson, 1992; McDonough and McDonough, 1997).

## Conclusions

This summary of eight areas of research and development in the psychology of second language learning and use has perhaps said enough to make the point that understanding how and why people learn and use a second language is

1. extremely interesting in its own right (it is, after all, about something that the majority of the world's population does, more or less successfully);
2. not always obvious and commonsensical (there are many challenges in the research results to traditional views); and
3. of great potential in informing language teaching practitioners. Of course, this potential needs to be carefully developed and evaluated: as in all applied sciences, it is inappropriate to transplant directly from 'the latest research' to innovations without careful development and evaluation in practice (Cohen, 1995; Ellis, 1997).

**See also:** Age factors; Attitudes and language learning; Autonomy and autonomous learners; Competence and performance; Disorders of language; Learning styles; Motivation theories; Neurolinguistics; Research methods; Second language acquisition theories

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## Pushkin Russian Language Institute

The Pushkin State Russian Language Institute was founded in 1966, and was granted its present status in 1998. It specializes in teaching Russian to foreigners, training teachers, elaborating educational programmes, and supplying textbooks and educational materials for Russian as a foreign language. It has three departments: Philological; Continuing Education; and the Department of Teaching Russian to International Students.

The Philological Department offers a 4-year bachelor's programme, a 2-year master's programme, and a 3-year postgraduate programme. The Department of Continuing Education provides programmes in professional development for teachers of Russian as a foreign language; language internships for undergraduates and graduates from overseas colleges specializing in the humanities; a distance course in teaching Russian as a foreign language; a preparatory course for international holders of B.A. and B.Sc. degrees intending to enrol in a master's programme; and elective courses in linguistics and methodology.

The Department of Teaching Russian to International Students provides Russian language courses at all levels, from beginners to advanced.

### Website

[www.pushkin.edu.ru](http://www.pushkin.edu.ru)



## Quality management

Quality management refers to techniques developed in industrial contexts in the 1940s and 1950s, principally in the USA and Japan. It sought to eliminate errors and defects in production processes by careful analysis of the function of individual elements, by attention to good design and, crucially, by giving responsibility for quality to those involved in producing it. One version of the approach is Total Quality Management (TQM), which introduced slogans such as ‘Zero tolerance of defects’, and ‘Do the right things, do things right’.

Classic quality theory in industry or services tends to be based on a mix of a number of different aspects:

- Detailed management of *processes* in the three phases of design, implementation and outcome, with the aim of achieving perfection through thorough inspection and control.
- Viewing quality as a feature of the relationship with the *client*, whose *satisfaction* is the measure of the quality achieved, and ‘exceeding clients’ expectations’ as the goal.
- Measuring the *results* or *outcomes* of the processes – financial success for a commercial enterprise, growth for an economy, examination results for a school.

The definition of what is ‘good’ raises the question of ‘how good is it?’ and the need of **evaluation** of quality, which in turn requires the

definition of what can be measured reliably and with validity.

All of these principles have been used as bases for the evaluation of quality in language education; school inspections have examined the processes by which curriculum is translated into **syllabus**, which in turn generates schemes of work and lesson planning; **assessment** procedures involve a process from initial placement through **progress testing** to final evaluation of proficiency. In both state/public and private education, quality ‘charters’ or guarantees have been developed which define what ‘providers’ of educational services promise to those who use them. In several countries league tables of examination results are used, with differing degrees of validity, to judge schools’ performances.

When we talk about quality, we are concerned with defining the nature of the thing described, the resources used to provide it, and steps taken to make it better, with the following issues:

- *Description* – What is the nature of the thing we are talking about? What kind of thing is it?
- *Comparison* – What are ‘good’ instances of the subject? What is ‘good practice’ in a particular activity? What criteria do we use for this?
- *Evaluation* – How good an example of its kind is it? How does it compare with set standards?
- *Management* – What can we do to ensure that quality is maintained? How can we make it better? What standards do we apply to this?
- *Guarantees* – How do we know we can rely on the quality of a particular thing or

activity? How can it be reliably accredited? By whom?

The concept of quality, related to the Latin 'qualis', is concerned first with *description* – what kind of thing are we talking about? – as well as the practical means by which it might be improved. Comprehensive and systematic descriptions, such as the **Common European Framework of Reference**, and the associated frameworks of reference which have been developed from this model – for **teacher education**, for CLIL, for pluralistic approaches to language teaching, for evaluating resources – are necessary points of departure for setting objectives, for comparing and accrediting quality. Descriptions lead naturally to a need for *comparison*; how can we define good instances of a particular activity? What do we mean by 'good practice' or 'excellence'? Various audit systems have developed scales and grading systems for assessing the quality of institutions, and the **European Centre for Modern Languages** of the Council of Europe sponsors projects which identify and describe good practice in different contexts – in the use of the Internet for language learning, in provision for minority languages, in use of the **European Language Portfolios**, for example.

The proactive aspect in relation to quality seeks to give answers to the question 'What can we do we make things better?' and to *quality management*. This is typically divided into quality *assurance* – what is done before and during an activity to make sure it is done well – and quality *control*, which checks the finished product. In language teaching activities, this covers a wide spectrum of different aspects: the appropriacy and relevance of curriculum and syllabus; teacher performance, the quality of the resources used, the **reliability** and **validity** of assessment procedures; the amount and quality of learning which is achieved; and more general aspects such as the security and well-being of participants and the educational value in the context of the school. As a consequence of this, quality management is concerned with features which apply to the whole of an institution, such as the way in which the leadership can create a *culture of quality*, often involving methodologies like action research, quality circles,

client focus groups, encouragement of innovation, and intensive use of class observations. It functions at an individual level, too, through development of reflective practice and continuous professional development. Typical techniques used in quality assurance include *benchmarking* (the selection of standards against which quality can be measured) and the use of *indicators* (objective and measurable features, such as examination results, levels of satisfaction, etc., which are considered to indicate quality).

The final aspect of quality management is directed towards the clients and other stakeholders involved in the process. How can they make an informed choice (when they have one) of provider of language teaching? What independent guarantees of quality can be obtained to build confidence and trust in the institution? The *accreditation* of quality has developed into a minor industry, where a major influence is the ISO (International Standards Organisation); ISO grants a *quality label*, which until recently was generic – driving schools would be audited through the same system as a state school – and concerned with the procedures of quality assurance and control, rather than the content of what is done. The inspection services of state education provide an implicit accreditation for schools, though this is seldom specific to language teaching, and the main development of quality accreditation has been in the field of private language education. Language schools in Britain have been inspected by, successively, the Department of Education and Science, the British Council and the English in Britain Recognition scheme since the 1930s; associations of language schools, either national or at a European level, such as EAQUALS (Evaluation and Accreditation of Quality Language Services), have developed inspection and auditing systems which have done much to establish criteria and standards for language teaching. The French government has established a quality label for schools teaching French in France. Quality accreditation bodies typically have *codes of practice* that include charters and guarantees for stakeholders and specify the standards which are assessed.

The European Union has produced a quality guide for the assessment of teaching materials and a label for quality in innovation in language teaching;

and ALTE (the Association of Language Testers in Europe) has a similar scheme for recognising good practice in language testing and examining.

Work has also been carried out in the definition of quality in the design of language teaching **materials** and programmes. Lasnier et al. have produced a 'quality guide' which defines principles of quality – such as relevance, transparency, **reliability**, generativeness – and divides the process of producing quality into the three steps of design, implementation and outcome.

The development of quality management of language teaching and learning is becoming increasingly important; the Council of Europe's project on the language of schooling states that all should have a right to 'quality language education'.

**See also:** Assessment and testing; Evaluation; Planning for foreign language teaching; Syllabus and curriculum design; Teacher thinking; Teaching methods

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FRANK HEYWORTH

## Questioning techniques

The effective use of questioning techniques is important for classroom management, for developing students' **skills** in language and social interaction, and to extend students' thinking and cognitive involvement in the content of lessons. This topic is usually considered from the teacher's point of view but it is also important to develop students' questioning skills.

### Typology of questions

Teachers' questions can be classified by form or by function. According to their form they can be sequenced, from the generally more easily understood and easy-to-answer questions, to more complex types. Any of these can be language models for learners. Thus, in English one can ask *either-or* questions ('Did Kim go to the bank or to the hotel?') to which the answer is usually contained in the question itself; *yes-no*, or polar, questions ('Was Kim in the bank?'), which could be answered with a simple 'yes' or 'no'; *wh-* questions, which begin with such question words as 'Who', 'Where', 'What', etc. ('Why did Kim go to the bank?'); and *indirect* ('I wonder where Kim went?') and more complex questions ('If Kim had

been in the bank at twelve, what would she have heard?'). However, a simple question can sometimes be hard to answer (for example, 'Why?'). According to their function, some teachers' questions may be social ('How are you today?'), or for classroom management and control, since they are intended partly to control participation and behaviour ('Are you listening, Kim?', 'Can you answer that question, Kim?'). As with rhetorical questions, the questioner does not expect an answer to these, but normally expects other behaviour in response.

Of course, teachers have to use language, including questions, to organise learning activities, and the frequency of management questions is one reason why teachers' questions predominate in classroom talk. Many teachers' questions are *display* questions, where the teacher already knows the answer but wishes the respondent to display language skill or knowledge. *Referential* questions, where the teacher does not know the answer, are rarer. They may be more personal to the student or involve opinions, and they may tend to lead to longer, more complex answers. Questions can be *open* (with a wide range of expected or possible answers) or, more commonly, *closed* (with a narrow range of expected answers), depending on the context. Teachers' questions can also make lesser or greater cognitive demands and are therefore powerful tools for developing students' thinking. Thus, in Bloom's taxonomy (1956), which has been widely applied to both oral classroom discourse and to **reading** comprehension, low-order or literal questions test learners' *knowledge* when relevant answers involve recognition or recall of ideas, or their *comprehension*, if answers emphasise the literal grasp of meaning and intent of material. These lower-order questions make lesser demands than higher-order questions. Higher-order questions involve drawing inferences through *application* to a new situation, *analysis*, *synthesis* or evaluation of content or language.

### Use of questions

Research studies have repeatedly shown that most teachers' questions tend to be lower-order questions that do not make high cognitive demands. This may be because the higher-order questions

take more time to think of, and good, thought-provoking questions generally need to be prepared in advance. Since a teacher's questions not only focus attention on aspects of language and interaction but also promote different kinds of thinking and ways of working, effective questioners will ask a range of types of questions, deliberately including higher-order questions. For example, asking about time ('Did the task take longer than you expected?') or teamwork ('How can the **group** work together better?') can help learners reflect on task organisation, learning and cooperation. Differentiating questions so that they are appropriate to individuals yet challenging enough to promote learning for all is difficult in mixed-ability classes.

Good questioning needs planning, awareness and reflection. The techniques of asking include distributing questions around the class so that as many learners as possible can be involved in answering, paying attention to the timing, pace and sequence of questions, and to prompting answers. Some students are rarely called upon to answer, perhaps because teachers may ask only those who seem to know or because the teacher is unwilling to pause or slow down the momentum of the class while waiting for an answer. However, studies have shown that slightly increasing the wait-time between a question and allowing a student to answer, or between the answer and the teacher's subsequent response, leads to better-quality answers from a wider range of students, probably because they are given more thinking time. The teacher's responses usually evaluate answers, but they can also introduce conversational phrases ('I'm inclined to agree with you.').

Teachers can improve questioning techniques through observation, watching and listening to classroom recordings, analysing transcripts and reflecting on the purposes and effects of different types of questions on students' language, thinking and interaction. It is important to become aware of how questions are generally the leading element in the common, three-part language exchanges (e.g. question-answer-evaluation) which can dominate formal classroom talk. Such awareness can prevent exchanges from becoming routines and help teachers to use them appropriately and thoughtfully.

### Learners' questioning skills

Developing students' questioning skills is important as a way of improving their linguistic, cognitive and social skills. Moral aspects are also involved, for example, in asking politely, in learning from other peoples' questions and answers even when they have errors or are inappropriate, and in listening to others' contributions with respect and an open **attitude**. Students' questions can be developed in pairwork and role play, by writing and using questionnaires, by listing their own questions on a text, or by bringing prepared questions to class. A difficulty here is to develop the use of communicative or referential questions rather than only those which are for language skills practice. Like teachers' questions, those of students could be classified and discussed to promote **language awareness** and to develop more critical thinking.

There are, however, cultural differences about asking questions. Some students are reluctant to ask questions of teachers in class because they are afraid of making mistakes or they do not want to interrupt the class. However, they may ask after the lesson. Others do not ask because they believe that asking shows disrespect for the teacher. Other students do not like to ask their peers because they believe that the teacher is in the best position to teach them. Many teachers and students, however, believe that questioning is a fundamental way of learning; learning how to ask is learning how to learn. The questioning techniques – the content,

type, range and manner of asking – are cultural models of learning.

**See also:** Classroom research; Group work; Language laboratories; Large classes; Teacher education; Teacher talk; Teaching methods

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# R

## Reading

Some examinations allow learners to use **dictionaries** to solve reading comprehension tests in foreign languages. Examiners are confident that to understand the meaning of every word and phrase is not the same thing as being able to read. What, then, are the characteristics of reading? Besides the understanding of word and phrase meaning, the following can be regarded as some of the important factors: complexity of sentence structure, idea density, quantity and quality of illustrations, personal reference to the texts, and also legibility – for example type size or typeface. Traditionally, readability formulas have been based on the two main factors: difficulty of the words and phrases, and average sentence length. However, these formulas can be criticised from a schema theory perspective.

### Schema theory

Reading used to be regarded as giving information from text to reader in a uni-directional sense. Thus, foreign language teachers made efforts to rephrase difficult expressions or grammatical items using plain words or structures. However, according to **schema theory**, readers acquire information from texts not passively but actively (McVee et al., 2005; Nassaji, 2002). They predict a certain development of a story, for example, with their prior knowledge of stories, and look for confirmation of their predictions. Effective reading requires both top-down and bottom-up processing. With over-reliance on

bottom-up processing, readers can translate each word but may not grasp the overall structure of the passage. On the other hand, with an over-reliance on top-down processing, readers may make wrong predictions.

Reading comprehension can be likened to the process of driving a car. An incorrect prediction is dangerous. What is needed is a prediction which prepares for every possibility, with flexible amendment of a schema as required. This in turn means that the ability to monitor one's reading comprehension is required. Activating schemata is especially useful for foreign language learners. Most learners are old enough to have prior knowledge of many topics. Even poor readers of foreign languages have some schemata, and they can participate actively in lessons if their schemata are activated.

This theory has changed the view of reading from a passive to an active process. Readers' prior knowledge is far more important than the data they find in texts. The significance of the interaction between top-down and bottom-up processing has been brought to light by many studies.

However, schema theory is still too general to use in everyday foreign language classes. Giving a pictorial context, for example, proves to be effective when texts are particularly 'opaque', but we seldom come across such sentences. Furthermore, problems often arise with respect to schema activation, and pre-reading activities are needed to provide students with sufficient background knowledge of the texts. The purpose of pre-reading

activities is to give students successful strategies. Most pre-reading activities have tried to give students related information. It is doubtful, however, whether this is sufficient for students to be able to access cues by themselves. To activate students' schemata, teachers need to evaluate first what students already know about the topic of the text and then provide the appropriate information.

### Situation model

The situation model, which integrates schema theory with other factors, is a consistent mental representation of a series of incidents, actions, and situations constructed by integrating the information from different texts with relevant activated knowledge retrieved from the long term memory. It represents the information such as when, where, how, and why an incident occurred and who was involved in it. There is research support (Glenberg et al., 1995; Graessner et al., 1994; Perfetti, 1989; van Dijk and Kintsch, 1983) for the notion of understanding a text by means of constructing a consistent situation model. Situation models depend on factors related to readers, including L1 reading ability, schema, L2 proficiency purpose, and **motivation**, and factors related to texts, including **genre**, wording, and text structure.

### Working memory

One of the important components in reading is activation of working memory (e.g. Grabe and Stoller, 2002). It is widely acknowledged that working memory plays an essential role when we engage in cognitive activities (e.g. Shah and Miyake, 1999). For example, when we try to solve a double-digit multiplication by mental arithmetic, it requires working memory to function properly. In 38 multiplied by 8, we first set about the multiplication of the first digit, 8, and while keeping the result, 64, in mind, we have to do further multiplication, i.e. 3 times 8. Any cognitive process requires us to do both temporary storing of information and processing of information at the same time.

In reading comprehension processing, also, readers engage in parallel operations of temporary storing and processing of information. Readers

have to retain the information that they have already read and try to process the new information in the sentences. Readers thus have to connect the information they have read to the new information that is coming in. Otherwise their reading will break down into word-by-word processing. The memory that stores the information from the previous sentences and also deals with processing new information is called working memory. Since the capacity of this working memory is limited, there may not be sufficient memory capacity for storing if too much resource is used for processing. This condition for storing and processing can be called a 'trade-off' (e.g. Baddely, 1986, 1992; Just and Carpenter, 1992). That is, if the working memory of a reader is small, his/her challenges in language processing will be greater. Readers with larger memory spans are much more capable of carrying information over from one sentence to the next (Daneman and Carpenter, 1983).

### Reading problem or language problem?

There are some good reading strategies common to all languages. Good readers do not look at or decode every word in the text. They pick up sufficient information for meaning and make maximum use of redundancy. Good reading strategies follow the same process, sampling information and confirming those predictions. These reading strategies can be called knowledge-based, conceptually driven processing.

Most foreign language learners are older than L1 learners when they begin learning to read. They have already acquired a certain amount of L1 reading ability. If good reading strategies are universal across different languages, good L1 readers have a much greater advantage in developing L2 reading abilities than poor L1 readers. On the other hand, we have some evidence to support the hypothesis that L2 reading is a language problem. Beginning readers or poor readers are faced with more unknown **vocabulary** and structures than good readers. For them, L2 texts are something like worm-eaten historical documents. If their language proficiency is poor, readers are forced to use word-by-word decoding strategies. Data-driven processing or text-based processing are useful only when they

are automatic. It is clear, therefore, that both L1 reading ability and L2 language proficiency are factors of L2 reading ability, but the level of L2 language proficiency is significant. Good L1 reading ability can be transferred to L2 reading only after readers acquire a certain minimum amount of L2 language proficiency, a 'threshold'.

### Good reading strategies

The term 'strategy' is used to describe what is involved when we try to solve any problematic situation. In the interactive reading comprehension process, the readers' active role has been emphasised. Making guesses from the context, for example, is an effective strategy for reading. Good readers have a wide range of effective approaches to texts and they can choose a strategy suitable to a given text. One of the goals of foreign language reading instruction is to provide students with as many strategies as possible.

What are thought to be good reading strategies? Good readers can relate information which comes next in the text to previous information in the text. They can monitor accurately their comprehension ability. Then they can use their previous knowledge to predict the subsequent story or to guess unknown words. Because they can distinguish between main points and supporting details of the passage, they can skip some words but can grasp the outline of the text. Even when there are some parts that they cannot understand, good readers always try to get the outline of the text, skipping some difficult parts.

Generally speaking, foreign language readers have trouble when they face unknown words. Good readers never give up even when they come across difficult unknown words. They manage to guess at word meaning, re-reading a problematic part many times, whereas poor readers try to decode every word and phrase on the page. When poor readers come across difficult words, they do not find a way to overcome the problem. This means that foreign language teachers should discourage students from adopting a word-by-word strategy. They should show students that they do not have to decode every word and phrase in the text. Students should be trained to realise that there are important parts

and not so important parts in a text. For example, showing students that they automatically skip some parts of a text written in their **mother tongue** is an effective way of teaching this.

Good readers do not only depend on text information through bottom-up processing but also actively utilise top-down processing. They think that their guesses are often more correct than the information obtained from the text by translating. For example, they imagine what the characters in a story are thinking and also imagine how they would think or act if they were those characters. This vicarious reading is an effective strategy, and teachers should ask questions about this experience to get their students actively involved in stories.

Good readers have also been found to focus on changing their strategies or the aim of their reading according to the nature of the text, and to think about the main theme after reading. Teachers thus need to explain that there are different kinds of text and that the goals and strategies of reading should differ according to the kind of text they are reading.

### Implications for teaching

On the basis of the above, the teaching of reading should have the following characteristics. First, we should teach not only the grammatical items or vocabulary but also reading strategies. Second, we should not check how students translate what they read but rather their ways of understanding the content or of extracting the information. Third, we should not give a definitive **translation** but should instead show them how to extract the meaning. Fourth, we should have them focus on one or two strategies at a time by using easy passages. Fifth, we should have them read long passages and show them that, in doing so, they operate certain useful strategies unconsciously. Finally, we should make them realise that those strategies are really effective.

Teachers of reading should be turning their students into **risk-takers** who read texts actively. Otherwise they will not give up the tendency towards word-by-word reading. Inference-type, generalisation-type and personal-involvement-type questions are needed to create good readers, rather than fact-finding questions which only make students scan the surface of the text.

**See also:** Audiolingual method; Literary texts; Literary texts and intercultural understanding; Reading methods; Schema and script theory; Skills and knowledge in language learning; Sociolinguistic competence; Teaching methods; Writing

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## Reading methods

The role of reading in modern life cannot be underestimated. Despite the rapid spread of new technologies (ICT and others) reading remains one of the major information resources whether in books or the new media. It also is a powerful source of intellectual and cultural development of the individual. Reading in a foreign language, in addition, is a means of **intercultural communication** in different domains – social, professional, academic, personal. For foreign language learners reading is a source and a tool of language learning, provided they are skilful readers.

It is emphasized by many researchers that we are entering a new era. There will be access worldwide to printed materials which will be available as print-out or on screen; plans to digitalize all publications past and present have not yet been realized but indicate the direction being taken. As White said already in 1983, 'Significantly, these new developments will assume a literate audience,

and so the skills of interpreting information presented in printed form will continue to be important in the new age' (1983: 87).

Folomkina (2005) argues that in different situations the efficient reader can use up to fifty reading strategies in the first language, which may be transferred to a foreign language. It is generally recognized that an 'expert reader' can choose from such basic types of reading as scanning to locate specific information, skimming to extract general information, reading for main ideas (overall comprehension), and study reading for detailed comprehension and critical interpretation. The reading strategy that the reader adopts influences the use and scope of comprehension skills and hence the reading mechanics.

### Reading in a foreign language

In the field of foreign languages (FL), it is argued that in many instances around the world reading is one of the most important **skills**, particularly in cases where students have to read English material for their own specialist subjects but may never actually have to speak the language. Such cases are often referred to as 'English as a library language' (McDonough and Shaw, 1995: 101).

The approach to teaching foreign language reading skills is determined by the concept of reading process. In language pedagogy reading is viewed as a communicative activity, a process of interaction between the reader and the author of the text. Reading as the understanding of discourse is not simply a receptive activity, but the process of active working out and interpreting the message of the author (Widdowson, 1984).

This interactive process in a foreign language includes a series of skilled actions: perception (bottom-up word recognition and identification of the text) and comprehension of the message in the context constantly followed by interpretation and re-interpretation (top-down) in the light of real world knowledge, schematic expectations and new textual understanding in an interactive process (Council of Europe, 2001: 91). Perceptive skills enable the reader to penetrate to the meaning of the printed text. This is the so-called mechanics of reading. The aim and product of reading as a

communicative activity is comprehension and interpretation of facts, concepts and message of the author, as well as cultural information, which is achieved by operating comprehension (cognitive or intellectual) skills.

The way the reader approaches the FL text depends primarily on the purpose and reason or motive for reading; for example, to obtain information for some purpose or because we are curious about some topic, to keep in the know of what is happening, for enjoyment. The skilful reader reads for information of different kinds – we may speak of different levels of text information: level of facts, level of ideas (explicit or implicit), and message (beyond the text). Efficient readers also adjust their reading strategy to the characteristics of the text (the language, discourse features, previous knowledge and experience, schemata, cultural assumptions).

The level of competence in reading, as described for example in the **Common European Framework of Reference** (Council of Europe, 2001) can be measured by degree of flexibility, which means the reader's ability to vary reading styles and strategies and adjust them to the reading purpose and type of the text.

### Teaching reading in a foreign language

The evolution of the concept of the reading process has led to a shift in the approach to FL teaching materials for reading (Nuttel, 2005). It was often the case in reading classes that a written text was used as a vehicle for the introduction of new vocabulary and/or structures, rather than for developing reading abilities per se. This approach to materials for reading focused on items of **grammar** and **vocabulary** which were then to be acquired and used, and this made the text artificial, having few authentic features of a 'real' text. This is clearly inadequate if we are attempting to teach reading skills, since the artificiality of the text means that no real message is being communicated (McDonough and Shaw, 1995: 104).

It is now recognized that the focus is on selecting authentic materials for reading (grading them for levels of proficiency), given the variety of text types, so as to encourage interaction between the

reader and the text and facilitate the development of reading skills and active flexible readers. In learner centred communicative methodology, the goals and objectives of teaching reading skills in a foreign language are focused on developing efficient readers, who are flexible, interrogative of the text, critical and creative in communicating with the author.

Current practices and procedures in teaching effective reading skills fall into classroom and autonomous (self-access) reading. In both cases FL teaching materials tend to be structured so as to motivate the reader, encourage purposive reading, suggest a meaningful task before reading and offer tasks for comprehension check and integrated skills development (oral or written) on the basis of the text ideas. In the case of developing **autonomy**, emphasis is laid on the importance of ample reading material to meet the learner's individual needs, involving the learner in project work, case-studies and other problem solving information processing activities.

Reading in a communicative context is also a meta-cognitive activity. Within a family of languages, there exists the possibility for skilful reader to transfer reading skills from the mother tongue to a second language, as well as a **foreign language (intercomprehension)**. From the teaching perspective this means creating favourable conditions to ensure the transfer of efficient reading skills from the **mother tongue** to a foreign language through authentic materials and instruction.

Conceptual knowledge of the reading process is reflected in the teacher's choice of the types of FL **materials** for developing reading skills. Proceeding from the concept of reading as a process of intercultural interaction between the reader and the author, a reading text is treated as a 'medium' and a means of encouraging this interaction. Much attention in reading instruction is given to developing strategic competence of the reader – ability to hypothesize, reconstruct the meaning by making use of different text clues, using his or her previous knowledge to fill occurring information gaps, activate linguistic and context guessing, etc.

Noteworthy is a generally recognized difficulty in teaching reading skills to children related to **motivation** (Greenwood, 1988). Considering

different attitudes to reading, teachers point out a problem of reluctant readers. This reluctance stems from a variety of social and individual causes. The way to overcome this difficulty is by making the reading process not only enjoyable but meaningful for the learner, achieved by selecting appropriate texts and reading tasks (taking into consideration the scope of the learners' interests), fostering the feeling of success in the language.

As regards the **assessment** of reading skills and level of reader's competence, the **Common European Framework of Reference** offers criteria and level descriptors which are widely used in Europe and beyond, and the **European Language Portfolio** is a tool for developing reflective skills, self-assessment and learner autonomy in foreign language learning.

A special point should be made about teaching beginners to read in a foreign language. The techniques of teaching the mechanics of reading and elementary comprehension skills depend on the nature of the target language. In teaching **beginners** to read, two basic approaches are generally adopted (or a combination of the two):

- *the analytic*, proceeding from identifying syllables to reading the whole word; and later, identification of word groups and sentences;
- *the synthetic*, the so called 'whole word' method (followed by identification of sense groups and sentences).

Reading at the beginner stage is based on the material previously learned in oral speech. The basic technique is oral reading. Gradually the skills of word recognition, identification of sense groups, understanding sentence structure and meaning, and other perceptive skills are developed alongside with basic cognitive skills. Although teaching reading mechanics is done on the 'oral basis' the development of perceptive reading skills overlaps with the development of writing mechanics (writing words–word groups–sentences). The effective methodology of teaching a foreign language to beginners presupposes interrelated development of skills in oral and written language, given the psychological nature and overlap of skills of oral and written communication.

## Teaching reading in a non-alphabetic language – Chinese

There is a specific approach to teaching reading in non-alphabetic languages such as **Chinese**. The graphical unit in Chinese writing system – the character (*hanzi*) – is a sign corresponding to a syllable which has a meaning of a subject or a notion. It is helpful to distinguish between characters and words in describing Chinese. A distinctive feature of its morphology is compounding. A word may be composed of 1–2 or 3 characters, and its meaning is mostly derived from the meaning of the characters of which it is composed. More than 75 per cent of the words in Chinese are compound words formed by combining two or three morphemes, of which about 65 per cent are two-morpheme disyllabic compounds, and about 10 per cent three-morpheme compounds. On average, a single Chinese morpheme appears in about seventeen compound words. Most Chinese compound words are semantically transparent.

There are four different tones in the pronunciation of Chinese, and syllables with the same tone can be written in several different characters with very different meanings. This means that each character must be learned separately. The estimated number of Chinese characters is 85,000 (Zhao and Zhang, 2008: 108). A Chinese reader generally needs to know about 2,500 characters in order to read a newspaper of average difficulty (National Education Commission and National Language Construction Committee, 1993: 99; Ministry of Education, PRC, 2001) and acquire relevant graphical, phonological and semantic processing skills.

In compound Chinese characters, which account for more than 80 per cent of all Chinese characters, there is a phonetic component, which sometimes gives a clue to the sound of the character, and a semantic radical, which sometimes gives a clue to the character's meaning. However, it must be stressed that the phonetic component does not always give the sound of the character directly and Chinese children are rarely explicitly taught to use these components to learn to read because they are quite irregular. In short, orthography–phonology correspondence is neither straightforward nor consistent.

**See also:** Chinese; Communicative language teaching; Knowledge and skills; Language for specific needs; Reading

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NATALYA KORYAKOVTSOVA

## Reference works

A reference work is any database of information that can be accessed for a specific purpose. **Dictionaries**, glossaries and some kinds of grammar book are reference works containing linguistic information. Encyclopedias, atlases, almanacs, manuals and some kinds of textbook are encyclopedic reference works, containing information about the world rather than about words and language. Timetables, telephone directories and catalogues can also be considered types of reference work, although they are not designed for teaching and learning.

The information in a reference work is usually presented visually, in the form of written text, diagrams, maps, or tables. Reference works are not designed to be read in a linear way from beginning to end. Instead, each piece of information (or entry) in the reference work is designed to be accessed independently of the other entries. Within the same reference work entries are often structured in a similar way; definitions within the same dictionary, for example, may have many features in common (Hoey, 1986).

Printed reference works present entries in some kind of sequence, so that users can easily locate the information they need. Entries may be organised chronologically, spatially, thematically, alphabetically, numerically or according to any combination of these methods. For example, timetables and some history textbooks are chronologically ordered, atlases are spatially ordered, thesauruses are thematically ordered and telephone directories are alphabetically ordered (in countries where the writing system is alphabetical). In many cases there is also a secondary system of organisation: grammar books, textbooks, atlases and thesauruses often contain an alphabetical index to help users locate entries more easily, and although the entries in reference grammar books are often ordered numerically, they may also be sequenced according to the order in which the compilers believe the structures will be acquired, and/or they may be arranged thematically according to word classes or language notions.

Entries in reference works stored in electronic form, such as a CD-ROM or a website, do not need to be organised in a linear sequence, so the user often has a wider choice of search strategies. To find an entry in the *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, for example, the user can make natural language queries (in words, phrases or questions), click on time lines (for historical information), roll the cursor over a map (for geographical and statistical information), or browse an alphabetically ordered list of items.

Reference works in electronic form often combine a number of separate information sources, such as multiple dictionaries, reference grammars, and multimedia files. Reference works can also exist in a combination of formats: printed manuals and textbooks are often packaged with additional reference material in electronic form or links to relevant websites. The World Wide Web can itself be regarded as 'the largest and most widely consultable work of reference that has ever existed' (McArthur, 1998: 217), because it integrates a huge number of reference sources around the world, such as library catalogues, instructional websites and language databanks. There is no over-arching editorial control over its contents, however, and web pages change, or disappear, from day to day.



For this reason language teachers often prefer their students to consult printed reference works.

People have always felt the need to store and access information, and the use of reference works probably predates writing. Sticks, stones and bits of bones seem to have been used by cave dwellers for reference purposes (perhaps to keep tally of hunts, births and deaths, or astronomical cycles). Many of the earliest written documents in the world also functioned as works of reference; there are examples of bilingual word lists, for example, dating from the second millennium BC. The Indian grammarian Panini compiled grammar textbooks some time between the fifth and the seventh centuries BC, and a grammar of Greek was written in about 100 BC.

The forerunners of many of the dictionaries and encyclopedias available today were compiled in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for example the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, first published in three volumes in 1768 and 1771, and now available in thirty volumes, or in digital format; Löbel's *Konversationslexicon* (1808), which provided the model for the large family of subsequent Löbel-Brockhaus encyclopedias; Webster's *American Dictionary* (1828), which began the Merriam-Webster dictionary tradition; and Roget's *The-saurus of English Words and Phrases* (1852). We do not use updated versions of the 'traditional' **grammar** books popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, because attitudes towards grammar teaching changed in the twentieth century (although linguists still refer to the basic grammatical notions that were established by the ancient Indian and Greek grammarians). Traditional grammars had a prescriptive approach to language: only the **standard language** variety used by the educated elite was considered 'correct' and worthy of study. Many modern grammars, on the other hand, are descriptive: they describe and analyse the forms found in all the varieties of the language, including informal spoken varieties. As an aid to language description, modern compilers of dictionaries and grammar books refer to large corpora of naturally occurring spoken and written texts to check the frequency, range and behaviour of words and structures (see also **corpus linguistics**).

The use of reference works for language teaching and learning is especially associated with the

**grammar translation** teaching method, which requires the learner to translate written passages with the aid of a grammar book and a dictionary. Although other teaching methods may place less emphasis on the use of reference works, grammars and dictionaries are consulted by most language learners, especially older children and adults who want to study independently.

Not all grammar books are intended for language teaching and learning, however. Theoretical grammars written for linguists or students of linguistics describe and evaluate a particular linguistic theory rather than the language itself (Corder, 1988). These are not really reference works, because they are not composed of independent entries. Instead, arguments and ideas are developed from chapter to chapter. Another type of grammar book, the large reference grammar, is intended as a record of the grammatical system, and tries to provide as comprehensive a picture of the language as possible. This type of work may be too complex and detailed for classroom use.

Grammars which are designed for teaching and learning a foreign language, or for developing awareness of the mother tongue, are known as **pedagogical grammars**. Most are primarily intended to be used as reference works, although some contain exercises which may be treated like textbook material, just as some language teaching textbooks contain grammar sections and glossaries to be used as reference material.

Although dictionaries and grammar books are the two types of reference work most associated with language teaching and learning, other kinds of reference materials such as atlases, timetables, instruction manuals and catalogues may also be used in the language classroom, in printed or electronic form. Tasks involving these types of reference work enable learners to practise handling information in the target language, for example by finding items in alphabetically ordered lists, relating written instructions to pictures and diagrams, and scanning for specific information.

**See also:** Grammar; Internet and language learning; Lexicography and lexicology; Pedagogical grammar; Text and corpus linguistics; Vocabulary

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HILARY NESI

## Reform Movement

The Reform Movement, which is usually connected with the development of modern language teaching principles during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, has to be seen as a reaction against the traditional **grammar–translation method**. Innovations were worked out especially with respect to the teaching of **pronunciation** and **grammar** as well as to methods and visual and aural **materials**.

First hints, which can be regarded as preliminary remarks for the Reform Movement, can be found in

the 1860s and 1870s. In prefaces to **textbooks**, for example, some authors supported the idea of modernising foreign language teaching by a more natural and pupil-centred approach. The most important impetus, however, was given by the German teacher and scholar Wilhelm **Viëtor**, who published a famous and partially sarcastic pamphlet in 1882 entitled 'Language teaching must start afresh!' (*Der Sprachunterricht muß umkehren!*). 'Viëtor's appeal was heard all over Europe and also in America, especially after he started a review ... that popularized the new approach' (Titone, 1968: 38). He denounced the defenders of the old grammar–translation method, which was connected with the teaching of Latin and had traditionally been transferred to the teaching of modern languages. The best-known innovation called for by Viëtor's essay was that of a **monolingual principle** in foreign language teaching which led to the so-called **direct method**. Thus the foreign language as the normal means of classroom communication should provide the basis of instruction, and oral skills should enable the pupils to use the foreign language as a means of understanding and producing sentences in everyday situations.

Psychological principles of language **acquisition** were derived from the common-sense psychology of those days, which was combined with the idea that the process of learning languages depended on the forming of associations. On the one hand pupils were supposed to acquire a foreign language similarly to the process of learning one's **mother tongue**; on the other hand the monolingual method was thought to help pupils to associate words and structures with their meanings in a direct way (Franke, 1884; Sweet, 1899). Moreover, one could see the first signs that learner-oriented teaching had to deal with the fact that there were different types of learners, i.e. the visual, the aural, and the audio-visual type (Eggert, 1904).

A great number of the founders of the Reform Movement were linguists, who in the beginning gave priority to phonetics. The **International Phonetic Association (IPA)** was founded in 1886 by a group of Frenchmen under the leadership of Paul Passy, who was soon joined by **Jespersen**, **Viëtor**, and **Sweet**. The international phonetic alphabet provided the basis not only for research

work but also for the training of pronunciation in foreign language classes. Special courses were designed for the first weeks of language learning. The pupils should train their ears, their organs of speech, and undertake phonetic transcriptions. As teachers had to be well trained in phonetics, too, they were expected to have travelled to the foreign countries, and **native speakers** were asked to assist in foreign language classes.

Great phoneticians have assisted in the improvement of FLT. The name of Henry Sweet (1845–1912) deserves to be mentioned in this connection. Besides a priority for phonetics Sweet repeatedly stresses the fact that every language has its own structure, and can therefore not be forced into the straitjacket of Latin grammar.

(van Els et al., 1984: 150)

The most significant change that was caused by the Reform Movement, however, was a new attitude towards the teaching of grammar. The reformers were convinced that there was a natural order in learning languages, namely **speaking, reading, writing** and finally grammar. The old deductive way of learning grammar was now replaced by an inductive or analytic one. The basis for seeking, finding, describing and training rules was no longer single or disconnected sentences but texts that meant something. 'Gradually textbooks took a different pattern ... The reading passages consisted mainly of simple modern prose designed to introduce the pupil to an understanding of the life and customs of the foreign people' (Titone, 1968: 38–9). Thus texts were fundamental in a double sense: pupils should get a general education by the contents, and they should comprehend grammar rules by analysing forms and functions. Written and oral dialogues and even conversational **exercises** became important for applying and transferring the findings. Since then foreign language teaching has always also been direct language experience and the transfer of semantic concepts into forms of language.

The realistic approach to language learning led to a special use of visual and aural media. Wall pictures showing everyday scenes (e.g. in connection with the four seasons) were not only described

in the foreign language classes but also exploited for the training of **vocabulary**, for the illustrating of grammar, and for inventing and constructing dialogues. The phonograph, or rather the gramophone, was used by the reformers initially for the purpose of experimental observation and description of phonological phenomena. From about 1905 onwards the production of special aural materials made it possible to use records for pronunciation exercises in foreign language classes. The particular advantage was the presentation of intonation patterns and literary scenes, which native speakers had recorded in studios.

It was obviously Viëtor's pamphlet in 1882 which attracted the greatest attention at the beginning of the Reform Movement, and it was Jespersen who, in his booklet 'How to Teach a Foreign Language' (1904), summarised the practical implications of the movement for classroom teachers. Even though the ideas of the reformers were put forward by several conferences and numerous publications, mostly in new journals and periodicals, the aims and methods were not always accepted peacefully. Various reasons and experiences gave rise to controversy (see Titone, 1968: 39; Schilder, 1985: 58–9). Consequently it became evident in the first decade of the twentieth century that compromises had to be found. Finally a combination or a mixture of the direct approach and the traditional attitudes towards reading, learning grammar and translating developed.

Nevertheless it was the reformers who were most often referred to in the years to come. Their principles of the monolingual approach, the training of dialogues and conversation, and of pupil-centred activities were usually (and still are) mentioned when so-called new ways of foreign language teaching were (or are being) designed.

**See also:** Direct method; *Fremdsprachendidaktik*; History: the nineteenth century; Linguistics; Monolingual principle; Teaching methods

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## Reliability

This is a statement of the accuracy, consistency and fairness of a measuring instrument and refers to the extent to which that instrument will give the same result each time it is applied. Consider the example of two different instruments for measuring the width of a sheet of paper: a standard ruler and an elastic tape measure. Regardless of the number of times the standard ruler were used to measure the width of the paper, it would give the same result. This ruler, therefore, is reliable, for it measures the trait concerned (in this case, length) consistently and accurately. An elastic tape measure, on the other hand, will give a different measurement of the paper depending on how much the elastic is stretched. It is, of course, possible to arrive at the correct measurement of the paper by chance/accident, or by taking many repeated measurements of the paper and averaging them out. However, the elastic tape measure is considered unreliable because it is unlikely to give the same measurement each time it is used.

Applying this principle to the context of a language test, if a test is reliable it will give any single student the same result each time it is applied. Consequently, a reliable test is considered to be fairer than one that gives different and possibly misleading results for the same student. An unreliable test is considered to contain measurement errors that can be due to factors such as the time at which the test is taken, the items in the test, and the scoring.

### Estimating reliability

In classical test theory, test reliability is estimated by comparing two sets of results from the same test and the same group of test-takers. This comparison is reported as a correlation and normally ranges from 0 to 1.0; the lower the correlation, the lower the reliability of the test. There are a number of ways of gathering these two sets of test results, each of which addresses different sources of measurement error.

### Test–retest reliability

Inconsistencies arising from the time at which the test is taken can be checked by using a test–retest procedure in which the test-takers take the same

test at two different times (perhaps a week apart). The test-takers' scores on both occasions are then compared. This approach has the advantage of allowing clear comparisons to be made, because it provides two sets of scores on the same test items for the same set of test-takers. However, it is somewhat impractical because differences in the test-takers' performance need not necessarily be due to the different times at which the test is taken. Instead the differences might, arguably, be because the test-takers remember some or all of the test items, or are more familiar with the test method, or are bored by the exercise, or have learned more language in the period between the two administrations of the test.

### ***Parallel form reliability and Split-half reliability***

These two approaches estimate inconsistencies arising from the items in the test and are most commonly used in relation to objective tests (tests with items that have a clearly specifiable correct answer). The parallel form approach involves the construction of two versions of the test, both of which are administered to the same group of students. This approach has the advantage of providing information on the same group of students while avoiding the practice effect and/or boredom that could result from the test-retest approach. However, it is extremely difficult if not impossible to construct two genuinely parallel tests. It is also time consuming to administer two tests and the test-takers can become tired, particularly if the tests are administered consecutively. This fatigue is likely to have an adverse effect on their performance.

The split-half approach avoids these disadvantages because it takes the test and divides it into two halves, comparing the test-takers' performances on each half. The concern here is to ensure that each half contains equivalent items and this is difficult to ensure if only one 'cut' is made. Consequently, statistical procedures have been devised that estimate the split-half reliability for all possible divisions of a test.

### ***Intra-rater and inter-rater reliability***

This approach estimates inconsistencies arising from the scoring of the test and is usually applied

in the case of subjectively scored tests (in which there is no single specified answer and the score is partly dependent on the judgement of the examiner). Intra-rater reliability is typically measured by asking examiners to score each performance twice. Like the test-retest approach, however, the results of intra-rater reliability procedures can be affected by the familiarity of the examiner with the scripts he/she has marked, and by boredom with having to re-mark. Inter-rater reliability can be estimated if two or more raters are asked to independently assess the same set of test performances. These independent assessments are then compared for their consistency with each other.

### **Factors affecting reliability**

There are many factors that affect test reliability by causing deviations or fluctuations in the test-takers' performance and test scores.

#### ***Test-taker characteristics***

Test-takers' performance on tests are usually adversely affected by temporary personal factors such as whether the test-taker is tired or ill on the day of the test or whether they are unhappy or concerned either about the test or some other part of their life. Additional test-taker characteristics that can affect test reliability are the extent to which the test-takers are familiar with the test and have developed strategies based on this test-wisness. The more familiar test-takers are with a test, the better their scores are likely to be. Finally, certain test-takers are also more inclined towards risk-taking than others and guess the answers to the test questions. The test-taker's scores might be boosted or depressed depending on the success of this strategy.

#### ***Test characteristics***

These include the number of items in the test and the speed at which it must be completed. If a test is particularly short (e.g. 15–20 items), its reliability is likely to be increased by the addition of more items. However, tests can also be too long (and can overtire the test-takers as a consequence). In such cases, a reduction in the number of items can

increase the test's reliability. The reliability of a test can also be increased if test-takers are given more time. Like test length, however, it might be the case that the time allocated needs to be reduced.

Test reliability is also influenced by the extent to which the test items can discriminate/distinguish between high- and low-ability test-takers. The greater the test's ability to spread students out, the higher is its reliability likely to be. Interestingly, the more homogeneous the test items, i.e. the more similar they are to each other in content, the higher the reliability of the test, because such a test is taking repeated measures of the same traits.

### **Features of test administration**

These refer to the clarity of the instructions, the quality of the test papers and the test environment, the monitoring of cheating and the care with which test-takers are kept informed of time. If a test centre is poorly lit or if the examiners are not provided with microphones with which to make announcements in large rooms, then the reliability of the test is likely to be adversely affected. Similarly, poorly printed or photocopied test papers and confusing or ambiguous instructions can reduce/impair the reliability of the test.

### **The scoring procedure**

Threats to reliability can occur both within a rater (intra-rater reliability) and between raters (inter-rater reliability). Intra-rater reliability is adversely affected by examiner fatigue or by idiosyncratic features such as a preference for neat handwriting. Additionally, less experienced raters are more likely to be inconsistent. Inter-rater reliability is limited by the extent to which the raters share the perspective with which they are judging the test performance.

Consequently, there are many ways of improving the reliability estimates for a test. These include standardising the test conditions (such as good quality test papers, clear and unambiguous instructions and guidelines for test administrators); standardising the scoring procedures (by providing well developed marking criteria and sufficient

training for examiners); and conducting careful checks on test items before they are used in the test.

**See also:** Action research; Assessment and testing; Evaluation; Research methods; Validity

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## **Research methods**

Research is a systematic process of formulating questions, collecting relevant data relating to such questions, analysing and interpreting the data, and making the results publicly accessible (Hatch and Farhady, 1982; Nunan, 1992).

It is usually argued that in order to count as research, data collection and analysis should follow procedures to ensure **reliability** and **validity**. As with other social sciences, there is controversy within language teaching and learning as to the relative merits of qualitative as opposed to quantitative approaches to research (van Lier, 1988). The purpose of this entry is to provide an account of research methods for the study of teaching and learning. The first section deals with the distinction between quantitative and qualitative approaches. This is followed by sections covering the following key aspects of the research process: formulating questions, methods of data collection, and approaches to the analysis of data.

### **Approaches to research**

Within the social sciences there are two competing research paradigms: the quantitative and the

qualitative. Quantitative research is aimed at assessing the strength of relationships between variables, and is based on the experimental method which aims to control and manipulate. Qualitative research seeks understanding by observing phenomena in their natural settings. In recent years, increasing numbers of researchers have argued that the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research is simplistic and naive, and that the two traditions are indistinguishable in many respects. Nevertheless, the distinction continues to be observed and debated (for discussion, see Nunan and Bailey, 2009).

Among language researchers, there are some who argue that qualitative research is essentially a preliminary activity, carried out in order to identify possible causal relationships between variables that might be more rigorously investigated through quantitative research. Others argue that the nature of the type of questions being investigated should determine the research paradigm chosen. Grotjahn (1987) for example, argues that one needs to distinguish between three different aspects of the research process:

1. the method of data collection (whether collected through an experiment, or non-experimentally);
2. the type of data (qualitative or quantitative);
3. the type of analysis (statistical or interpretative).

Grotjahn argues that there are two 'pure' research paradigms, the 'analytical-nomological' in which quantitative data are collected experimentally and subjected to statistical analysis, and the 'exploratory-interpretative' in which qualitative data are collected non-experimentally and analysed interpretatively. In addition, however, there are hybrid paradigms in which the variables are mixed and matched.

These days, even Grotjahn's substantially elaborated typology is not sophisticated enough to capture the complexities of mixed methods research where qualitative and quantitative data are collected, and both statistical and interpretive analyses are deployed.

### Formulating questions

In many ways, the most difficult aspect of the research process involves formulating a question or questions that are worth asking in the first

place, and capable of being answered given the practicalities of data collection and analysis.

Depending on the research tradition within which one is working, formulating a question may occur prior to, or in parallel with other steps in the research process. In experimental research, it is crucial to establish the research questions prior to embarking on data collection and analysis. In **naturalistic research**, on the other hand, the questions frequently emerge, and change, during the course of data collection and analysis (Nunan and Choi, 2010). If one conducts an analysis of the questions that have been investigated over the last 30 years in the field of language education, one can see that the issue of what questions are worth asking is loaded with value judgements and assumptions about the nature of language and the language learning process. The questions that investigators have considered worth asking have therefore changed over time. At one time, foreign language teaching research was dominated by the so-called 'methods comparison studies', which were intended to settle debates over the relative superiority of competing classroom methods. These studies were costly and largely inconclusive, and did little to advance the cause of empiricism in the field (Ellis, 1995; Ritchie and Bahtia, 1996).

Within **second language acquisition** research, a distinction is drawn between research which investigates **untutored language acquisition** in naturalistic environments, and that which looks at acquisition in tutored environments. Key questions posed by researchers working within second language acquisition include:

- Is learning a second language like learning a first? (Dulay and Burt, 1974a, 1974b)
- Is there a distinction between conscious learning and subconscious acquisition? (Krashen, 1981, 1982)
- Why do some learners fail to acquire a second language successfully? (Schumann, 1978)
- How can we account for variation (a) between learners and (b) within learners? (Labov, 1970, 1972; Ellis, 1985)
- What modes of classroom organisation, task types, and input facilitate second language development? (Swain, 1997).

An analysis and review of research into these questions is provided in Nunan, 1996a.

## Data collection

The most commonly employed means of collecting data in language teaching are through observation, elicitation devices of various kinds, including tests, questionnaires and interviews, and introspection. Each of these methods is more suited to the investigation of certain questions rather than others, and each has its own strength and weakness.

### Observation

Observation is employed in a wide range of language research into both instructed and naturalistic settings. Longitudinal case studies of children acquiring their first and second languages employ both observation and elicitation (see below). It is now generally accepted that studies of language learning in instructed settings also need to employ an observational dimension, even when the study involves a formal experiment, because without such observation, the quantitative data are often uninterpretable (Spada, 1990).

Observation is a basic data collection technique in ethnographic research, in which the researcher takes great pains not to intrude into or influence the behaviour of the individuals under study. However, observation, while the most 'natural' form of data collection, has several weaknesses. In the first place, it is an open question as to whether it is at all possible to obtain data through observation that have not been influenced in some way, either by the presence of the observer, or by the data collection procedures themselves. The sociolinguist Labov has spoken of the 'observer's paradox', pointing out that the aim of much research is to find out how people behave when they are not being systematically observed, but that such data can only be obtained through systematic observation (Labov, 1972). Another weakness of observation is that the behaviour under investigation may not occur very frequently, thus necessitating many hours of data collection on the part of the observer.

In collecting observational data, the researcher is confronted with the issue of whether or not to

engage in focused or unfocused observation. In unfocused observation, a type most often favoured by ethnographers, the researcher attempts to record everything that he or she observes, on the grounds that in limiting the focus of the observation, the researcher might exclude potentially important or significant phenomena from later analysis. Unfocused observation can yield huge amounts of data which may be extremely difficult to quantify, and in which it is difficult to determine patterns and relationships. In recent years computer programs have begun to appear which were designed to assist in sorting and analysing large quantities of qualitative data. Such programmes enable the researcher to tag large quantities of text. The program then sorts and identifies patterns in the data.

In focused observation the focus of attention is deliberately limited to prespecified phenomena. Such observations are generally conducted using observation checklists of various kinds which quantify the phenomena of interest. Observation checklists are particularly popular in **classroom-based research**, and in the last 20 years, over thirty such schemes have been developed and applied in language teaching and learning research. The first of these schemes were comparatively crude, with relatively few categories. More recently they have become much more sophisticated, to the point where some require considerable training to use. The COLT (Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching) scheme, for example, deploys eighty-four different categories. (For further description and analysis of observation in language research, see Allwright, 1988; Spada and Frohlich, 1995.)

### Elicitation

Elicitation is a blanket term referring to a range of procedures for obtaining speech samples and other data from subjects. Devices include production tasks and standardised tests, interviews, surveys and questionnaires, and simulations and role-plays. A survey conducted some years ago revealed that elicitation was the most common of all the techniques used in language research (Nunan, 1991). The value of elicitation over straight observation is that it can yield large amounts of target language data in



a relatively short space of time. This is a great advantage for researchers who are looking for the appearance of particular linguistic items that may occur only rarely in natural data.

Production tasks are used in research as an alternative to observation when the research wants to elicit target language items such as particular morphemes or grammatical structures. Such tasks became popular in the 1970s when researchers were interested in comparing the **acquisition** of certain grammatical items in naturalistic and instructed settings. The aim of the research was to document the order in which these items appeared, and to study the effect of instruction and first language background on the order of acquisition. A device was developed called the Bilingual Syntax Measure. This consisted of a series of cartoon-like drawings which were designed to elicit the structures of interest to the researchers (Dulay and Burt, 1974a). There are two dangers in using devices such as this without collecting comparison data from other sources such as observation. First, because the researcher has determined the items of interest in advance, other potentially important items and phenomena might be overlooked; and second, because the results obtained might be artefacts of the devices themselves (Ellis, 1985; Nunan, 1987). Some years later, Pienemann (1989) used a more sophisticated research methodology and also uncovered developmental stages in second language acquisition. He also proposed an explanatory model for these stages.

Introspection is the process of ‘observing and reflecting on one’s thoughts, feelings, motives, reasoning processes and mental states with a view to determining the ways in which these processes and states determine or influence behaviour’ (Nunan, 1992: 231). Introspection is widely employed in language research because it enables the researcher to obtain insights into aspects of language development that are otherwise unobservable. In research into teacher behaviour it has been used to obtain data on the relationships between teachers’ belief systems and their classroom behaviour. Probably the most common type of introspective method is that involving the keeping of diaries, logs or journals. A diary study is ‘a first-person account of a language learning or teaching experience,

documented through regular, candid entries in a personal journal and then analysed for recurring patterns or salient events’ (Bailey, 1990: 215). They have been used to investigate **second language acquisition** (Schmidt and Frota, 1986), teacher–learner interaction (Nunan, 1996b), teacher education (Bailey, 1990) and numerous other aspects of language teaching and learning. The major weakness of the technique is that it is virtually impossible to establish whether the verbal or written reports resulting from introspection accurately reflect the cognitive processes underlying the behaviour of interest. Despite this, there is little doubt that introspective techniques will continue to be employed in research seeking to understand the relationships between behaviour and thought, because there is simply no other way at present of obtaining such data. (For further information, see Faerch and Kasper, 1987.)

## Data analysis

As already indicated, research data can be either quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative data is concerned with counting, while qualitative data is concerned with meanings (Dey, 1993). In the initial section of this entry, we saw that experimental research can include qualitative as well as quantitative data. We also saw that naturalistic research can include quantitative as well as qualitative data. All qualitative data can, in fact, be quantified. When classroom researchers create observational checklists, and then check off and count the number of questions that are asked by the teacher, or the number of unsolicited bids by students, they are, in effect, quantifying qualitative data. The advantage of this quantification is that numbers are easier to manipulate, to group, and to compare than meanings. It is easier to see patterns in numbers. And, of course, if one wants to compare two or more groups for making statistical inferences, then numbers are essential.

In many areas of language research, the researcher wants to work directly with the raw data. It is impossible to do morphological, syntactic or discourse analysis on sets of numbers, although it is possible, and sometimes desirable at some stage in the research process, to quantify the data one is

working with. For example, one current line of research in instructed second language acquisition is investigating the relationship between instructional tasks and the negotiation of meaning. Data are collected from second language learners as they perform different types of task, the interactions are transcribed, and the researcher analyses the transcripts for instances of negotiation (where speakers and hearers check comprehension and request clarification to ensure that they are interpreting correctly and being interpreted accurately). Having identified instances of negotiation, the research can count these, and compare them across different task types to determine which types of task generate the greatest amount of negotiation.

Classroom transcripts and transcripts of naturally occurring conversations generate huge amounts of data, sometimes running to hundreds of pages. As already indicated, the large quantities of data can be difficult to analyse and quantify. However, there is also a line of research that carries out intensive analyses of relatively small samples of speech. This type of **conversational analysis** is known as ethnomethodology, and ethnomethodologists can analyse two or three interactional turns, and their results sometimes run to many pages. The aim of ethnomethodology is to account for the ways in which mutual intelligibility is achieved in conversation. (For an introduction to this type of research, see Atkinson and Heritage, 1984).

From the late 1990s, a shift took place from psychometric research to studies conducted within a sociocultural perspective (Lantolf, 2000). Qualitative researchers have also shrugged off the defensiveness that marked a good deal of naturalistic research in the 1970s and 1980s (Holliday, 2007; Nunan and Choi, 2011). In addition, a panoply of new methods and techniques for generating and representing research is finding its way into applied linguistics. These include autoethnography, ficto-criticism, and (inter)cultural analysis (see, for example, Merrill and West, 2009; Muncey, 2010; Nash, 2004).

**See also:** Action research; Classroom observation schemes; Classroom research; Discourse analysis; Evaluation; Quality management; Reliability; *Sprachlehrforschung*; Validity

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## Risk-taking and foreign language learning

In the search for psychological variables that might characterize 'good language learners' early 1990s focused on one facet of the primary personality trait

'extraversion' (Beebe, 1983; Ely, 1986, 1988) which could most relevant to foreign language learning, namely risk-taking. The interest in that particular variable at the time was probably not just a coincidence. A few years earlier, Naiman et al. (1978) failed to confirm their hypothesis that good language learners (as defined by their test scores) would be more extraverted. This disappointing finding reverberated through the world of applied linguistics (Dewaele and Furnham, 1999) and dampened the initial enthusiasm about the predictive power of this personality dimension on success in foreign language learning (FLL). It thus made sense to aim a little bit lower in the hierarchy of personality traits and investigate the effect of a facet that had *prime facie* potential to explain success in FLL. The extravert's inclination to seek thrills has been linked to lower levels of cortical arousal. Extraverts are thus more inclined to take risks in using the FL in class (Ely, 1986: 3), possibly also because extraverts tend to be more optimistic and hence more confident in the pay-off of their risk-taking.

Producing speech in a FL is a gamble and not all learners are equally inclined to face the potential social embarrassment of getting something wrong. As Brown (2001) points out: 'Interaction requires the risk of failing to produce intended meaning, of failing to interpret intended meaning, of being laughed at, of being shunned or rejected. The rewards, of course, are great and worth the risks' (p. 166).

Beebe (1983) defined risk-taking as a situation where an individual has to make a decision involving choice between alternatives of different desirability, the outcome of the choice being uncertain and failure being a distinct possibility. Beebe (1983) argued that L2 learners' willingness to take risks depends on the situation: they are less inclined to take risks when their peers are listening in because they do not want to look foolish. The might take risks more easily in interactions with teachers and native speakers with whom they are not in competition.

Ely (1986) found that American students' willingness to take risks in using the Spanish L2 class was linked significantly to their class participation, which in turn predicted their proficiency.

In a follow-up study with the same population Ely (1988) found that FLL risk-taking was positively correlated with attitudes toward activities involving relatively free language use. He also found that language class sociability ('a desire to interact with others in the second language by means of the L2' (1986: 3) positively affected attitudes toward activities involving the sharing of ideas or 'performing'. Further studies have shown a positive relationship between risk-taking and final grades in the L2 (Samimy and Tabuse, 1992). However, in her overview of research on individual differences in FLL, Oxford (1992) warned against simple cause-and-effect relationships because risk-taking does not, by itself, 'always create consistent results for all language learners' (p. 30). Indeed, it interacts 'in a complex way with other factors – such as anxiety, self-esteem, motivation, and learning styles – to produce certain effects in language learning' (p. 30).

Language teachers are encouraged to create a positive classroom environment where participants feel confident that moderate but intelligent risk-taking will be rewarded (Arnold, 1999; Dufeu, 1994; Oxford, 1992). Teachers need 'to assist learners in knowing when and how to take risks, particularly in conversational settings' (Oxford, 1992: 38).

**See also:** Attitudes; Motivation; Psychology; Successful language learners

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JEAN-MARC DEWAELE

## Rivers, Wilga Marie

b. 1919, Melbourne, Australia; d. 2007, Newton, MA, USA

Wilga Rivers became internationally recognized as a leader in the theory and practice of language teaching with the publication of *The Psychologist and the Foreign-Language Teacher* (1964). In this seminal work, she turned away from the **behaviourist**

model of language learning that underpinned the **audio-lingual method** and showed how research in psycholinguistics could shape understanding of processes of **second language acquisition** and guide classroom practice. In subsequent works, Rivers remained abreast of research in **linguistics**, **psychology** and related fields to explore and explain this relationship. During her career, she published thirteen books and over eighty articles, and became a major international figure in applied linguistics.

Rivers earned her doctorate at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign. Before accepting a position in 1973 as Coordinator of Language Instruction in the Romance Languages at Harvard University, Rivers taught at Northern Illinois University, Monash University, in Melbourne, Australia, Columbia University's Teachers College, and the University of Illinois. She taught at Harvard until her retirement in 1989. Before her death, she completed the first volume of her memoirs, *Down Under/Up Top: Creating a Life* (2004).

Rivers' wide interests led to a broad range of professional activities. She served on bibliography and long-range planning committees of the Modern Language Association, Linguistic Society of America, and American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, and on the advisory councils of the National Foreign Language Center (Washington, DC) and Language Acquisition Resource Center (San Diego, CA). She was Charter President of the American Association of Applied Linguistics and on the founding executive council of the American Association of University Supervisors and Coordinators of Language Programs.

In her 'Ten Principles of Interactive Language Teaching' (1991), Rivers presented the elements she believed essential to effective language learning and teaching in a **communicative** classroom, and succinctly defined her understanding of the necessary interaction between teaching and learning. This article underscored her lifelong commitment to encouraging language teachers to focus on the learner, to develop and use their own creativity, and to recognize the importance of taking a humanistic and humane approach to foreign language teaching.

Wilga Rivers brought to the international foreign language teaching community a heightened awareness of its role and a deep belief in the excitement of teaching languages. With clarity, intelligence, and remarkable common sense, she helped language teachers gain an intellectual understanding and appreciation for their field and its complexities. Equally important, she taught that while there is a common core to retain in the theory and practice of language teaching, each generation finds its own path to maintain the vitality of the foreign language classroom.

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BERNICE MELVIN

## Russian

Russian belongs to the family of Indo-European languages, and is the most widely spoken and widely taught of the Slavic languages. Together with Ukrainian and Belorussian it forms the group of Eastern Slavic languages, uses the Cyrillic alphabet, and is one of the official languages of the United Nations. There are about 170 million native **speakers** of Russian, of whom some 130 million live in the Russian Federation, another 26 million in the successor states to the Soviet Union, and about 8 million in countries with high levels of Russian immigration (among others, Germany, the

USA, Canada, Australia, and Israel). If speakers as a second language are included, there are about 240 million speakers of Russian.

### Historical development

Today's modern Russian is derived from the Old East Slavic language, which was the language of literature and commerce until the beginning of the Kievan Rus' (about 880). With the advent of Christianity in 988, this was displaced by the introduction of Old Church Slavic (a southern Slavic language) as the official language of the liturgy. Characteristic of the period from the ninth to the fourteenth centuries, however, is Old Russian. Dialectical differentiation accelerated the break-up of the Kievan Rus' in about 1100. Church Slavic remained the literary language in the Moscovite period, until the Petrine age, when its use was drastically restricted to Biblical and liturgical texts. The political reforms of Peter the Great were accompanied by an alphabet reform, secularization, the borrowing of technical and specialized **vocabulary** from the languages of Western Europe, and general westernization (Cubberley, 2002). The modern literary language is usually dated to the time of Alexander Pushkin, in the first third of the nineteenth century (for the historical development see Riasanovsky and Steinberg, 2004).

Written Russian acquired its present appearance after the orthography reform of 1918 and the last codification of 1956. Political circumstances and Soviet successes in military, scientific, and technological matters (especially cosmonautics), helped Russian to acquire worldwide prestige, in particular in the mid-twentieth century. In the USSR, Russian was the undisputed **lingua franca** in all the republics of this multinational state, the dominant language in education, and/or the subject studied, and in the countries of the Eastern Bloc it became the first compulsory foreign language, also remaining the language of Communist Party ideology until 1989.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russian was relegated in all the successor states (with the exception of the Russian Federation) to the status of a **minority language**, and in the countries of the former Eastern Bloc the demand

for Russian fell drastically. A similar situation was observed in the states of Asia, where in the Soviet period Russian had been the first and most important foreign language (such as in Mongolia and Vietnam).

### Linguistic particularities

The Cyrillic script was developed from the Greek alphabet, and has similarities with the Greek and the Latin alphabet. The Russian alphabet consists of thirty-three letters, and can be learned rapidly.

Russian is a typical stress-timed language, characterized by complex syllable structures, vowel reduction, free and movable word stress, variable syllable boundaries, and a relatively broad pitch range. The importance of intonation in Russian, its great distinctive possibilities, is connected with the rather free order of words in Russian (Svetozarova, 1998: 265f.). Factors which cause difficulties for those learning Russian are palatized ('soft') consonants, contrasting with non-palatized ('hard') phonemes, the often unpredictable word stress, and the reduction of unstressed syllables.

In common with most of the Slavic languages, Russian has a rich morphology. Words inflect according to grammatical categories by the addition of suffixes and changes in the word stem. With the exception of articles, all types of words are to be found in Russian which also occur in English. There are six noun cases in Russian, three grammatical genders (masculine, feminine, and neuter), and two numbers (singular and plural). As well as this, there also exists in Russian the category of animacy, which creates a distinction in declension between animate nouns (live things) and inanimate nouns (objects). A typical feature of all Slavic languages is the category of the verbal aspect, which when relating to time causes a specific distinction between imperfective (incompleted) and perfective (completed) actions. Russian allows for a relatively free word order, thanks to the syntactical relationships within the sentence being made clear by the inflection. The underlying structure is SVO (subject-verb-object).

Historically, Russian has borrowed vocabulary (loan words) from German, Dutch, French, and Latin, and since Perestroika (1985–91) increasingly from English.

Dialects play a less important role in Russian than in other languages. Despite the great geographical distances involved, differences in **pronunciation** are not so widely separated in the Russian-speaking lands that any problems with comprehension could arise.

### Dissemination as a foreign and second language

Russian is the dominant language in most of the successor states to the Soviet Union, and is learnt as a second and foreign language. In the CIS states it remains the best codified and structured language in all spheres, including technical and specialised forms of language, as well as being the *lingua franca* in higher education.

Successor states to the USSR with high proportions of Russians among the population are Lithuania, Kazakhstan, Estonia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, and Belarus (see the report *Russkiy yazyk v mire* at [www.mid.ru](http://www.mid.ru)). Associated with this is the very high prestige still accorded to Russian, which is appreciated as the language of a world literature, a multinational state with great international influence and a long history, and also as a wide-reaching and fully developed **standard language**.

Russian is learnt as a foreign language in Asia and in Europe. For example, in Mongolia Russian is learnt by large numbers of pupils in schools and universities as the first foreign language and in Vietnam Russian is widespread (see [www.maa pry al.org](http://www.maa pry al.org) for details). Although Russian declined in popularity in Eastern and Central Europe in the 1990s, the numbers of learners then became stable, and all teaching programmes have been shorn of ideology. Factors which now play a part in language offer and choice are in particular economic (Russian for Business) but also political and cultural.

In other parts of Europe too, Russian is widespread, for example in Germany (for details see: [www.destatis.de](http://www.destatis.de)). In Poland, the Czech Republic, Greece and elsewhere Russian usually occupies third or fourth place in the order of foreign languages but with substantial regional differences.

The best students of Russian take part in Russian Language Olympiads, and school-level exchanges take place with Russian schools.

Many people take up the study of Russian as adults, with the demand being for economic and financial Russian in particular. At universities, training is provided for Russian teachers and Slavic specialists (in most cases with Russian as the most important Slavic language). Russian today is a foreign language of equal status, which has taken its rightful place among other foreign languages.

Over the past few decades there has been substantial immigration into Europe of speakers of a Slavic language as their first language. This has resulted in Russian becoming, for example, the most widely spoken immigrant language in Germany, with about 3 million speakers. School students with a Russian-speaking background often engage in heritage language programmes in order to promote their mother tongue.

### Trends in Russian teaching

The International Association of Russian Language and Literature Teachers (**MAPRYaL**) organizes worldwide conferences, Russian language festivals, and Russian Olympiads, publishes the periodicals *Russkiy yazyk za rubezhom* and *Vestnik MAPRJaL*, and has its own website: [www.mapryal.org](http://www.mapryal.org)

As with many other languages, the teaching of Russian has long been dominated by the **grammar–translation method**, but since the 1980s the language has increasingly been taught using the **communicative approach**. New Russian curricula, materials, textbooks and examinations, such as the *TRKI* (*test po russkomu yazyku kak inostrannomu* – test of Russian as a foreign language) are based on the **Common European Framework of Reference**. New trends in the teaching of Russian as a foreign language lie in the positioning of Russian within the framework of concepts of **plurilingualism**, since Russian has now become a typical tertiary language (L3), taught as a second or third foreign language after English. With respect to **intercomprehension**,

Russian can serve as a bridge language to the study of other Slavic languages. However, differentiated methodological measures are required in order to integrate school students with Russian-language backgrounds into the teaching of Russian as a foreign language, but research in this respect is still in its infancy.

**See also:** French; German; Intercultural communication; Internationalisation; Planning for foreign language teaching; Pushkin Russian Language Institute; Teaching methods

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# S

## Sapir–Whorf Hypothesis

The Sapir–Whorf Hypothesis (SWH) is particularly relevant in the discussion of linguistic relativity. It claims, in essence, that a language selects and isolates certain aspects of the ‘kaleidoscopic flux of impressions’ and thus structures reality for us. The following quotation from Edward Sapir (1884–1939) illustrates this assumption: ‘Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection’ (Sapir, 1963: 162). Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897–1941), who was Sapir’s student, found this concept of linguistic relativity confirmed when he studied Hopi and discovered that the grammatical categories of Hopi and those of European languages select and highlight different aspects of reality. From this insight he drew the conclusion that each language embodies a different world view:

We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized

by our minds – and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds.

(Whorf, 1956: 213)

From the interpretations of Sapir’s and Whorf’s writings a strong and weak version of linguistic relativity was developed. The strong version says that we are imprisoned in our language and can only think what our language allows us to think. This claim was vigorously debated in various disciplines from **linguistics** to philosophy and **psychology**. The philosopher Elmar Holenstein severely criticises the strong version of the SWH and uses the following example to refute it. When, for example, a language such as **Chinese** does not possess the second conditional – ‘If I had wings, I could fly’ – the conclusion, according to the strong version, is that the Chinese are not capable of imagining unreal situations. Holenstein argues against this linguistic determinism and relativism by pointing out that one’s linguistic competence not only makes it possible to say something in certain ways but also enables one to express the same thing by using metalinguistic and non-linguistic means (Holenstein, 1989: 44).

According to the strong version, language does not reflect reality but produces it. The weak version accepts the view that language is not a transparent window to reality but stresses that language itself is influenced by our natural, social and cultural environment. Language and reality are interdependent. This implies that reality is also reflected in the language. In her autobiography *Lost in*

*Translation*, Eva Hoffman shows how in the North American context the terms ‘friendship’, ‘kindness’ and ‘silliness’ differ in meaning from their Polish equivalents and point to different world views. Therefore she is ‘lost in translation’ after her arrival in North America, but finally she is able to live in both worlds and can translate between them. The pedagogical implication of the weak version of the SWH for foreign language learning is that it is possible to understand different world views and become aware of one’s own. Language shapes how we perceive the world, but we are not imprisoned by it.

The question of linguistic relativity also plays an important role in the debate about postcolonial literature. According to the strong version of the SWH, post-colonial authors should not write in colonial languages because they would otherwise take over the world view of the imperialists and betray their own. However, post-colonial authors who write in colonial languages stress that a language can embody many world views and that one can make the foreign language one’s own. Chinua Achebe says about writing in English: ‘And let no one be fooled by the fact we may write in English for we intend to do unheard things with it’ (1975: 7). According to the weaker form of the SWH, there is a mutual dependence between biological, social and linguistic reality.

Sapir and Whorf stressed linguistic relativity in order to understand every language on its own terms and to respect the world view inherent in each. Sapir wrote: ‘Many primitive languages have a formal richness, a latent luxuriance of expression, that eclipses anything known to the languages of modern civilization’ (Sapir, 1921: 22). Whorf goes on to argue that we can only appreciate the achievements of each language when we transcend the language and look at it from the outside: ‘The situation is somewhat analogous to that of not missing the water till the well runs dry, or not realizing that we need air till we are choking’ (Whorf, 1956: 209). Hence translations are important. They defamiliarise the familiar: ‘It was to me almost as enlightening to see English from the entirely new angle necessitated in order to translate it into Hopi as it was to discover the meanings of the Hopi forms themselves’ (Whorf, 1956: 112f.).

These considerations can illustrate the relationship between relativism and universalism in the SWH. On the one hand Sapir and Whorf stress the relativity of languages: we must see them from within and not judge them from the outside. On the other hand, however, we can only appreciate their achievements when we transcend our own language and understand what different languages have in common. Whorf especially is interested in the basic structures of perception and thinking which all human beings share: ‘My own studies suggest, to me, that language, for all its kingly role, is in some sense a superficial embroidery upon deeper processes of consciousness ...’ (Whorf, 1956: 239). For Whorf it is ‘a great fact of human brotherhood’ that all human beings have an ‘intellectual mind’ which can ‘systematize and mathematize on a scale and scope that no mathematician of the schools ever remotely approached’ (Whorf, 1956: 257).

According to the SWH, learning and studying foreign languages does not only have an instrumental goal but also an important educational one. It can make us aware of the constraints of our language and world view and allows us to see what we have in common with other forms of speaking and thinking on deeper levels.

**See also:** Acculturation; *Civilisation*; Cognitive linguistics; Cultural studies; Intercultural competence; *Landeskunde/Kulturkunde*; Strategic competence; Teacher thinking; Translation theory; Universal grammar

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LOTHAR BREDELLA AND ANNETTE RICHTER

## Saussure, Ferdinand de

- b. 1857, Geneva, Switzerland;  
d. 1913, Geneva, Switzerland

Above all, Saussure was a scholar of Indoeuropean languages and comparative philology. His fame, however, rests mainly on lecture courses pertaining to general **linguistics** given in 1907, 1908–09 and 1910–11 which were posthumously published from students' notes by C. Bally and A. Sechehaye under the title of *Cours de linguistique générale* (1916). This book made him the founder of the Geneva School of Linguistics, from where linguistic structuralism (and structuralism in other disciplines, e.g. **anthropology**) originated and spread all over the world. More material pertaining to the *Cours* was published between 1957 and 1974.

Much of Saussure's seminal influence on linguistics stems from his dichotomic terminology. At a time when, for many linguists, historical studies were the only ones which could claim a scientific character, he defined synchronic versus diachronic linguistics each in its own right. For Saussure, diachronic linguistics is devoted to phenomena in temporal succession which are not systematic in relation to each other and which the people of a speech community are not aware of collectively (i.e. language evolution and change). Synchronic linguistics is devoted to phenomena at a given point in time which are systematic in relation to each other and which the people of a speech community are collectively aware of (i.e. meaning, **function** and **grammar**). These phenomena are acoustic signs, as a rule without any natural relation to their meanings, i.e. they are arbitrary and accepted by convention. The signalling property of sounds (*signifiant*) as well as the signified section of reality (*signifié*) are constituted in the brains of speakers. This is probably the most revolutionary of Saussure's innovations. It does away with the idea that linguistic signs (words as names) are attached to objects of reality like labels. It makes the relation of *signifiant* and *signifié* a mental process. In the sign (*signe*) they belong to each other like the two sides of a coin.

The systematic character of linguistic phenomena is the real objective of linguistics. Saussure's comparison of linguistics with chess is famous as a means of explaining the systematic nature of language. In the same way in which the system of rules, represented in each figure, constitutes the game of chess, irrespective of for example the substance of the figures, the system of linguistic regularities constitutes language, irrespective of the substance of signs. The organisation of signs in this system becomes effective not by virtue of what they assert but by their difference from each other. The meaning of a word is defined by the meanings of its near-synonyms, and a syntactic structure, e.g. the present, functions by its difference to another syntactic structure, e.g. the past. The value (*valeur*) of each sign and each regular combination of signs (structure) is, thus, something positive, but the system as a whole comes into being only by differences, i.e. negatively. In order to understand an

individual linguistic phenomenon one must understand other phenomena, and eventually even the whole.

These axiomatic statements on language and linguistics (and others pertaining to *langue and parole*) have become the common property of **structural linguistics**. It had (and still has) a tremendous significance also for the theory of language teaching and its methodology, probably because many of its basic statements conform with observations to be made and difficulties to be encountered in the classroom. Teachers learn that their daily experience is of a scientifically valid nature: In language teaching historical information is of a different kind from information about current usage, information on the former is not useless but contributes something different to language teaching than information on the latter. The arbitrary nature of signs of a foreign language causes difficulties in relation to the first language of the learners, because any succeeding language remains foreign as compared to the first one. The way into a foreign language is didactically so difficult because definitions and explanations of rules always presuppose the knowledge of other rules, and so *ad infinitum*. The characterisation of such observations in terms of structural linguistics is purely descriptive, not explanatory. This may have the consequence that, after all, linguistic concepts do not help much to overcome the difficulties of daily practice. Indeed, the support that structural linguistics can give to the teaching of languages has for some time been overestimated. But at least it gives foreign language teachers the security that their activities are grounded in the basic observations of an undisputed academic discipline.

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WERNER HÜLLEN

## Schema and script theory

Schema theory (also known as script theory) is a theory of the organisation of background knowledge in long-term memory and of its use in comprehension. Schemata are knowledge structures which contain generic information about aspects of the world, such as different types of objects, people, situations and texts. They arise from repeated exposure to similar experiences, and are used to make sense of new instances of such experiences. According to schema theory, comprehension involves an interaction between the (textual) input and the comprehender's existing knowledge, and successful understanding depends on the availability and activation of relevant schemata. Different responses to the same text or difficulties in comprehension can be related to variation in the range and content of the schemata different individuals possess, due to different life experiences or cultural backgrounds (Eysenck and Keane, 2010: 401ff.).

### Schemata in comprehension

The term 'schema' is widely accepted as the most general term for a generic knowledge structure in memory. Other terms, such as 'script', 'frame' or 'scenario', are sometimes used as alternatives to schema, or to refer to particular types of schemata. A schema is a structured bundle of knowledge, which consists of a set of slots and a set of relations. For example, a 'flight' schema will have slots for passenger/s, airline, place of departure, destination, etc., and will contain information about the relations that exist between the entities that correspond to different slots. When a schema is instantiated, i.e. applied to a particular experience, the slots will receive specific values (e.g. the destination slot may be filled in with the value 'Paris'). Slots carry constraints on what values can fill them (e.g. the captain of the aircraft has to be human) and are filled in by default values if no specific information is provided by the input (e.g. if food is mentioned, one will assume it was brought by cabin staff even if they are not explicitly referred to). Schemata can be embedded inside other schemata in a hierarchical structure (e.g. 'checking-in' is a sub-schema which is part of the 'flight' schema).

Schemata perform a range of functions in comprehension. Consider the following text:

I will never fly with that new airline again. They only had one check-in desk, so we were delayed. When i got on board, I had so little leg-room that I got backache. And when we finally arrived I discovered that my bags were missing!

The application of a ‘flight’ schema enables comprehenders

1. to disambiguate potentially ambiguous lexical items (e.g. deciding that here ‘checking-in’ involves showing tickets/passports and passing over luggage);
2. to infer implicit information (e.g. that the insufficient leg-room relates to the space between the seats of the aircraft);
3. to make predictions about what will happen next (e.g. that the missing bags will probably be returned).

All this is crucial for the perception of the text as coherent.

### Acquisition of schemata

Although it is generally claimed that schemata are formed by extracting common patterns from repeated experiences and that they need to be progressively updated, relatively little is known about the process of schema acquisition and change. A rare attempt to account for various types of learning from a schema theory perspective is provided by Rumelhart and Norman (1981). They envisage three different ways in which schemata may develop and change in the light of new experiences: accretion, tuning and restructuring. Accretion occurs when an existing schema can adequately account for a new instance of a familiar experience, so that the new experience simply reinforces the schema. Tuning occurs when a new experience causes a change in the values that can fill the slots of an existing schema or in what can count as default elements (e.g. after experiencing new low-price airlines, my ‘flight’ schema no longer includes fixed seat allocation

and a ‘free’ meal as default elements). Restructuring occurs when new schemata are created, either by forming a totally new schema from experience, or by modelling a new schema on an old one.

### History

The notion of schema as a mental structure has been traced back as far as Kant, and can be found in the work of the Gestalt psychologists during the 1920s. However, the birth of schema theory itself is usually identified in the work of the cognitive psychologist Bartlett (1932). Bartlett conducted a series of experiments which showed that comprehension and memory are largely shaped by people’s existing knowledge and expectations. This persuaded him that new experiences are not stored separately in memory, but are assimilated to similar earlier experiences in generic structures which he referred to as ‘schemata’ (a term he borrowed from the neurophysiologist Henry Head). In the forty years that followed the publications of his findings, Bartlett’s contribution was largely ignored, due to the dominance of **behaviourism** and psychoanalysis. The 1970s, however, saw a resurgence of interest in the notion of schema, particularly due to the growth of Artificial Intelligence and the adoption of the computer as a metaphor for the mind in cognitive **psychology**. During this period, some of the best-known versions of schema theory were developed. In his work on visual perception, Minsky (1975) introduced the notion of ‘frame’ to refer to knowledge relating to settings and visual scenes, such as different types of rooms. Schank and Abelson (1977) proposed a typology of schemata centring on the notion of ‘script’, a knowledge structure which relates to sequences of actions and events in everyday experiences. Their account of the roles, objects and actions which make up the ‘restaurant’ script is the best-known and most frequently cited exemplification of how a particular schema might be structured. Subsequently, Schank (1982, 1999) proposed a new, more dynamic version of schema theory, which tried to account more successfully for the flexible way in which background knowledge is used and adapted in everyday life.

## Critique

Although a wide range of empirical evidence has been provided for the existence of schema-type structures in memory, schema theory has often been criticised for being unprincipled and unconstrained (e.g. Eysenck and Keane, 2010: 405–6). In attempting to deal with something as vast and varied as human knowledge in memory, schema theorists tend to be rather vague as to what can count as a schema, what exactly is contained within each schema, and how different schemata relate to each other. As a consequence, schema theory is ideal in providing *post hoc* explanations for specific findings, but has relatively little predictive power. The psychological reality of schemata as separate ‘chunks’ in memory has also been questioned. In particular, cognitive psychologists working within connectionist models of memory have suggested that knowledge is not stored in high-order complex chunks (e.g. the schema for kitchen), but in networks of interconnected units corresponding to low-level concepts (e.g. kitchen table, bread bin, coffee pot). Within this framework, schemata do not exist as separate entities but correspond to groups of units in knowledge networks which tend to be activated at the same time (e.g. the ‘schema’ for kitchen arises when needed from the simultaneous activation of the units corresponding to kitchen table, bread bin, coffee pot, etc.) (McClelland et al., 1986).

In spite of these problems, schema theory has been successfully applied in a wide range of areas, including **anthropology**, semantics, language **acquisition**, **neurolinguistics** and the analysis of **literary texts**. It has also been influential in work on **reading** comprehension and in the areas of second and foreign language teaching. Its appeal for those working in education lies in the fact that it provides a user-friendly framework within which to study the interaction between texts and readers, and within which to explain how differences in available background knowledge can result in differences and/or failures in comprehension.

**See also:** Acculturation; Intercultural communication; Intercultural training/Cross-cultural training; Literary texts; Literary theory and

literature teaching; Politeness; Reading; Reading methods; Sapir–Whorf Hypothesis

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ELENA SEMINO

## SEAMEO RELC – The SEAMEO Regional Language Centre

The Seameo Regional Language Centre, an educational project of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), is located in Singapore. The members of SEAMEO are Brunei Darussalam, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam. The main objective of SEAMEO is to provide constructive direction to the forces and challenges of change in the contemporary world through joint and co-operative efforts for regional educational development.

SEAMEO RELC was set up in 1968 to provide assistance to SEAMEO member countries in the area of language education. To achieve its purpose, the Centre conducts advanced training courses and undertakes research, publications and information dissemination and other activities related to the linguistic needs and problems of Southeast Asia.

Many of those attending language teaching training courses at SEAMEO RELC hold scholarships given by SEAMEO. Besides language teacher training, the Centre is also a key training resource for high officials in the region. Its team of staff and experts offer customized training for different groups of learners with different needs.

SEAMEO RELC organises an international seminar each April bringing together approximately 500 language experts, linguists, scholars, teacher educators and classroom teachers representing more than twenty countries from the Southeast

Asian region and beyond to discuss and explore language teaching issues. The Centre is also well respected for its publications, its consultancy work for assessment in language use and its professional standing as a Centre of choice for training.

Every year, the Centre trains more than 1,000 people who come not only from the region, but also from the Middle East, China and Japan. It offers training not only to language professionals, but also to professionals in fields other than language education.

In its over forty years of existence, SEAMEO RELC has trained over 36,000 professionals from Southeast Asia and beyond.

### Website

[www.relc.org.sg](http://www.relc.org.sg)

## Second language acquisition theories

Every theory of second language acquisition (SLA) is a response in part or whole to the following questions:

- What is the initial state of learning of a second language? How can we characterise the use of the faculty of language and of previously known languages, including L1, in the learning of an L2?
- How can we describe the development of knowledge in L2 and what are its determinants? Is there an ultimate state in the learning of an L2?
- What role is to be attributed to verbal interaction in L2 in the acquisition of this language?

Each of the approximately 40 theories and models surveyed by Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991: 227) in the field of research on the acquisition of second and foreign (henceforth second) languages explains certain elements of these questions as a function of their postulates and their epistemological choices. Larsen-Freeman and Long classify the theories of SLA in three families: nativist, environmentalist and interactionist.

Long (2000) shows that theories of second language acquisition can be differentiated according to five criteria:

- the source – are they developed from empirical data (see for example Klein and Perdue (1997) and their hypothesis on the basic variety) or borrowed from another field (see the theories which have recourse to **universal grammar** (UG) for example)?
- their range – what is the nature of the phenomena which are explained?
- their content – what explanatory mechanisms are used?
- their type – Long distinguishes two families of theories: the nativist camp and the empiricist camp
- the nature of their proposals – in the form of laws or in the form of relations between cause and process like Pienemman's (1998) theory of processability.

The specificity of theories will be approached in terms of competition between sociocultural theories (environmentalist and interactionist in Larsen-Freeman and Long's (1991) terminology), and cognitive and neuronal theories of second language acquisition, some of which are nativist. We will also show how third language acquisition revisits the question of linguistic **transfer**.

### Three early research topics in SLA

During the foundation phase (1967–1980), research on SLA focused essentially on the role of the L1 in the acquisition of L2, on the specific properties of interlanguages and on the characteristics of verbal interactions between native and non-native in L2. Kellerman (1979) and Jordens (1979) demonstrated that knowledge of L1 is a strategic resource influenced by typological issues in the acquisition of L2s. Andersen (1983) postulates that interlinguistic transfer is all the more likely to be produced when the target structure in L2 is the origin of intralingual errors at the time of its acquisition as a first language and that equivalent structure in L1 is also a source of intralingual errors. Kellerman and Sharwood-Smith (1985) broadened the spectrum of

phenomena taken into account in research on SLA by introducing the notion of 'cross-linguistic influence' which covers borrowing, interference, transfer and avoidance of these, and language loss. This proposal opened the way to research on third language acquisition and on cross-linguistic interaction which followed in the years after 2000 (see below).

The formulation of the **interlanguage** hypothesis in the 1970s (Selinker, 1972), provoked a confrontation of two positions. One inspired by the model of generative grammar postulates that specific traits distinguish interlanguage in the totality of natural languages: for example, its permeability by the rules of L1 or L2, a property which is responsible for the phenomena of regression in L2 (Adjémian, 1976). The other, derived from the work of Labov on sociolinguistic **variation**, argues that the characteristics which apparently differentiate interlanguage from other linguistic systems are in fact shared by the latter (Frauenfelder et al., 1980). Bialystok and Sharwood-Smith (1985) modified the terms of the debate by introducing a cognitive modelling of the process of SLA where the distinction is made between the mental representation of the learner's knowledge (his/her grammatical and pragmatic competences in L2) and the system which controls the implementation of knowledge in the production of L2. These proposals led to contemporary cognitivist theorisation concerning the process of SLA which are based, secondly, on the neurosciences.

From the end of the 1970s, Hatch (1978) and Long (1983) described the linguistic and conversational adjustments made by native speakers towards non-native speakers. Whereas Long establishes a taxonomy of the means used by a **native speaker** in native/non-native interactions, Hatch attempts to describe the genesis of linguistic forms in L2 in terms of discursive structures and conversational interactions. This strand of studies belongs to the emerging sociocultural theories of second language acquisition.

### 'Two parallel SLA worlds': competition between SLA models and theories

"Two parallel SLA worlds" (Zuengler and Miller, 2006) confrontation in the 1970s–1980s between



cognitive rationalist approaches and work of a social and pragmatic orientation in the study of the process of acquisition of second languages took a more virulent turn on the appearance of a volume of the *Modern Language Journal* in 1997. The partisans of sociocultural approaches called for 'a re-conceptualisation of research in SLA'. Firth and Wagner (1997) defended the idea of an 'enhanced awareness of the contextual and interactional dimensions of language use'. They want an 'increased emic (i.e. participant-relevant) sensitivity' to the basic categories of research on acquisition of second languages and an extension of the databases use in research. Partisans of sociocultural theses on the acquisition of second languages argued in favour of an enlargement of the research themes which give an account of the multi-dimensionality of socialisation in L2. They question studies focused on individual cognition rather than socially situated cognition.

Larsen-Freeman (2007) summarises the differences between sociocultural theories and cognitivist theories in twelve points. Inter alia she emphasises:

- the different role attributed to context in the two paradigms;
- the divergent representations of human language and the object of research in the two theoretical groups;
- the difference in the representation of the learner and his/her **identity** in the two paradigms;
- the different philosophical and epistemological orientations.

Cognitivist theories in their turn reject sociocultural theories by arguing that they misunderstand the object of the theory of acquisition, and by criticising their epistemological choices, especially their constructivism, and their research methodologies (Gregg, 2005).

### Sociocultural approaches

From the end of the 1990s, sociocultural approaches to SLA developed in diverse ways. Among the theories which can be included under this banner, we can cite ecological approaches to acquisition of

L2 (Kramsch and Vork Steffensen, 2008), approaches in terms of socialisation (Norton and Toohey, 2002; Riley, 2010), Vygotskian sociocultural theory (Lantolf, 2006), critical theory of second language acquisition (Watson-Gegeo and Nielsen, 2005), the sociolinguistic approach (Tarone, 1988) and the emergentist theory (MacWhinney, 2010). These theories insist on the fact that it is necessary to study second language acquisition as a social and cultural activity. It is appropriate to think of the acquisition of a second language as a social accomplishment, keeping the point of view of learners who have to be conceived as social actors. The relationships between the learner and the social have to be conceived in terms of relations of power, of identity negotiation and of communities of practice.

Sociocultural approaches have developed very varied methodologies of analysis: from the functionalist or interactionist analysis to the hermeneutic approach. A number of these theories have adopted a constructivist and relativist epistemology.

### Cognitivist and neuronal approaches

Cognitive theories are numerous and cannot all be placed in the Chomskyan paradigm (Mitchell and Myles, 2005). Here we will deal only with nativist theories and theses from the cognitive neurosciences.

#### *Nativist theories of second language acquisition*

There are two opposing fundamental positions in this sector: theories which postulate that the acquisition of second languages is a process radically different from the acquisition of L1 (Bley-Vroman, 1990) on the one hand and on the other the different conceptions which attempt to give an account of the combining of facts of transfer from L1 and the more or less complete access to Universal Grammar (UG).

White (2000) identifies six proposals with respect to access to UG during the acquisition of an L2. In the thesis called 'total transfer and partial access to UG', the categories of the L1 are mediators (Tsimpli and Roussou, 1991). The theory of minimal trees of Vainikka and Young Scholten

(1996) predicts that learners dispose at the beginning of their learning of the L2 of only lexical categories and that they transfer to the L2 functional properties linked to lexical categories of the L1. Subsequently, their interlanguage develops by acquisition of functional categories belonging to the L2. The thesis proposed by Schwartz and Sprouse (1994) is described by the formula 'total transfer from L1 and total access to UG'. Epstein, Flynn and Martohardjono (1996) postulate for their part that 'the access to UG is total, that there exists no transfer from L1'. Eubank (1994) defends 'a partial access to UG and a partial **transfer** of the categories of L1' at the beginning of grammar in L2. Finally there is the theory of Hawkins (2001), the theory of modular structural construction which complements the proposals of Vainikka and Young Scholten by adding a transfer from L1 at the moment of emergence of functional heads in L2.

### *Theses of the cognitive neurosciences*

The debate on the formulation of a neuronal theory of the SLA is illustrated particularly well by the exchanges between Schumann, Jacobs, Pulvermüller, Eubank and Gregg in *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (1995). Partisans of a neuronal theory such as Schuman tend to be critical with respect to nativist theses and their cerebral locations. Research in neurosciences identifies three connected zones: linguistic dimensions, cognitive processing and their neuronal instantiations. According to Haggort (2006), cognitive neurosciences bring together the studies which aim to reply to questions about processing architectures and their instantiation in the brain. The focus is on understanding which part of the brain, which networks of neurons are mobilised for specific cognitive operations (Haggort, 2006: 91).

### **Third language acquisition**

In keeping with the appearance of neuronal theories of SLA, the emergence of studies on the learning of a **third language** reshapes the field of theories of SLA. This research leads to a questioning of the meaning attributed to the word 'second' in the label second language acquisition, and to the abandoning

of the 'presumption of equality' based on the idea that all language learning is equal (De Angelis, 2007). Research which comes from third language acquisition postulates that the linguistic representations of monolingual learners differ from those of plurilingual learners. The latter have to manage more numerous and diverse systemic information susceptible of influencing the handling of linguistic data in L3. The results obtained demonstrate the specificity of language learning in the **plurilingual** individual. A series of factors condition the transfer from a known language, L1 or L2, towards the L3, among which typological distance, the level of mastery of the languages present, the frequency of their use, or the order or age of the acquisition play an important role (Cenoz, Hufeisen and Jessner, 2001 and 2003; Rast and Trevisiol, 2006; De Angelis, 2007; Ringbon, 2007; Hammarberg, 2009; Bardel and Lindqvist, 2010; De Angelis and Dewaele, 2011). Two of these factors are often cited to explain the dynamics of inter-linguistic relations: the (psycho)typology and the status of languages in contact (the L2 factor).

Since the founding studies by Kellerman (1979) and Jordens (1979), we know that the potential for transfer of a linguistic item in language X depends on the representations of the learner about the distance which separates language X from language Y, and on the specificity (markedness) of this linguistic item. When it is a matter of learning a third language, an L2 with properties similar to those of the L3 could facilitate the acquisition of this language. Among the categories which have been studied, the following may be cited: the transfer of pre-verbal negation from Spanish as L2 to Italian as L3 (Bardel, 2006), the transfer of relative subordinates from Russian as L2 to English as L3 in speakers of Kazakh as L1 (Flynn et al., 2004; Flynn, 2009), and the transfer of the definite article from English as L2 towards French as L3 among speakers of Cantonese as L1 (Leung, 2007). It seems that typological proximity is a necessary condition for a known language, L1 or L2, to be able to serve as the departure point in the acquisition of the L3.

The L2 factor has been given an operational definition in the studies of Hammarberg and Williams on the role of German as L2 in the acquisition of Swedish as L3. Hammarberg (2001, 2009)

attributes a specific role to each of the previously acquired languages: the L1, English, is instrumental and serves essentially the metalanguage. It allows the implementation of pragmatic behaviour and code switches at the beginning of the acquisition of L3/L4. The L2, on the other hand, provides linguistic elements, essentially lexis and grammatical resources, for the acquisition of the L3/L4; it is the external default provider of linguistic elements. Given the type of logical relations between German as L2, English as L1 and Swedish as L3, and the frequency of their use, Williams and Hammarberg (1998) conclude that it is the status of German as a foreign language which shifts the balance in its favour. The L2 factor is defined as the tendency to avoid the L1 in the belief that the latter is intrinsically not foreign and to prefer in its stead, as a consequence, another non-L1 language (Hammarberg, 2009).

Linked to the difference in status between the L1 and languages acquired subsequently, the representations of plurilingual learners with respect to non-native systems are not as stable as one might imagine, since lexical or morphosyntactic elements coming from an L2 are sometimes treated as belonging to the L3. De Angelis (2005) thus speaks of an association of foreignness to explain the insertion of items belonging to an L2 in discourse in L3. Typological proximity seems to encourage syntactic transfers L2-L3, but does not necessarily lead to transfer L1-L3. In the acquisition of an L3, the L2 thus acts as a filter susceptible of preventing access to L1.

## Epilogue

Socio-cultural, cognitive and neuronal theories of SLA are opposed to each other in their conceptions of the object of research, in their epistemological choices and their methodologies. If the recourse to the neurosciences seems to be rather associated with cognitivist theories, the reference to biology is not exclusive to these theories. Since the appearance of research on third language acquisition, the frontiers of these two parallel worlds (Zuengler and Muller, 2006) could begin to blur.

**See also:** Acquisition and teaching; Cognitive linguistics; Learning styles; Monitor model;

Mother tongue; Native speaker; Neurolinguistics; Research methods; Self-access; Untutored language acquisition

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## Secondary education

The reasons for the inclusion of a foreign language – or even more than one foreign language – as a *compulsory* component in the secondary school curriculum vary from society to society. Compulsory education in most societies has as its *raison d'être* the preparation of young people for adult life as well as a contribution to their personal, social, cultural, spiritual and physical development. Many societies deem foreign languages to have a central contribution to make in this respect. The relative importance of this contribution varies, however, as do the status and the importance afforded to foreign languages as part of compulsory education. More often than not, foreign languages are a well-established, integral part of the secondary school curriculum. In some instances, the existence of a requirement for all young people to study a foreign language during their compulsory schooling is rather recent and its necessity continues to be keenly debated – not to say questioned – variously by policy makers, school managers, curriculum planners, parents and learners themselves. This is the case in England for example, despite the recognition by the European Commission of the need for European citizens to learn at least two foreign languages in order to become active citizens of a multilingual and multicultural Europe (European Commission, 1996: 45) and despite the fact that the world young people grow up in is increasingly characterized by globalization and internationalization.

### Educational purposes and societal needs

The nature and scope of foreign language provision tends to be determined by its underpinning rationale, and the time made available for foreign language study is often not only an indication of how seriously the need to know, and to be able to use a foreign language, is taken by a given society but also of how proficient learners are likely to become in the foreign language. Over recent decades a broad – but by no means undisputed – international consensus on the aims of, and approaches to foreign language teaching around the notion of communicative competence, i.e. the ability to use the foreign

language for the purpose of practical communication in everyday contexts, has emerged through **communicative language teaching**. Linked to it is the considerable interest in **task-based teaching** and learning that is discernable since the 1990s (see e.g. Skehan, 2003 or Ellis, 2005). There remains, nevertheless, considerable diversity in the scope of foreign language learning and teaching in different countries, including what Eric Hawkins, in his seminal treatment of the subject, called ‘an apprenticeship in foreign language learning’ (Hawkins, 1987: 282), i.e. the development in young people of a foundation for future foreign language learning. Then, there is the suggestion, to be found in most curriculum statements, that foreign language learners should be exposed to new experiences and to develop positive attitudes to, and insights into target cultures; also, the development of so-called transferable skills, such as the ability to work with reference material; or the more ambitious, and – as some would argue (e.g. Byram, 1997) – misguided attempt to achieve near-native proficiency, given for example the limited time available for foreign language learning in secondary education or the implicit need for learners to give up their own language and identity. The role of what Long (1988, 1991) has termed ‘focus on forms’, i.e. attention to discrete grammar teaching, as opposed to ‘focus on form’, i.e. attention to grammatical features in the context of a primary concern with meaning and communication, continues to be keenly debated by language professionals and researchers alike.

Any judgements of the effectiveness of foreign language provision in a given country or in international comparison need to take into account the rationale for the inclusion of foreign languages in the secondary curriculum. Different societies have different reasons for requiring their members to learn foreign languages, and foreign language needs will differ according to changing cultural, economic, political, educational and societal contexts, traditions and needs. The factors determining the choice of which foreign language(s) to offer are manifold and include:

- the importance of the language in terms of trade and industry;

- the number of speakers of the language (**native** and non-native);
- its usefulness for leisure purposes;
- its (perceived) level of difficulty;
- the attitudes of learners towards it;
- the availability of specialist teachers;
- the influence of the target culture(s) on the learner or the society they live in;
- its use as a medium for scientific discourse; or
- its significance in terms of output of works of a literary or philosophical nature. (Pachler and Field, 1997: 7–8)

As there is no one language that outperforms all the others on these criteria, as the linguistic make-up of societies and the foreign language needs of industry and the economy change over time, and as it is near to impossible to predict the foreign language **needs** of individuals in their adult lives, policy makers are well advised to ensure access to a diversified foreign language curriculum, despite the serious cost implications in terms of curriculum and teacher time. Recent developments in the UK are a case in point where, in response to global developments, the teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language has seen considerable interest at all levels, including in secondary education.

### Methods of foreign language teaching in secondary education

The prevalent approach to foreign language teaching in secondary education since the late 1970s and early 1980s has been communicative language teaching (CLT). Given its eclectic nature, it seems inappropriate to conceive of CLT as a method with universal applicability; instead, it is best thought of as an approach with many variants drawing on a range of ideas derived from a multidisciplinary perspective including, at least, linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology, and educational research, reflecting the realization that the search for one definitive method of foreign language teaching is futile. Central is the development of ‘communicative competence’ in foreign language learners, based on a view of language as communication and a view of linguistic proficiency not as structural knowledge of language but as an

understanding of, and ability to use the **functions** linguistic items perform. The emphasis of CLT-based foreign language teaching is on *meaning* rather than on *form* and on the *ability to use* language rather than on *knowledge about* language.

In recent years, shortcomings of CLT have increasingly been identified (see e.g. Klapper, 2003). Important issues, which remain to be resolved, include:

- an over-emphasis on transactional, topic-based situations/contexts and a lack of focus on the cultural dimension of language and language use including intercultural competence;
- the tendency to underestimate the role of (explicit) grammatical knowledge; and
- an emphasis on teaching (and testing) in the target language (TL) without due recourse to the learners’ L1.

Of particular importance in the development of CLT was the work of van Ek (1975) on **threshold levels** under the auspices of the **Council of Europe**, designed for emigrant adult workers, as well as that of Wilkins (1976) on the functions language performs. Whilst important in moving the profession on from the by then outmoded **grammar–translation method**, the so-called notional-functional syllabuses developed as a result have tended to lead, in some cases, to a narrow transactional-functional orientation in which secondary pupils are prepared for the linguistic (and non-linguistic) needs of tourists, with the emphasis on ‘getting by’ rather than an emphasis on understanding language and the ability to use it independently to express personal meaning. This approach tends to be characterized by a heavy emphasis on recall of often random lexical items and phrases derived from narrowly defined, idealized interactions and exchanges at the cost of transfer of knowledge, structures and **skills** across topics. More and more, though, there has been a move away from a notion of **authenticity**, which puts an emphasis on target language use in situations typically to be encountered in the target country and which require of learners the ability, and willingness, to suspend disbelief. Instead, a recognition is developing of the importance, on the one hand, of tasks and situations

which pupils are likely to encounter in their everyday lives and, on the other, of situations which ‘take account of the ways of living out of which others speak and write’ (Byram, 1997: 4). As a result, there exists an increasing recognition of the importance of the intercultural dimension in language teaching recognizing not just the linguistic identities associated with target language speakers but also their social and cultural identities, seeking to develop in learners an ability to recognize, and respond appropriately to complexity and multiple **identities**, to avoid stereotyping, to seek a shared understanding with interlocutors with different social and cultural identities, etc. (see e.g. Byram et al., 2002).

Furthermore, the importance of hypothesis-testing and of noticing new language and linguistic features – with reference to the grammatical system of the TL – and of comparing the TL ideal to their own TL production, i.e. of reflection on language use by others and on pupils’ personal use of their first language – is being increasingly recognized. This is because it is thought that input becomes intake, i.e. part of the learner’s short/medium term memory, as a consequence of this hypothesis-testing and attention to new language. The need to move away from a limited notion of communicative competence towards a broader interpretation is, therefore, being addressed and the conception of communicative competence advanced by Canale (1983) based on earlier work with Swain (1980) is finally starting to find recognition and implementation in foreign language teaching in secondary education.

Based on his reading of available research into second language acquisition, Ellis (2005) outlines the following principles of instructed language acquisition, which might helpfully guide subject pedagogy in secondary level foreign language classrooms:

- Principle 1. Instruction needs to ensure that learners develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence.
- Principle 2. Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus predominantly on meaning.
- Principle 3. Instruction needs to ensure that learners also focus on form.
- Principle 4. Instruction needs to be predominantly directed at developing implicit

knowledge of the L2 while not neglecting explicit knowledge.

- Principle 5. Instruction needs to take into account the learner’s ‘built-in syllabus’.
- Principle 6. Successful instructed language learning requires extensive input.
- Principle 7. Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output.
- Principle 8. The opportunity to interact in the L2 is central to developing L2 proficiency.
- Principle 9. Instruction needs to take account of individual differences of learners.
- Principle 10. In assessing learners’ L2 proficiency, it is important to examine free as well as controlled production.

### Proficiency and skills attainable in secondary education

The question of what level of proficiency can be achieved by foreign language learners in secondary education has increasingly come into focus as education systems around the world are finding themselves held accountable through league and performance tables at local, regional and national levels as well as through international comparisons.

In order to make learners’ achievements and proficiency more transparent and tangible to parents, to the wider public and, of course, to the learners themselves, policy makers in a number of countries have had national frameworks or curricula drawn up which describe the levels to be attained by learners. These documents, besides often specifying methods and content (e.g. topics, lexical items, functions, linguistic structures), tend to use the skill areas of listening, speaking, reading and **writing** as tools to conceptualize course requirements. Sometimes a hierarchy of skills is implied but a number of national curriculum frameworks insist on a balanced approach by promoting mixed-skill tasks and activities. There are important questions to be asked about how accurately narrowly conceived frameworks reflect overall proficiency in a foreign language; and legitimate concerns have been expressed about the effects of highly prescriptive curricula upon foreign language learning and teaching.



One important, relatively recent framework at supranational level is the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages**, which aims to provide a European-wide ‘basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks etc.’ (Council of Europe, 2001: 1). It defines six levels of proficiency grouped into three bands that learners might achieve at different stages of their learning.

Different frameworks adopt differing conceptualizations of language learning. In the United States, for example, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (1996) developed **US Standards for Foreign Language Education**, which focus on the ‘five c’s’ of: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons and communities.

Depending on the nature and scope of foreign language provision, different levels of proficiency can be obtained. Outcomes of foreign language learning at secondary level tend to be assessed by way of traditional paper-and-pen tests as well as simulations, role-plays and information-gap activities.

At **beginners** level which, in the context of secondary education, can be taken as foreign language learning at ages 11–16, often only a rather limited linguistic proficiency can be achieved. Given the limitations imposed on learners, expectations need to be realistic; they include

- the acquisition-poor nature of classroom environments;
- the limited amount of curriculum time available;
- limited exposure to the target language;
- the lack of opportunities for language learning and use outside the classroom;
- students’ perception of language learning as difficult;
- unfavourable student–teacher ratios;
- the geographical and affective distance from the countries and cultures where the language is spoken.

Learners at beginners level should be able to take part in simple transactions and conversations, often featuring simple and familiar language and contexts; their pronunciation will be intelligible, their knowledge of language forms limited and largely implicit; whilst able to communicate meaning,

their ability to produce grammatically correct language will vary. At this level, language learning often revolves around so-called ‘chunking’, i.e. learning not of isolated words but larger lexical items including phrases, idioms and collocations, with the learner acquiring language by engaging with such language chunks, deconstructing and reconstructing them. But care does need to be taken not to over-prioritize formulaic expressions (see e.g. Mitchell, 2003). The transition from beginner to intermediate level (ages 16–18/19) tends to be characterized by an increase in ‘focus on formS’, rather than function/meaning, as well as by an increased emphasis on cultural and vocational components which, in turn, make increased reference to learners’ developing world knowledge.

### Some issues

One of the questions facing policy makers in all countries is whether or not to have a national curriculum or national framework governing the teaching and learning of foreign languages, and how much professional autonomy they should allow schools and teachers in relation to decision making about what to teach, when and how. How much prescription should there be in terms of methods and content or how much should be left to the professional judgement of teachers? There exist significant differences in the perceived status of teachers, linked, among other things, to the level, length and quality of teacher education and development programmes. Governments allow schools and teachers more or less scope to develop and implement curricula or schemes of work and to assess and test foreign language **skills**, knowledge and understanding. Some systems rely heavily on formative and summative teacher **assessment**, where the foreign language teacher decides what to teach and how to assess it; others favour statutory testing, where the proficiency and competence of learners in the language is tested through national, externally set, marked and/or moderated exams. Both systems have advantages and disadvantages. Whilst there is a high degree of standardization in systems with a national curriculum/framework and national tests, there can be a tendency to ‘deliver’ prescribed content and to ‘teach to the test’ rather

than experiment with innovative methodology or to vary content according to the needs of learners. In systems where foreign language teachers have a high degree of autonomy there tends to be less standardization but more scope for innovation, experimentation and focus on the needs of learners. There can, however, also be a tendency for certain course and **textbooks** to 'prescribe' covert curricula, which are followed more or less closely by foreign language teachers and supplemented more or less amply with additional material according to their level of expertise or the preparation time available.

New **technologies** can be seen to have significant potential for impact on foreign language teaching and learning in secondary education. Although **computer-assisted language learning (CALL)** has been available to foreign language teachers for some 30 years now, it has arguably not yet made a significant contribution to foreign language teaching methodology. Reasons for this lack of impact are manifold and include perpetually changing hardware, unimaginative software often drawing heavily on narrow behaviourist concepts of learning and underpinned by a productivity paradigm, lack of embeddedness of technology-enhanced language teaching in teacher education and development, teacher perceptions and dispositions around technology, etc. In other words, technology has not become fully integrated and normalized in foreign language classrooms (Bax, 2003). However, the affordances of digital technologies, in particular multimodality, i.e. the interplay between the written word, (moving) images and the spoken word for meaning making, interactivity, 'the ability to respond contingently to the learner's action' (Beauchamp and Kennewell, 2010: 759), convergence, the increasing multi-functionality of devices, as well as their increasingly ubiquitous connectivity to, and availability through the internet (cf. cloud computing), and personal ownership can be seen as a potential 'game changers'. These affordances of digital technologies enable social and cognitive communicative interaction, among other things through virtual and personal (online) learning environments, audio and video conferencing applications, social networking tools, etc. However, the availability of technology per se is

not going to bring about the desired impact: what matters is how they are being used (Webb and Cox, 2004).

**See also:** Assessment and testing; Autonomy and autonomous learners; Graded objectives; Higher education; Objectives in language teaching and learning; Primary education

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NORBERT PACHLER AND ANA REDONDO

## Self-access

'Self-access' refers to a mode of language learning in which learners work without direct teacher supervision, at their own pace, and often at times of their own choosing. Self-access learning may be undertaken to supplement a teacher-led course, or it may constitute a programme of learning in its own right. It usually takes place in a self-access centre, which provides learners with a library of language learning resources in various media and a range of technical facilities. Attempts to implement this mode of learning have been particularly widespread in **higher** and **adult** education, where self-access has frequently been discussed in conjunction with **autonomy** and **learning styles**.

The notion of self-access arises from two ideas that are fundamental to education in general: that classroom contact between teachers and learners is not enough to achieve most formal learning goals – learners must also spend time learning on their own outside the classroom; and that worthwhile learning requires more resources than individual learners can be expected to acquire for themselves. This latter idea gains particular force when it is applied to adult learners who are responsible for directing their own learning. What distinguishes most self-access language learning centres from libraries is the central role played by the **technologies** associated with non-print media and the presence of structures designed to guide and support learning.

Self-access language learning first came to prominence in the 1970s. Its emergence was due partly

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to a concern to develop autonomous modes of learning in universities and adult education, and partly to the need to find a new role for **language laboratories** following the widespread abandonment of the **audiolingual method**. To begin with, most self-access centres comprised a language laboratory and a library of language learning **materials** in print and audio. But as the movement towards self-access gathered momentum, new technologies became available: first video and satellite television, then standalone computers, and after that multimedia computers and computer networks. The last of these developments represents a watershed in the history of self-access centres. Whereas the earliest centres necessarily focused on language learning rather than language use, the **internet** enables learners to communicate directly with the target language community, while digital technologies increasingly support production of multi-modal texts in the target language.

Educational policymakers have sometimes promoted self-access centres as a means of saving money: if teaching can be done by machines, they reason, it should be possible to employ fewer human teachers. But besides mistaking learning resources for teaching machines, this argument takes no account of the fact that learners do not necessarily know how to use a self-access centre. They need support, especially when they are following a programme of learning that does not include some form of classroom contact. The most common type of support is an advisory service that helps learners to clarify their learning objectives, identify interim learning targets, select appropriate learning materials and activities, and gradually develop a capacity to monitor and evaluate their own learning (for examples, see Riley, 1985 and Esch, 1994). Learning contracts and learner journals are often used to stimulate and record these reflective activities, while learner support groups of various kinds may be formed in order to provide a social context for individual learning (see, e.g., Karlsson et al., 1997). Self-access programmes that are organised in this way can lead to highly effective learning, but they are certainly no cheaper to provide than language classes.

The design of self-access centres and self-access language learning programmes is hampered by the

fact that there has been relatively little principled discussion, either of the relation between media technologies, language use and language learning, or of the kinds of learning that the various uses of different technologies are apt to promote (but see Little, 1998). In the absence of clearly articulated principles, self-access learning has often been shaped by unexamined assumptions. For example, the audio-active-comparative language laboratory's focus on individual learning encouraged the belief that self-access learning is necessarily a matter of learners working on their own (the same mistake has been made in relation to autonomous learning). But human learning has its origins in social interaction, and it is therefore to be expected that self-access programmes will be strengthened rather than compromised if they provide learners with an opportunity to interact with **native speakers** of their target language or work collaboratively with other learners.

The need for appropriate theoretical underpinnings has become more rather than less urgent since the internet made it possible for self-access centres to put learners directly in touch with native speakers of their target language. For example, the potential of e-mail and other modes of electronic communication to support **tandem learning** (partnerships between learners with different **mother tongues** who are learning one another's language; see Little and Brammerts, 1996; Schwienhorst, 2008) can be fully exploited only if due account is taken of the psycholinguistic differences between oral and written, synchronous and asynchronous communication, and learners are supported accordingly.

By its very nature the language laboratory required a room of its own, which facilitated its evolution into the self-access language learning centre. In the subsequent history of language teaching, media technologies have been much more widely used in self-access centres than in classrooms. But the fact that the self-access centre has become a place where learners can make direct contact with the target language community is a consequence of the development of radically new channels and modes of communication. Arguably, the ability to engage in computer-mediated communication is now central to a general communicative repertoire in any language, and if language

teaching follows where information systems are leading, language classrooms will necessarily begin to resemble self-access centres. At the same time, it will become increasingly difficult to distinguish between self-access and **distance language** learning (White, 2003).

**See also:** Adult learners; Autonomy and autonomous learners; Distance learning; Internet and language learning; Language laboratories; Learning to learn; Media centres; Tandem learning; Task-based teaching and assessment

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DAVID LITTLE

## Sign languages

Sign languages are human languages which are expressed primarily through the visual-gestural medium: they use movements of the hands and other bodily articulators, such as the eyes, mouth, head and shoulders, which are in turn perceived visually by the addressee (although in the case of Deafblind people, the perception may be tactile).

This perceptual process is not well understood because unlike omni-directional auditory reception of spoken languages, the fixation point of the viewer's eye gaze is of great importance. There are considerable differences between native users of the language and learners of the language in their ability to predict and track the movements in a signed presentation, with native signers most likely to fixate around or just above the lips of the signer and not at all on the hands (as might have been supposed).

There is a general consensus that sign languages share the universal properties noted for spoken languages.

Sign languages are to be found around the world as *minority* languages, there being no Deafland where signing is used in everyday life. However, these languages are diverse and usually distinct from one another, just as spoken languages are. There is a general convention to name sign languages in relation to their geographical location – for example, Kenyan Sign Language, British Sign Language, American Sign Language and Hong Kong Sign Language – although, as with spoken languages, sign languages are not necessarily co-existent with national boundaries. Although most sign languages have developed as the primary

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language of Deaf communities, there are also visual-gestural communication systems developed by hearing people. The precise linguistic status of such forms may vary in their similarity to Deaf sign languages. The signing of the Plains Indians and that of the Walpiri of Southern Australia, seem to exhibit certain grammatical features comparable to those found in Deaf sign languages.

## Sign languages used by Deaf people

### *Manual and non-manual components*

Despite an early preoccupation with the gestural (mostly manual) aspects of Deaf people's communication, the crucial importance of non-manual features, particularly with respect to syntax, has become recognised. These features play an important role in the expression of negation, questions and topic-comment focus. They also operate at the lexical level and as morphological adverbial and adjectival markers.

### *The words of sign languages*

The words of sign languages are referred to as signs. These are of three key types: manual, multi-channel and non-manual. The most common type, manual signs, involve actions of the hands; the second group, usually constituting a much smaller but frequently used sub-set of the **vocabulary**, involves movements of both the hands and some other bodily articulator(s); the third type, which usually makes up a very small proportion of the overall lexical resources, makes use only of non-manual features. However, non-manual signs seem to be used for very restricted linguistic purposes, such as 'back-channelling responses' with meanings such as 'That's right', 'Is that so?' 'You must be joking', and may be more prevalent in informal interaction.

Much of the 'lexical weight' within sign languages is carried by manual signs which may be one-handed or two-handed. Every manual sign can be described in terms of the handshape(s) used, the location of the hand(s) and the movements made by the hand(s). Sign languages exploit a small number of contrasting elements. One handshape may be

distinguished from another by features such as the extension, bending or spreading of the fingers and thumb.

Signs may be distinguished from each other simply by a small change in one of these contrasting elements. The sign SPEAK in British Sign Language (BSL) involves using a handshape in which the four fingers are held extended and together, and the hand is bent at the major knuckles with the thumb held parallel to the index finger. The hand is held so that the back of the hand is at the side of the mouth and the fingers and thumb make a repeated closing action. The sign BIRD uses exactly the same location, and repeated closing action, but the handshape involves the extension of only one finger (the index finger held parallel to the thumb) rather than four. In addition to handshape, location and movement, three other parameters are also relevant: the orientation of the hands, the way the hands are placed in relation to each other in two handed signs, and the point and place of contact in signs where the two hands interact. Thus in BSL DIFFICULT, the hands are held side by side and then the tip of the thumb of the dominant hand contacts the centre of the palm of the non-dominant hand.

### *Morphology and syntax in sign languages*

The use of the term spatial syntax refers to the fact that signing occurs in the space in front of the signer's body and this space is used in a highly structured way to express meaning. Signs are set up at different locations within the signing space. Such spatial patterning interacts with sequential patterning in the production of signed sentences and signed discourse. The signer is also simultaneously able to exploit a range of non-manual features: these play an important part in the expression of negation, questions and topic-comment forms.

The morphologies of all of the sign languages so far studied share common features. All make use of so-called 'classifier' morphemes which play an important role in the expression of multi-morpheme verbs and in the creation of new lexical items. Classifiers are linguistic units which indicate in which group or category a particular referent belongs: for example, that an item belongs to the

category of animate beings or the class of round objects or the category of vehicles. Classifiers are expressed in sign languages primarily by means of handshape: in American Sign Language, the handshape in which the thumb, index and middle finger are extended from the closed fist is a classifier for vehicles; in Thai Sign Language, the handshape in which the thumb and little finger are extended from a closed fist is used as a classifier for people; in Swedish Sign Language, the flat hand is used to refer to objects that are saliently two-dimensional.

Classifier forms are often used in multi-morphemic verbs of motion and location such as VEHICLE MOVING IN UPWARD DIRECTION; PERSON LOCATED BESIDE VEHICLE. The signed context will provide the actual meaning: 'the car went up the hill' and 'the policeman was standing beside the motorbike'. Typically the signer will have supplied the more specific referents by the use of non-classifier forms.

Most of the sign languages so far analysed have complex inflectional morphologies. Thus the grammatical category of aspect is frequently expressed through changes in the movement parameter. In ASL, meanings such as 'wait for a long time' and 'hit again and again' are expressed through changes in the movements of the signs WAIT and HIT. Similarly, some verbs in sign languages show person and number agreement by the use of specific movements: in BSL, I HELP YOU, the movement is made away from the body, in YOU HELP ME, the movement is made towards the body.

### *Lip-patterns*

Sign languages use lip-patterns some of which are particular to sign languages whilst others have been borrowed from spoken languages (usually from the majority spoken language of the geographical area of that community). Lip-patterns which are particular to sign languages include forms which mirror the action of the hands (e.g. the closing of the mouth and holding of the lips together as the dominant hand moves down to touch and maintain contact with the stationary hand in the BSL sign TRUE) and those used to provide an adverbial function or to convey degrees of intensity in relation to adjectives and classifiers. The following

examples of adverbial or intensity lip-patterns are drawn from BSL but equivalents may be found in other sign languages. The lip-patterns may involve the lips alone, as in the sign for SAUNTER, in which the lips are closed and protrude slightly to convey that the action is done WITH EASE, or involve other parts of the mouth or face, as in a sign for PAIN in which the teeth are held together and the lips drawn back to convey INTENSITY, or signs incorporating the sucking-in of the cheeks which creates a rounding of the lips conveying that the object is SMALL or THIN. Lip patterns of spoken language words may be used together with a sign to distinguish certain signs which are otherwise identical, e.g. the BSL signs JAM and MARMA-LADE. Signs created from the first fingerspelled letter of a spoken/written word are also usually produced with the lip-pattern of the spoken word, e.g. the BSL sign KITCHEN.

Spoken language lip-patterns may accompany parts of the signed message. Thus we can have French information on the lips, whilst the rest of the message is exploiting the **grammar** of French Sign Language. At the sentence level, it is impossible to mouth/speak a spoken language and perform a sign language at the same time without altering one of the languages. In education, it has been suggested that simultaneous speaking and signing (SimCom or signed speech) helps the Deaf viewer to learn speech and text more easily, but research indicates that meaning is usually lost for the Deaf viewer. At the same time, this combination may also be confusing for the uninformed observers whose primary language is a spoken language, since the observers may give sole attention to the lip pattern and (usually mistakenly) assume that they have understood the content of the message.

### **Sign languages and fingerspelling**

In many parts of the world, Deaf people make use of a manual alphabet (fingerspelling) which allows them to represent the text of the language of the hearing community. This may be used in educational settings and to introduce concepts from spoken language. The manual alphabets used differ from country to country. The majority of fingerspelling

systems, including those within Irish Sign Language and American Sign Language, use one-handed manual alphabets, but some like BSL use a two-handed system.

Sometimes non-sign language users assume that fingerspelling and signed language are one and the same. However, fingerspelling can be used independently of signing, but also as an integral part of a sign language. The extent to which fingerspelling is used will vary from language to language and even within the sign usage of an individual Deaf person, depending on the context.

Fingerspelling also plays an important part in those contact varieties of signing which have emerged as ways of communicating between Deaf and hearing people. Fingerspelled forms allow the Deaf signer to borrow words from a spoken language. Sometimes these forms become more integrated into the particular sign language, losing the properties associated with the sequencing of individual letters and looking more like the signs of the sign language concerned. In Scotland, the BSL sign for the football team Celtic derives from the spelling out of the individual letters. However, while it is possible to recognise the letter 'c' configuration at the beginning and end of the sign, the intervening letters have been reduced to a mere movement of the dominant hand.

## Visuality and signed language

An interesting issue concerns the extent to which the individual signs of sign languages and indeed their grammatical structure, can be regarded as 'iconic', i.e. where the actual form of a linguistic expression itself provides an indication of its meaning. In many sign languages, the signs for animals are directly linked to some physical attribute of the animal: the trunk of an elephant; the mane of a lion; the shell of a turtle. Indeed it would be rather odd to find a sign language which did not have signs for animals which derive from such attributes. Many signs for objects may be regarded as iconic in this sense. However, these signs are expressed using the conventional formational properties of the particular sign language. Thus the different sign languages of the world may both focus on different physical features and express

them through different handshapes, locations and so on. This means that even signs which are directly visually motivated may not be understood even by sign language users from other Deaf communities. The sign languages of the world are not mutually comprehensible. However, it is the case that because visual motivation is a characteristic of human sign languages, when Deaf people from different countries come together this aids their ability to communicate across sign language boundaries.

Visual motivation goes beyond the individual sign. Thus sign languages often make metaphorical use of the signing space. Time in many sign languages is expressed through what have been termed 'time-lines', such as an imaginary line running from behind the shoulder to approximately arm's length in front of the body. The signer uses the area around the shoulder to indicate the present; behind the shoulder to indicate the past and in front of the shoulder to indicate the future. The signer can indicate future and past generally or mark out more specific periods. Some sign languages also use spatial metaphors such as the 'interaction' set of metaphors where the two hands interchange, for example, moving to and fro alternatively. This movement is used in such meanings as 'communicate', 'discuss', and 'negotiate'.

The term 'visual encoding' refers to the tendency in signed language to incorporate real world visual information as a matter of course. Thus in most sign languages, if one were expressing information about opening a door, the signing itself would indicate physical information about the door – e.g. the type of handle, where it was located, whether one opened the door with a key and so on. The signer's use of the signing space will typically provide visual information, such as that X was standing to the right of Y and the window was opposite to Y. Spoken languages can of course provide such information if required; in signed language the actual grammatical and lexical resources of a specific language tend to ensure that such information is incorporated in a regular way.

## Sociolinguistic and socio-cultural aspects

In Europe, less than half of Deaf people have learned their sign language by the age of 5 years



according to their self-report. Deaf children often have to learn sign language from other children and not from adults (as 90 per cent are born in hearing families who know no sign language at the child's birth). Not surprisingly, psycholinguistic research then suggests that these later learners do not master the language to the same level as those born in Deaf families (less than 5 per cent of the community). This is likely to have implications for later adult communication, and it is certainly true that Deaf people in interaction may be less certain that the viewer is fully understanding (than would be expected among hearing-speakers).

This situation is further affected by a speech-centric public policy (which rises and falls in popularity, but typically dominates society thinking) that promotes parenting and education without sign language. Oralism, now supported by cochlear implantation (an invasive operation to bypass the cochlea and provide direct stimulation, which then mimics auditory processes and provides a sense of hearing) encourages parents to view their children as hearing and to deny their Deafhood. This is further supported by the UNESCO Salamanca Statement from 1994 which asserted the right of all children to be educated in mainstream schools (and has led to closure of Deaf schools, which in former times were the focal point for sign language acquisition). These developments are reducing the signing Deaf community, just at the time when research on linguistics and the cultural experiences of Deaf people is reaching a peak.

Deafhood is a recent term coined to express the dynamic nature of the Deaf person's experience in life including interaction and language use. Deaf sign users can now be referred to as Sign Language Peoples to indicate their unique cultural and minority language status and to describe the social space which they inhabit.

Despite the fact that many countries (for example, Sweden, Finland, Greece, Portugal) formally recognise their sign languages, the linguistic impact on Deaf lives may not be pronounced even though there are some positives – sign language on television, in the legal process and most significantly, the training and provision of interpreters. Such opportunities have not yet led to significant Deaf mainstream achievement.

Internal variation with the usage of an individual sign language is influenced by many of the same factors as with spoken language. Thus geographical location, the age, sex and social status of the signer as well as situational factors such as status and audience can all affect the variety used.

## Teaching Deaf sign languages

Before the development of research on sign language, sign language was taught rather informally and without accreditation, by hearing people. With an increase in pride in language arising from its description, Deaf sign language teachers have taken ownership of this area of activity.

The teaching may be based on formal training but typically focuses on the delivery of a particular curriculum. Because much of the progressive thinking and views on language teaching have been written and incorporated in advanced systems of teacher training from which, by and large, Deaf people are excluded, the scope for adoption of 'new methods' has been much less among Deaf sign teachers. Deaf-led curricula tend to be based on their own educational experiences and are often achievement-motivated but without significant consideration of the nature of the language *learning* process.

Only very recently has there been a move towards an applied sign linguistics which begins to investigate learner experiences, language use and to consider the need to have a sign language learner corpus, on which to base the stages of sign language development. This has been partly driven by the developments in the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages**, which demands a user-focused approach. However, its direct application to sign language teaching is difficult as it is typically based on the expectation that the learner will be visiting the country of the language users and interacting in daily life. Without a Deafland, the interaction framework is reduced.

There have been significant moves to exploit new technology to support sign language teaching with videotapes, then DVDs and now online courses. Free resources such as [www.signstation.org](http://www.signstation.org) with online interactive courses and information, have been used extensively. Signstation for BSL learning has registered over 20,000 users. Further

advances in video capture mean that learners can learn and be tested in both receptive and productive sign language, participate in classes and interact with tutors or with other students – all at a distance and even while on the move. The exploitation of learning management systems in this way is a rapidly growing enterprise which drives public awareness.

For Deaf people, gaining recognition for their sign languages is central to their campaign to achieve equality of opportunity with hearing people and is vital to support both the services delivered in sign language and the language teaching frameworks.

**See also:** Applied linguistics; Common European Framework of Reference for Languages; Disorders of language; Language planning and policy; Linguistics; Pragmatics; Standard language; Vocabulary

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### Website

[www.signstation.org](http://www.signstation.org) – online learning of sign language

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## Silent Way

The Silent Way is usually considered to be one of the alternative or **humanistic** approaches to language

teaching. It is the name given by Caleb Gattegno to the language teaching application of his general pedagogical approach. When Gattegno's approach is applied to other subjects such as reading or mathematics, it goes by other names. Caleb Gattegno based his whole approach on several general observations which underlie the Silent Way.

First, it is not because teachers teach that students learn. Therefore, if teachers want to know what they should be doing in the classroom, they need to study learning and the learners, and there is no better place to undertake such a study than on oneself as a learner. When Gattegno studied himself as a learner, he realised that only awareness can be educated in humans. His approach is therefore based on producing awarenesses rather than providing knowledge.

When he studied other learners, he saw them to be strong, independent and gifted people who bring to their learning their intelligence, a will, a need to know and a lifetime of success in mastering challenges more formidable than any found in a classroom. He saw this to be true whatever their age and even if they were perceived to be educationally subnormal or psychologically 'damaged'. (For an account of Gattegno working with such learners, see Holt, 1982.) As a teacher, he saw that his way of being in the class and the activities he proposed could either promote this state of being or undermine it. Many of the techniques used in Silent Way classes grew out of this understanding, including the style of correction, and the silence of the teacher – though it should be said that a teacher can be silent without being mute. Simply, the teacher never models and doesn't give answers that students can find for themselves.

Second, language is often described as a tool for communication. While it may sometimes function this way, Gattegno observed that this is much less common than we might imagine, since it requires of speakers that they be sensitive to their audience and able to express their ideas adequately, and of listeners that they be willing to surrender to the message before responding. Working on this is largely outside the scope of a language classroom. On the other hand, language is almost always a vehicle for expression of thoughts and feelings, perceptions and opinions, and these can be worked on very effectively by students with their teacher.

Third, developing criteria is important to Gattegno's approach. To know is to have developed criteria for what is right or wrong, what is acceptable or unacceptable, adequate or inadequate. Developing criteria involves exploring the boundaries between the two. This in turn means that making mistakes is an essential part of learning. When teachers understand this because they have observed themselves living it in their own lives, they will properly view mistakes by students as 'gifts to the class', in Gattegno's words. This attitude towards mistakes frees the students to make bolder and more systematic explorations of how the new language functions. As this process gathers pace, the teacher's role becomes less that of an initiator, and more that of a source of instant and precise feedback to students trying out the language.

A fourth element which determines what teachers do in a Silent Way class is the fact that knowledge never spontaneously becomes know-how. This is obvious when one is learning to ski or to play the piano. It is skiing rather than learning the physics of turns or the chemistry of snow which makes one a skier. And this is just as true when one is learning a language. The only way to create a 'know-how to speak the language' is to speak the language.

Historically, the approach went through several stages. It came into being in the 1950s when Gattegno, a mathematician, encountered the Cuisenaire rods, small pieces of wood which vary in length and colour and are used in mathematics teaching. He soon became aware that the rods could also be used to create unambiguous and instantly apprehensible situations which would permit a teacher to give students step-by-step input as required by their learning. New words were introduced when necessary by being said once, and the students could explore the language using their natural gifts. The teacher could remain almost silent, giving the students the time and space necessary to practise the language, the teacher's silence indicating to the students this attitude to learning and the learners, and placing the onus for learning squarely on their shoulders.

Towards the end of the decade, Gattegno had the further idea of writing the functional **vocabulary** of the target language on wall charts, colouring the different letters so that each sound was always

represented by the same colour. Using a pointer, the teacher indicated the words on the charts, and the students could work out their **pronunciation** by looking at the colours. The approach was given the name Silent Way at this time, referring of course to the teacher's silence.

A major advantage of this way of working is that using a pointer reproduces the inherently ephemeral nature of language. To indicate a phrase, the person pointing – teacher or student – must move the pointer from word to word, and the students have to hold the complete string in their minds as it is built from each written element. This leads to a greatly heightened level of retention.

Another advantage of using word charts is that they free the students from the need to rely on memorisation. They thus become more **autonomous**, and this in turn allows the teacher to devote more attention to being a sensitive source of feedback during the students' exploration of the language, indicating systematically when changes need to be made and finding the best way of inducing them. The teacher's feedback can be as simple as a slight movement of the hand indicating that the sentence needs to be modified somewhat, or more elaborate, if a word needs to be pointed on the charts or if a situation capable of illustrating the problem and allowing a solution to be found has to be created. The teacher's job is constantly subordinated to what the students are doing.

## Typical classes

A recurrent pattern in low-level Silent Way classes is the initial creation of a clear and unambiguous situation using the rods. This allows the students to work on the challenge of finding ways – as many as possible – of expressing the situation in the target language. The teacher is rather active, proposing small changes so that the students can practise the language generated, always scrupulously respecting the reality of what they see. They rapidly become more and more curious about the language and begin to explore it actively, proposing their own changes to find out whether they can say this or that, reinvesting what they have discovered in new sentences. The teacher can then gradually hand over the responsibility for the content of the

course to the students, always furnishing the feedback necessary for the learning process. The content of the course then becomes whatever the students want it to be, usually an exploration of their own lives, their thoughts, feelings and opinions.

In more advanced courses, the basic way of functioning remains the same, although the class might look quite different to an inexperienced observer. The rods are seldom necessary and the word charts are used much less frequently, since the students can usually find their own mistakes once they become aware that there is a mistake to look for.

To learn to be a Silent Way teacher, it is of course necessary to know the position of the words on the charts and which colours correspond to which sounds. Only then does the real work begin. Silent Way teachers need to become aware of the role of awareness in their own learning in order to see the students' awarenesses more clearly. They need a strong commitment to self-exploration in order to develop an ever deeper awareness of themselves as people. They must develop a deep sense of the students' strengths and learn to have confidence in them as people. They can then put into practice another important principle at the heart of the Silent Way – that, while the students work on the language, the teacher works on the students.

The Silent Way is used by a small but growing number of teachers around the world, often working in relatively extreme conditions – with illiterate refugees, for example, or in cases where speed of acquisition is important or accuracy is vital.

**See also:** Drama; *Handlungsorientierter Unterricht*; Humanistic language teaching; Medium-oriented and message-oriented communication; Monitor model; Psychodramaturgy for language acquisition; Suggestopedia; Teaching methods

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ROSLYN YOUNG

## Skills and knowledge in language learning

Learning a language involves both getting to know how meanings are encoded in it, and being able to act upon this abstract knowledge to engage in actual behaviour. The relationship between abstraction and actuality is a problematic one and in linguistics has traditionally been avoided by imposing a clear distinction between them. Thus **Saussure** proposed that **langue**, a community's common knowledge of the encoded system, should be abstracted out of language as a whole (*langage*) as the object of linguistic description, leaving *parole*, actual language behaviour, out of account (Saussure, 1915/74). **Chomsky** follows suit by isolating **competence**, knowledge of sentence encoding, as the proper concern of linguistic enquiry, and disregarding performance (Chomsky, 1965). Although it may be convenient for linguists to ignore behaviour and focus their attention exclusively on knowledge, it necessarily prevents any consideration of the interdependent *relationship* between the two. When we come to consider the use and learning of languages, however, it is this relationship which is crucial, and which is suggested, indeed, by the very term competence itself. For in spite of Chomsky's use of the term, when we say somebody is competent in a language we do not mean that they know it as an abstract coding system, but that they are capable of doing things with it. We would not normally use the term competence in reference to knowledge that is not acted upon (even if we could identify it), nor to behaviour which we did not take as evidence of a more general and **generative** knowledge of the language. When we seek to induce language

learning by teaching, the central question is how this relationship is to be interdependently activated: what kinds of behaviour in class will lead to an internalisation of the requisite knowledge, and how learners can realise that knowledge as appropriate behaviour.

### The actualisation of knowledge

Knowledge of language, as of anything else, is abstract in that it is a cognitive abstraction from perceived experience. We acquire it by generalising from particular samples of behaviour, and these have to be actualised through the media of the perceiving senses. Hence the traditional description of language behaviour in terms of four skills:

|                  |               |                |
|------------------|---------------|----------------|
|                  | <i>Spoken</i> | <i>Written</i> |
| <i>Producing</i> | Speaking      | Writing        |
| <i>Receiving</i> | Listening     | Reading        |

One way of inducing language knowledge would be to get learners to abstract it from their own behaviour in the exercise of these skills. This is indeed the basic principle behind a **structural/behaviourist** approach to language pedagogy, whereby learners are required to produce and process instances of encoded language in the form of exemplary sentence patterns manifested in speech and writing. The assumption here is that the repetitive practice in giving behavioural substance to such encoded instances will result in their internalisation as abstract knowledge of the code, which can then serve to inform subsequent behaviour.

What one needs to notice about this approach, however, is that the kind of behaviour directed at the internalisation of knowledge is entirely different from that which is normally realised from such knowledge in circumstances of natural use. When people use language, they do not *manifest* their knowledge of the code, they *realise* it in accordance with contextual requirements. They draw on the code as a communicative resource: they do not display it. So the oral and written processing of sentence patterns is an exercise of the language skills which has no parallel outside the classroom, and the learners are being required to behave in the foreign language in ways they would never do in

their own. But to say that this is not language-*using* behaviour is not to say that it might not be effective as language-*learning* behaviour. Learners, one can reasonably argue, need to access the code of the language they are learning and need to be exposed to, and exercised in, the different ways it is made manifest in speech and writing as a precondition for subsequent more user-like behaviour.

The crucial question, however, is whether, and to what extent, the exercise of manifesting skills in the classroom *is* in fact such a precondition, and does in effect provide for a transition to normal use. A distinction has been made between skill-getting and skill-using activities (Rivers and Temperley, 1978) and it seems obvious that to use a skill you have to acquire it first. But the skills the learners acquire in manifestation are not, as I have indicated, those that are called upon in realisation. They represent quite different ways of behaving.

### Medium and mode

The idea that language learning objectives are to be defined in terms of the four skills of **speaking, listening, reading** and **writing** is well established in foreign language pedagogy. Whether it is well founded is a different matter. As already indicated, these skills are defined in reference to what channel (aural or visual) is used in the transmission and reception of the linguistic signal. Since these physical signals are produced and apprehended physiologically by quite different motor-perceptive mechanisms then we do clearly have four quite distinct kinds of behaviour here. But only in respect to the *medium* of manifestation. If we look at the way language is realised as use, the distinction no longer applies. Here, the code is only actualised when required by some factor in the context and only in order to achieve a particular *mode* of communicative interaction. And there is no direct correspondence between medium and mode. Thus Halliday (in Halliday et al., 1964, and elsewhere), identifies mode of discourse as one of the dimensions of register, and points out that we can have spoken language designed to be read, written language designed to be spoken, and so on. The factors that now come into consideration have to do not with the participants as physical producers and

receivers, but with their interactant roles as social addressers and addressees. In considering language use, it is not **medium** as such that is of interest, but how it is relevant as a factor in creating conditions for different modes of communicative interaction. So it is that Halliday points out that written language is not more complex than spoken but that each typically has its own kind of complexity, writing being synoptic and speech dynamic in character, and they differ in degrees of lexical density in consequence (Halliday, 1989). But these differences are a function of how the media are used to produce different modes of communication. Similarly, the recent development of e-mail has created the possibility of new kinds of interaction between people. It is writing that has something of the immediacy of spoken dialogue.

Some scholars (e.g. Carter and McCarthy, 1995) have talked about the **grammar** of speech as distinct from that of writing. But the point to note is that such grammatical features are not intrinsic manifestations of the medium but consequent realisations of the fundamental features of orate as distinct from literate modes of communication, as discussed in Ong (1982) and elsewhere. A central point here is that as these modes become conventionalised, they become independent of the media through which they are actualised: you can, for example, talk like a book, or write in the manner of unscripted speech and simulate its spontaneity. Although modes develop to counter the constraints, and exploit the possibilities of media, once established they take on an independent life of their own.

What this means, of course, is that literacy is incorporated into cultural history, and members of a literate community will inevitably adopt certain literate modes of communication even if they find it hard to cope with the medium of writing. Being illiterate in an orate society is a totally different matter. By the same token, of course, you can learn how to cope with the medium of writing or speech, but this does not of itself provide for the ability to deal with the various modes of communication conventionalised within a particular community that the medium is commonly associated with. Thus literacy is not a matter of composing sentences in the graphological medium nor reading a matter of decomposing them, but of being able to

act upon the conventions that define different kinds of written communication. And the same applies to oracy and the conventions associated with different modes of spoken interaction.

### Skills and abilities

If one defines the learning process as a matter of internalising knowledge of a code, then it makes sense to think of it as being achieved through the exercise of the four skills, the activity of encoding and deciphering linguistic signals as physically manifested in a particular medium. This is a structuralist/behaviourist view of the learning process, and of course it is one which has been extensively rejected over recent years in favour of a **communicative** approach, which seeks to bring learner behaviour into closer correspondence with user behaviour. What this should logically entail is a quite radical shift of focus away from these four manifesting skills as such to a consideration of how linguistic signals are realised to communicative effect in different modes of use. Curiously enough, even among those who firmly reject the approach that gives them warrant, the four skills continue to appear as the essential operational principles of language learning (see for example Grabe, 1998; Hedge, 2000).

The two ways of actualising linguistic knowledge, as I have described them here, are essentially different. One might account for this by redefining the concept of skill in broader terms (see for example Johnson and Jackson, 2006). An alternative would be to mark the difference by the use of different terms. The term 'skill' might be retained as referring to manifestation in a medium and 'ability' as referring to realisation in a mode of use (see Widdowson, 1978). The question now arises as to what the relationship between them might be. Can the exercise of language practice skills in the classroom contribute to the development of abilities in the use of language? Do they effectively lead to the internalisation of the code of the language, as they are designed to do, and if so, how is that internalised knowledge accessible for subsequent realisation as use if learners have not been expressly instructed in the ability to do so? The assumption of the proponents of skill-based

teaching was that there is such a **transfer**: the current orthodoxy in language teaching pedagogy would, on the contrary, assert that there is not. Indeed, the argument for a communicative approach is based on the belief that there is no transfer from skill to ability, and that even if it is conceded that the linguistic code was, to some degree at least, internalised, it remained inert as useless knowledge which learners could not act upon when contexts of use called on them to do so. It was therefore proposed that communicative ability should be focussed on as the essential learning objective to be induced by teaching.

### Competence in language

Such a shift of focus necessarily involves a reconsideration of what it means to be competent in a language. As we have seen, Chomsky defined competence as knowledge of a linguistic code, and more specifically of the generative possibilities of its syntax. But in acting on such knowledge, as distinct from simply displaying it, it is obvious that other kinds of knowledge are implicated. In what was to become a key point of reference for language pedagogy, Hymes (1972) proposed that to be communicatively competent in a language, one had to be capable of making four kinds of judgement about any instance of its occurrence:

- Whether and to what degree it is possible.
- Whether and to what degree it is feasible.
- Whether and to what degree it is appropriate.
- Whether and to what degree it is actually done (or attested).

Of these communicative conditions, only the first is accounted for by Chomsky's concept of **competence** (for further discussion of how the two concepts of competence relate, see Widdowson, 1989). The possible is a measure of conformity to the linguistic code, and particularly its syntax. Clearly it was this condition that structuralist teaching concentrated on. But since the abstract possible had to be internalised, it had also to be related to the second condition. Feasibility has to do with relative ease of processing. In structuralist teaching, the possible linguistic items to be made

manifest through the exercise of the four skills were selected and ordered precisely so that they could be readily processed and internalised. The third and fourth conditions were made subservient to that purpose. Thus, the language produced and received in class was not, and not intended to be, appropriate to any contexts of 'real life' use outside it. It was therefore not a matter of replicating such contexts of use, but of contriving whatever contexts were deemed appropriate for making the possible more feasible. In consequence, what was done in class, the language that was actually attested there, bore little resemblance to what speakers of that language actually produced.

If the objective of learning is redefined to incorporate competence in the language as evidenced by actual user behaviour, the dependency relations across these four conditions is reversed. Now it is the second two that are salient, and the first two subservient. Learning a language is now a matter of knowing not just the rules of its code but the conventions of its normal contextual use. And not only of knowing what these conventions are but of having the ability to act upon them to achieve communicative behaviour recognised as appropriate by particular communities of users.

Conceived of in this way, language learning becomes a much more complex process, of course, and poses a number of problems. With regard to the fourth of Hymes' conditions, for example, corpus descriptions have now made available a massive amount of factual evidence of what users of a particular language actually produce in naturally occurring contexts of use. With such findings at our disposal, we are now in a position to specify the objectives of learning in terms of the relative frequency of possible encoded features, lexical and grammatical, and their customary co-occurrence. Now we know what 'real' language looks like, it might seem, we no longer need to deal in contrivance. The obvious difficulty about this is that, in reality, attested language is always associated with what is appropriate. The two conditions are interdependent. People only produce patterns of language in the process of using them in particular contexts. And such contexts are, of course, socio-culturally informed and presuppose all manner of shared knowledge, attitudes, and values which are

necessarily remote from the reality of learners as learners. The contextual appropriateness of the language in the original conditions of its use, is something they are not yet in a position to realise, nor indeed may they ever be. The essential point is that the attested in isolation is just as much an analytic abstraction as is the possible in isolation. In both cases they can only be realised as communication in relation to contexts of use, and to the extent that 'real' contexts cannot be replicated in classrooms, they have to be contrived.

### The language as subject

Learning a language means becoming competent in it, and competence means both knowing the possible as an encoded resource, and being able to act on this knowledge as appropriate to achieve communicative behaviour. The question then arises as to what is to be taught to induce such learning, in other words how the language subject is to be defined. It is obvious that the language subject that appears on the school timetable as part of the curriculum cannot be the same as language, as experienced by users in naturally occurring social contexts of use. Even if learners might aspire to eventually arrive at a competence comparable with that of such users, they obviously have to go through a transitional process of learning to get there, and it is this process that the subject must be designed to induce. The question is what design is likely to be most effective as an investment for future use.

If the objective is to get learners to be competent in the language, the design of instruction cannot simply provide for the exercise of skills in manifesting the possible, but must also involve learners in activities whereby they will develop abilities to realise the possible in contextually appropriate ways. But, as pointed out earlier, the appropriateness conditions cannot replicate those that obtain in 'authentic' user contexts. They have to be contrived so as to engage the reality of the learners themselves while at the same time getting them to internalise the possibilities of the code as a communicative resource. Activities designed to meet these conditions have been widely proposed of late under the name of **task-based learning** (see

Bygate et al., 2001; Ellis, 2003; Skehan, 1998). A task is different from an exercise, we may say, because whereas an **exercise** simply requires learners to manifest the possible by completing sentences, filling in the blanks and so on, the task requires them to realise the possible as appropriate to some contextual purpose. What needs to be noted, however, is that tasks are designed on the basis of a pedagogic reinterpretation of the Hymes conditions on communicative competence and their relationship. Thus what is feasible relates to what learners can process at a particular stage of their learning, and what is appropriate relates not to normal socio-cultural contexts of use but to pedagogic contexts of classrooms. Tasks as pedagogic constructs cannot replicate the reality of what happens in the normal circumstances of language use. Indeed, their effectiveness in engaging the learners in the process of learning will usually depend on a dissociation from user reality. What this means, of course, is that what tasks do is not to rehearse learners in patterns of '**authentic**' behaviour, but to develop general abilities for use, a capability for communication.

Conceived of in this way, task-based teaching adheres to the same investment principle in defining the language subject that informed structuralist teaching. That is to say, both are based on the assumption that teaching cannot encompass everything that is to be learned, but can only provide learners with a capability for further learning (see Widdowson, 2003). They differ, of course, in their notion of what that capability consists of. For structuralist teaching it was the internalisation of the encoded possible through the exercise of the manifesting skills: once that was in place, it was assumed, then the realisation of that internalised knowledge as appropriate communicative behaviour could be left to the learner to achieve as and when occasion arose. In task-based teaching, the assumption is that this leaves too much to be learned and that abilities for realising language as appropriate communication need to be expressly taught.

But this still necessarily leaves much untaught, and yet to be learnt. Taking the appropriateness condition into account does not, as it is sometimes supposed, imply that learners have to be rehearsed



in patterns of actual user behaviour. To do this is neither pedagogically effective, nor in fact feasible. A lot of time and effort can be fruitlessly expended in striving for authentic language in the classroom and trying to teach the unteachable. Effective pedagogy must be a matter of identifying what constitutes the best investment for future learning in terms of an ability to draw on the internalised knowledge of the language as a communicative resource. In this sense, one may say that language teaching is still what it essentially has always been: the art of the possible.

**See also:** Competence and performance; Language awareness; *Langue* and *parole*; Task-based teaching and assessment; Teaching methods; Text and corpus linguistics

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HENRY WIDDOWSON

## Sociolinguistic competence

Sociolinguistic competence refers to a speaker's (or writer's) knowledge of what constitutes an appropriate utterance according to a specific social context. This kind of knowledge about how language is used in social settings is widely accepted as a crucial element of the more general notion of communicative competence. The term communicative competence was originally proposed to

emphasize the importance of knowing the socio-cultural appropriateness of an utterance in addition to knowing its grammaticality (Campbell and Wales, 1970; Hymes, 1972). A communicatively competent speaker, it is argued, not only knows the grammatical rules of a given language, but also knows a wide range of sociolinguistic phenomena: dialects, registers, collocations, figures of speech, etc. Applied linguists Canale and Swain (1980), Savignon (1983), and Bachman (1990) further refined the construct of sociolinguistic competence by elaborating its constituent parts and by examining its pedagogical implications. They argued that sociolinguistic rules of speaking depend on dynamic, contextual factors such as the social status of the participants and are therefore qualitatively different from the static, context-free rules of grammar found in most language textbooks.

### Definition

According to Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983), sociolinguistic competence may be subdivided into two separate but related kinds of knowledge: knowledge about the appropriateness of form and knowledge about the appropriateness of meaning. Appropriateness of form refers to the extent to which a given verbal or non-verbal form appropriately conveys a meaning in a given context. For example, it would be a violation of the conditions on appropriateness of form if a waiter were to address a table of customers at an expensive restaurant with the question 'OK, what'll it be?' The question sounds rude because the waiter has chosen forms that are inappropriately informal. An example of a violation of the conditions on appropriateness of meaning would be if the waiter were to tell the customers what to eat instead of asking them what they would like to eat. In essence, appropriateness of meaning depends on knowing and respecting the rights and obligations of one's social role such as 'waiter' or 'customer'.

**Applied linguistics** have consistently pointed out that violations of sociolinguistic rules may actually cause more trouble for communication than linguistic or grammatical errors. A good illustration is the misuse of terms of address, a typical problem for most non-native speakers. A linguistic

error concerning a term of address would be the ungrammatical utterance 'Thank you, Mrs'. While the error sounds decidedly odd and foreign to most speakers of English, it is hardly offensive. On the other hand, the use of the first name to address someone of higher status, a violation of a sociolinguistic rule, is likely to cause much embarrassment or consternation (e.g. 'Thanks, Michelle', instead of 'Thank you, Mrs Obama'). Sociolinguists have argued that such errors, because they violate social convention, are frequently judged more harshly by native speakers than purely grammatical errors (Wolfson, 1983).

### Researching sociolinguistic competence

Research on the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence falls into relatively distinct paradigms: quantitative variationist approaches, qualitative ethnographies, and language socialization studies. Variationist studies focus on the variable patterns of language use as possible resources for **identity** construction. Using correlational statistics, variationist studies isolate a single linguistic variable, typically phonetic or morphological, and examine its use by speakers in different social contexts (Bayley and Regan, 2004). In contrast, ethnographic studies of L2 speakers focus on providing a rich description of the social context in order to explain linguistic choices as indices of a variable multilingual identity. Regan (2010) argues that a complex, dynamic view of L2 identity construction calls for a mixed methods approach that includes both approaches. Finally, the language socialization paradigm refers to both socialization through language and socialization to use language (Schiefflin and Ochs, 1986). While earlier studies in this approach primarily examined the language socialization of children by caregivers, more recent studies have focused on L2 learners in formal and informal settings (Bayley and Schecter, 2003; Kramsch, 2002).

### Teaching sociolinguistic competence

Even though language educators now generally agree about the importance of developing students' sociolinguistic competence, there is still a tendency to view it as less important than grammatical

competence. Such an attitude is understandable given that the findings of sociolinguistic research present so many challenges for foreign language education. For example, educators are not clear about how to teach sociolinguistic competence, or whether it is teachable at all within the confines of the classroom (Valdman, 2003). Virtually all educators who have recognized the importance of contextual or situational factors in language learning argue for the importance of authentic language texts in the language programme. However, no written text, regardless of **authenticity**, can be expected to exemplify the sociolinguistic patterns governing the spoken language. In fact, pedagogical materials frequently fail to even mention constructions that are prevalent in the spoken language, a state of affairs due largely to a continued bias against orality within the profession (Valdman, 2003). Compounding the specific problem of how to teach the spoken norm versus the written norm, there is the more general problem of how to facilitate sociolinguistic competence within the limited social context of the classroom. In essence, the challenge facing language educators is to figure out how to teach a socially constituted knowledge of language use based on an understanding of social factors that largely occur outside the formal setting of a classroom. A possible solution to these problems is the pedagogical norm, a construct that has been in existence since the 1960s. Grounded in both sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic principles, the pedagogical norm mediates the relationship among descriptions of the target language, **second language acquisition** research, language teaching methods, and pedagogical materials (Gass et al., 2002; Valdman, 2003).

**See also:** Communicative language teaching; Grammar; Intercultural communication; Non-verbal communication; Sociolinguistics; Strategic competence; Strategies of language learning; Variation in language

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## Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is an aspect of the exploration of the social influences on language and the role of language in society. A growth area of study since the late 1960s, it is concerned with linguistic variation within and across individuals and groups at the social, regional, national and international level with respect to such factors as **age**, **gender**, education, occupation, ethnicity and socio-economic status. From the study of the single sounds and **pronunciation** of individual speakers to the use of a world language for international communication, sociolinguistics draws from and contributes to a wide range of disciplines, including **anthropology**, social **psychology**, philosophy, education, political science and communication. Through investigation of such phenomena as social **attitudes** to language, **standard** and non-standard forms of language, patterns and needs of national language use, regional and social dialects, or language change and spread, sociolinguistic research sheds light on various social

concerns; among them are language conflicts, language rights, literacy, language and disadvantage, the social bases of bilingualism and multilingualism, language and identity, and gender-based speech.

### Description

Sociolinguistics (also known as the sociology of language; see Fishman, 1972) aims to understand uses of language and the social structures in which the users of language function. Given its emphasis on social context, sociolinguists assume language cannot be studied in isolation from the communicative intentions of the users and the socio-cultural context in which a language or language variety is used.

A further assumption is that language is a communal possession that people use, and not an abstract, self-sufficient system. One especially relevant fact of language when viewed from this perspective is that no individual uses language the same way all the time. People constantly change styles, registers and dialects as well as languages depending upon their audience and purposes. They use language differently whether speaking or **writing** to co-workers, neighbours and friends; interacting with clients, students or car mechanics; buying or selling a commodity, scolding or soothing a child; asking for help or giving an order; extending or declining an invitation; excluding someone from a conversation; or seeking identity with a speech community.

The **variation in language** represented by different language varieties is highly structured and regulated. Thus, any variation associated with language use, whether pronunciation, intonation, **vocabulary**, rhetorical choices, or sentence and discourse structure, has limits. The group of people who speak this language, which is known as a speech community, determines the norms and rules defining the limits for use of the particular variety. To understand the structure of a text and the purpose it is intended to serve, it is necessary to refer to the norms and expectations and the social rules of use shared by this group. It is through members' interaction with one another that the communicative competence required to be identified with and become a member of that community is established. Such

competence encompasses the ability to use the knowledge of the community's social and cultural values as well as the formal or structural features of its language variety.

Sociolinguistic research may be motivated by interest in the impact of linguistic variation on the social circumstances (e.g., educational failure or low socio-economic status) of individuals and groups (e.g., speakers of non-standard or minority languages) and ultimately on the improvement of the social conditions of the linguistically marginalised. Other motivations are interest in the avoidance or amelioration of language conflict, determination of national or regional languages, establishment of language standards, or improvement of both second and foreign language teaching.

Sociolinguistics is distinguished from general, theoretical **linguistics** by its emphasis on the social context of language use, i.e. the social influences on language and the role of language in society. Linguistics takes only the structure of language (phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics) into account, to the exclusion of the social contexts in which it is learned and used. For the sociolinguist, speech is social behaviour that serves as a means of self-identification for individuals as well as groups.

Data is collected by different methods of inquiry depending upon the relevant field of study, e.g. history, social psychology or gender studies. Methodological choices include, but are by no means limited to, ethnographic observation, statistical approaches, discourse studies, survey research and **conversation** or **discourse analysis**. The types of sociolinguistic investigation represent detailed investigation of speech events, e.g. differences in lexical choices, intonation patterns, or discourse strategies, the formal and functional characteristics of code-switching and code-mixing, and urban dialects; and more general investigation of the role of language in society, e.g. language policy and **planning**, world languages, **linguistic imperialism**, standards of language, or language spread and death. These two broad approaches – detailed and general – are not discrete and mutually exclusive. In fact, meaningful investigation of some phenomena may benefit from and even require both types of analysis, e.g. the sociolinguistic study of a language that functions as a means of global communication.

One such phenomenon of contemporary interest is the worldwide spread and use of **English** (Kachru and Smith, 2008). Scholarship on this topic investigates the forms and varieties of English that develop in diverse cultural and sociolinguistic contexts. To meet the aim of understanding the nature of English and its numerous national, regional and international varieties, descriptive studies are conducted on the structural features of these varieties, e.g. their lexicon and **grammar**, and functional characteristics, e.g. the uses made of English for various purposes in particular domains of human activity. Discourse and conversational analyses investigate the practices and structures of making text through English and ways of speaking that may differ across contexts of use in such disparate locales as South Asia, Europe and the Middle East. Survey studies assess public attitudes toward the learning and use of English in countries and regions, and aid in language policy and planning. **Literary** analyses are appropriate in investigations of creative expression through the use of English in new literatures. Ethnographic methods are suited to the study of multiple cultural identities and traditions associated with English in non-Western contexts. By adopting various modes of inquiry, research into English as a world language, or World Englishes, has relevance for professionals whose work and livelihood depend upon its learning and use, e.g., lexicographers, **language planners** and policymakers, creative writers, literary critics, linguists, language teachers, and **teacher educators**.

While the existence of differing perspectives and interpretations may be viewed as problematic and as an obstacle to the study of language variation, diversity of approaches, models and methods is in fact a positive characteristic. Language and its use are highly complex, and limiting focus, investigative methods or approach would result in loss of important insights and findings on the interplay of language and society. No one theory or method can do everything sociolinguists want to do.

## History

In the late 1960s and early 1970s the field of linguistics was dominated by the theories and

methodology of linguistic analysis associated with the American linguist Noam **Chomsky** (1965). His generative-transformation linguistics (later **universal grammar**) emphasised the decontextualised ideal **native speaker** and restricted its attention to the sentence level and grammatical accuracy. This approach is too limited for researchers and scholars with an interest in the role of language in such social issues as access to educational and employment opportunities for minority populations who use a non-standard language variety, or the linguistic rights of indigenous and immigrant groups. Understanding the sources and effects of linguistic diversity on social status and mobility required a different approach to language. (See Giglioli, 1972, and Pride and Holmes, 1972, for early research that was influential in establishing and shaping the field.)

Sociolinguistics has its roots in European and American linguistics. The British linguistic tradition is an approach to linguistic analysis associated with J.R. Firth, British historian-turned-linguist, whose work, beginning in the 1930s, had a profound impact on developments in linguistic theory throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Firth's philosophy of language was based on the interdependence of language, culture and society and the belief that language needs to be studied as a social phenomenon. His notions of language varieties, social dialect and register, and functions of language, all have a place in contemporary sociolinguistic studies. Firth also acknowledged the role of language in a broader sense, e.g. as a means for international communication and for representing a particular culture and way of life. These realisations are echoed in subsequent sociolinguistic research.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, M.A.K. **Halliday** (1978) developed the sociological linguistics Firth advocated, particularly through investigation of the social functions of language. For Halliday, the best way to bring all the functions of language, and therefore all the components of meaning, into focus is through the description of written and spoken texts in the contexts of situation in which they occur. That is, it is necessary to take such environmental features into account as the people and their relationship to one another, their **non-verbal** as well as verbal behaviour, and the effect

of what is said or written. Such focus on the context is essential to understanding the meanings expressed, negotiated and interpreted by the users through the texts they create.

Parallel developments were also in progress in the USA around this time. Dell Hymes (1974), anthropologist and linguist, also critical of the notion that linguistic description could proceed without reference to context, proposed an ethnographic approach. It would take into account such various factors involved in speaking as the time and place of the interaction, the participants, the form and content of what is said, and the expected outcomes. Hymes was concerned with what a speaker knows with respect to appropriate use of language in interaction with other speakers. After all, learning a language also involves learning how to use it in order to get things done and interact with the people who speak that language, with members of the particular speech community. This attention to appropriateness evolved into the concept 'communicative competence', a specification of what it means to be a competent user of a particular language.

At least a century before Halliday and Hymes arrived on the scene, language scholars in Europe were researching language variation in the form of dialectology studies, which had as their focus the identification of regional differences in language form, particularly variations in **pronunciation** and vocabulary, and in determination of the geographic location of the pronunciations observed. In the 1960s, dialectology expanded to include class and ethnic urban dialects. William Labov's (1972) work in particular was influential in establishing investigations into the social dimensions of language variation as part of sociolinguistics. He also introduced an alternative, quantitative, research methodology. Trained as a chemist, Labov studied how pronunciation of certain sounds can change over time and across social groups by using precise techniques associated with the scientific approach of the natural sciences. Analyses of the frequency of particular speech patterns, e.g. the presence or absence of post-vocalic final 'r' in the speech of New Yorkers, were reported as percentages in tabular form.

The scope of sociolinguistic investigation continues to expand. For example it has opened to

include the study of the relationship of language and sexism, gay and lesbian speech, and **internet**-user language. None the less, understanding meaning in variation continues to be the theme of the study of language and society.

### Conflicting views

Those who conduct sociolinguistic studies are not of a single mind on theoretical, methodological or empirical issues. Differences exist on such matters as theories of language, interpretations of what constitutes relevant data and valid evidence, formulations of research problems, beliefs about the generalisability of conclusions, and interpretations of both the theoretical and real world consequences of research.

A central disagreement among some sociolinguists is about the direction of influence between language and society. There are four basic positions. Some believe social structure – **gender**, regional origin or ethnicity – influences or determines linguistic structure or linguistic behaviour (the ways of speaking). Others maintain that linguistic structure influences social structure (it is not the speakers of a language who are sexist or racist, but the language). Still others take the view that the influence is bi-directional (speech behaviour and social behaviour are in a state of constant interaction). And finally, some question whether there is any relationship at all between linguistic and social structures (each is independent of the other).

The scope of sociolinguistics is also debated. While some (see Wardhaugh, 2002) argue that the field encompasses most research that is concerned with language and society – e.g. conversational and discourse analysis, **speech acts**, **bilingualism**, language standardisation, or language **attitudes** – others (see Trudgill, 1974/1983) accept as sociolinguistics only those studies with linguistic objectives, i.e. those that aim to improve linguistic theory and develop understanding of the nature of language. This more narrow view of the field admits studies of variation theory and language change – the relationship between language and social class – for the insight they provide into the nature of linguistic variability and the structure of linguistic systems. (See Mesthrie et al., 2009; and

Coulmas, 2005, for representations of a more inclusive view.)

### Significance for language teaching and learning

The significance of sociolinguistics for language teaching and learning manifests itself in first and second and foreign language teaching issues. Regardless of whether first or **second language acquisition** is the focus, in learning to speak everyone learns to communicate in those ways deemed appropriate by the speech community in which they are doing that learning or of which they desire membership. As ways of speaking differ from group to group and from language to language, new ways have to be learned in order for the learner to fit in. (See McKay and Hornberger, 1996, for a discussion of links between sociolinguistics and language teaching.)

In the setting of first language, the beginning of formal education may require learning a new way of speaking: that of the standard variety used by teachers and in **textbooks** that identifies a speaker as ‘educated’. It may be learning the language of a new professional group, e.g. lawyers and artists, or of a new **genre**, e.g. scholarly papers or speech writing. A topic of interest in sociolinguistics in the area of first language has been the relationship between the use of language and educational failure. In his research into urban and ethnic dialects, especially that of Black English Vernacular (BEV) speakers in urban contexts, Labov investigated the role of BEV, the primary language of communication at home, in the poor scholastic performance of children from families of lower socio-economic status. One key factor was the difference between the formal features of BEV and the standard English used by their teachers, who regarded BEV as ungrammatical and limited in syntax and vocabulary, and therefore illogical. These views influenced teachers’ **assessments** of the children’s intellectual capability and ability to participate and succeed in the educational process. This research and its findings have clear implications for the teaching of literacy, teacher education and standards and tools for language assessment.

In second and foreign language pedagogy, adoption of the notion of communicative competence

has considerably influenced teaching theory and practice. Seeking alternatives to the form-focused instruction which characterised contemporary approaches, second language specialists in the 1970s found Hymes's attention to appropriateness in context, and Halliday's focus on meaning and function, valuable bases for reforming language teaching. While numerous functional and communication-based teaching models were subsequently proposed, it was not until the 1980s that a coherent and comprehensive theory was developed. In their theoretical framework for curriculum design and **evaluation** in second language programmes, Canale and Swain (1980; see also Canale, 1983) place linguistic competence squarely within the larger construct of communicative competence, where it is but one component with sociolinguistic, strategic and discourse competence. A similar perspective was taken by van Ek (1986) and the development of the **threshold level**. Savignon's (1997) subsequent interpretation of this framework provided a pedagogical model that teachers could use in their own classrooms. A variety of innovations and initiatives in **communicative language teaching** in diverse settings around the world demonstrated the relevance of social and cultural context to a range of theoretical and practical concerns. (See Savignon and Berns, 1984, 1987, for examples.)

Other relevant sociolinguistic constructs have proven useful in addressing essential concerns for language teaching in both second and foreign language contexts (Kachru, 1992). Notions of intelligibility, **standard language** and language norms highlight the key role of context as a central consideration in selecting classroom models, determining the communicative competence learners are to develop, and the level of intelligibility they are to achieve. Decisions on these matters directly impact pedagogical decisions in the areas of forms and standards for evaluation, **materials** design and selection, and **teacher education**.

**See also:** Communicative language teaching; Communicative strategies; Conversation analysis; Discourse analysis; Linguistics; Native speaker; Notions and functions; Politeness; Research methods; Sociolinguistic competence; Speech act theory; Text and corpus linguistics

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MARGIE BERNs

## Spanish

*Spanish* or the *Spanish language* – also called *castellano* or *lengua castellana* in some Spanish-speaking territories – is the national or official language in some twenty countries. Furthermore, Spanish has a significant international presence as a second and foreign language. The growth of the Hispanic community over the past decades and the importance of migration from Latin America are processes that have had a remarkable influence on Spanish language learning. The Hispanic community has acquired a growing international influence in the fields of economy and trade, which is complementary to its cultural prestige. All this makes Spanish an attractive language for many different

reasons, and the subject of intense study in regions such as the United States, Europe and Brazil. The increase in the number of students has been accompanied by a development of the methodology for teaching Spanish and of the publishing industry.

The growth of the Hispanic community has been continuous since the sixteenth century. This growth was accompanied throughout history by the publication of language **reference works** and methods of Spanish as a Foreign Language (*Español como Lengua Extranjera, ELE*). It is essential to mention the *Gramática de la lengua castellana*, by Antonio de Nebrija (1492), as this was the first codification of a modern romance language, but ‘most courses and materials used for teaching Spanish as a foreign language were published outside Spain until about the middle of the twentieth century’ (Sánchez Pérez, 1992: 3). Thus one of the first works specifically published for teaching Spanish to foreigners was the *Útil y breve institución para aprender [ ... ] la lengua española* (Lovaina, 1555) aimed at francophone students.

### Methods and approaches

The first course-books published in Spain for ELE teaching appeared towards the middle of the twentieth century, in response to the needs of the growing number of courses organised by Spanish universities (Sánchez Pérez, 1992: 369ff.). They were *Español para Extranjeros*, by Martín Alonso (1949) and *Curso breve de español para extranjeros*, by Francesc de Borja Moll (1954). Both these courses were based on a grammatical framework, but they show an interesting variation on the strict grammatical approach, containing practical dialogues and speech forms which are designed to reflect Spanish customs and spoken usage. By the 1970s two new courses were published which involved the introduction of the **audiolingual method**. One was *Vida y diálogos de España* (Antonio Rojo, 1968), which was a faithful adaptation into Spanish of the SGAV methodology of the French school at Mons. The other, *Español en directo* (Sánchez et al., 1974) had more of a British influence in that it was more of an eclectic combination of situational elements, the **direct method**

and a strong grammatical basis with **audiolingual method** principles.

The publication of *Un Nivel Umbral* (*A Threshold Level*, Slagter, 1979) coincided with the beginning of a period of complete transformation in ELE methodology. The 20 years between 1970 and 2000 saw the development of a series of important projects which were accompanied by a large number of manuals and supplementary materials for ELE teaching. Publications increased not only in quantity but also in diversity: learners' dictionaries, textbooks for business Spanish, materials for specific **skills** and for teaching through tasks were published. At the beginning of twenty-first century, many manuals were available, most of them with a **notional-functional** basis, ranging from strictly linguistic practice to the inclusion of elements close to the learning process (cognitive and constructivist) and involving the student's participation (**autonomy** and learning **strategies**). The influence of these communicative trends and **communicative language teaching**, and in particular **task-based teaching**, has become a prominent feature.

In this period, the teaching of ELE has run in parallel to other European languages. The publication of the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages?** (Council of Europe, 2001) led to the emergence of a way to plan and manage the teaching of Spanish and led to the development of the *Plan curricular del Instituto Cervantes* (2006), which in turn guided the elaboration of most ELE teaching materials published in Spain. For its part, the teaching of Spanish in the United States has followed a pattern based on traditional methods of a structural base and with a strong cultural component.

## The establishment of state institutions

### *The Cervantes Institute*

The **Cervantes Institute** was founded in 1991 for the international promotion of the Spanish language and culture in Spanish. In 2010 there were seventy-seven centres offering around 15,000 language courses and a total registration of more than 210,000. In 1997 the *Centro Virtual Cervantes* website was created, accessible on the Internet

(<http://cvc.cervantes.es>). Among its contents are teaching materials, discussion forums, cultural reports, proceedings, and links to academic projects (*Archivo Gramatical de la Lengua Española*, *Catálogo de voces hispánicas*). Furthermore, there is a network of centres associated and accredited by the Cervantes Institute, established in Spain and in other countries, which are inspired by quality standards in educational services. The Cervantes Institute offers regular activities for the promotion of Spanish culture and maintains more than sixty libraries, organised in a network with more than 1 million volumes.

### *The Ministry of Education of Spain*

In Spain, there is a network of official public language schools for the specific purpose of teaching languages to adults, the Escuelas Oficiales de Idiomas (EOI). The teachers in these schools are university graduates and civil servants, and some of them offer Spanish as a Foreign Language. In addition, Spanish Embassies have an Education Office, many of them with a linguistic attaché whose mission is to offer support for teachers of Spanish. There is also a network of secondary schools which run courses following the Spanish educational system. The activities of the Spanish Ministry of Education are organised in a general programme called 'Acción Educativa en el Exterior'.

### *Diplomas in Spanish as a Foreign Language (DELE)*

These diplomas for accrediting linguistic competence were created by the Ministry of Education of Spain in 1989 and are administered by the Cervantes Institute. There are several examinations each year and in 2010 the total number of annual candidates was about 60,000, in 708 cities and 107 countries around the world. Moreover the Cervantes Institute has promoted the establishment of the international network SICELE (Sistema para la Certificación de Español como Lengua Extranjera). This network proposes standards for the certifications in Spanish Language administrated by Spanish-speaking institutions and it promotes cooperation about ELE teaching.

### ***Aula Virtual de Español (AVE)***

The AVE is a digital platform, created by the Cervantes Institute, whose main contents are Spanish online courses. The AVE Spanish courses include all levels of language learning according to the *Common European Framework of Reference* and consist of modules and units. The material includes a statement of learning objectives for each section, the presentation of text and audio samples, and interactive activities. There are independent learning activities, interacting with the system, and others that require synchronous or asynchronous communication with the tutor and other students.

### **Agencia Española para la Cooperación Internacional y el Desarrollo (AECID)**

The AECID is an official agency from Spain that maintains a network of lectureships in foreign universities, most of them in America, Africa and Asia. In 2012, the network included 259 lecturers in 86 countries.

### ***The universities***

Almost all Spanish universities organise ELE courses both during the school year and in the summer holidays. The Universidad Internacional Menéndez y Pelayo (UIMP) is a public university which has the special function of organising ELE summer courses, mainly in its headquarters at Santander. Many other universities offer teacher training and postgraduate courses in ELE; these include Alcalá de Henares, Barcelona, Complutense de Madrid, Granada, Salamanca, and Universitas Nebrissensis. These studies are organised by university departments, many of them with research and doctorate programmes in applied linguistics and acquisition of second languages, placing them not only in a professional, but also in a research context.

### ***Associations and conferences***

The oldest of the ELE associations is the European Association of Teachers of Spanish (Asociación Europea de Profesores de Español, AEPE). The

Association for Teaching of Spanish as a Foreign Language (Asociación para la Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera, ASELE) was founded in the 1980s. There is also the Spanish Association of Applied Linguistics (Asociación de Lingüística Aplicada, AESLA), with conferences and publications including papers about ELE. The Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP) is based in the United States and it publishes the journal *Hispania*, which includes a section about Spanish as a Second and a Foreign Language.

**See also:** Cervantes Institute; French; Lingua franca; Portuguese; Standard language

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## Speaking

Approaches to the teaching of speaking in a second or foreign language must take account of two key phenomena: the nature of speaking in a first or second language (henceforth L1, L2), and how people learn. The nature of speaking has been described in componential models of speaking (e.g. Bachman, 1990; Martinez-Flor et al., 2006) which focus especially on the different components or aspects of speech as *product*, and in processing models (e.g. de Bot, 1992; Levelt, 1999) which focus on the psycholinguistic *process* of speech production. On the other hand, views of the nature of the learning process in relation to L2 speaking have changed over time from an emphasis on ‘speaking to learn’, with speech seen mainly as a means to acquiring L2 rules and forms, to one of ‘learning to speak’, with speech seen as a special **skill** involving more than mastery of rules and forms.

‘Speaking to learn’ received early impetus from the views of structuralist linguistics that speech, far from being an imperfect representation of writing, was the primary form of language. In the first half of the twentieth century, a combination of the focus by structuralist linguistics on language patterns, and current environmentalist views of learning (e.g. **behaviourism**) meant that L2 speaking instruction tended to be heavily biased towards the practice of sentence-length syntactic structures in various types of oral drill (e.g. **audiolingualism** or **Palmer’s Oral Method**). From the 1970s onwards, claims that L2 and L1 learning were essentially similar and possibly guided by innate **universal grammar** principles, led to a greater belief in various forms of ‘natural’ L2 acquisition, with an emphasis on the **Monitor model** and comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985). More recently, an emphasis on cognitive-skill (Johnson, 1996) and cognitive-associative learning (Ellis, 2008), has led to a renewed interest in developing automaticity and fluency in speech through various types of practice, but with greater meaning focus (DeKeyser, 2007). Alongside this, the ‘learning to speak’ tendency has focused on the ways in which learners can develop **sociolinguistic** and **discourse** skills.

## The nature of spoken language

Spoken language has been divided into two main categories, which may overlap in specific speech events: ‘transactional’ speech, which conveys information, and ‘interactional’ speech, which establishes and maintains social relationships (Brown and Yule, 1983). To these may be added the category of ‘ludic’ speech (Cook, 2000), which is playful speech, often used to entertain.

The nature of spoken language proficiency in component-oriented theories has been typically divided into linguistic competence (grammatical, lexical and phonological), discourse competence (the ability to create coherent and cohesive speech), sociolinguistic competence (relating to appropriacy in different settings), pragmatic/illocutionary competence (ability to perform **speech acts** effectively in the language), and **strategic competence** (ability to use resources effectively and compensate for limitations) (Bachman, 1990; Martinez-Flor et al., 2006).

The assertion of the primacy of speech has led a number of researchers to examine the nature of spoken language and its difference from writing in the various competence types identified above (Cornbleet and Carter, 2001; Thornbury and Slade, 2006). With regard to linguistic competence, corpora of spoken language have been used to provide evidence of particular features of spoken **grammar**, and have provided the data for major grammars of **English** (Biber et al., 1999) and descriptions of the grammar of interactional speech in particular (Leech, 2000). Interactional discourse takes place in a shared context, avoids elaboration, is interpersonal, tends to express **politeness**, **emotion** and attitude, takes place in ‘real time’ and usually has a restricted and repetitive repertoire. This in turn leads in spoken English to higher uses of features such as ellipses, tags and tails, short, paratactic clauses and vague language. Linguistic analysis of spontaneous speech has also identified that, to cope with real time processing demands, speakers make frequent use of formulaic utterances, and prefabricated ‘chunks’ or sentence-stems (Wray, 2008). At the level of discourse, **conversation analysis** has shown how dialogic speech involves organised turn-taking, and different types

of exchange, including opening-and-closing sequences. Sociolinguistic competence in speaking will involve the understanding of the setting of the speech event, the participants and their roles, the aims of the speaking, and the rules of the **genre** involved. Sociolinguistic competence also involves **intercultural competence** (Martinez-Flor et al., 2006), which may entail understanding of the ways in which turn-taking, pausing and non-verbal communication operate in different cultures. Pragmatic competence involves both pragmalinguistic competence – a speaker's ability to choose the correct form to convey a particular meaning – and sociopragmatics – the ability to choose a form which is appropriate to context. For L2 speakers, the social variables of power difference, social distance and degree of imposition involved may affect their ability to perform such pragmatic acts as requests and refusals (Taguchi, 2007). Strategic competence in speaking has been viewed from two different angles. One emphasises the similarities between L1 and L2 **communicative strategies** aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of speaking (Bialystok, 1990). The other focuses on the special needs of L2 speakers to compensate for limitations in their linguistic knowledge via message reduction strategies and resource expansion strategies used to maintain communication or to make repairs. Within this category of strategies can also be included fluency/disfluency features such as silent and filled pauses, repetitions and self-corrections (Dörnyei and Kormos, 1998; Konishi and Tarone, 2004.)

An issue of increasing importance in relation to the 'product' view of spoken English is that of which model of English should be presented to learners. As awareness of English as a global language used for communication outside traditional **native-speaker** circles has grown, so have calls for new Englishes to be recognised as acceptable models (Mesthrie and Bhatt, 2008). Alongside this plea for nativised Englishes to be accepted has come a call for a more liberal and pragmatic approach to what should be regarded as acceptable in the **pronunciation** and grammar of English as a **lingua franca** or international language (Jenkins, 2007).

Process models of speech production see three main phases of processing (Levett, 1999). In the

first, the conceptual preparation stage, the content of the message is prepared in pre-verbal form. This content may be for a short clause or, in broader outline, for a series of clauses. This pre-verbal message is then passed on for linguistic formulation. This will involve grammatical encoding, drawing on a **mental lexicon**-with-grammar to provide vocabulary items along with the syntactic frames into which they can fit. It will also involve morpho-phonological encoding, to produce a phonological plan or 'score', which is then passed to the final phase of articulation. Fluent speech requires that, apart from the conceptual preparation stage, everything will run off automatically once the pre-verbal message has been produced. It also requires that conceptual preparation of the next part of the message can begin before the first part has been articulated. However, even proficient L1 speakers may experience problems. At the conceptualisation stage, a speaker may form an inappropriate or imprecise message. At the formulation stage, the speaker may choose the wrong word to convey the message, or lose track of syntax produced so far. At the articulation stage, the speaker may mispronounce words, or different parts of the pre-articulation plan may interfere with each other to produce errors such as 'Spoonerisms'. The fact that speakers can perceive and correct these errors is evidence for the existence of a self-perception or monitoring system, which can operate before or after a message is articulated. Speakers also monitor for interlocutor comprehension and attitude, and adjust their utterances accordingly.

In L2 speech, these processes will typically function less efficiently than in the L1 (de Bot, 1992). Pre-verbal messages may be largely independent of language, but speakers may still be unsure of what is acceptable in the L2 culture, or even what resources the L2 has to encode certain meanings. At the formulation stage, L2 speakers may lack items in the lexicon, leading to disfluency, to the selection of an inappropriate word, or to the use of communication strategies of avoidance or paraphrase in order to cope with the problem. L2 speakers may also lack appropriate syntactic frames for the lexical items and conceptual relationships they wish to encode, also

leading to disfluency, or to interference from the L1 or other parts of their L2 **interlanguage**. The articulation phase is a major opportunity for L1 interference in **pronunciation**, as the phonological plan may trigger automatic production of sounds or syllables from the L1 which are close in nature to those of the L2, and possibly held in a common mental store. L2 speakers will typically have to engage in more self-monitoring, and in more frequent mid-production planning, which will be observable in slower, more hesitant speech.

### Teaching and learning speaking in a second language

Approaches to the teaching of L2 speaking, especially in English, can be seen to fall into two broad types. One involves a part-skill to whole-skill approach, with an incremental and more gradualist approach to skill development in the deployment of new and already learned language; the other emphasises a whole-skill to part-skill approach, with speaking tasks as a central feature, broken down where necessary to develop greater complexity, accuracy and fluency in the use of language needed to perform the task.

Early part-skill to whole-skill pedagogy was in the 'speak to learn' tradition. A three-phase Presentation–Practice–Production (PPP) lesson plan was advocated with grammatical structures presented in meaningful contexts for repetition and practice in oral drills of increasing complexity. The final production phase required freer use of the structure-in-focus. The advent of an approach to syllabus specification based on **notions and functions** meant that grammatical structures were often replaced in the PPP sequence by language functions (typically interpersonal speech acts such as requesting or apologising). Part-to-whole skill approaches to L2 speaking also developed within the **communicative language teaching** (CLT) movement. Thus one CLT activity typology for oral work involves a movement from pre-communicative work, via communicative language practice and structured communication, to authentic communication (Littlewood, 1992). In this sequence, L2 speakers engage in activities requiring increasing communication of new meanings and greater use of a

combination of targeted structures and other patterns. A similar sequence is envisaged in 'progressive form-defocus', where increasing cognitive complexity of tasks forces learners to speak while paying less attention to form (Johnson, 1996). Within the CLT framework, attention has been paid to forms of practice involving more creative and authentic repetition, such as that required by repeated explanations of a research project in a simulation of an academic poster exhibition (Bygate, 2006). Within **content-based instruction**, there has been concern about the need for accurate spoken output (Swain, 1995), and this has led to a proposal to modify the PPP sequence into one of Awareness–Practice–Feedback, focusing on creative automatization in the second stage, and prompted self-repair within content-based classes in the third (Ranta and Lyster, 2007). With the greater emphasis on 'learning to speak', attention has switched to a wider range of part-skills involved in the speaking process (Thornbury and Slade, 2006). With this wider range of skills in mind, one proposal has been to teach oral skills in a sequence of Awareness-raising activities–Appropriation activities–Autonomy activities (Thornbury, 2005). In such a sequence the features focused on would include organising turns, sociocultural rules, topic shifts, communication strategies, discourse markers and speech acts. On the evidence available, instruction seems to increase the use of a range of communication strategies and pragmatic markers (Jeon and Kaya, 2006), although pragmatic conversational features are often non-salient and will need to be highlighted in some form of consciousness-raising process involving illustration and induction (Carter and McCarthy, 1995).

The whole-skill to part-skill approach to development of speaking skills was advocated early in the CLT movement, with the proposal of a sequence of Communicate → Present lacking/necessary language items → Drill if necessary. Later, this approach was taken up by those proposing **task-based learning** (TBL). TBL has drawn on the advocacy by Krashen of the value of comprehensible input in acquisition. Interactive tasks are seen as providing valuable comprehensible input as learners 'negotiate for meaning'; they are also seen as enabling learners to 'notice the gap' in

their own spoken output (Long, 1996). Central to TBL is the language task, typically an oral interaction-based activity whose criterial features are a primary focus on meaning with a clearly defined communicative outcome, requiring real-world processes of language use and the engagement of cognitive processes (Ellis, 2003). Such tasks are seen as providing opportunities for acquisition-in-context, but also as offering learners the chance to exploit their existing linguistic resources and acquire skill in a meaning-oriented environment. Negative criticism of TBL has tended to focus on its unproven suitability for acquisition rather than on its value as a promoter of communicative practice (Swan, 2005). Frameworks for TBL have been proposed, which typically involve initial content preparation and planning, task performance (possibly with time pressure) and post-task evaluation, often allowing for language analysis and development (Ellis, 2003; Willis, 1996). Studies have been made of the ways in which different types of tasks and different conditions for task performance may lead to different oral performance outcomes, especially in terms of the complexity, accuracy and fluency of learner speech (Skehan, 2001). Task characteristics which have been examined in this way include familiarity of information, degree of structure, complexity of outcome and degree of information manipulation. Of the conditions of task performance which have been studied, most attention has been paid to the effect of different types and amounts of pre-task planning (Ellis, 2005). Within the discussion of the way measures of complexity, accuracy and fluency can reveal levels of speaking proficiency (Housen and Kuiken, 2009), a debate has developed between those who support a 'trade-off' hypothesis (Skehan, 2009) and those who argue for a 'cognition' hypothesis (Robinson, 2005). Proponents of the former claim that advances in one dimension, such as complexity, will typically be balanced by declines in another (usually accuracy); advocates for the latter assert that increasing task complexity can result in benefits to both complexity and accuracy of speech.

**See also:** Acquisition and teaching; Behaviourism; BICS and CALP; Content-based instruction; Discourse analysis; Group work; Medium of

instruction; Mental lexicon; Pragmatics; Pronunciation teaching; Skills and knowledge in language learning; Sociolinguistics; Speech act theory; Strategic competence; Task-based teaching and assessment; Writing

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ALAN TONKYN

## Speech act theory

In the theory and practice of language teaching, the speech act constitutes the object of learning. **Pragmatics** therefore has an essential role to play. It is thus speech (*parole*) and not language as system (*langue*) which is the focus here and in particular the implications for learning a language rather than the teaching of language.

### From the theory of speech acts to interactionist linguistics

The theory of speech acts comes from various currents of thought in different disciplinary fields, embodied among others by Gardiner, Peirce, Wittgenstein and Bally. Gardiner (1932) understood language as a means of influencing the behaviour of the interlocutor. Peirce (1930–58) too proposed to define the meaning of an utterance on the basis of the effects which it is capable of producing.

Bally (1932) in turn analyses an utterance into a ‘modus’ and a ‘dictum’, which anticipated the analysis in terms of ‘illocutionary value’ and ‘propositional content’ suggested later by Searle. Finally, Wittgenstein (1953) was the originator of a philosophy of ordinary language in which he described ‘language games’.

The book *How to do Things with Words* (1962) is considered the starting point of the theory of speech acts. It is a collection of lectures given by Austin in 1955 at Harvard University and published posthumously. Immediately in the first lecture, Austin breaks with the logical-positivism initiated by Frege by showing that there are many utterances which are not accounted for by the question of the truth or falseness of utterances. Certain utterances which resemble assertions are in reality not intended to communicate information about the world. These utterances, called performatives, have the specific character of doing what they say they are doing simply by saying it:

One of our examples was, for instance, the utterance ‘I do’ (take this woman to be my lawful wedded wife), as uttered in the course of a marriage ceremony. Here we should say that in saying these words we are doing something – namely, marrying, rather than reporting something, namely that we are marrying.

(Austin, 1962, 1975: 12–13)

These utterances depend on the circumstances without which ‘the utterance would be inappropriate’. The acquisition of such social conventions is precisely one of the purposes of language learning.

In the course of his reflections, Austin abandoned the notion of the purity of performatives in favour of a more general notion of *Speech Acts* (1969). The theorisation of this concept required the creation of a metalinguistic language to facilitate the description of the illocutionary value of natural language utterances, and Searle’s taxonomy (1969, 1979) is currently the best-known. It is based upon four semantic criteria with which to describe speech acts: illocutionary point, direction of fit, psychological state, and propositional content. These criteria are used to distinguish five categories of illocutionary act: assertives/representatives,

directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. The development of such descriptive categories was an indispensable theoretical tool for describing discourse. On the other hand much research in contrastive pragmatics has shown that no classificatory principle can in fact transcend the differences between languages. The acquisition of the cultural implications which underlie speech acts has therefore to be considered an important pedagogical objective in the teaching of languages.

The thinking stimulated by the classification of speech acts led the founders of speech act theory to think about relations between form and meaning: which formal criteria must be the basis for characterising linguistically the performative quality of an utterance? Austin observed that, despite the presence of recurrent formal indicators in performative utterances, no grammatical or lexicological criteria seem to enable us to identify a performative utterance. Searle's contribution to the theory of speech acts supports Austin's analysis. In introducing the concept of indirect speech acts in *Expression and Meaning* (1979), Searle notes that the meaning of a sentence sometimes diverges from the sense it has in context: for example, 'It is cold' can be used as a request (to close the window). It is therefore difficult to establish a one-to-one correspondence between form and meaning. This does not, however, lead him to deny the existence of linguistic convention, since Searle proposes a principle of expressibility according to which 'Whatever can be meant can be said'. But the interpretation of indirect language acts requires in his view the use of conversational maxims (Grice, 1975), of postulates of conversation (Gordon and Lakoff, 1975) and of context, all of which are parameters previously neglected in linguistic analysis.

Even if Searle does not analyse speech acts in concrete situations of communication, his thinking has opened the way to an interactionist linguistics which postulates the context of utterance as the key to the interpretation of utterances in natural language. From this perspective, it is necessary to take note of the sequential organisation of speech acts and the pragmatic constraints which are imposed by the illocutionary value of these acts on the discourse (Sacks et al., 1974). This means that speech acts act on the other but also oblige the other to

re-act. They therefore create a system of expectations which speakers cannot ignore. All of these aspects of the functioning of speech acts, identified in **discourse analysis**, have to be taken into account in the teaching of languages, because they play a role in the interpretation of speech acts. This is all the more important because indirect speech acts sometimes generate misunderstandings in an intercultural situation.

The complexity represented by the interpretation of indirect speech acts should not, however, lead teachers to encourage the production of explicit performatives in the language class. For the use of a performative utterance can, in certain institutional situations, appear impolite, and damage interpersonal relations. For, in continuing the work of authors on illocutionary logic, Brown and Levinson (1987) have demonstrated the effects of speech acts on the positive and negative face of speakers. The realisation of an act which is 'threatening' for the interlocutor's 'face', sometimes necessitates a 'face work' (Goffman). The acquisition of avoidance strategies is therefore essential if the non-native is to maintain the harmony of relationships, and their cultural dimension must lead language teachers to put the social context again at the heart of language teaching.

### Action-oriented approach and language teaching

All these theoretical currents have influenced the teaching of languages. The **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages** (CEFR) moved away from the communicative approach to adopt an action-oriented approach. This considers the learner above all as a social actor who has tasks to perform. The priority given to social practice favours the acquisition of social conventions and the cultural implications which underlie speech acts. This approach also stimulates pragmatic competence in the learner by giving priority to the practice of conversation rather than the production of isolated illocutionary acts. It thus presents learners with natural language which sometimes necessitates the implementation of complex cognitive processes.

The tasks which are to be performed are not essentially linguistic, and thus the action-oriented

approach facilitates the introduction of the kinetic dimension in the learning of a foreign language: learners have to use their own gestures in the realisation of their linguistic actions. Gesture is furthermore the means of remedying lexical deficits and indicating the organisation of one's own discourse. Non-verbal signals are bearers of meaning, and the understanding of them can also help the learner to decode verbal messages.

However, this approach too often encourages the production of speech acts which can be simulated in the language classroom but which are not representative of daily interactions. Intercultural situations which can create misunderstandings are not taken sufficiently into account. The interpretation of an indirect speech act in particular is a problem for learners of any foreign language, because the linguistic associations which allow them to move from the literal meaning of an utterance to the meaning in context are not necessarily the ones which they associate with the lexical items of a sentence in their mother tongue. Recent research shows that the development of semantic competence favours the development of pragmatic competence and therefore the decoding of utterances. What is important therefore is that coursebooks and **materials development** should take account of the common ground in the acquisition of these competences and offer activities which allow the learner to develop them concurrently.

**See also:** Communicative strategies; Conversation analysis; Discourse analysis; Intercultural communication; *Langue* and *parole*; Pragmatics; Speaking

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SOPHIE ANQUETIL

## Sprachlehrforschung

The term *Sprachlehrforschung* (literally 'language teaching research') refers, within the German

context, to the scientific investigation of foreign language learning within institutional contexts. More correctly, the term should be *Sprachlehr- und-lernforschung* ('language teaching and learning research', see Koordinierungsgremium, 1983), as this scientific discipline covers both learning and teaching processes. The term and the scientific discipline have developed for multiple reasons, and furthermore, the establishment of this discipline has also had structural consequences for language teacher training at universities. If one were looking for equivalents in different languages, then 'applied linguistics' and 'classroom research' or 'educational linguistics' would come to mind in English. In French, *didactique des langues étrangères*; *didáctica de las lenguas extranjeras* in Spanish or *didattica delle lingue straniere* in Italian come closest in meaning. In the Italian context – as well as in Poland – the term *glottodidattica* or glottodidactics is also used. These equivalents only partially cover the meaning of the German term, and this brings up the question of what the subject matter of this German discipline is and what the reasons for its development have been.

The discussion in the mid-1970s about language learning and teaching can be summarised thus: The foreign language pedagogy of that time was criticised because it was mainly based on personal experience and consisted of 'recipes' for foreign language teaching which were not based on empirical research, and because it was centred on schools and as a consequence on younger learners. The critics were helped by the rise of psycholinguistic concepts that put the foreign language learning process at the heart of their interest. Especially powerful was the concept of **interlanguage** and, with that, the assumption that foreign language learning is the result of interaction between a multitude of factors. These factors interact strongly and are related to the learner, the teacher, the situation in the classroom, the methods, and the policy framework such as learning goals or guidelines. Foreign language learning and teaching can be seen as the interaction of a multitude of factors on many levels. This interaction has been called *Faktorenkomplexion* (factoral complexity) (Koordinierungsgremium, 1983), which has been further developed conceptually (e.g. Königs, 1983). It is

the foundation of *Sprachlehrforschung* (Königs, 1991), which has set itself the task of going beyond traditional, recipe-like foreign language didactics and which also takes the adult learner into account.

The consolidation of 'German as a Foreign Language', which was shaped as a scientific subject only in the 1970s in Germany, inspired many theses and scientific articles which focussed on institutional language learning outside schools. This is also the reason why *Sprachlehrforschung* was, in the beginning, very learner-oriented, i.e. starting from the needs, abilities and conditions of the individual learner, the process of learning a language in a classroom is analysed in order to arrive at well-grounded suggestions to improve foreign language teaching. Thus, *Sprachlehrforschung* views the language learning process as a process *sui generis* which does not necessarily have parallels in different fields of study. This position has led to specific developments within the discipline, which can be either depicted as a way of finding conflicts to sharpen the borderline with other disciplines or as a motor for the development of new scientific methods and results. In fact, these two points of view are connected and depend on each other.

It was deemed insufficient to use linguistic models to describe foreign language learning. Linguistic ideas are seen as important basics and support for describing language learning, but they are not expected to have the potential to explain the specific problems of language learning. This became evident in the discussion about the contrastive hypothesis and **contrastive analysis**. Differences between linguistic systems may lead to learning difficulties but they do not have to and, conversely, identical structures are no guarantee for the absence of learning difficulties. Linguistic contrast is not enough to describe the quality of the language learning process. Even more obviously, this problem surfaced during the debate about *Didaktische Grammatiken* (pedagogical grammars, see Bausch, 1979). One of the results was the well-grounded view that modelling the object which is to be learned without considering the learning subject does not lead to a model of language acquisition that is relevant for the foreign language classroom. Of course the more application-oriented language

description models that were developed in linguistic **pragmatics** were seen as a step in the right direction towards describing the language learning process, especially in contrast to the system-oriented models of structuralist linguistics. Nevertheless, they were not seen as a sufficient way to explain the initialisation of language learning processes. This rather strict dissociation from **linguistics** has to be seen in the light of another development in this area unique to Germany: German *Angewandte Linguistik* (literally: ‘applied linguistics’) has focussed on areas of research that are concerned with the application of linguistic knowledge to areas outside foreign language teaching. The programmes of the annual congress of the Gesellschaft für Angewandte Linguistik (GAL – ‘Association for Applied Linguistics’) are a clear example. In contrast to that, applied linguistics in the Anglo-Saxon tradition has focussed on language acquisition to a much larger extent.

One effect of *Sprachlehrforschung*’s focus on the learning subject has been attempts to find models, theories and hypotheses which would lead to far-reaching, universal axioms. These attempts are often based on data that were elicited outside the foreign language classroom and interpreted without accounting for aspects of language learning that were induced by classroom processes. *Sprachlehrforschung* has always been very sceptical about these efforts, because it regards the processes within the classroom as genuinely important for the language learning process and for research within that field of study (see Bausch and Königs, 1983). This does not exclude data from second language acquisition research per se from being integrated in papers on classroom research (see Königs, 1992), but it is more logical to begin this research in the actual classroom and then to analyse and interpret the question of whether the results also apply to language learning outside the classroom.

The aim of *Sprachlehrforschung* to find empirical evidence for suggestions to improve the foreign language classroom has made it necessary to develop suitable empirical methods. These methods must ensure that the results satisfy scientific standards and that they are capable of giving insight into actual foreign language learning processes. *Sprachlehrforschung* must deal with the problem

of making *Faktorenkomplexion* (factoral complexity) accessible empirically. This has led to many papers that used qualitative approaches and tried to triangulate their data. As a consequence, a highly differentiated network of empirical approaches was developed, with sociological methodology being one of the major sources. Over time, subjective theories (*subjektive Theorien*) became more popular, probably because they put the learning individual at the centre of attention, which is a main feature of *Sprachlehrforschung* in general. The major aim of these papers was to find a way to identify among the multitude of factors those that improve and those that hamper foreign language learning processes. Although experiments in laboratories were not generally excluded, the major portion of the empirical data was elicited from the natural research environment: foreign language learning within the classroom. Of course, it is very important to choose and develop the empirical methods very carefully and to check their appropriateness for analysing the complex mental processes that constitute foreign language learning (see Grotjahn, 2005).

The most important areas are learner autonomy, task-based learning, new media, didactics of multilingualism, inter- and transcultural learning, language testing and using the **Common European Framework of Reference** to develop learning standards. The intense research on grammar and grammatical models for explaining foreign language learning, which was dominant in the 1980s and 1990s, has decreased, while the interest in the mental lexicon and the semantic side of human information processing has clearly increased.

Up-to-date *Fremdsprachendidaktik* is no longer the same as in the 1970s. It has clearly defined research interests and has improved and even transcended old research methods – without a doubt a merit of *Sprachlehrforschung*. Whether these developments justify speaking of a paradigm shift remains open to discussion. There is, however, no doubt that the developments have been considerable, especially taking the initial situation into account.

**See also:** Applied linguistics; *Didactique des langues*; *Fremdsprachendidaktik*; Learning

styles; Psychology; Second language acquisition theories; Untutored language acquisition

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FRANK G. KÖNIGS

## Standard language

A standard language is the codified, written variety of a language that is used in formal and official

communication. It is accessible to all speakers of a variety of that language, but its usage is associated with prestige and high social value. Standard language is often taken to be synonymous with national language and thus national borders can limit its geographical spread. Standard language can be seen as the ideal-type variety of a specific language.

### Defining features of standard language

Following the definition above, these features can be taken to characterise standard languages: codification, accessibility for all speakers of the language, high social value and geographical spread. The difficulty with the concept of standard language lies in the fact that these features are not absolute, but in most cases only hold to some degree.

Codification entails that rules and norms regarding syntax, lexicon, orthography, and **pronunciation** have to be recorded and agreed. This also implies that a writing system exists that is used for recording purposes, but also for communication. Since the standard variety is captured in written format in **grammar** books and **dictionaries** it is also implied that standard language usually equals written language. An open question is whether or not languages without a writing system can still have a standard variety. It also has to be noted that standards can set varying emphasis on the defining linguistic features. Thus, British and American English vary at phonological, lexical, and orthographical level, but only in British English pronunciation is there an explicit defining feature in the form of the so-called Received Pronunciation. In this case we find competing standards. There can also be cases where different varieties of one language would qualify as potential standard varieties. A case in point is Corsican. To avoid conflict because of standardisation, a so-called polynomic approach has been chosen in Corsica: phoneme–grapheme correspondence has been agreed but no unified orthography has been defined, in order to allow regional varieties to be represented equally in writing (Jaffe, 1999).

The requirement that there should be accessibility for all speakers of the language means that

the standard variety should not contain linguistic features that are incomprehensible for speakers of another variety of that language. However, accessibility does not mean that all members of a speech community have to be literate in the standard variety, nor does it mean that all members use standard pronunciation. On the contrary, a considerable degree of **variation** can be observed at phonological level. Thus, standard pronunciation of word final < ig > in **German** is [ɪç], but dictionaries often note that in Southern Germany [ɪk] is the dominant and thus implicitly the standard form.

Prestige and social value are associated with standard language for various reasons. Since standard language is linked to written language it is also linked to education. Therefore, command of standard language implies access to and some degree of education. Then, as a variety used for formal and official communication, standard language is linked to the sphere of government and administration. It is further associated with cultural and often religious activities. For these reasons it gains high social value. This value may also lie in the fact that economically powerful and influential social classes predominantly use the standard variety. Further, Milroy (2000) points out that British English standard pronunciation is explicitly oriented towards educated, upper classes and thus is linked to prestige. In reverse this implies that command over the standard variety allows access to education and higher social and economic ranks and it thus gains value as a means of social advancement.

The geographical aspect of standard language also shows some ambiguity. Contrary to dialects, which are regional, standard language is defined by its supraregional spread. However, its influence often appears to stop at national borders. **English** and the notion of ‘world Englishes’ are a case in point, but so is **German**. Here the concept of ‘pluricentricity’ has been brought into the discussion. It is assumed that at least three standards exist: an Austrian, a German and a Swiss, each of which is limited by national borders or those of the Swiss cantons (Clyne, 1992; Ammon, 1995). In this concept speakers see their national variety as an acceptable variation to the standard (Pfrehm, 2011). In this case, standard language, national

language and national borders seem to interact and converge to some degree. But there are also cases where a standard is limited to a region within a nation state, as for example in Catalonia. Here the standard language is used to distinguish one region from another and to define an autonomous identity. This leads to little variation within the region, and Standard Catalan having to fulfil the function of the standard variety as well as of less formal registers (Frekko, 2009).

So far standard language, then, can be seen as being defined by some understanding within a speech community about what linguistic features mark the standard and when and where it can be used. The details of the definition of the standard variety are spelled out differently for most of the known standard languages.

### Historical, political and ideological issues around standardisation

In line with the arguments above, Milroy and Milroy (1999: 18–19) point out that standard language – in their case Standard English – is hard to define and that except for written English a high level of variation appears to be acceptable. The reason for this seems to be that language resists uniformity and stability. Hence, the idea of an invariable, universally valid standard appears to not hold in reality or as Chambers (2009: 226) states: ‘There is no evidence to suggest that standardization is natural behavior.’ However, standardisation happens for a variety of reasons and it is this process rather than its – temporary – outcome that should be examined, according to Milroy and Milroy (1999).

Historically standard varieties often evolved because the variety in use at political, economic or religious centres has spread into other regions, for example, because travelling merchants brought their variety with them and if one needed to trade with them one had to accept their language. This indicates that standardisation is coupled with power. Using one widely accepted variety as common means of communication has obvious advantages, but the choice of the variety is hardly accidental. Nevertheless, it may have a desirable effect in that a shared language leads to political

stability (see Chambers, 2009: 226–27, for a brief discussion). This process can be conflict-laden, and therefore standardisation sometimes aims at defining a variety that shows little to no features of a specific regional or social variety, but rather aims at neutrality (see Gal, 2001 for the case of Hungary; and Milroy, 2000 for the United States).

If standard languages historically emerged out of economic and/or political power relations, standardisation nowadays is often given to institutions, such as the Académie Française with its long history, or groups of language professionals such as the cross-national panel of experts that worked on a new standard orthography for German from 1997 to 2004.

### Standard language and (foreign) language teaching

Competence in the standard language is one aim of school-based education. Similarly, in foreign language teaching the standard variety of the taught language provides the teaching aim. The advantage is that it represents a well-defined system that provides criteria against which the achievements of a language student can be assessed. These are at the base of **assessment** tests that need to be valid and reliable and that also allow the student to provide evidence of his or her language competence.

Against these desirable effects of the availability of a standard, there stand functional and pragmatic considerations that reflect the motivation and needs that lead a language student towards learning a language. It may well be helpful to at least know about the variation to be expected in the target language. And if native-like competence is the aim, then one needs to ask whether this entails coming as close as possible to an ideal-type, often normative description of the target language, or if the regional and social context provides the benchmark.

**See also:** Authenticity; Language awareness; Linguistic imperialism; Mother tongue; Native speaker; Pedagogical grammar; Pronunciation teaching; Skills and knowledge in language learning; Vocabulary



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PATRICK GROMMES

## Stereotypes

A stereotype is a view of an individual or a group of people held by others based on commonly held

assumptions that may not be the result of direct, personal knowledge of those people. Stereotypes can act as filters through which we view other people, their way of life, cultural traits, values and so on. They may serve as summaries, offering a convenient way of dealing with the many social and cultural groups we may encounter in our everyday lives. Stereotypes are in evidence in most societies and some even cross international boundaries. It will be emphasised that they are socially and culturally constructed and not immune to change and reworking. They frequently, but not always, contain negative content that can cause many difficulties for members of groups being judged by a stereotype rather than factual information.

The origins of the word come from Greek, with *stereos* meaning solid and *typos*, meaning mark. It entered more common social currency when considering reproduced ideas that are far removed from the original. The term is also used to refer to ‘preconceived ideas about individuals, groups or objects, when these preconceptions are shared by members of particular groups or societies’ (Mann, 1983: 378). In another definition, a stereotype is

a label which involves a process of categorisation and evaluation. Although it may refer to situations or places, it is most often used in conjunction with representation of social groups. In its simplest terms, an easily grasped characteristic (usually negative) is presumed to belong to a whole group.

(O’Sullivan et al., 1997: 126)

Problems arise when negative features of stereotypes prejudice **beliefs** about people who we do not know. Stereotypes can also offer false justification of serious discrimination against different groups of people, such as foreigners and other minority groups, and lead to verbal and physical abuse, violence, murder, and even genocide. This is because in performing the function of providing shorthand information about a particular group, or acting as a measuring stick, false assumptions and preconceptions can take over from valid knowledge. Bigotry may take the place of reason. Derogatory ideas and beliefs, then, are often associated with the use of stereotypes. Stereotypes tend to be oversimplistic in content and unresponsive to evidence provided

about the people being stereotyped which, if more rational criteria are used, indicates that the stereotype needs to be revised if not abandoned altogether.

There are sets of roles and related behaviours that are deemed suitable for each sex so that men and women become 'gendered subjects' (O'Sullivan et al., 1997: 224). There are also clear stereotypes of ethnic groups, social class and geographical regions within a country, for example of London-born 'Cockneys' or northerners in England. Within most countries there are regional stereotypes often based upon historical factors, competition for status and acceptance, even disputes, misunderstandings and possible enmity. There are also stereotypes of specific groups in society such as professions like the police, lawyers, doctors, and so on.

Stereotypes may include ideas not only about what people within a particular group may look like or how they talk but also about their general behaviour, traits, ways of thinking and even what type of food they may like. A stereotypical view might begin with the statement that all members of a particular group do or like something, which offers a very generalised set of ideas.

There are ideological functions to stereotypes because they may be 'a means by which support is provided for one group's differential (often discriminatory) treatment of another' (O'Sullivan et al., 1997: 127). It has been deemed acceptable in the past to treat people as slaves, to imprison and torture them just because they have been members of a negatively stereotyped group. There are clear links to racist practices in this sense, just as sexism is supported by derogatory stereotypes about women. The use of extremely negative characteristics and features in political propaganda comes to mind here.

Ethnocentrism is also linked to this. Ethnocentrism involves members of one nationality viewing their own society and culture as being at the centre of the world, and seeing themselves as more important than and superior to others. When nationalism and ethnocentrism are taken to the extreme, resulting in the unjustified hatred of other nations, we can talk of xenophobia.

We come in contact with stereotypes and internalise them during the process of socialisation as we grow up and learn about the society and culture

around us (Barrett, 2007). Stereotypes can be learned from others, such as immediate family members during primary socialisation, as well as through peer groups, education and the media during secondary socialisation. Patterns of behaviour are absorbed through the reading materials and playthings of children and the social roles they see acted out around them.

Various forms of media, such as advertisements, can reinforce certain stereotypes as well as confronting and perhaps changing others. The roles, behaviour, language and actions of characters in various television and radio programmes, advertisements and in print media can all be analysed in terms of the extent to which they conform to commonly held stereotypes. Children may be particularly sensitive to what is presented to them as they go through the socialisation process.

From the mid-1990s, research has shown that academic settings are full of negative stereotypes about the potential for achievement of certain groups. This 'stereotype threat' leads to such groups not performing as well as they could because they accept that, in comparison with people of other groups, they are expected to perform poorly (Schmader, 2010).

## Stereotypes and language teaching

Educational practices may confront stereotypes learned at home and in the locality, but they may also reinforce them. Stereotypes have appeared frequently in language teaching as a result of conscious intentions or unconscious reworking of commonly used social constructs. They can be considered as part of the cultural dimension of language learning. In the past there have been clear racial stereotypes used in the **materials** and media, for example, about different groups of people, as well as where they live and their ways of life. The bowler-hatted 'typical' Englishman in foggy London, the kilted and financially stringent Scot, are two British examples. These have been reconsidered in more recent times with the advent of political correctness. Some have been viewed as relatively harmless or funny, although humorous stereotypes that mock or make fun of people can be viewed as a form of abuse. Jokes about ethnic

groups are increasingly questioned because they may help reproduce power inequalities and lead people to view those groups in derogatory terms.

Stereotypes in language learning materials may hinder rather than help learners of other languages, and this issue is one looked at more seriously than in the past. No language materials are value-free, and the cultural content can include whether or not stereotypes are evident and how, if they are, they can affect the learner. **Human rights** education would point out the dangers of stereotypes, and teaching that involves empathy with minority groups in society can also be seen as a way to counteract negative effects upon learners.

Although stereotypes may appear as oversimplifications of social and cultural traits, Perkins (1979: 127) pointed out that it is not such a simple process. She identified shortcomings in the way that stereotyping is normally assumed to operate. It is not always negative nor always about minority groups or the less powerful in society. Stereotypes can also be held about one's own social group and not just the 'Other'. It has already been pointed out that they are neither constantly rigid nor unchanging, and sometimes they can be supported by empirical evidence. Perkins argued that stereotypes would not work culturally if they were so simple and erroneous.

Stereotypes, then, are probably not going to disappear because they can perform some useful functions if treated carefully. It is likely, however, that there will continue to be changes in existing stereotypes the world over. With increased **cultural awareness** and contacts, it is hoped that negative and untruthful aspects can be minimised so that people can judge for themselves the individual worth and merits of others rather than viewing whole groups in generalised and often prejudiced ways.

**See also:** Attitudes and language learning; Beliefs about other countries; Cultural awareness; Culture shock; Human rights; Intercultural communication; Psychology; Teacher thinking

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MICHAEL BYRAM  
RUTH CHERRINGTON

## Stern, Hans Heinrich (David)

- b. 1913, Kassel, Germany;
- d. 1987, Toronto, Canada

H.H. (David) Stern was an influential theorist of foreign and second language teaching, whose thinking helped to shape policies for and research on language curriculum, instruction and **teacher education**, particularly in North America and Europe from the 1960s to the 1990s. His major book, *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching* (1983), elaborated an analytic framework of fundamental concepts of which language teachers and policies should necessarily be cognisant: both to be aware of foundational theories and research and to guide their ongoing educational practices. These fundamental concepts include knowledge of one's own learning and teaching experiences, the history of language teaching, concepts of language, the

role of language in societies, the **psychology** of learning languages, and educational policies and theories. A later companion volume, (1992, edited posthumously by his colleagues Patrick Allen and Birgit Harley), presented a multidimensional curriculum framework that aimed to broaden the range of **objectives** and content options conventional to language education while highlighting core issues in teaching, such as whether to present second languages in an intralingual mode (in reference to the second language and culture) or a crosslingual mode (in reference to the first language) and whether to approach language learning analytically or experientially (or both). These books, like Stern's numerous journal articles and contributed chapters, stressed the logical importance and **humanistic** value of closely interrelating language teaching practices, policies, theories and research.

Stern's career began in the 1930s as a teacher of **French** and **German** in Dorset. After completing an MA in 1948 at the University of London Institute of Education, Stern lectured at the University of Hull until 1965. During this time he completed a PhD at the University of London in 1956 and worked in the early 1960s as a research officer at the UNESCO Institute for Education in Hamburg on the IEA studies of educational achievement in twenty-two countries. The latter research led to two major books on language education in primary schools (1967, 1969). After a period as reader in **applied linguistics** at the University of Essex, Stern moved in 1968 to Toronto, where he founded the Modern Language Centre of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, which he directed as professor until his retirement in 1981. He organised and inspired numerous projects on language teaching, particularly to enhance the teaching and learning of French in predominantly English-speaking regions of Canada. Stern's professional contributions were warmly remembered by various educators in a festschrift honouring his retirement (Mollica, 1981).

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ALISTER CUMMING

## Strategic competence

In the literature on second language learning and use, the scope and function of strategic competence have been variously defined and interpreted. This is due partly to the variety of definitions of communicative competence, to which strategic competence is generally agreed to be indispensable, and partly to the problematic interface between implicit (unconscious) and explicit (conscious) mental processes. However, all definitions relate strategic competence to the fact that linguistic communication is one of the principal means by which we pursue our social purposes. Essentially, strategic competence is responsible for the plans, whether implicit or explicit, by which communication is shaped. The concept of strategic competence is fundamental to discussion of communicative approaches to language teaching, **communicative strategies** and **strategies of language learning**, and centrally implicated in discussion of **autonomous learning** and **learning styles**.

Among the most influential definitions of strategic competence is the one embedded in Canale and Swain's (1980) definition of communicative competence, which was an attempt to adapt Dell Hymes's (1972) concept to the second language learner/user. According to Canale and Swain (1980: 30), strategic competence is called into play 'to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence'. This definition coincides with one of the principal focuses of **interlanguage** research in the 1970s and 1980s, the exploration of the ways in which language

learners cope with the problems that arise when they are communicating in their target language (see, e.g., Selinker, 1972; Færch and Kasper, 1983); but it encourages a view of strategic competence as a capacity that is engaged only when things go wrong.

By contrast, Bachman (1990) has argued that strategic competence should be seen, not as a subordinate component of communicative competence, but as a more general cognitive capacity that underpins all problem-solving behaviour. According to this view, our strategic competence is obligatorily and continuously engaged in planning, monitoring and evaluating task performance; it is fundamental to the way in which we behave. When the task we are confronted with involves linguistic communication, some of the processes in which we engage are inaccessible to introspection and conscious manipulation (for example, those that have to do with phonological encoding; see Clark and Clark, 1977: 223), whereas others may operate either above or below the threshold of conscious awareness (for example, the selection of one phrase rather than another). When the task in question is one that we have performed many times before, these latter processes are likely to operate largely below the threshold of conscious awareness; whereas when the task is unfamiliar or presents us with some difficulty (the situation which Canale and Swain's 1980 definition addresses), some aspects of our assessment, planning and evaluation may become conscious and deliberate.

This view of strategic competence has three important consequences for foreign language teaching/learning. First, it entails that strategic competence is not something that language learners must develop anew with each new language: they already possess strategic competence by definition, though their explicit control of strategic processes is infinitely variable. At the same time, of course, the demands of learning and using another language should cause their strategic competence to grow both in its implicit and in its explicit dimension. Second, as a general cognitive capacity, strategic competence underlies social as well as linguistic **skills**, and successful communication depends on interactional strategies as well as the strategies we

use to overcome, say, gaps or temporary lapses in our lexical knowledge. Thus strategic competence must be seen in social-interactive as well as individual-cognitive terms (see Kasper and Kellerman, 1997). Third, although it may sometimes be possible to distinguish between communicative and learning strategies in terms of the language learner/user's focus and intention, in psychological terms the distinction cannot easily be maintained. Strategic control of communicative task performance and strategic control of aspects of the language learning process are underpinned by the same general cognitive capacity. This argues for a close two-way relation between language learning and language use.

Perhaps the biggest obstacles to a straightforward understanding of strategic competence are the complex nature of consciousness (see Schmidt, 1994) and the problematic relation between implicit and explicit mental processes (see Morris, 1990). Much of the discussion of strategic competence, and especially of the role of strategies in second language learning and use, assumes continuity between conscious and unconscious mental operations. In many cases this is clearly justified. For example, when we compose a written text, the strategic processes of planning, monitoring and evaluation may sometimes present themselves to our conscious awareness, but they often proceed unconsciously. In other cases, however, and especially when our attempts to deploy communicative or learning strategies are guided by beliefs about aspects of cognition to which we have no introspective access, the matter is much less clear-cut: our minds do not necessarily work in the way we imagine they do.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, the development of explicit strategic control of communicative and learning task performance is necessarily a central concern of second language pedagogy, though how precisely this development should be achieved is likely to remain a matter of controversy.

**See also:** Communicative language teaching; Communicative strategies; Intercultural communication; Psychology; Second language acquisition theories; Speaking; Strategies of language learning; Successful language learners

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DAVID LITTLE

## Strategies of language learning

A language learning strategy is any action that language learners perform in order to increase their target language proficiency. It may be focused on some quite specific task, for example, the learning of an item of **vocabulary** or the memorisation of a grammatical rule. Alternatively, it may have to do with the language learning process in general. For example, learners may decide to organise their vocabulary notes in a particular way, or to evaluate themselves at regular intervals in order to identify aspects of their proficiency that need special attention. Although learning strategies may begin as conscious actions, with frequent use they can become part of the learner's automatic learning behaviour. Research into **successful language learners** has yielded taxonomies of learning strategies, which have been used to develop programmes of strategy training.

Among the most influential taxonomies of language learning strategies is the one elaborated by Oxford (1990: 14f.), who distinguishes between 'direct strategies for dealing with the new language' (subdivided into memory, cognitive and compensatory strategies) and 'indirect strategies for general management of learning' (subdivided into affective, social and metacognitive strategies). Although classifications of this kind are arguably helpful in providing both a map of the territory and a basis for pedagogical intervention, they can also be misleading. For one thing, they are not exclusive: behaviours described as language learning strategies are also deployed in language use (and in other domains too). For example, the affective

strategies which learners employ to maintain positive self-perceptions may be called upon to manage **motivational** aspects of the learning process, but they can also play a role in the management of interactions with **native speakers** of the target language. Similarly, metacognitive strategies (like consciously paying attention, or planning how to go about a particular task) are implicated in language use no less than in language learning. Taxonomies of language learning strategies can also mislead by seeming to propose clear-cut categories, whereas distinctions between strategy types are often fuzzy and difficult to maintain. In Oxford's taxonomy, for example, cognitive strategies are classified as 'direct' and metacognitive strategies as 'indirect', but in reality metacognition is part of cognition, and it is often impossible to draw a clear line between them.

The pedagogical move towards an explicit focus on strategies of language learning came from two impulses. The first was the interest in **communicative strategies** that emerged from research into **interlanguage** in the 1970s and 1980s (e.g. Færch and Kasper, 1983). Empirical explorations of the strategic behaviour of second language learners/users inevitably raised the question whether explicit instruction could enhance performance; and interest in explicit instruction gave rise to the idea that learners might also benefit from strategy training that focused on language learning rather than language use. Pedagogical measures that derive from this source tend to be strongly analytical and sharply focused (for practical examples, see Oxford, 1990).

The second impulse behind the pedagogical move towards an explicit focus on learning strategies was the growth of interest in **autonomous learning**. If learner autonomy arises from acceptance of responsibility for one's own learning (Holec, 1981), it follows that pedagogies oriented to the development of learner autonomy must be concerned to develop learners' explicit strategic control of the language learning process (cf. Little, 1996). While some of these pedagogies have followed the path of strategy training, others have been content to involve learners as fully as possible in the reflective processes of planning, monitoring and evaluating their own learning (see Dam, 1995), without attempting to distinguish clearly between

strategy types or to focus learning activities on specific forms of strategic behaviour.

Strategy training is vulnerable to criticism on at least four grounds. First, 'it is not clear that what differentiates good and poor learners is the choice of strategy; it may simply be the range and amount of use of strategies' (McDonough, 1995: 83). Second, because most strategies can be deployed unconsciously as well as consciously, strategy training may simply make learners consciously aware of strategies they were already using unconsciously. Third, the existence of individual **learning styles** casts some doubt on the extent to which all strategies are in principle equally accessible to all learners. Fourth, metacognition is by no means an infallible guide to cognition (see Morris, 1990), so that we can never be certain that what learners think they are doing corresponds to underlying mental processes to which they have no introspective access. For all these reasons it is difficult to establish with certainty that strategy training is the best means of increasing learners' strategic control of the language learning process. It may be at least as effective to concentrate on helping them to engage as fully as possible in the reflective tasks of planning, monitoring and evaluating their own learning.

**See also:** Autonomy and autonomous learners; Communicative language teaching; Communicative strategies; Learning styles; Learning to learn; Motivation; Strategic competence

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DAVID LITTLE

## Structural linguistics

Structural linguistics has two different origins: one developed from the Prague school in Europe, and the other was related to the study and analysis of Indian languages in the United States. Because of its concern with the later flourishing of transformational generative grammar, as well as its influence on second language teaching in Japan and many other parts of the world, American Structural Linguistics (ASL) is focused on in this section.

The American structural linguistics prospered mainly in the second quarter of the twentieth century, i.e. from the early 1930s through 1960. ASL differs from structuralism in Europe in that its originators were interested in describing the native American Indians' languages, which had no writing system. The researchers relied solely on their auditory impressions in order to discover how the sound system of a given Indian language was phonologically and morpho-syntactically constructed.

Kenneth L. Pike is well known for his fieldwork by his monolingual demonstration – describing an unknown language only by talking to a native informant.

They avoided mixing of linguistic levels, priority being given of course to the phonological description. Sticking to the phonology-first approach while pretending to know nothing about mental and semantic properties reflects the Bloomfieldian concept that 'The only useful generalization is inductive generalization' (Bloomfield, 1933). C. C. Fries's emphasis on formal features of language also characterize ASL. In other words, some of the linguists in this tradition even assumed that whatever is linguistically significant must be observed and what is not observed should not be the research target because of its lack of observable evidence. The second language teaching based on the ASL tradition aims for the mastery of the sound system and grammatically observable features of arrangement. C. C. Fries states as follows:

In learning a new language, the chief problem is not, at first, that of learning vocabulary items. It is first the mastery of the sound system – to understand the stream of speech, to hear the distinctive sound features and approximate their production. It is second the mastery of the features of arrangement that constitute the structure of the language. (1945: 3)

This so-called oral approach formed the basis for foreign language teaching around the middle of the twentieth century. However, in 1957, Noam **Chomsky**, an initiator of the transformational generative grammar, published *Syntactic Structures*, whose new concept fundamentally changed the ASL-based teaching. The main problems raised can be summarized as follows:

1. The stimulus–response theory (SR) only partially reflects what's working in the mind. Bloomfield tried to describe language as objectively as possible, even to the avoidance of the concepts of the language user. As seen in Chomsky's critical review of Skinner's **behaviourism**, the animal's linguistic behavior is clearly limited to



the SR, while the use of the language by us humans is free from SR, and much more creative.

2. Structural differences do not always emerge. Although the following sentences (a) and (b) are structurally the same, the meaning is different. (a) means that he is the person who is easily pleased. On the other hand, sentence (b) means that he is the type of person who is eager to please people around him.

(a) He is easy to please.

(b) He is eager to please.

As long as one sticks to the sentence observable on the surface, one cannot come up with the correct interpretation of the sentences.

3. Ambiguity cannot be solved by formal features only. The sentence 'Who made her dress?' can be interpreted in two ways. One asks who made the dress she wore last night or something like that, which is more or less the normal one. The other asks 'Who made her put on that dress she was wearing?' On the surface there is no clue as to which to choose.

4. Language is internally rule-governed. What is observable on the surface is, according to ASL, the sole evidence which gives a clue to understanding the feature and structure of the language. On the other hand, transformational generative grammarians state that the string of speech on the surface is performance-related phenomena subject to false starts, rephrasing and careless mistakes, etc. Thus the deep structure and its transformation rules constitute the language, reflecting the competence of the language users.

5. The status of the phoneme is theoretically shaky.

(a) rider – ri[D]er

(b) writer – wri[D]er

In the major dialect of American English, the intervocalic /t/ and /d/ are both realized as the same flap. As there is no phonetic difference between them, the phonetic symbol [D] is used to transcribe this common flap. Thus the question arises: Are 'rider' and 'writer' indistinguishable? The answer is no. The preceding diphthong /aI/ is lengthened before voiced sounds, and shortened before voiceless sounds. And it is this vowel length that distinguishes (a) from (b).

The Bloomfieldian concept of the phoneme was 'once a phoneme, everywhere a phoneme'. However, as the above sentences show, the linear arrangement of phonemes was not always correct.

Although the ASL's physicalism was severely criticized, the formal aspect of language should not be overlooked, particularly in foreign language teaching. Every language has its own phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic systems differing in many respects from those of the EFL learner's mother tongue. Unless the formal aspects of the target language, in this case English, are mastered, one cannot hope to achieve the advanced level of English. The mental-prone approach, if taken to the extreme, might be the return to the grammar-translation method.

**See also:** Audiolingual method; Audio-visual language teaching; Grammar; *Langue* and *parole*; Linguistics; Notions and functions; Pragmatics; Texts and corpus linguistics

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TAKASHI SHIMAOKA

## Study abroad

For centuries, individuals have gone abroad for part or all of a university degree programme. The expectation is that extended immersion in a society where the target language (TL) is used every day will enhance learners' proficiency, especially oral-aural skills and less formal registers. Improved linguistic skills are not the only gain, nor is improvement automatic. Because of the huge range of factors which come into play when a learner is abroad, the outcomes vary considerably from one individual to another. Study abroad (SA) is a relatively new **research** domain, but recent years have seen an expansion of interest to match the explosion in student mobility, itself linked to the globalisation and marketisation of higher education.

Study abroad research has generally embraced recent trends in **second language acquisition**, including the 'social turn', a rejection of essentialised notions, a shift of emphasis from quantitative to qualitative studies, recognition of wider educational and social contexts, and a consensus that such contexts, like cultures, **identities** and **motivations**, are fluid, dynamic, situated, and constantly reconstructed through interaction.

Contextual variation combines with different methodological approaches in terms of numbers, methods and measures to make SA a tricky research field, whose only constant is high individual variation, resulting from individual motivations, attitudes, personalities, strategies, decisions and actions. Linguistic progress depends on interacting with people and media: the extent of opportunities, and the degree to which the individual grasps those opportunities, crucially determine outcomes.

Defining 'study abroad' first requires distinguishing between whole-programme SA (also known as diploma or degree mobility) and within-programme SA (credit mobility): the two domains share many features, but the perspective of very temporary as against semi-permanent residence inevitably influences students' behaviours and learning. Some definitions restrict 'study abroad' to within-programme mobility, or to programmes with specifically linguistic goals or those offering formal language classes. Most include voluntary work or a placement/internship (including working as a language assistant in a school) alongside or in lieu of university study, where such residence is recognised within the degree programme.

Differing definitions and data collection methods make accurate figures hard to obtain. The OECD estimate of 3.7 million mobile students in 2009, an increase of 59 per cent since 2000, represents just 2 per cent of the world's university students, and underlines the scope for further growth against a background of global competition between universities, and recognition of the graduate employability advantages of a degree programme which provides experience of different countries, languages and cultures. The USA and Europe provide most SA research, but in the European Union's ERASMUS exchange programme, which has seen 2.5 million mobile students since 1987, typical duration is 6 months, while most Americans study abroad for only 2–8 weeks.

Learning objectives and outcomes go beyond the merely linguistic. The UK-based definition of six alphabetical categories, namely academic, cultural, intercultural, linguistic, personal, and professional (Coleman and Parker, 2001) has proved robust in both teaching and research contexts, and similar categorisations are used elsewhere (e.g. Engle and Engle, 2003; Bolen, 2008). While the six categories of individual learning outcome are adequate from an institutional point of view (though they pose real problems for **assessment**), two caveats are appropriate. First, research subjects portrayed essentially as 'language learners' are in reality individuals with complex identities, for whom novelty and fun count as much or more than improved Spanish: purely cognitive approaches are perhaps better suited to classroom contexts than to

study abroad, where the whole emotional, physical, social person is engaged. Second, SA is often expected to have broader social or political outcomes, for example in terms of citizenship or subsequent labour mobility.

Adopting a modified hard-science model, many studies seek to compare the results of study abroad with those of other 'treatments', usually At-Home (AH) and domestic Immersion (IM) of the North American summer-school type. Valuable though such comparisons are, SA students are not the same as non-SA students: they are higher achievers, wealthier, whiter, more female, and above all differently motivated. Additionally, 'the study abroad context' simply does not exist: it varies according to both the institutional framework and the individual's profile within that framework.

Home institutions can influence only some of the contextual variables identified as playing a role in SA outcomes. Age, timing of SA, the size and nature of the student group, pre-departure proficiency level, language and non-language classes in the host university are often linked to the home institution's programme. Especially important is whether the students involved are specialist linguists. Some reviews wrongly conflate data from British or Irish studies, whose highly motivated informants may bring 10 years of intensive prior study, a lot of travelling, and near-native TL proficiency to their year abroad, with USA studies of sensation-seeking generalists offering minimal TL skills and spending a few weeks abroad for the first time. Sojourn duration and accommodation arrangements are often significant factors, but only when linked to social integration. The institutional framework, embracing preparation, curriculum integration, support, tasks while abroad, debriefing on return, assessment, and post-SA TL maintenance affect linguistic and other impacts. The particular combination of home language (L1) and target language (L2) and their relative status impinges on SA as on all SLA.

One key factor which has emerged from qualitative studies is the social and linguistic networks which the student establishes in the host country. This factor is best conceived as concentric circles, with the inner circle comprising co-nationals, the middle circle other outsiders, and the outer circle

locals who are native/expert speakers of the TL. With time, there tends to be centrifugal movement. Successful sojourners use the secure home base of fellow-country(wo)men to get to know other people, such as exchange students from other countries, who often share their marginal status, learning aims and hybrid linguistic identity. This stage may in itself bring intercultural gains, but reliance on a lingua franca may limit TL use, and the greatest linguistic and cultural gains, as well as access to a wider range of local people, come only when the student socialises with locals themselves. The extent depends on SA duration, individual motivation and effort, and institutional context. Some programmes seek to build in short-cuts from the inner to outer circle, notably homestays with families, buddying with local students on similar programmes, or placements in local companies or schools. Success varies considerably, and it seems that a local sexual partner is a more reliable route to enhanced TL proficiency, cultural insights and intercultural skills.

The worldwide growth in English-taught university courses is just one of the global factors which, like easier and cheaper air travel and globalisation, make it unwise to combine, as many reviews do, SA studies from different periods. Another is the explosion in telecommunications (Coleman and Chafer, 2010) which today allows daily networking with friends and family at home, with consequent dilution of the immersion experience. Physical situation no longer matches psychological and emotional location, social networks are both real and virtual, and 'abroad is less abroad than it once was'.

Despite the variability in SA research, where heterogeneity and conditionality lurk beneath every generalisation, an overview of findings is possible. Overall proficiency improves, and faster than through home tuition, as declarative L2 knowledge is proceduralised and automatised. Enhanced fluency is evidenced by speed of delivery, reduction of pauses and hesitations, longer phrases and utterances, more native-like filled pauses, use of chunks, and fewer but more sophisticated communicative strategies. Enhanced listening comprehension is matched by substantial gains in lexis and phonology. Gains in reading and writing, whether understood

as general production and comprehension or as academic literacy, depend on features of context, including formal tuition. The small gains in morpho-syntax for advanced learners are not easily measured. Nor are the slow advances in pragmatic competence (Barron, 2002) and in sociolinguistic competence (Regan et al., 2009). TL proficiency peaks at completion of study abroad, and is reflected in both greater linguistic confidence and learner autonomy, but can at best only be maintained on return.

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JAMES A. COLEMAN

## Successful language learners

The investigation of general processes and stages in the **acquisition** and use of foreign and second languages is one of the main purposes of research into second language acquisition. This research is pursued by the search for insights into individual differences between learners. In foreign and second language acquisition it is unfortunately a rather unusual individual case if an **adult learner** masters a second or foreign language to **native speaker**, or near-native speaker, level. The normal case is that learners achieve different approximations to such learning and do so at different speeds. Only first language or very early bilingual language acquisition is usually complete and probably effortless, leading to mother tongue competences.

Widely shared observations and expectations of both foreign language teachers and of learners themselves suggest that there are successful/good and less successful/bad foreign language learners. Why it should be the case, that some people are more successful in foreign language acquisition than others who seem to learn languages under the same or at least comparable conditions, has been the starting point since the early 1970s for substantial research on individual differences among foreign language learners.

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One early influential research project which inspired many follow-up studies was ‘the good language learner’ project which appeared in 1996 in a second and unchanged edition almost 20 years after its first publication in 1978. This project addressed the question: ‘What makes good language learners tick? What do they do that poor language learners don’t do? Could we help the poor learners by teaching them some of the good learners’ tricks?’ (Naiman et al., 1996: xii). It developed from conceptual reflections on the fact that good learners organise their foreign language learning more successfully than others, that they for example pay more attention to grammatical forms, that they seem to be uninhibited and more communicative, and use more guessing **strategies** (cf. Rubin, 1975). With this approach there came the explicit hope that through the investigation of personality characteristics and the inventory of strategies of ‘good’ learners, it would be possible to find directions for deliberate provision of help for ‘bad’ language learners with compensatory procedures taken in teaching. The opposite possibility, of analysing ‘bad’ learners and their learning strategies and of drawing consequences from this analysis, was also attempted (Kinau and Stefanowitsch, 2000).

Research on the good language learner provided important impulses in research on strategies and the development of training in strategies. Today it is self-evident in foreign language teaching to attribute greater significance to learner strategy training not only but especially in the context of activities taken to develop learner **autonomy** (O’Malley and Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990). It is hoped that with strategy training there will be overall more effective and successful foreign language learning. However, it was always simultaneously a matter of debate in how far learning strategies are really susceptible to conscious development and can be transmitted. The dominant opinion seems to be that this is indeed possible (especially with respect to meta-cognitive learning strategies) even if it is not without limit (McDonough, 1999), i.e. it is within the limits determined by learner factors such as the motivation, attitudes, dispositions and capacities of the learner.

Research on such learner factors is substantial but also very heterogeneous. There are various

basic concepts and models, various research methods used, and they are often comparable only to a limited degree. The central focus is on characteristics of foreign language learners which are connected to successful foreign language learning, especially affective factors such as **motivation**, **attitudes** or foreign language anxiety, and cognitive factors such as language **aptitude** or **learning styles**. Whereas affective factors and emotions are thought to be relatively unstable and changeable, cognitive learner factors are characterised by the fact that they are deeply anchored in the personality and quite stable, that is they are factors which apparently cannot be manipulated by foreign language teaching approaches or other external interventions – or at least only in a very limited way.

Motivation is without doubt the factor to which foreign language teaching attributes most influence and also the greatest potential for intervention, from a teaching perspective. Motivation is an affective factor which is made up of various overlapping, complementary and interdependent components which are determined by the personality and biography of learners in their attitudes and orientations towards the language to be learnt and the culture connected with it, and also by the conditions of their learning environment and their socio-cultural milieu. Motivation can change in the course of time and can sometimes be the cause and sometimes the effect of successful foreign language learning. Motivation is thus multidimensional and dynamic. Until the beginning of the 1990s, motivation was presented in research on **second language acquisition** in a socio-psychological model as a function of attitudes and orientations to a foreign language and the culture connected with it (cf. Gardner, 1985). Thereafter, cognitive psychological aspects of motivation (in particular causal attribution, locus of control and expectancy of success, self-efficacy), self-regulation aspects (intrinsic and extrinsic motivation) and contextual aspects (in particular characteristics of foreign language teaching) were given stronger emphasis (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011).

Foreign language anxiety is considered to be an impeding affective factor in successful language learning. In the context of tutored language learning it was shown that communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation are

components of a negative influence (e.g. Horwitz and Young, 1991).

Foreign language aptitude is considered to be, even more than the motivation factor, the most important factor in predicting and explaining individual differences with respect to success in foreign language learning. Foreign language aptitude was defined by Carroll (e.g. Carroll, 1981) as the sum of four independent elements: phonetic coding ability (the ability to identify and to retain sounds in connection with their written form); grammatical sensitivity (the ability to recognise grammatical functions of words within a sentence); inductive language learning ability (the ability to recognise grammatical patterns inductively); rote learning ability (especially the ability for learning by heart). In more recent work (cf. Skehan, 2002) constructs and models of foreign language aptitude were developed and specified in more detail inter alia on the basis of new theories of memory. Furthermore, it became clear that learners have different foreign language aptitude profiles which are characterised by either memory capabilities or analytic capabilities, without there being a significant difference in the effect on learning success. Foreign language aptitude profiles are, however, interrelated with variables in teaching, above all teaching style, and mean that learners can profit more or less from a teaching style which corresponds to their aptitude profile.

Learning styles affect the way in which people approach problems, plan learning processes and acquire insights, and are an important link between cognition and personality. Great potential is often attributed to learning styles from a practical teaching perspective, but they are much debated in second language acquisition research. There are results from research which show different individual variables contributing to learning style, which can roughly be categorised under cognitive dispositions for processing information (e.g. holistic or analytic style, field dependence versus field independence), sensory preferences (e.g. distinguishing visual, auditory and kinaesthetic/tactile types) and also more strongly personality-based dispositions (for example tolerance for ambiguity, **risk taking**, extroversion versus introversion). What is particularly relevant for foreign language teaching practice is the recognition that difficulties in

learning can result from a lack of coincidence between the teaching style or the assumptions of teachers about the learning styles of their learners and the actual existing learning styles of learners (Ehrmann, 1996). In other words an inappropriate teaching style can impede successful learning.

The 'good language learner' studies already rejected the idea that it is possible to determine *the* prototypical good learner who is distinguished by a specific combination of characteristics. Research since then has shown that there are many aspects which have to be taken into consideration, and does not offer simple answers (Griffiths, 2008a). There are many ways in which one can be a successful foreign language learner. Griffiths (2008b: 95) characterises the current state of the art as follows:

The optimism of 30 years ago, which predicted that if we could only find out what good language learners did we could help all learners to learn successfully has given way to the realization that the task is larger and more complicated than was thought at that point in time.

Current research shows that success can never be predicted independently of consideration of learner personality and of the learning context. Individual cases are marked by specific and interdependent constellations of factors which help or hinder second language learning (Riener, 1997).

**See also:** Aptitude for language learning; Attitudes and language learning; Learning to learn; Learning styles; MLAT; Motivation; Motivation theories; Risk-taking and foreign language learning

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CLAUDIA RIEMER

## Suggestopedia

The learning system developed by a Bulgarian medical doctor and psychiatrist, Georgi Lozanov, who started working on his method in the 1960s. Influenced by Indian yoga and Soviet psychology, the aim of suggestopedia is to accelerate learning through suggestion, relaxation, and concentration. It is also known as 'superlearning' (after the book of that name) and is the basis of 'Accelerated Learning'. In the 1970s, Lozanov trained a small number of people in the US in his methods, but in 1980 he was placed under house arrest in Bulgaria and for the next 10 years he was not allowed to communicate with the outside world. During that time, his trainees continued to develop the method (which became known as Accelerated or Accelerative Learning), but when he came out of seclusion, Lozanov claimed that much of his teaching had been misrepresented or misunderstood (one group of people, for example, claimed erroneously that the secret of the method's success lay in the special chairs used for the concert readings). In a private conversation (with Susan Norman in 2005) he said that he wished he had never given an example lesson, since people had picked up on that particular sequence, rather than focusing on the underlying principles, which allow for many different lesson types. He further stated that the most important principle of all was love; that what mattered most was the relationship between the teacher and students, which he described as like caring maternal love. The description of suggestopedia given here is largely based on how it has been interpreted in the west, while trying to remain true to the principles set out by Lozanov.

### The method

The most conspicuous characteristics of suggestopedia (as practised in the west) are 'the decoration,

furniture, and arrangement of the classroom, the use of music, and the authoritative behaviour of the teacher' (Richards and Rodgers, 1986: 142). The procedures of a four-hour intensive suggestopedic class involve:

#### *The first part*

This starts with a review of the previous day's lesson in the form of conversational exchange, songs, games, story-telling, sketches, and plays. To help overcome inhibitions and to allow for more spontaneous expression, each student is given a new name and new profession. Each 'foreign' identity assigned contains repetitions of one or more phonemes that students might find difficult to pronounce in the target language.

#### *The second part*

In the second part of the class, conscious analysis is realised in the form of reading, grammar, and translation. First, the teacher discusses the general content (not structure) of the material, which consists largely of real-life dialogues. The learners then receive the printed dialogue. The translation of each word-group is provided in a column on the right of the page. The teacher answers any questions of interest or concern about the dialogue.

#### *The third part (the seance or concert readings)*

The third part of the suggestopedic language class, the *seance*, provides for memorisation of the new material at an unconscious level. Initially, at least for the 'concert' part, students recline in their comfortable chairs and listen to two readings of the dialogue by the teacher.

- A. The active session: The dialogue is presented using dramatic intonation or voice level. During the active session, the students look at the dialogue on the printed page and repeat to themselves any difficult foreign words and phrases.
- B. The passive session (the concert session at which the unconscious learning system takes over): The material is acted out by the teacher in a dramatic manner over a musical background (slow movements,

usually sixty beats to a minute, of baroque instrumental music).

- B1. A 2-minute introduction which serves as a 'countdown' (baroque music as the background music).
- B2. A series of slow movements of baroque music, lasting some 20 minutes, over which the teacher acts out the lesson dialogue with an emotional or artistic intonation and during which the students, with eyes closed, meditate on the text.
- B3. Fast, cheerful baroque music, lasting 2 minutes, which brings the students out of their relaxed state.

Whereas most literature focuses on the concert readings (which is the part unique to this method), in fact 75 per cent of lesson time is spent on 'elaboration' – practical activation of the language (parts one and two).

## Origins and history

Suggestopedia is often considered together with the **Silent Way**, **total physical response**, and **community language learning** under the title of humanistic methods, which focus as much on the learners as on the subject of the lessons. In the 1960s, Dr Georgi Lozanov discovered that certain yogic techniques of physical and mental relaxation could be used to produce a state of analgesia, or relief from pain, on the one hand, and a state of hypermnnesia, or greatly improved memory and concentration, on the other. One report claimed that a yogi could repeat 1,000 phrases from memory after hearing them only once (Lozanov, 1992: 7). He applied these findings to the field of education. Suggestopedia is the product of his attempts to combine yoga relaxation and verbal suggestion with the Mauger **direct method** to produce a unique system of teaching (Bancroft, 1982). It was used initially to teach young children how to read, and was later developed by Lozanov, along with his partner Dr Evelyn Gateva, as a method of foreign language teaching. Suggestopedia is based on three assumptions: (1) Learning involves the unconscious as well as the conscious mind of the learner; and (2) people are able to learn much faster



than they usually do in an academic setting, but, (3) learning is interfered with by (a) the norms and limitations which society has taught us, and (b) the lack of a harmonious, relaxed working together of all parts of the learner, and (c) consequent failure to make use of powers which lie idle in most people most of the time. In accordance with these assumptions, suggestopedia aims to remove these limiting norms and inhibiting tensions while maximising the learners' power of learning through the desuggestive–suggestive process. According to Richards and Rodgers (1986: 145), 'Desuggestion seems to involve unloading the memory bank, or reserves, of unwanted or blocking memories. Suggestion, then involves loading the memory banks with desired and facilitating memories.' Later in life, Lozanov himself called his method 'Desuggestopedia' and at the time of writing (2010) he also refers to 'Suggestopedia – Reservopedia' (because it draws on the reserve capacities of the mind).

Lozanov (1992) lists six means of the desuggestive–suggestive process: authority, infantilisation, double-planeness, intonation, rhythm, and concert pseudopassiveness.

### **Authority**

People remember and are most influenced by information coming from an authoritative source. Lozanov dictates a variety of prescriptions and proscriptions aimed at having suggestopedia students experience the educational establishment and the teacher as having great authority. Lozanov talks of choosing a 'ritual placebo system' that is most likely to be perceived by students as having high authority (Lozanov, 1992: 267). Well-publicised accounts of learning success lend the method and the institution authority, and commitment to the method, self-confidence, personal distance, acting ability, and a highly positive attitude give an authoritative air to the teacher.

### **Infantilisation**

In a suggestopedic classroom, students are encouraged to return to their childhood ability to learn through play, and everything is designed to create a

general atmosphere of easiness, spontaneity and absence of pressure. This infantilisation is accomplished in part by students' acknowledging the absolute authority of the teacher and in part by their taking part in role playing, games, songs, and gymnastic exercises that help 'the older student regain the self-confidence, spontaneity and receptivity of the child' (Bancroft, 1972: 19).

### **Double-planeness**

The learner learns not only from direct instruction (the conscious level), but from all aspects (physical and emotional) of the environment in which the instruction takes place (the unconscious level). The best learning takes place when there is a coherence between what is happening on each of these two levels. This is what Lozanov refers to as 'double planeness'.

In the suggestopedic classroom, the bright decor of the classroom, the musical background, the comfortable furniture, and the behaviour and personality of the teacher make up the second (unconscious) plane. The way information is presented and practised, through games and songs, also adds to the message (directed at the unconscious mind) that learning is fun and easy.

### **Intonation, rhythm, and concert pseudo-passiveness**

Varying the tone and rhythm of the dialogues helps both to avoid boredom through monotony of repetition and to dramatise, emotionalise, and give meaning to linguistic materials. Lozanov recommends a moderately artistic intonation because it 'increases the information value of the material given, engages the emotional and double-plane aspects of the communicative process more actively, and creates an atmosphere of acceptable significance' (1992: 196).

Suggestopedia uses an 8-second cycle for pacing out data at slow intervals. During the first four beats of the cycle there is silence. During the second four beats the teacher presents the material. Ostrander et al. (1979) present a range of evidence on why this pacing (a time span of 8 seconds) to baroque largo music is so potent. They note that musical rhythms

affect body rhythms, such as heartbeat, and that researchers have noted that 'with a slow heartbeat, mind efficiency takes a great leap forward' (p. 63).

Both intonation and rhythm are co-ordinated with a musical background which helps to induce a relaxed attitude, which Lozanov refers to as concert pseudo-passiveness. This state is felt to be optimal for learning, in that anxieties and tension are relieved and the power of concentration and acceptance of new material is raised. Lozanov recommends a series of baroque slow movements (sixty beats a minute, the ideal beat for meditation in Indian music) in 4/4 time strung together into a concert lasting approximately 30 minutes. In such concerts 'the body relaxed, the mind became alert' (Ostrander et al., 1979: 74).

Lozanov's website ([www.dr-lozanov.com](http://www.dr-lozanov.com)) offers seven principles which he refers to as 'Seven Laws' (and an updating of his earlier thinking): (1) Love (of the teacher for the students), (2) Freedom (for students to learn, and for the teacher to teach in the best way), (3) The Conviction of the Teacher that Something Unusual is Taking Place (the source of the teacher's inspiration), (4) Manifold Increase of Input Volume (at least two to three times greater than in most other methodologies), (5) Global-Partial, Partial-Global; Partial through Global (switching between language in context and looking at linguistic details), (6) The Golden Proportion (the basis of harmony in learning), (7) Use of Classical Art and Aesthetics (which increases the state of receptivity).

## Critique

The Lozanov method has gained attention in various parts of the world. In the United States, descriptions of the almost unbelievable successes of suggestology have appeared in *Psychology Today* (August 1977) and *Parade* magazine (12 March 1978), a Sunday supplement that has an estimated readership in the United States of over 30 million. It was popularised (and Lozanov says misrepresented) by Ostrander, Schroeder, and Ostrander's (1979) book *Superlearning*. However, suggestopedia also received a scathing review in the *TESOL Quarterly*, a journal of somewhat more restricted circulation than *Parade* (Scovel, 1979). Scovel takes special issue with Lozanov's use (and misuse) of scholarly citations,

terminological jargon, and experimental data and states that 'a careful reading of [*Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopediy*] reveals that there is precious little in suggestology which is scientific' (1979: 257). He also notes that Lozanov is unequivocally opposed to any eclectic use of the techniques outside of the full panoply of suggestopedic science.

In the United States, the Society for Suggestive-Accelerative Learning and Teaching (SALT – today called IAL, the International Alliance for Learning) was formed to promote suggestopedia (or its westernised descendant, Accelerated Learning) and conducted experiments to study suggestopedia. Similar societies exist in other countries.

**See also:** Humanistic approaches; Lozanov; Teaching methods; Total Physical Response

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SUSAN NORMAN

MENG-CHING HO

## Sweet, Henry

b. 1845, London; d. 1912, Oxford

Henry Sweet, the irascible if genial phonetician and enemy of all woolly thinking in language learning methodology, was a pioneer in many areas of **linguistics**. His amusing critiques of contemporary 'methods' and **attitudes** to language learning are well worth consideration today, with useful insights on the spoken language, the application of **grammar** rules, the selection and grading of **vocabulary**, and the **psychology** of the learner.

As a descriptive linguist, Sweet published his highly regarded *New English Grammar* (1891) and short but pertinent descriptions of the phonology of many modern European languages (1877), presented in a 'Broad' (essentially phonemic) script that influenced the **International Phonetic Association** (of which he became a member). As a philologist, he edited many Old English manuscripts for the first time and developed a rigorous approach to the design of the language **textbook**. A related interest in the medieval history of language teaching seems also to have coloured his ideas on teaching through the 'natural sentence' and the dialogue.

Such experiences nourished his **applied linguistics**. Thus the arrangement and methodology in his *Anglo-Saxon Reader* (1876) and *Primer* (1882) clearly led to the popular *Primer of Spoken English* (1885), remarkable for being both a textbook for learners of modern English and also a model of linguistic description.

His final word is the *The Practical Study of Languages* (1899/1964), a comprehensive work on the nature of language and languages (including **Arabic** and **Chinese**), the preparation of **materials**, and the theory of teaching and self-study. Despite a bias towards a phonetic method in the early chapters, Sweet criticises practitioners of a single classroom technique, such as **Gouin**, for their lack of 'general principles'. His solution is eclectic, combining his own emphasis on phonetics and collocation with new ideas from Hermann Paul (and Herbart) on patterns of association within the mind, the 'synthesis' of whole sentences, and language in context.

Sweet had links with the **Reform Movement**, especially **Jespersen**, and he taught Daniel Jones. His writings influenced **Palmer**, and although Sweet was not a **behaviourist**, some connections can be seen with **Bloomfield**.

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MARK ATHERTON

## Syllabus and curriculum design

A syllabus can be defined as the specification of aims and the selection and grading of content to be used as a basis for **planning foreign language**, or any other educational, courses. (It might be noted that the plural form 'syllabuses' is now usually preferred to 'syllabi'.) In **English**, though not in some other languages, a distinction is made between a *syllabus* and a *curriculum*. The narrower specification of a syllabus, which refers to the aims and content of a particular subject, can be seen as part of a wider and more general curriculum. This may go beyond specifying the content of a single subject and may include both organisational aspects and questions of overall policy or **language planning**, such as how many languages should be studied, at what ages, how many hours should be devoted to the study of a language, etc. It is the term 'syllabus' that has, in the past, usually been employed by applied linguists in discussions of foreign language. When a broader perspective is taken – for example, in discussions of language across the curriculum or **language awareness** or of how **cultural awareness**, information technology, etc., can be integrated into FL teaching – then the more general term may be preferred. Clearly, there is an area of overlap between the two concepts.

### Scope and significance of syllabus design

The scope of a syllabus can vary considerably. At one end of the scale it can be purely institutional – say, within a private language school – and specify the language content of a single specific course. At the other, it can be part of a national curriculum and take the form of a complex document drawn up by a ministry of education and incorporating

components such as a 'teacher's handbook'. It is also common for examination boards to issue 'syllabuses', though it could be argued that this type of specification is an inventory rather than a coherent syllabus. A syllabus may be explicit – that is to say, it exists as a separate document, or it may be implicit – for example, in a **textbook**, where it only becomes apparent by examining the categories in the table of contents.

Since the mid-1970s, syllabus design has represented one of the central topics of **applied linguistics** and educational policy, since the syllabus is seen as a means of positively influencing **materials development** and classroom practices. In respect of policy, its potential to provide a common basis for foreign language learning has both ideological and practical implications. This is apparent at a national level in many countries, but it is also evident at an international level where considerable attention has been devoted to the issues in various publications of the **Council of Europe**.

Syllabuses are necessary for three main reasons. The first, and least controversial, is transparency: a well-designed syllabus provides a framework for *clarifying objectives*, content and methods for learners, teachers – and perhaps parents too. The second is that of *regularising* teaching and learning, which, particularly in the case of national syllabuses, may help to ensure uniformity of content, attainment standards, etc. The third is that of *guiding* the process of teaching and learning, in particular by specifying methodology. This represents a controversial aspect of syllabus design, since the dividing line between guiding and constraining can easily be overstepped. A syllabus that is prescriptive or too comprehensive in its specifications may be seen by teachers as forcing them into a straitjacket, and may result in the negative view that teachers sometimes have of the type of syllabus, referred to by van Lier (1996: 8) as 'disempowering', which seeks to impose content and methods on classroom teachers.

The degree of acceptance a syllabus enjoys amongst teachers and learners may be linked to factors such as: Who draws up the syllabus? Who is the intended reader? To what extent are teachers and learners consulted in the design process? How

much scope does a syllabus leave for individual interpretation? One approach is to ‘democratise’ syllabus design procedures by including classroom teachers and students in the construction process, a *negotiated syllabus* (Nunan, 1988b), and by piloting it before it takes effect. Another interesting development in this connection is a type of syllabus designed to be read by the learners themselves rather than by teachers or textbook writers.

### Factors in designing syllabuses

The design of a syllabus may be a complex procedure, consisting of several stages: preparation; construction; implementation; and **evaluation** (Richards and Rogers, 1986: 159). An important part of the preparation stage is a **needs analysis**, which has the function of determining the needs for which learners require a language. It might include aspects such as the situations or domains in which learners might use the foreign language, the topics which should form part of a course, the **skills** required by the learner, their expected attainment levels, the methods by which they wish to be taught, their preferred **learning styles**, etc. The informants of a needs analysis are usually the students themselves, but may also be teachers or employers, and the analysis can take the form of a questionnaire, an interview, or some other piece of research. A second source of input which will determine the design of a syllabus will be theoretical aspects such as views of language learning held by the designers themselves, or current thinking in education or methodology, which will be reflected in the content specification.

The categories used in specifying content in foreign language syllabuses have expanded considerably from the traditional list of structures to a range of categories that incorporate not only language, but also learning and teaching as well as general educational aspects. The following types of categories are those most commonly found in modern syllabuses:

- Expected outcomes of language learning, which might range in their definition from general goals of foreign language learning (e.g. ‘to be able to interact with **native speakers** in

real situations’) to more specific performance-based objectives (e.g. ‘to be able to ask for and understand directions’).

- Contextual categories which specify the type of domains in which students should be able to interact and which are therefore to be included in the foreign language programme. These include: settings (e.g. in a restaurant, church, school), topics (e.g. leisure activities, house and home), behavioural specifications, i.e. what learners should be able to do in communication (e.g. describing their own house, saying how they travel to school).
- Language-related items, which may be described in terms of grammatical forms or structures (e.g. present progressive, definite article); **notions** (e.g. size, time, frequency); functions (e.g. apologising, asking the way, greeting someone); lexical lists; the four skills – **reading, writing, listening, speaking** – and related sub-skills (e.g. listening for gist, scanning a text for specific information, note-taking); **text types** that students will be confronted with (e.g. a conversation, a newspaper advertisement); discourse categories (e.g. typical dialogue exchange patterns); compensation strategies to cope with language difficulties (e.g. asking for clarification, guessing from context).
- Teaching methodology, consisting of general pedagogical guidelines or specific examples of classroom tasks and activities.
- Learning **strategies**, usually examples of ‘**learning to learn**’ techniques, ways of enhancing **autonomous learning**.
- Cultural awareness or sociocultural components, which may be: knowledge based (e.g. major national holidays), behavioural (e.g. interpreting body language, visiting rituals), or attitudinal (e.g. developing empathy towards otherness).
- Attainment levels, for example, the descriptors of competence specified in the A1 – C2 scales of the **Common European Framework of Reference**.

### Communicative syllabus design

Most differences between syllabuses – and controversies surrounding them – concern the specification

of content, and run parallel to swings of the pendulum in linguistic and methodological approaches. Until the early 1970s, the main purpose of most syllabuses was seen as listing and grading the language content of courses, textbooks or examinations. In keeping with prevailing views of linguistic description, this took the form of lists of formal items to be mastered by students: the so-called structural syllabus. From the mid-1970s onwards a shift of emphasis in language description and corresponding changes in methodologies led to a broad acceptance of principles of **communicative language teaching**, according to which language was to be seen in terms of 'acts of communication'. For syllabus designers, the nature of whose task requires them to think in categories, this necessitated a major re-orientation. First, this different approach required a broadening of categories beyond narrow linguistic units to incorporate use-based contextual and behavioural components, i.e. units of communication. Whilst this did not preclude the specification of language components, it became necessary to stipulate language categories based on the meanings that give rise to the forms, rather than the forms themselves, which in turn required new theories of language meaning. The term 'notional-functional' reflects the two principal categories of meaning which found their way into communication syllabuses. Notions came to be used to refer to general existential concepts – possibly universal categories of human experience – such as time and space, whereas language functions can be defined as the purpose for which language is used, often specified as action-based or behavioural meaning, such as 'apologising' or 'asking for help'. Both the term *notional-functional syllabus* and *communicative syllabus* are used, and sometimes confused, in theoretical discussions. The former is a narrower term, referring to the semantically-oriented specification of language; the latter includes reference to aspects of language use (contextual features, skills, etc.) as well as to methodology.

One of the aims of communicative syllabus design was to take a broader 'top-down' entry point to categorisation, rather than the traditional 'bottom-up' view which begins with grammatical structures. To this end, Wilkins (1976) distinguished

between a *synthetic* approach, in which language items are introduced separately and sequentially so that, as in a jigsaw puzzle, the student gradually builds up a picture of the whole structure, and an *analytic* approach, which involves a graduation based on broader units such as situations, texts, etc.

The practice of 'communicative' syllabus design was strongly influenced by two publications which attempted to provide communication-based descriptions in the form of comprehensive inventories, both of which appeared in the 1970s. These were Munby's *Communicative Syllabus Design* (1978) and the very influential Council of Europe publication, the *Threshold Level* (van Ek, 1975; van Ek and Trim, 1991) which, though an inventory rather than an actual graded syllabus, has served as the basis for the design of many European national syllabuses for a variety of different languages.

### Alternative designs

Although communicative or notional-functional syllabuses took a radically different approach, their primary task was nevertheless to categorise language, albeit from a user-based semantic, rather than formal, perspective. In the 1980s, following a general learner-centred view of foreign language learning, the attention of methodologists and applied linguists began to move away from the analysis of language use to focus more strongly on the process of **second language acquisition**. As a result, there was a shift in emphasis from *what* students should learn in the direction of *how* students do learn. As far as teachers were concerned, they came to be regarded less as 'managers of communication' and more as 'facilitators of acquisition'. This led to a distinction being made between *product-oriented* and *process-oriented* syllabuses (Nunan, 1988a; van Lier, 1996). 'Product' can refer to any kind of target knowledge, ability or other outcome of learning, be it linguistic, cultural or whatever, whereas 'process' refers to the means by which students gain this knowledge or develop these skills. This might be seen in terms of classroom activities or tasks – the *task-based* or *procedural* syllabus (see Johnson, 1982; Nunan, 1988b) – or at a more abstract, psychological level in terms of learning strategies or cognitive processes

which learners employ to facilitate acquisition. A process approach, based on principles of learner autonomy, can represent a direct challenge to product-based syllabuses, as can be seen from the following quotation:

[a curriculum] ... is process-oriented in the sense that pedagogical interaction is motivated by our understanding of learning rather than by a list of desired competencies, test scores, or other products. The settings of goals and objectives ... are themselves integral parts of the curriculum process, rather than pre-established constraints that are imposed on it from the outside.

(van Lier, 1996: 3)

Despite its appeal to idealism, it is likely that both at an institutional, and more especially at a national, level a purely process-oriented approach will be difficult to implement, for, as Stoks (1996) points out, these pose a problem of accountability. It seems that governments, teachers and students alike feel a need for expected outcomes of learning to be stated at the outset of a course.

A further development is the outward expansion of the foreign language syllabus in the direction of a more general curriculum, in the sense that the two terms were distinguished above. One reason for this is the wish to locate language learning within more general educational aims, seen, for example, in the strong focus that is given to the category of **cultural awareness** or sociocultural competence, and another is a much broader view which is taken of learning. This trend can be seen by comparing the two major Council of Europe documents, the Threshold Level with its mainly language-based specification, and the **Common European Framework of Reference**, which sees communicative competence as one component of a speaker's 'general competences'.

A further issue in syllabus design is the grading of content within a syllabus, with regard to both selection and organisation. In many syllabuses the criteria for selecting items of language (**grammar**, functions, **vocabulary**, etc.) are not made explicit but may be based on frequency of occurrence, usefulness to the learner or perceived difficulty or complexity of structure, content, task, etc. An

interesting approach – the *lexical syllabus* – is taken by Willis (1990), who proposes as a basis for selection and grading the frequency of occurrence of lexical items in **authentic** language. There are three significant features of this approach: first, Willis's data is based on a twenty-million-word corpus of authentic language (COBUILD); second, Willis not only incorporates lexical items but syntactic and discourse patterns too; and third, he proposes an analytic syllabus, i.e. that a syllabus should be based on texts rather than isolated lexical items of structures.

Another aspect of grading is the question of organisation. Most syllabuses take a linear approach. Each language item is specified only once to indicate when it is to be first introduced into a teaching programme. An alternative approach is offered by the *spiral* or *cyclical* syllabus (Corder, 1973: 297), which includes proposals for recycling various elements.

The most significant change in curriculum design in the 21st century concerns the shift away from specifying teaching **objectives**, or input, be this traditional or communicative, as found in the Threshold Level, towards specifying expected learning outcomes, as found in the scaled descriptors of the **Common European Framework of Reference**.

Every syllabus operates within certain contextual constraints and, as Johnson (1989: 18) says, one of the challenges of the syllabus designer is to reconcile 'what is desirable (policy) with what is acceptable and possible (Pragmatics)'. In addition, it is important to remember that a syllabus is only one element of an overall *operational framework*, which may begin with policy making, include materials development, and end up with what Girard (Girard et al., 1994: 108) in his model terms 'teaching and learning acts'. As van Lier says:

A map is not the territory. In a similar way, the syllabus is not the journey. Experience, appreciation, criticism, and so on, are not laid down in the syllabus, they are merely made available by it, and brought to it by the learners.

(van Lier, 1996: 20)

**See also:** Council of Europe Modern Languages Projects; Graded objectives; Notions and functions; Objectives in language teaching and learning; Planning for foreign language teaching; Proficiency movement; Teacher education; Textbooks

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DAVID NEWBY



# T

## Tandem learning

Based on the potent image of the concerted effort of tandem cyclists, tandem learning is a way of organising foreign language learning which brings together native speakers of different languages who wish to learn each other's language and to help their partner learn theirs. Tandem learning differs fundamentally from a traditional teacher-learner relationship through the peer-peer relationship and the interchangeability of the roles in the learning process.

Individual or group tandems constitute partly **autonomous** learning contexts which are organised as face-to-face, or virtual encounters that are usually binational.

The growing importance of tandem learning in Europe over the last thirty years is partly a result of the popularity of the **communicative** approach with its focus on **authentic** language use, and, in more recent years, the development of **inter-cultural competence**, emphasising the need for contact with native speakers and the development of knowledge, attitudes, skills and awareness for intercultural communication (Byram, 1997). The rise in popularity of tandem learning has been aided by increased student mobility, in particular through the European ERASMUS exchange programme, and by technological developments.

The first tandem exchanges are often cited as language exchanges between Turkish immigrant workers in Germany and German social workers. Since the 1960s, four different lines of development can be distinguished (Herfurth, 1993: 243–5).

The first time the tandem approach formed part of a teaching concept was in the binational holiday encounter programmes of the *Deutsch–Französisches Jugendwerk* (German–French youth organisation). From 1973 to 1983, Turkish immigrants and German workers participated in binational language classes in Munich to promote intercultural understanding as well as language learning. Based on individual Spanish–German tandems at the *Instituto Alemán* (German **Goethe-Institut**) in Madrid, Spain, various tandem initiatives were founded from 1979 onwards in a number of European cities. They eventually organised the 'tandem net' in which courses and **exchange** activities are coordinated. A fourth strand of tandem courses has grown at European universities since the 1980s. These binational language courses started between Spain and Germany and have since been established in many countries in Europe.

Having started in out-of-school youth exchanges and forming part of university and **adult** education settings, as well as being used in the field of encounters between members of specific professions, the tandem idea has also been firmly established in many forms of exchange at the primary and secondary school level. From the project '*Lerne die Sprache des Nachbarn*' (learn the language of your neighbour), an intensive contact programme between primary students in the border area of France and Germany (Pelz, 1989), and the extensive field of student face-to-face exchanges worldwide, to the forms of class **exchanges** via correspondence, such as letter, audio-cassette,

video or e-mail exchanges (Christian, 1997), the tandem approach has been used to prepare and structure encounters.

Mainly restricted to continental Europe during its pre-electronic phase, tandem learning has taken up a more global position since the advent of the **internet** (Little and Brammerts, 1996: 1). This new form of communication extends the opportunities for tandem learning on the linguistic (access to more languages) as well as the thematic (access to more material) level, while also giving tandem learning a very distinctive new quality. New **technologies** change the learning arrangement. With the use of email, instant messaging, and video conferencing on the internet, all four language skills can still be employed in telecollaborative tandem frameworks, although the nature of the language used may differ (e.g. hybrid forms of written and spoken text).

Tandems can be set up in special courses with external support from a teacher or counsellor, or they can function as additions to the traditional classroom situation. In a face-to-face encounter, individual or group tandems are set up, taking into account the possible differences in language proficiency of the various partners. In addition to being fundamentally **task-based**, tandems are collaborative frameworks which may also allow for group work with peers (Helmling, 2003).

Unlike natural exchanges which may also facilitate natural, **authentic**, and spontaneous language learning and use, tandem learning functions through the explicit principles of **autonomy** (responsibility for your own learning), and reciprocity (responsibility for ensuring mutual benefit). With these principles comes the development of **language** and **cultural awareness**, through reflection on the process. Both partners being expert users (not teachers) in their language and culture and depending on each other for mutual support, contribute and benefit equally in terms of their time, energy and interest. Reciprocity should also govern the choice of language and meeting place (in face-to-face encounters). Learners are responsible for their own learning process, planning and structuring the learning sessions, as well as collaborating on common products. To ensure mutual benefit, a contract between partners can form the basis of cooperation,

regulating important aspects such as choice of language, turn-taking, forms of error correction, choice of texts or learning material. Since learners are usually not trained as teachers, they need help in identifying their **objectives**, in applying the appropriate learning methods and strategies, and in critically evaluating the learning outcomes.

Tandem learning is thus characterised by the poles of traditional classroom learning and self-instruction. A balance is struck between the amount of external structuring and steering and the autonomy of the learners. In the classroom context, teachers give up some control over the learning situation for the benefit of increased learner's autonomy; i.e. they change from the sole person in charge and the only foreign language model in the classroom into a moderator who structures and guides the interaction. Apart from setting up and organising the exchange, the teacher is responsible for the development of target tasks to structure the collaborative work effort, and becomes a counsellor on the linguistic and thematic levels.

Tandem learning covers aspects of both language learning and intercultural learning. The foreign language is both content and **medium** of this process of linguistic and intercultural exchange. Agreement on the choice of language, various forms of clarification of words (**translation**, code-switching) as well as different forms of error correction (how often and at which point in the discussion) are essential for successful interaction. Interaction between partners moves back and forth between content and form of language, incorporating phases of meta-communication about the language system, thus enhancing awareness of the language learning process. This can be supported by structured language **exercises** as well as by advice on **communicative strategies** (e.g. formulations for introducing a change of topic, for preventing and clarifying misunderstandings, for introducing repairs).

The tandem situation, structured thematically or by goal- or project- oriented tasks, allows for intensive negotiation of linguistic and cultural meaning, and provides an environment where, by virtue of the peer relationship, roles of native and non-native speaker are largely equalised. Through comparative (and other) activities, tandem partners

can relativise their own perspectives, adopt those of others, reflect on this process and engage actively in understanding others (Woodin, 2003). The roles of **native speaker** and **non-native speaker** are not always enacted as such in the tandem partnership; in tandem conversations between learners of higher proficiency in particular, the relationship is far more complex than 'I learn from you and you learn from me', and can lead to deep collaborative reflection on linguistic, cultural and social issues.

In addition to linguistic and cultural skills the tandem approach also provides learners with opportunities for developing transferable skills, such as time-management, planning and prioritising goals, problem solving, setting and meeting objectives (Little and Brammerts, 1996).

Tandem learning increases contact time between non-native and native speakers, and, with the advent of electronic media, the financial problems of organising exchanges as well as the fear that languages such as **English, Spanish, French** and **German** might dominate the tandem market can be attenuated to a certain degree – notwithstanding the necessity of face-to-face encounters – since virtual connections allow for a cheaper connection and provide more access to lesser-taught languages.

Although tandem learning can be seen to bring many benefits to language learners, the development in educational settings tends to point to a slow integration of tandem learning into existing, and thus evolving, language programmes. Some notable examples of successful integration include the University of Sheffield tandem module (Walker and Lewis, 2003), and the Goethe-Institut in Paris (Helmling, 2003) which offers an accredited tandem learning course.

The tandem concept has also been adopted by professionals outside of language learning, for example, to support peer observation for staff development and for the enhancement of interfaith dialogue.

**See also:** Autonomy and autonomous learners; CALL; Communicative strategies; Error analysis; Exchanges; Group work; Intercultural communication; Large classes; Learning to learn; Monolingual principle; Non-verbal communication; Study abroad; Technologies for language learning

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## Task-based teaching and assessment

Task-based teaching (often abbreviated as task-based language teaching, TBLT) developed on the basis of the communicative approach to teaching languages in the late 1980s (e.g. Piepho, 1979; Prabhu, 1987). It has advanced as an appropriate approach to teaching languages from primary to adult education and has been vigorously promoted for education world-wide (Samuda and Bygate, 2008: 195; for a survey of precursors to tasks see Samuda and Bygate, 2008). The reasons for its spread cover simultaneous developments in various fields: education policy recommends tasks as an appropriate tool to learn languages (e.g. Council of Europe, 2001); findings of **second language acquisition** (SLA) research (covering psycholinguistic, cognitive and socio-cultural approaches, e.g. Eck-erth and Siekmann, 2008; Ellis, 2003; Samuda and Bygate, 2008; Skehan, 1998) support the use of tasks; and classroom-based research which focuses on understanding the learning processes resulting from doing tasks have led to convincing methodological concepts for teaching languages (e.g. Müller-Hartmann and Schocker-v. Dittfurth, 2011; Van den Branden, 2006; Van den Branden et al., 2007).

The degree to which language learning is based on tasks in a language learning programme/curriculum varies across different language teaching contexts. We therefore distinguish *task-based* from *task-supported* approaches (Samuda and Bygate, 2008: 58). In TBLT the language needs of specific learners are the basis for selecting tasks (a focus only few contexts subscribe to, e.g. Flanders – see Van den Branden, 2006). In task-supported

language learning (TSLL), tasks may only be an add-on to an otherwise synthetic syllabus that is based on a selection of topics and/or linguistic structures. Here tasks are an important but not the only unit around which learning is organized. For example, most European countries' secondary **English** as a Foreign Language teaching is based on coursebooks which subscribe to a competence-based yet linguistically structured curriculum and cover tasks to varying degrees and qualities.

In language education, tasks refer to activities that qualify as tasks only if they have the potential to involve learners in meaningful language use. To be able to live up to this claim a task needs to allow learners to use language for purposes that they find worthwhile: 'Task-based language education starts from the basic idea that students learn a language by performing tasks. A task is generally described as an activity in which people engage to attain an objective and which involves the meaningful use of language' (Van den Branden et al., 2007: 1). Therefore the principal focus of tasks is not on displaying learners' ability to produce pre-specified language forms (which distinguishes tasks from exercises) but it is on communicating learners' own meanings (Edward and Willis, 2005: 4).

As tasks conceptualize learning from learners' perspectives (i.e. their needs, competences, required support), the learning potential of tasks cannot be appropriately evaluated without relating it to the learning environment and contextual affordances and constraints in which they are used. Long-term classroom based research has identified variables at three levels that all contribute to the richness of task-based interaction in addition to the task features as such. Devlieger and Goosens (2007: 97) represent the factors as circles within circles. The outer circle represents a 'safe, positive atmosphere' which encourages risk-taking, assertiveness, autonomy and a feeling of safety. Within this circle of safety, self-competence and well-being, a second circle represents learners working with meaningful, relevant and challenging tasks. The third, innermost circle presents the crucial role of teachers' process competences – and the interaction with other learners – to support learners' language development. A task's learning potential may therefore not be appropriately evaluated without considering this

contextual embeddedness. 'Tasks on paper are not blueprints for [ ... ] predictable action, [they are ... ] reconstructed by any pupil or teacher confronted with them' (Berben et al., 2007: 61).

## Research

Empirical research allows us to conclude that tasks have the potential to support learning if they meet the following five criteria (see research summary in Müller-Hartmann and Schocker-v. Ditfurth, 2011: 63–68): they motivate learners to get involved (1), they are complex (2), they support the learning process by an integrated focus on form (3), they provide individual and co-operative problem-solving in interactive scenarios (4), and they sequence the task process and balance task demand and task support (5).

It is the ultimate *raison d'être* for task research of any kind to contribute to the quality of learning environments. But there is widespread agreement that 'research into tasks for second language teaching has yet to get to the heart of the matter – learning on tasks within classroom contexts' (Samuda and Bygate, 2008: 127). Only very few studies consider TBLT as a social situation, that is, integrate teachers' and learners' perspectives on tasks in their pedagogical contexts (Schart, 2008: 58). In view of the heterogeneity of language learning contexts and the multitude of factors that affect language learning it is hard to see in what way research can live up to the aim of providing generalizable results. Causal relationships between instruction (*input*) and learning (*intake*) are hard to identify.

Yet psycholinguistic-oriented SLA research for a long time has focussed on researching the effects of isolated task variables on the quantity and type of language production of individual learners under laboratory conditions (see Ellis, 2003; Samuda and Bygate, 2008). Even though this type of research has made us aware of certain task features that affect language learning (e.g. the need to provide space for negotiation), it has not yielded insights that may directly be transferred to improve highly complex and heterogeneous language learning situations. Recent developments in SLA research point in the right direction: they no longer reduce

language development to cognitive psycholinguistic processes, but view it as a communicative event and therefore integrate learner and teacher perspectives (i.e. Eckerth and Siekmann, 2008). A position worth considering is that of Schart, who challenges the idea of common concerns of teachers and researchers which he termed 'perceptual gap', '[b]ecause psycholinguistically-oriented studies seek universal items in TBLT by reducing complexity and therefore have the tendency to treat learners as information processing units and tasks as something that take place in a vacuum' (Schart, 2008: 43; see also Samuda, 2001: 119). In contrast to this perspective on research he views his learners as historically situated active agents and therefore is not interested in the acquisition of linguistic forms but in what way tasks may contribute to develop a particular class. Referring to Zuengler and Miller, he sees tasks as a 'resource for participation' (2006: 36) rather than input for language learning.

As a task's primary purpose is its motivational potential to involve learners, dimensions like relevant content or student–teacher rapport are basic categories that SLA research has largely failed to address. They are the focus of a pedagogically oriented classroom research that is gaining momentum (cf. Müller-Hartmann and Schocker-v. Ditfurth, 2011; Schart, 2008; Van den Branden, 2006; Van den Branden et al., 2007).

## Practice

Different task formats may be classified as those that support the learning of a foreign language, those that are used to diagnose learners' competence development, those that support the learning process (formative assessment tasks) and those that assess competences at classroom, regional or national level (summative assessment tasks, see below). Willis (1996) has provided a methodological concept that suggests sequencing tasks in three steps: *pre-task(s)* to prepare learners' language and content, the *task cycle* during which learners do the task and plan the presentation of results, followed by a *language focus* in which students analyse and practise selected language features that emerged from doing the task (Willis, 1996: 38). Müller-Hartmann

and Schocker-v. Ditfurth (2011) suggest a task sequence that considers contextual factors, such as the use of coursebooks in TSLL contexts.

A large number of different task types have been classified (e.g. *listing, ordering, problem solving, sharing personal experiences*; see Willis, 1996), which may be selected and sequenced for different groups of learners (*task-as-workplan*) and which may replace the activities suggested by a course book. It has been convincingly argued that teachers need to consider *task demands* for their respective groups of learners (i.e. cognitive, linguistic, interactional) and select appropriate *task support* for a particular group (Cameron, 2001: 22–28). There is evidence that a flexibly used *focus on form* supports language development best:

Long (1991, 2005; Long and Robinson, 1998) has consistently argued for a particular type of focus on form in which learners' attention is drawn to linguistic features if and when demanded by the communicative activities and the negotiation of meaning learners are engaged in.

(Kumaravadivelu, 2006: 129)

### Task-based assessment

Historically, **assessment** has developed from discrete point testing in the 1960s to integrative (skill-based) testing in the 1970s, to communicative and task-based testing since the 1980s with the latter questioning 'the underlying psychometric principles of measurement in the ELT field' (Davison and Cummins, 2007: 415). It focuses on language use as a complex competence, designing communicative 'real-life' assessment tasks that integrate skills and assess what learners can do with language (Ellis, 2003). There is a general difference between assessing learners' achievement at a certain point in time and assessing learners' language development in TSLL contexts. The former is used for large-scale testing, such as in assessing achievement specified in a curriculum to find out what learners can do in terms of nationally defined competence levels as specified by the **Common European Framework of Reference** (Council of Europe, 2001).

We distinguish testing tasks from tasks to support learning (see Müller-Hartmann and Schocker-v. Ditfurth, 2011: 232). While both task types basically follow the same criteria, such as involving learners or activating their experiences, there are also clear differences. Testing tasks are much more restrictive in terms of what learners can do (e.g. as regards personal choice) because they focus on individual competences. They do not look at the process of how the task is done, but they evaluate to what extent a learner fulfils the task demands in the task's outcome within a set frame of time.

Before tests can be administered though, learners need to develop the competences that are to be tested. For this we need pedagogically motivated forms of assessment, i.e. task-based assessment that supports the learning process, such as in/direct feedback or forms of self- and peer-assessment. At the outset of this process diagnostic tasks make it possible to find out learners' level of competence and identify the areas they need to develop in the future.

Task-based assessment follows certain general principles. Assessment should 'involve the direct assessment of student performance, be criterion-referenced, focus on the attainment of specific objectives rather than trying to assess general proficiency, be formative in nature' (Nunan, 2004: 163). Performance-based assessment supports the learning process because it looks at learners' language use in specific situations. We look holistically at the actual language our learners produce while doing a task, as opposed to discrete point tests.

Teachers can observe and evaluate the performance as a whole (did they achieve the purpose of the task?) and also the elements of language use [ ... ], within the performance in the task (to what extent did they use a range of vocabulary? To what extent was the performance accurate?)

(McKay, 2006: 99)

Teachers do not assess by comparing an individual learner's performance against the average performance of the class, but by assessing his/her performance against specific criteria (see McKay, 2006: 99; Nunan, 2004: 145). Criteria should be developed in collaboration with learners, but could

be taken from the performance scales of the *Common European Framework of Reference* (Council of Europe, 2001: 26–29). Instead of assessing learners' general achievement, we assess their proficiency in the use language for communicative purposes, i.e. things they can do with language by using regular learning tasks.

Finally we differentiate between summative and formative assessment. Summative assessment is used at the end of a unit or course, usually to evaluate and measure achievement to report to others (i.e. educational authorities), whilst formative assessment is usually informal and provides information about learning which can be used to plan further teaching (McKay, 2006). For some tasks, especially oral tasks, we use observation sheets to be able to evaluate learners' performance in the process. Scales allow teachers to provide feedback to the learners on their performance and to also compare learners' performances. This can also be used for diagnostic assessment to find out about learners' specific strengths and weaknesses at a point in time. Teachers prefer to use incidental formative assessment, which is carried out to assess an instructional task in process and not a task that was designed for assessment. While planned formative assessment provides systematic information, incidental formative assessment makes it possible to compare learners' performance to the required L2 standards, showing teachers 'how they are succeeding on a day-by-day basis' (Ellis, 2003: 315).

Traditionally good assessment practice has been described by the concepts of **reliability**, **validity**, and **objectivity**. In TSL other concepts such as **practicability** are important because traditional concepts are restrictive when it comes to task-based assessment since traditional testing has always strived to control the variables, such as the context and the role of the tester. This provides 'a potential threat to the teacher-based assessment', because 'of the necessarily highly contextualized and dialogic practices' (Davison and Cummins, 2007: 419). Instead practicability combined with observation data, often over a longer period of time, is more important in grasping the development of language learning in such a complex context. As McKay (2006: 116–17) stresses,

there is validity in formative classroom assessment when an assessment decision has resulted in more student engagement, and when progress can be identified: 'Validity is a characteristic that refers to the soundness, trustworthiness, or legitimacy of assessment decisions'

(McMillan, 2003: 9)

Reliability needs to be seen differently as well since the teacher is interested in the individual development of each student and not so much in assessing one student against a class norm. Reliability then can be established in classroom formative assessment by collecting observation data over longer periods of time, i.e. over a number of tasks. Also, practicability of assessment formats is crucial for teachers to actually handle assessment in their complex contexts (McKay, 2006: 116–17).

Brindley (1989: 169–71) and others have suggested a number of assessment tools that can be used for formative task-based assessment, such as observation, portfolios, conferences, journals, learner self-assessment procedures, teachers' and learners' journals. Observation charts are especially helpful when trying to collect data about complex competences, such as intercultural communicative competence or speaking competence. By engaging in self- or peer-assessment learners begin to develop an awareness of what is important when learning a foreign language and they are good tools to help learners become more self-directed and reflective (Cameron, 2001: 235). Portfolios are more complex tools of assessment, such as the **European Language Portfolio** which shows competences in the five skills (Legutke et al., 2009: 125–9), or the showcase portfolio, which is a selection of the best pieces of work a learner decides to put into the portfolio to show her/his development over longer periods of time.

## Perspectives

The traditional divide between research and practice (situated at different institutions and done by different people) needs to be overcome if we truly are to make an impact on the development of heterogeneous and complex contexts of language

learning. Kumaravadivelu's idea of a *postmethod pedagogy* in which he argues for classroom-based research that considers the three parameters of *particularity* (i.e. a sensitivity towards a particular group of learners in a particular institutional context and sociocultural milieu), *practicality* (i.e. by enabling teachers to find out what works in his or her context) and *possibility* (i.e. to be aware of the social obligations that result from the sociocultural reality that shapes his or her learners' lives) is a convincing concept (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). Foundations for a teacher's professional idea of self as *reflective practitioner* who is able to explore his/her practice in collaboration with his/her learners and colleagues on an ongoing basis need to be established already at the pre-service teacher development level. Experiences with research approaches to teacher learning (see Schocker-v. Dittfurth, 2001), concepts that integrate practical experiences in teacher education (see Legutke and Schocker-v. Dittfurth, 2009), and approaches of exploratory practice (see Allwright and Hanks, 2009) have convincingly demonstrated that they have the potential to support learner- and learning-oriented task teaching.

**See also:** Assessment and testing; Acquisition and teaching; Medium-oriented and message-oriented communication; Second language acquisition theories; Syllabus and curriculum design; Teaching methods

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## Teacher education

A number of terms are used for learning to teach, reflecting both the type of education the teacher-learner is engaged with, and the stage in their career they are at. The term 'teacher training' implies a set of skills and behaviours that can be taught and transferred from a 'trainer' to a 'trainee'. This can happen at a pre-service stage (Initial Teacher Training, ITT) or in-service (In-Service Teacher Training, INSET or INSETT). The term 'teacher education', on the other hand, implies working towards a deeper understanding on the part of the teacher-learner. It is sometimes used as an umbrella term for all the formal learning that teachers undertake. 'Teacher development' is often the term used for the myriad ways in which teachers continue to develop beyond the initial stages of teaching and for the activities in which they engage in order to achieve this, either on their own or in groups (see, however, Tarone and Allwright, 2005 for a slightly different demarcation of these terms). This terminological confusion is reflected in the nomenclature used for participants as well – e.g. trainees, beginning teachers, teacher-learners, student teachers, teachers-in-preparation, etc.

In terms of a timeline, we have used two terms above – pre-service and in-service. This division, however, can be contested, and Feiman-Nemser (2001) has suggested that we view these stages as a continuum which in fact begins with the 'apprenticeship of observation' (Lortie, 1975), continues with pre-service education, goes on to induction (reflecting the idea that the first years of teaching present particular challenges) and then on to professional development. She then suggests that there are different central tasks involved in learning to

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teach at the pre-service, the induction, and the continuing professional development stages.

### Models of language teacher education

Wallace (1991) provides an overview of the history of language teacher education, discussing three models – the craft model, the applied science model and the reflective model. Each of these reflects both the process of learning and the ways in which the knowledge base was conceptualised. In the craft model, the neophyte learned the craft through an apprenticeship process in which they observed a master; indeed trainers were often called ‘master teachers’. The applied science model suggests that the knowledge needed for professionalism is a wider construct, which has been arrived at through research, and which the entrant to the profession needs to engage with. Future actions as a professional are then based on this knowledge and its practical implications. Importantly, the professional does not engage in the scientific research themselves; as Wallace (1991) points out, this model implies a separation between the researcher and the practitioner, with the latter as consumer of the products of research. In the case of the language teacher, the research might be in pure **linguistics** (e.g. an understanding of phonetics, phonology, theories of **universal grammar**, etc.), research in **second language acquisition**, etc. The third model for language teacher education is the reflective model, based on the understanding that not everything that a professional does is rooted in scientific understanding; much of it is rooted in experiential knowledge. Wallace (1991) suggests that a reflective model of education gives due recognition to both sources of knowledge, received knowledge and experiential knowledge, which then lead to a reflective cycle of practice and reflection. This model thus adds a process orientation to the product focus of the craft and the applied science models.

Recent discussions of language teacher education have focused on a wider view of the activity of teaching, seeing it as contextually framed and situated. Indeed, what may characterise developments in teacher education is the increasingly broadening range of contexts that teachers are seen to bring to

bear on their work. This broadening of contexts is expressed in Freeman and Johnson’s (1998) suggestion that teacher education should be reconceptualised as incorporating three dimensions – the teacher as learner of language teaching; the activity of teaching and learning; and the contexts of places (schools) and of processes (schooling).

Crucially, however, as Tarone and Allwright (2005) point out, Freeman and Johnson (1998) leave out the learner from the equation, or, at best, marginalise the learner and what research into learning can provide for the teacher (see also Freeman and Johnson, 2005 for a response to this charge). Gray and Block (2012) take this broadening of context further, suggesting that teacher education needs to be rooted in social sciences, including political economy.

### The distinctive characteristics of foreign language teaching

One assertion encountered quite frequently in relation to language teaching and language teachers, is its/their presumed distinctiveness from other subjects and their teachers. The subject domain of languages is said to be more difficult than most, if not all, other curriculum subjects, in part due to the pedagogical imperative of target language use for instruction and interaction as well as the wide range of complex teacher–learner and learner–learner interactions resulting from a strong focus on the development of communicative and **intercultural** competence in learners. Among others, these characteristics result in a certain added complexity in training needs for beginner language teachers. Borg (2006: 24) identifies eleven distinct characteristics of language teachers, for example: ‘Language is more dynamic than other subjects and has more practical relevance to life’ or ‘Incorrect output by language learners is more acceptable than in other subjects’ or ‘Language teaching is driven by commercial forces more than other subjects’.

Borg does note, though, that these characteristics are context specific which implies that language teacher education needs to attempt to respond to localised specificities. This is not easy in the context of an often international and highly mobile student body.

Like Borg, Tarone and Allwright (2005) support the view that learning to teach languages is different from learning to teach other subjects, pointing out that the second language teacher needs to focus on two aspects of any interaction: they need to focus on the form of the message (i.e. grammar, vocabulary, etc.) while also processing the message for meaning. We would add that this in fact applies also to any production on the teacher's part, where great awareness needs to be exhibited of the form while producing a meaningful message. Freeman and Johnson (2005), however, focus on the commonalities between teachers, highlighting the difficulties in researching any differences between language teachers and teachers of other subjects.

Differences also exist at the language teacher education system level: a study of foreign language teacher education across thirty-two countries in Europe by Kelly et al. (2002) found that there was a need for a European Benchmark for language teacher education in Europe to provide a common understanding of content, linguistic competence, processes, good practice, **assessment, quality assurance** and enhancement, etc. In addition to the desirability of greater convergence of different language teacher education systems, the report raises awareness of the need to strengthen the focus on teacher education programmes on preparing beginner teachers so they can respond to the increasing social and linguistic diversity characterising contemporary language teaching contexts. It also diagnoses a need for the strengthening of the preparation for technology-enhanced approaches to the teaching and learning of languages.

### Content and processes of language teacher education programmes

The question of what to include in a language teacher education curriculum continues to be keenly debated by teacher educators, practitioners and researchers alike. One key concern usually at the fore of these deliberations is the question of relevance: what knowledge, skills and understanding are needed in order to prepare someone to become an 'effective' and successful language teacher? It is the definition of the notion of effectiveness and the types of success criteria used that

determine how the question is answered. At the most basic level it is a question about the language teacher as an educator versus a subject specialist, i.e. as someone who has the socio-cultural, emotional, physical and linguistic well-being of the learner at heart – which is arguably particularly relevant for teachers of younger learners – as opposed to someone more narrowly interested in achieving high levels of language proficiency and fluency in learners, often in relation to specific contexts and for specific purposes such as, for example, for university students seeking to develop their academic and professional literacy levels.

Normally, language teacher education programmes draw on the following sub-domains (see Pachler et al., 2009; Shulman, 1987):

- content knowledge, which, for language teachers, is normally taken to mean knowledge of, and competence in the use of the language;
- knowledge of linguistics and **second language acquisition** research;
- general pedagogical knowledge;
- curriculum knowledge;
- pedagogical content knowledge or didactics, i.e. the ability to make content accessible to and learnable for students;
- knowledge of learners and their characteristics;
- knowledge of the so-called foundation disciplines such as sociology, history of education, philosophy;
- knowledge of the countries where the target language is spoken, etc.

The sub-domain of content knowledge is particularly fraught with controversy: for example, what levels of knowledge and proficiency does a foreign language teacher need and to what extent is it the role of the teacher education programme to develop it? To what extent does the conceptualisation of content knowledge in teacher education reflect the diverse socio-cultural and technology-mediated settings of language use in the twenty-first century? Is the focus on 'language-as-object' or 'language as social practice'? This links to the topic of teacher identity, which is increasingly being problematised in teacher education programmes: what socio-cultural roles do language teachers perform in the

learning process and what factors shape them as people, as professionals and as learners? (e.g. Lantolf, 2009).

To what extent is content knowledge linked to pedagogical knowledge? And, also linked to this is the question of the interrelationship – or rather lack thereof in many programmes – of content knowledge development and curriculum knowledge, i.e. is there sufficient focus in teacher education on the linguistic demands of the curriculum to be taught or is the focus more on a grounding in a broad liberal arts or humanities tradition with the beginner teacher left to make the necessary links to teaching herself? Are beginner language teachers perceived as learners of language or learners of language teaching? Are content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge components dealt with separately or are they integrated (see e.g. Tedick, 2009)?

### Language in language teacher education

One sub-domain of language teacher education which is often marginalised is language. Trappes-Lomax (2002) argues that language needs to be understood in its many roles and their inter-relationships. He distinguishes what he calls three main modes of action/experience: language use, language acquisition and language objectification, which he sees being played out in three worlds: the real world, the classroom world and the language teacher education world.

Language teacher education should engage systematically with all aspects of this matrix. This should be the case both for **native-speaker** teachers and for **non-native speaker teachers**. In spite of the problems associated with these terms, the centrality of language proficiency in the case of non-native speakers is attested to by a number of phenomena. One is the fact that in the private language teaching sector, native speakers (assumed to automatically ‘possess’ proficiency in the language) are often preferred to non-native speakers (see for example Mahboob et al., 2004; Clark and Paran, 2007), and some countries have put in place policies to bring in native speakers of English into their educational systems (e.g. the NET programme in Hong Kong, the JET programme in Japan, and current similar projects in Korea).

### Second language acquisition and language teacher education

The literature on **second language acquisition** (see e.g. Ellis, 2005; Lightbown, 2003) as well as to some extent on teacher education (see e.g. Whong, 2011) has started to show an interest in what, if any, generalisations can be drawn from research into how foreign and second languages are learnt for their teaching. Various principles or observations have been abstracted from recent research findings, such as the following list Whong uses, which is based on VanPatten and Williams (2007: 9–12):

- Exposure to input is necessary for SLA.
- A good deal of SLA happens incidentally.
- Learners come to know more than they have been exposed to in their input.
- Learners’ output (speech) often follows predictable paths with predictable stages in the acquisition of a given structure.
- Second language learning is variable in its outcome.
- Second language learning is variable across linguistic subsystems.
- There are limits on the effects of frequency on SLA.
- There are limits on the effects of a learner’s first language on SLA.
- There are limits on the effects of instruction on SLA.

There are limits on the effects of output (learner production) on language acquisition.

The challenge for language teacher education and educators is to operationalise such guidance in terms of pedagogical practices. Another challenge for language teacher educators is the need for the development of technological pedagogical content knowledge in beginner teachers, i.e. the issues pertaining to the integration of **technologies** in teaching (see e.g. Mishra and Koehler, 2006).

At the process level, Roberts (1998: 136–37) posits that coherent sequencing and grouping of learning experiences into cycles combining direct experience (teaching practice; language learning), indirect experience (classroom observation; micro-teaching; inquiry; case studies), input (lectures,

readings) and self-awareness (theory building) is crucial for sense-making; he calls this ‘concerted design’.

One important development at the process level is the move towards an inquiry-based approach in which beginner teachers are not only taught how to utilise existing research evidence but, in addition, to contribute to the building of the knowledge base in relation in particular to practical teaching (Davies, 1999)

Clearly, this approach is a development of Wallace’s (1991) reflective approach referred to above.

### Standards-based approaches to language teacher education

Linked to the growing professionalisation of language teaching, as well as the rise in importance of accountability in education, is the increasing importance of standards in the context of language teacher education (see e.g. Richards, 2008). Many education systems in the world have developed a set of generic teaching standards and a number of professional organisations have developed subject specific ones. One example from the US are the standards of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages/National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (2002). The document ([www.actfl.org/files/public/ACTFLNCATESTStandardsRevised713.pdf](http://www.actfl.org/files/public/ACTFLNCATESTStandardsRevised713.pdf)) sets out six standards, each with numerous sub-standards.

Invariably, such prescriptions have a bearing on language teacher education curricula as well as on how beginner teachers are assessed. Donato (2009) advises a note of caution in relation to the technical-rational view inherent in standards. He posits that standards are weak predictors of practical teaching focusing on the ‘what’ rather than the ‘how’ of teaching. One reason why that is the case, he argues, is the fact that teaching tends to be conceptualised as fragmented into discrete units in standards, as opposed to dynamic and synthetic thought processes composed of multiple concepts of which there exists a varied understanding; reduction into taxonomic categories, according to Donato, can lead to profound misunderstandings of pedagogical concepts.

### The structure of ITE programmes

There is a main division here between two types. One is provision geared towards teaching in language schools in the private sector, and which, although it may confer a certificate or a diploma, will not be recognised in the state sector. The other is provision geared towards teaching in an educational system, and therefore requires recognition by government agencies, confers accreditation or leads to qualified teacher status or its equivalent.

Overall, the private sector offers shorter courses, which are often viewed as introductory or preparatory. Of these, courses such as the CELTA, awarded by Cambridge ESOL or CertTESOL, awarded by Trinity College London, have become the standard bearers. These courses consist of about 120 hours, and include an element of practicum.

University-based ITE programmes take a number of guises. This may be a 1-year, post-graduate certificate, as for example the PGCE in Modern Foreign Languages in the UK, or an integrated course with academic studies followed by professional development, as in Germany. In some cases (e.g. many African countries, Singapore) teacher-learners will have had most or all of their previous formal education in English as a second language. In other contexts (e.g. South America, Japan, Taiwan) student-teachers will enter the teacher preparation programme with differing levels of language proficiency, and often the first year or two of the programme is devoted to raising language proficiency before moving on to pedagogic issues in subsequent years (see Kamhi-Stein, 2009 for a survey of some research in this area).

A perennial issue in language teacher education in many countries is the need for closer collaboration between **mother tongue** and FL teaching and learning. Other issues are certification and its relationship to qualifications, as well as the need to broaden the research base beyond the focus on native-speaker teachers and beyond the focus on teachers of English as a foreign language.

**See also:** Assessment and testing; Cross-cultural psychology; *Didactique des langues*; *Fremdsprachendidaktik*; Primary education; Secondary education; Teacher thinking; Teaching methods

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NORBERT PACHLER AND AMOS PARAN

## Teacher talk

Teacher talk refers to the type of speech used by language teachers to address classroom participants. It is generally grammatical and can include several modifications or adjustments such as simplifications, rephrasing, frequent pauses, etc. Teachers make these adjustments in their speech in order to facilitate L2 communication.

According to Ellis, 'the growth of interest in the analysis of teacher language and interaction has been stimulated by the rejection of language teaching method as the principal determinant of successful learning' (1985: 143). When in the late 1970s and early 1980s researchers began to stress the importance of comprehensible input (Krashen, 1981) and interaction (Long, 1983) for successful language **acquisition**, teacher talk came into focus as a crucial source of input in the classroom. Some of the early work discussing teacher talk from this perspective was completed by Larsen-Freeman (1976) and Gaies (1977).

Although teachers generally seem to take their students' level of proficiency into account when addressing their classes (see, e.g. Håkansson, 1986), no clear guidelines exist for what constitutes

appropriate or effective teacher talk. Ellis (1985) and Håkansson (1986) suggest that teachers address their speech to an 'average learner' (Håkansson, 1986: 96), i.e. to a construct based on the teachers' assessment of their learners' average level of proficiency. Since teachers are involved in classroom interactions with many interlocutors of varying levels of proficiency, the input they provide generally tends to be less finely-tuned than the input available in one-on-one interactions between language learner and **native speaker**.

Lynch (1996) states that most studies on teacher talk are concerned with teachers who exhibit native or near-native **competence** in the language taught. Some aspects of teacher talk which have been investigated include amount of talking time, target language use, error treatment, input and interactional modifications, as well as teacher questions. As far as talking time is concerned, Chaudron (1988) observes that the studies he reviewed show a tendency of teachers to 'dominate classroom speech' (1988: 51; see also Allwright and Bailey, 1991). The amount of language which teachers produce is also related to factors such as teaching style, task type, student proficiency and **needs**, as well as class level (Ellis, 1991).

While most theories on foreign language pedagogy agree that teachers should seek to maximize their use of the target language (see e.g. Brandl, 2008), research shows that teachers vary widely in accomplishing this goal (Crawford, 2004). The facilitative role of students' L1 in language learning (Jarvis, 2002; Ringbom, 2007; Wayland and Guion, 2004) seemingly complicates the call to maximize target language use. However this is not necessarily a dichotic relationship; as Allford states, 'employing the mother tongue ... is entirely compatible with extensive use of the TL, which is being complemented, rather than undermined by cross-lingual comparisons' (Allford, 1999: 231).

Teacher's treatment of student **error** has received considerable attention from researchers. Several reviews (Allwright and Bailey, 1991; Chaudron, 1988; Ellis, 1994) provide a comprehensive survey of work which has been completed in this area. In general, studies on teacher treatment of error have identified the following main issues:

- the types of errors teachers choose to treat;
- who performs corrections;
- how and when corrections are accomplished;
- student uptake of corrections.

Despite the large body of work which has focused on error treatment, the relationship between error correction and language acquisition remains unclear. As Ellis states: 'Probably the main finding of studies on error treatment is that it is an enormously complex process' (1994: 585).

Apart from the error treatment which teachers accomplish in their talk, researchers have also investigated interactional and input modifications which teachers make in order to facilitate L2 communication. These modifications include the following: 'exaggeration of pronunciation and facial expressions; decreasing speech rate and increasing volume; frequent use of pause, gestures, graphic illustrations, questions and dramatization; sentence expansion, rephrasing and simplification; prompting; and completing utterances made by the student' (Richard-Amato, 1996: 45; see also Chaudron, 1988; and Ellis, 1994, for a review of relevant studies). Long and Sato (1983) further observe that teacher talk generally refers to the here and now of classroom situation.

Classroom interactions typically include a larger number of questions posed by the teachers (see, e.g., Long and Sato, 1983; see also Chaudron, 1988). Teachers' tendency towards asking questions may be due to the asymmetrical distribution of roles in the classroom. Furthermore, questions require answers and thus help involve learners in communicative interactions. The answers provided to questions also allow teachers insights into learners' comprehension of their teachers' talk. Summarizing the literature on teacher questions, Ellis states that studies have been concerned with

the frequency of the different types of questions, wait time (the length of time the teacher is prepared to wait for an answer), the nature of learners' output when answering questions, the effect of the learners' level of proficiency on *questioning*, the possibility of training teachers to ask more

'communicative' questions, and the variation evident in teachers' questioning strategies. (Ellis, 1994: 589)

A somewhat wider perspective on teacher talk is offered by Johnson (1995). She distances herself from the more traditional discussions of teacher talk in terms of observable structural modifications. From her point of view, teachers' use of language is not solely related to the immediate classroom context. She argues that 'the ways in which teachers organize classroom communication tells us something about who these teachers are, what they know, what they believe, and how they think about teaching, teachers, students, and second language classrooms' (1995: 38). Teacher talk is considered here in the wider context of knowledge construction and established power structures. Teachers should realize, Johnson advises, that they are in control of classroom patterns of communication and have the power to decide when, how, and by whom language is used. She concludes that, even if these patterns of communication are only one in many factors contributing to our understanding of second language classroom communication, they might be of particular importance since it lies within the teachers' power to actually change these patterns 'as they see fit' (Johnson, 1995: 17).

**See also:** Classroom language; Classroom observation schemes; Communicative language teaching; Content-based instruction; Monitor model; Monolingual principle; Non-native speaker teacher; Teacher thinking

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ERWIN TSCHIRNER, BIRGIT MEERHOLZ-HÄRLE  
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### Teacher thinking

Teacher thinking is a field of research that studies the thinking of teachers about various aspects of teaching and learning. Included are perceptions, beliefs, thought processes and knowledge. This research looks for relationships between these perceptions and classroom teaching. Interest in the 'inner world' of teachers and their views of their profession was first seen in skill and content areas of education in general. In the 1970s and 1980s, studies searched for ways to predict and improve student achievement in content areas. The aim was to link teacher

thinking to learning outcomes by means of following teachers' thoughts as they motivate teaching and influence student perceptions and actions. By studying the impact of these processes on each other, teaching could be related to learning. This became known as process-product research (Brophy and Good, 1986; Shulman, 1986a/b) because of the quantitative methods that were used.

Two seminal studies drew attention to in-depth description of teachers' cognitive worlds: Jackson's *Life in Classrooms* (1968) and Lortie's *Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study* (1975). Jackson studied elementary school teachers, drawing attention to the hidden aspects of teaching related to teacher thought processes. He extended the concern for predictability to the classroom as a social context. Lortie argued for recentring educational research on the classroom as the context of study that would help to understand teaching. These two studies led the way to studying teacher thinking, teacher thought processes, teacher learning and teacher knowledge, each having a cluster of separate research agendas.

Attention now was directed towards teachers' descriptions of how they construct the reality of the classroom. The aim was not so much to identify the effective teacher, but to understand and explain teaching processes, views, perceptions and understandings. (See the following literature reviews for an overview of the dimensions of teachers' inner worlds: Clark and Peterson, 1986; Fang, 1996; Shavelson and Stern, 1981).

In the field of foreign language study, teacher thinking research is often referred to as teacher belief research, building on the findings in the area of general education. Beliefs, assumptions and knowledge are studied in relation to how they interact, how they are used in the decision-making processes of teachers, and how they influence teachers' instruction (Woods, 1996). Exploratory, descriptive and interpretative ethnographic methods are used, drawing attention by the 1990s to the complexity of the social context of teachers and students.

### Beliefs and knowledge in education in general

Much debate has occurred about what is meant by teacher thinking, as well as about beliefs and the

distinction between beliefs and knowledge. One view suggested by Pajares (1992) is that beliefs and knowledge are concepts that interweave along a spectrum of meaning. In this view, beliefs are often thought of as being a type of knowledge, and knowledge as a component of beliefs. Pajares sorted through the dilemma and distinguished beliefs as being based on **evaluation** and judgement and knowledge on objective fact.

Some general statements can be made about beliefs:

- Beliefs are evaluative, not factual, non-consensual. They often include anecdotal material, have different degrees of strength and unclear boundaries.
- They may be descriptive, prescriptive and have a cognitive component representing knowledge as an affective and a behavioural component.
- They are mental constructs of experience often condensed into schemata or concepts that guide behaviour.
- They are not observed or measured but inferred from what people say, intend or do.
- They make an assertion about some matter of fact or principle or law. They involve people manipulating knowledge for a particular purpose.
- They persist when they are no longer accurate representations of reality.
- They vary along a central-peripheral dimension (the more central, the more they will resist change).
- The earlier they are incorporated into the belief structure, the more difficult they are to alter.

Some find that the power of beliefs is drawn from previous episodes or events (Goodman, 1988) and that teachers are influenced by 'guiding images' from past events that create 'intuitive screens' through which new information is filtered. Richly detailed episodic memory serves teachers as templates for their own teaching practice. Dewey (1933) argued that reflective thinking calls for careful examination of any beliefs to establish them upon a firm basis of evidence and rationality.

Distinctions have been drawn between teachers' educational beliefs and belief systems in general. Included in educational beliefs are: teachers' beliefs

about their role in affecting student performance, the nature of knowledge, causes of teacher/student performance, self-concept, self-efficiency and beliefs about specific subjects or disciplines (reading instruction, whole language, for instance).

Belief systems take the form of beliefs about constructs, such as politics or art, for instance. They have been described as loosely-bound systems with no clear logical rules for determining the relevance of beliefs to real-world events and situations and with highly variable and uncertain linkages to events, situations and knowledge systems (Abelson, 1979). Linkages are tied to personal, episodic and emotional experiences of the believer (Nespor, 1987). Belief systems have an adaptive function in helping individuals define and understand the world and themselves.

Nespor (1987) looked at the structure and functions of teachers' beliefs about their roles, students, subject matter areas they teach and schools where they work. He sought in this body of field-based research on teacher thinking to present a theoretical model of belief systems in which he distinguished beliefs from knowledge by four features: existential presumption, alternativity, affective and effective loading and episodic structuring. Non-consensuality and unboundedness were included when beliefs were organised as systems.

In addition, Woods (1996) proposed a hypothetical concept representing an integrated network of beliefs, assumptions and knowledge (BAK) based on data collected from teachers' verbalisations over time.

## **Beliefs and behaviour**

Evidence pointing towards the idea of individuals' beliefs strongly influencing behaviours (Abelson, 1979; Clark and Peterson, 1986; Nespor, 1987; Tabachnick and Zeichner, 1986) encouraged the study of teacher thought processes by exploring the relationship between the mental lives of teachers and their actions. This teacher/action research attempted to examine the mental constructs underlying behaviour before seeking to explain behaviour. Some disagreed about the separation of thought and action (see Elbaz, 1983, 1991), while others assumed a more dialectical relationship to exist in which thought and action are an inseparable part of

the same event (see Tabachnick and Zeichner, 1986). Pajares (1992) strongly argued for firming up the terminology being used by members of the research community, the research constructs being followed, and the future directions of research. He synthesised primary findings in a comprehensive review of research on teachers' beliefs, and found problems stemming from the different understandings researchers had of what beliefs are. He also specified several important assumptions guiding research on beliefs; namely:

- Individuals develop a belief system that houses all the beliefs acquired through the process of cultural transmission.
- Knowledge and beliefs are inextricably intertwined, but the potent affective, evaluative and episodic nature of beliefs makes them filters through which new phenomena are interpreted.
- Thought processes may well be precursors to and creators of beliefs, but the filtering effect of belief structures ultimately screens, redefines, distorts and reshapes subsequent thinking and information processing (Pajares, 1992: 325–6).

Clark and Peterson saw the need to bring together the areas of research in a review of the literature on teacher thought and action. The result was a model that represented teachers' interactive thoughts during pre-active, interactive and post-active phases of teaching (1986: 257). In their model, the pre-active phases, for instance, included the thinking of teachers, their planning, thought processes and teacher–student interaction. Included were specific studies that found links between teacher planning and action in the classroom (Hill, Yinger and Robbins, 1989), as well as exploring further action with 'on-task' (related to teaching) or 'off-task' (related to things outside the classroom or to personal life) (Peterson, Swing, Braveman and Buss, 1982). With this construct they could separate teachers' thought from language used to document those thoughts.

More recently, in the context of ethnographic research methodology, it has been argued by Freeman (1996) that accepting teachers at their word (a 'representational' approach to language data) fails to study language data for what it presents to the

world. The 'presentational' approach extends methodologies to linguistic analysis, in particular that of **structural linguistic** analysis of language and to translinguistic analysis (Bakhtin, 1981). It approaches language as a social system in which individuals participate and through which they are defined.

A good illustration of the effective use of qualitative methods and procedures being used with teacher thinking in an area of general education is the study of Duschl and Wright (1989). In their study of mathematics and science teachers, they investigated perceptions about the nature of subject matter used in decision-making involving the planning and delivery of instructional tasks. In searching for the 'hidden meanings' of the social context of science teachers, they applied an ethnographic approach using Spradley's (1979, 1980) developmental research sequence (descriptive, selective and focused observations) and his levels of analysis (domain, taxonomic and componential). They found that teachers do not employ guidelines about the structure and role of scientific theories in their thinking about teaching, but instead their decision-making is dominated by considerations such as student development, curriculum guides, **objectives** and pressures of accountability.

### Beliefs about foreign language learning

Research on foreign language teachers' beliefs began with interest about teachers' characteristics (such as personality, motivation, **learning styles** and language **attitude**) and the relationship of these characteristics to language **acquisition**. A primary aim was to determine what kinds of instructional environment best suit individual learners. Another was to identify learners' perceptions of what is involved in learning a foreign language to predict expectational conflicts that may contribute to student frustration, anxiety or lack of motivation.

Instruments used for eliciting beliefs include FLAS (Foreign Language Attitude Survey – De Garcia, Reynolds and Savignon, 1976) and BALLI (Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory – Horwitz, 1985, 1988). BALLI surveyed the difficulty of language learning, foreign language aptitude, the nature of language learning, **strategies**

of communication and learning, and learner motivations and expectations. The FLAS was developed as a tool for helping teachers explore their own attitudes and assumptions concerning foreign language learning and teaching.

Horwitz and others have found conflicting instructional practices. At times beliefs coincided with communicative **teacher methods** (e.g. student willingness to guess), but other beliefs (such as the importance of correctness) may affect the level of comfort with communicative techniques and activities in class. Mismatches that occur between teachers' and students' beliefs about language learning are related to anxiety tensions.

The potential influence of teachers' beliefs on students' beliefs has been a primary concern of research. ('To what degree do foreign language students' beliefs about language learning correspond to those of their teachers?' 'What is the relationship?') Findings suggest that teachers' beliefs are one of many factors affecting students' beliefs about language learning (Horwitz, 1985, 1988; Kern, 1995). The use of qualitative methods questions provided a means of studying in depth how teachers think about their profession, their role in teaching a language and its culture.

### Beliefs about culture and language

A major area of foreign language research involved in the study of language has been the study of the relationship of culture and language. Finding out teachers' beliefs about culture is preliminary to research goals. In the United States, Robinson (1985) studied a large population of foreign language teachers and their notions. Taking into account the **behaviourist**, functional, cognitive and symbolic traditions related to culture, she grouped definitions of culture as 'observable' and 'non-observable'. In Mexico, Ryan (1994) worked with English university foreign language teachers in a long-term case study that traced teachers' definitions about the nature of culture to a model adapted from Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) and Keesing (1981) that had meaning categories such as adaptive systems (descriptive, historical and normative), cognitive and structural. In Europe, Byram and Risager (1999) explored foreign language teaching and its

effect on secondary school students' perceptions of other cultures (see also Sercu et al., 2005). They were interested in interpretation of the cultural dimension in language teaching. They traced and analysed definitions using a grid with two dimensions: thematic (such as a way of life/objective structure/norms and values/art, literature) and societal (such as international, national, group, individual).

In other international settings such as China, teachers have been surveyed about their interpretations of culture teaching (Adamowski, 1991; Lessard-Clouston, 1996a). Both studies confirmed that teachers, when asked about culture and language, gave very broad definitions that included all aspects of daily life, and they said they taught culture both explicitly and implicitly in their classes.

A great lack of empirical research about socio-cultural perceptions still exists. While attention has been drawn to this lack in the literature (Byram, Esarte-Sarries and Taylor, 1991; Lessard-Clouston, 1996b; Robinson, 1985; Ryan, 1994), very few studies of the 'inner world of teachers' have been carried out in foreign language settings, with some exceptions in China, Britain, Mexico and Morocco.

In Mexico during the 1990s, studies of teacher thinking about cultural aspects of language learning have looked at the sociocultural aspect of language learning in university settings. The route followed by the research started with teachers' beliefs about culture and the teaching of culture, and related these beliefs to classroom instruction and student perceptions of cultural aspects in their language classes.

The first long-term studies were aimed at **English** as an international language, or **lingua franca**, in the social context of urban universities. In this setting the learning of English constitutes a special case in relation to other languages taught at the university level. English is an international language that university students feel obliged to study for professional and academic reasons. Tensions are created that can impede language acquisition and produce negative attitudes.

One of the first qualitative studies looked at the relationship between university English teachers' beliefs about the nature of culture and their classroom instruction (Ryan, 1994; 1997). For some teachers it was difficult to express their ideas and

explain how they defined culture. Some were perplexed at first by the complexity of the abstraction and its elusive character. Their definitions were very broad, embracing many aspects of daily life, a finding noted in other research (see Adamowski, 1991; Robinson, 1985; Lessard-Clouston, 1996a, 1996b). Another pattern found was that teachers spontaneously used metaphors to capture their ideas as if they were photographic snapshots on which to hang their definitions of culture. The use of a metaphor conveyed the highly personal nature of the concept of culture.

Teachers perceived of students as having negative **attitudes** toward North Americans (Ryan, 1994). Ambivalent attitudes surfaced toward speakers of English when they were seen as an agent of English-speaking cultures trying to supplant their own culture. Moreover, stereotypes of North Americans ('cultural imperialists', 'cultural penetrators' and 'cultural interventionists') were observed as lateral results in a number of studies.

Students' attitudes were found to be complex and involve ambivalent feelings toward English and its speakers, especially North Americans. An illustration of students' perceptions is that they perceived of themselves as wearing a protective shield, one that developed as their home culture was threatened by the new ways of seeing the world brought from other cultures through language ('If I am seeing the world through a different set of eyes, where does my original point of view go?' 'Why do people want me to change what I have now, what I am proud of? Do I have to change?') (Ryan, Byer and Mestre, 1998; Ryan, 1998b). Strong defensiveness and monocultural tendencies were found present, along with a sense of national pride ('Don't touch my culture!' 'Don't teach culture', 'Learning not losing'). At the same time, students recognised negative stereotypes and false images they held ('We have to get rid of myths by getting in contact with people. Both Mexicans and Americans have to do so.') Others were more positive ('I would be interested in learning about cultural aspects.' 'I would like a little more about the US in my English classes.')

A case study of a **native speaker** of English and a native speaker of **Spanish** followed teacher thinking into the classroom (Ryan, 1998a). When

beliefs of teachers about culture and foreign language teaching are compared, beliefs are not dissimilar; that is, both teachers have goals in common for their students. When teachers are observed, knowledge about C1 (native culture) and C2 (English-speaking cultures) functions as a variable in the interaction of teachers, students and text, moderated by interest, memory and a desire to comment.

## Conclusion

Teacher thinking research has been driven by several different agendas and has generated a respectable corpus of findings that has input in teacher education. From its beginning in the field of general education, this research has been concerned with teacher accountability and student outcomes in various educational settings and subject areas. The primary aim was to improve student achievement. What was missing was discovered in later studies that focused on the social context of learning. The direction research took began to utilise the potential of qualitative techniques to study, in depth and over long periods of time, teacher beliefs about their subject matter and the process of learning. Beliefs were found to be very strong, and the earlier they were formed the stronger and more resistant to change they were. Their relationship to the classroom turned out to be extremely subtle.

With this foundation of research in general education, foreign language study became another of its subject areas. The first surveys confirmed the strong and resistant nature of beliefs, especially teacher beliefs about language and language learning, and their complex relationships to teaching. Qualitative data collected from interviews, **classroom observation** and institutional materials enable researchers to fine-tune teacher–student interaction in the classroom. One of the first areas of interest was culture in language teaching, where teachers' beliefs could be followed in great detail in teaching. Another area was **reading** instruction.

The future of this research lies in examining teacher identity, not only teachers of English but also of other foreign languages. In complex international settings, where attitudes can be very pronounced and perceptions play a prominent role

in language learning, knowledge and insight into teacher–student thinking could provide essential input for teacher education.

**See also:** Cultural awareness; Language awareness; Non-native speaker teacher; Teacher education; Teaching methods

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PHYLLIS RYAN

## Teaching methods

The question of method is one of the central issues of instruction. Despite this fact method analysis has received far less attention in language education

theory to date than one might imagine from the way different methods are promoted and advocated. Throughout the **history** of foreign language education, teachers and theorists have debated which methods are superior for certain goals (cf. Howatt, 2004). In the course of the development of foreign language teaching, the focus has shifted continuously between the key questions of what instruction should aim at (goals and objectives), what should be taught in terms of language and subject matter (content), how foreign languages are learnt (learning process), and how they should be taught (teaching method). Of course, these issues are interrelated and, moreover, they are connected to a large number of subsidiary aspects, e.g. course structure, testing procedures, teaching materials, learner and teacher roles. Methods should also be seen in their cultural and social contexts (cf. Holliday, 1994) and as representations of underlying educational values at a given time, which are evident in society at large as well as in the daily practice of individual teachers.

### What is a method?

A method is a planned way of doing something. The original Greek word (*méthodos*) includes the idea of a series of steps leading towards a conceived goal. A method implies an orderly way of going about something, a certain degree of advance planning and of control, then, also, a process rather than a product. Thus the term method may describe both the procedures used by a teacher to instruct learners in a language lesson and the steps and techniques adopted by the learners themselves in pre-planned phases of self-teaching. A method always is a means towards something, it is not an end in itself.

A method is a theoretical construct, 'a coherent set of links between principles and certain techniques and procedures' (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: xii), and it is always described in a decontextualised way. However, teachers will implement a particular method in different ways, depending on their own values and experience, their students, their institutional constraints and the wider sociocultural and educational context.



## Method analysis

In spite of the fact that the question of teaching method is a central aspect of language education there have only been a few attempts to deal with method systematically. Mackey (1965) sees method analysis as distinct from teaching analysis. He states: 'The purpose of method analysis is to show how one method differs from another [ ... ]. It is limited to the analysis of teaching materials through which learners can study the language' (p. 139). As he sees methods exemplified in **textbooks**, his criteria for method analysis are based on material: 'All language-teaching methods, by their nature, are necessarily made up of a certain selection, gradation, presentation and repetition of the material' (p. 157). For Mackey, method is closely linked to syllabus and teaching procedures. Neither the roles of teachers and learners nor the underlying theories of language and language learning are part of his concept of method.

Anthony (1963) proposes a hierarchical model on three levels – approach, method, technique – which focuses on the relationship between the underlying theoretical principles (approach) and the classroom procedures derived from them (technique). He says 'I view an approach – any approach – as a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language and the nature of language teaching and learning' (Anthony, 1963: 63f.). On the intermediate level of method the beliefs about language learning and teaching are put into practice through decisions regarding course content and goals. These decisions are then implemented by certain teaching procedures at the classroom level – technique.

Anthony's conceptualisation of method as being the intermediate stage between approach and technique is attractive in its simplicity. This view of method is less narrow than in Mackey's case and corresponds to that traditionally adopted in German foreign language education, where *Fremdsprachenmethodik* (foreign language teaching methodology) is concerned with principles, procedures and materials of foreign language learning in classrooms. In contrast, *Fremdsprachendidaktik* (foreign language education) refers to the whole field and includes those areas which Anthony (1963) subsumes under approach (Neuner, 1989: 145f.).

The most detailed discussion of the method concept is to be found in Richards and Rodgers (2001), who have extended and revised Anthony's proposal. Richards and Rodgers define method as comprising different areas. Anthony's hierarchy of levels is turned into a model constructed on parallel lines. 'Thus, a method is theoretically related to an approach, is organizationally determined by a design, and is practically realized in procedure' (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 20). Similar to Anthony they regard approach as referring to 'theories about the nature of language and language learning that serve as the source of practices and principles in language teaching' (2001: 20). These theories have to be rendered practicable by using them to determine goals and **syllabus**, to guide the choice of task types which support the kind of learning which is being aimed for, to advocate particular roles for teachers and learners, and to describe the teaching materials. All these aspects belong to the field of 'design'. Finally, the range of actual tasks, the ways of presentation and feedback, the types of **exercises** and activities favoured by a particular design are analysed under the heading of 'procedure'.

Richards and Rodgers use their concept as an analytical tool to describe and compare a number of mainstream and so-called alternative or fringe methods. Their analyses provide valuable insights both into the method concept itself and into the individual methods. Applying the same set of analytical questions to each method makes it obvious that underneath the apparent differences some methods share a common ground in their underlying theoretical assumptions.

However, the reverse is also true. The same procedures may well be used for different methods and different purposes. This does not necessarily imply a shared approach or even – as Larsen-Freeman (2000) calls this level of design – shared principles. It is not easy, therefore, to draw clear distinctions between different methods without a thorough analysis; and some methods naturally share more principles or design features than others.

Concern with the general concept of method, though not the discussion of individual methods or methodological questions, receded in the writing on foreign language education at the end of

the twentieth century. Some scholars consider the concept of method obsolete or of doubtful value because of its underlying assumption that a single set of principles determines whether learning takes place or not (Nunan, 1991). These critics like to see the concept of method replaced with a range of options for content and teaching strategies (Savignon, 1983; Stern, 1992) or a set of principles (Brown, 1994) or **needs-based** strategies (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). However, even if language teaching theory is not being pushed forward by a discussion of methods, for pre-service teacher education a look at methods and their theoretical foundations may prove to be an important stage of orientation, when the complex structures of interrelated principles and options are too confusing for novices who have not yet had an extended period of teaching experience.

### Methods in the history of foreign language education

In the 1960s and 1970s the predominant view of the historical development of foreign language teaching was a linear one (e.g. Titone, 1968). The description of successive methods implied that foreign language education had made steady progress towards improvement. Historical references were often used to illustrate the superiority of informed contemporary practice over that of the unenlightened past. However, Kelly's (1969) extensive research into the history of foreign language teaching also showed that there are a number of recurrent themes and procedures, even if their concrete representations may have differed at various times.

More recent historical analyses (Klippel, 1994; Musumeci, 1997; Howatt, 2004,) stress the fact that methods are embedded in the political, cultural and educational values of their respective times and cannot be evaluated outside this context. In addition, these studies include an analysis of teaching **materials** and real teaching practice providing concrete examples of methods which were used at different times. When a variety of sources are examined, a much richer and more diverse past is revealed than was the case with method description based on the theoretical literature alone. It also becomes apparent that foreign language

teaching before 1900 was not just the **grammar-translation method**, but included, among others, variations of the **direct method** (e.g. in the theoretical works and in the schools established by the educationists of the Age of Enlightenment in Germany) as well as inductive approaches (Klippel, 1994).

In the twentieth century modified versions of the direct method first proposed by the **reform movement**, e.g. **Palmer's** Oral Method, have existed side-by-side with the grammar-translation method and more form-focused ways of teaching. After World War II the **audio-lingual method** was widely propagated; in Europe – but not in the United States – it was largely replaced by the **audio-visual method** in the 1960s, which in turn became obsolete with the advent of the **communicative** approach. This chain of development is reflected in the theoretical and practical publications of the English-speaking world and Western Europe. Method development in Eastern Europe was heavily influenced by the work of Russian psychologists and applied linguists. Unfortunately, research into the historical development of indigenous language teaching methods in other parts of the world has not been undertaken on a significant scale.

Historical research into foreign language teaching methods demonstrates clearly that methodological innovation is not only dependent on the propagation of theoretical advances but more importantly on the development of appropriate teaching materials and, more recently, on pre-service and in-service **teacher education**. This is because at classroom level, methods have rarely been implemented in an unadulterated form. Research on teachers' subjective theories and teacher thinking has shown that methods are always adapted by those who use them. Most teachers will pick and choose those procedures and proposals which are in tune with current educational values, which coincide with their subjective theories, which are supported by a wide variety of published materials, and, finally, which prove effective and easy to use. As long as this pluralistic view of teaching methods is tied to a teacher's consistent philosophy of language teaching, it could be called 'principled eclecticism' (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: 183).

## Method comparisons

Method comparisons are undertaken with two major goals. The first one is descriptive and seeks to increase our knowledge about foreign language teaching methods, classroom teaching and theory construction, as is the goal of Richards and Rodgers (2001), Larsen-Freeman (2000) and, less so, of Stevick (1998). The second goal is prescriptive, as it intends to prove that one method is better, i.e. more efficient, than another one. The implication is that the superior method should be used.

Descriptive method comparisons need to analyse methods using the same theoretical model or set of questions. What makes it difficult to compare methods using the three-tiered concept of Richards and Rodgers (2001) is the fact that at least some information on the three areas of analysis – approach, design, procedure – has to be inferred, because the proponents of each method do not always provide comprehensive outlines for the underlying theory and for all areas of practice. Therefore, determining some aspects may be a matter of interpretation of statements or materials and consequently carries the risk of misinterpretation. Pennycook (1989) considers this to be a major flaw of the Richards and Rodgers model.

Larsen-Freeman (2000) works with a list of ten questions which are applied to each method in turn. These questions cover much of the same ground as the method concept of Richards and Rodgers, namely goals, teacher and learner roles, characteristics of the teaching/learning process, student–teacher interaction, emphasis on certain **skills** and areas of language, types of **evaluation**, teacher response to student **errors**, views of language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: 7–8). Larsen-Freeman includes three further important aspects which are missing from the Richards and Rodgers concept: the affective domain ('How are the **emotions** of the students dealt with?'), the underlying concept of culture, and the role of the students' native language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: 7–8). Both of these comparative studies have provided information on and detailed insights into the major current mainstream and fringe methods to help teachers make informed methodological decisions.

Interest in prescriptive method comparison reached a peak in the 1960s. One major large scale

quasi-experimental study with this aim was the Pennsylvania Project (Smith, 1970). However, taking method as the main category of comparison did not yield clear results. The superiority of one method over another could not be proved empirically, simply because the realisations of one method in different settings, with different groups of learners and by different teachers turned out to be very diverse. In practice, foreign language classes are shaped by a complex network of situational, relational, educational, cognitive and affective factors, far too many to be controlled in an experimental study.

Although this experimental research did not fulfil expectations in terms of method comparison, it led to a more critical look at methods. 'It has also provided a sobering check on some of the claims, often extravagant ones, that innovators and advocates of different methods have been prone to make' (Stern, 1983: 492). And, of course, it has given us a more thorough understanding of the classroom situation, where goal-setting, learning processes and the interaction of teachers and learners may be more important than the method adopted. Unfortunately, disappointment with method research has also led to neglecting the teaching perspective for some time. At the end of the twentieth century foreign language education theory was still primarily concerned with learning processes rather than teaching procedures, even though the teachers themselves, their education and reflective practice are now receiving more attention.

## Current methods

Historical research has shown that teaching methods at any given time are bound up in the web of educational thinking within a particular society. Teaching methods are part of the cultural context in which they exist. This partly explains why new teaching methods cannot and maybe should not be transferred from one cultural context to another. Method research has to take the cultural loading of methods into account (Holliday, 1994).

In Europe and in 'core English-speaking countries' (Phillipson, 1992) the second half of the twentieth century produced foreign language teaching methods which may be linked to a number of ideas salient in educational thinking: individual-

ism and autonomy, learning by using as many senses as possible, the centrality of communication and the negotiation of meaning, the role of cognition. Apart from these general educational concepts, it was the development of **linguistics** which has shaped present-day teaching methods.

The communicative approach (**communicative language teaching**) has been widely accepted and may be seen as an umbrella under which a number of methods have found their place (see Waters (2009) for an unusual, yet thought-provoking overview): **natural approach**, **task-based learning**, **community language learning**, **humanistic methods**, **content-based instruction**, **bilingual method**, and, to a lesser degree **total physical response** (TPR) and **suggestopedia**. The role of the senses in understanding and handling the foreign language is important in the **audio-visual method**, TPR, **task-based learning** and **humanistic methods**. A strong cognitive element is present in **the silent way** and the **grammar-translation method**. Cognitive learning does not play a big part in the audio-lingual method or TPR. More than any other method, community language learning takes the needs and the individuality of the learner as its focal point (Stevick, 1998). But the individual learner matters in all communicative methods. After all, the main objective of communicative language teaching is to enable the learner to express in the foreign language what he or she would like to express.

The main purpose of a teaching method lies in facilitating learning. Thus, the method needs to suit the goals set in the language classroom, i.e. the effective and efficient acquisition of the new language. Swan criticises recent preoccupation with peripheral issues:

In replacing old methods by new ones, we have often allowed new and promising-looking macrostrategical stances to dictate our acceptance or rejection of micromethods, whose value should in fact be judged solely by their efficacy. [ ... ] What we need, perhaps, is therefore not so much to find new methods, as to take stock of the existing ones.

(2009: 132f.)

That is why teachers need to know different language teaching methods.

**See also:** Classroom research; Teacher education; Teacher thinking

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FRIEDERIKE KLIPPEL

## Technologies for language learning

Few language teachers would admit that they do not need or do not use technology in order to deliver their curriculum. Indeed, the integration of

technology into the mainstream language curriculum has gained a prominent role in the field of second language pedagogy and, by extension, the **research** agenda for the field of second language learning (Chapelle, 2009; Meskill and Anthony, 2010; Thorne, 2006). Not only do students enjoy using technology to accomplish almost any task, but they are also willing to spend significant amounts of time outside of class working on language homework if technology is added into the mix. This accounts for the interest in harnessing video games for the purposes of language learning (Gee, 2007; Peterson, 2010; Thorne, 2008; Thorne et al., 2009), because students intrinsically appear to enjoy learning via a game format.

Where the language profession may not be in agreement is the proportion of the curriculum that should be mediated through technology. While a supplementary role for technology might seem acceptable for most teachers, others continue to feel that language courses delivered totally online (i.e. **distance learning**) fail to meet the standards for best practices. The fear is that administrators will use technology as a way of reducing labour costs or replacing teachers altogether (Blake, 2008). These worries persist despite the fact that language teachers must clearly be involved at all stages of design and implementation of an online curriculum.

In the past, the term *technology* could refer to audiotapes, videotapes, computer assisted learning programs (i.e. tutorial **CALL**), teleconferencing, and computer mediated communication (CMC; e.g. email, blogs, wikis, instant messaging, chat). The practice of CMC via computers and mobile telephone devices has exploded, along with a staggering array of new mobile apps, so that CMC increasingly delivers the functionalities previously available only on audio and/or videotapes or within the teleconference studio.

The different curricular roles for technology can be described as *blended* (i.e. using technology as a supplement to classroom instruction), *hybrid* (i.e. providing instruction both in class and online), and completely *online* language learning (Blake, 2011). Some researchers (Allen and Seaman, 2010) have characterized the hybrid learning format as representing the best of both worlds in the sense that it provides the learner with all the conveniences of

online learning while still maintaining the vital face-to-face (F2F) link found in the classroom experience. In a report concerning online learning in general, Allen and Seaman (2010) provided evidence of a 21 percent increase in online enrollments for 2008, where 30 percent of all college students took at least one course online, including language courses. Furthermore, between 30 and 79 per cent of the course content for higher education was delivered online in a blended or hybrid format. Hybrid learning is present, they say, where a 'substantial proportion of the content is delivered online, typically uses online discussions, and typically has a reduced number of face-to-face meetings' (p. 4). However, little research has been done to determine if all students equally benefit from learning online. Obviously, students who thrive in **autonomous learning** environments would be predisposed to take full advantage of an online language curriculum. Future research needs to address the effect that personality and cognitive factors might exert on student outcomes in an online learning environment.

With respect to CALL, a variety of tools stand ready to assist the language curriculum: internet web pages to provide authentic materials in any language; web applications such as WordChamp (LeLoup and Ponterio, 2005) to increase vocabulary while reading online; discrete learning programs or tutorial CALL to practice pronunciation, morphology, and syntax (Hubbard and Bradin Siskin, 2004); mobile phone applications to have access to anytime/anywhere learning; programs with extensive feedback and record keeping capacities or i-CALL, such as e-Tutor (Heift, 2010a); and synchronous CMC (e.g. video, voice, and text exchange) and asynchronous CMC tools to carry out real-time and deferred-time chatting, respectively. Each tool provides certain affordances, but also mediates language learning in predetermined ways (Thorne, 2003). Language teachers should be wary of the seemingly transparent nature of technological presentations of the curriculum because technology does not relieve the instructor or the students of the necessary task of interpreting culture, as Kramsch and Anderson (1999) have taken pains to point out.

The explosive popularity of social computing (i.e. Facebook, MocaLive, texting, Twitter) offers the profession another avenue to engage language students outside the classroom, especially with respect to **tandem learning** and developing **inter-cultural competence**. While tandem learning has enjoyed much success (Darhower, 2007; Furstenberg et al., 2001; Lomicka, 2006; O'Dowd, 2006; Schwienhorst, 2008), these tele-collaborations have sometimes led to some unpleasant breakdowns in communication as reported in the literature (Belz, 2002; Ware, 2005; Ware and Kramsch, 2005) and should not be undertaken without considering the obstacles to intercultural understanding, especially when the dialogue is mediated through technology.

As the use of technology becomes an accepted, if not expected, practice in language education, researchers will increasingly turn their attention to evaluating how particular technological tools affect the process of learning, rather than fixating on comparative outcomes and questions of which is better, the classroom or technology (see discussion in Blake et al., 2008). CALL researchers have documented how technology can benefit **reading** comprehension and **vocabulary** growth (Chun, 2006; Cobb, 2007), syntactic knowledge (Pelletieri, 2000), writing (Kramsch, 2009; Warschauer, 2010; Warschauer and Grimes, 2007), pragmatic competence (Sykes and Cohen, 2009), and intercultural insights (Goodfellow and Lamy, 2009). Research on the use of L2 learner corpora to generate appropriate student feedback (Heift, 2010b) makes it clear that the CALL field will have to invest more in i-CALL systems, despite the programming time needed to instantiate these interactive language learning environments. Mobile apps for L2 learning will increasingly be students' favourite vehicle for gaining access to language knowledge and practice.

**See also:** CALL; Corpus linguistics and language teaching; Language laboratories; Materials development; Teaching methods

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ROBERT J. BLAKE

## TESOL – Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

Founded in 1966, TESOL International Association is a membership association for English language teaching professionals. TESOL's mission is to advance professional expertise in **English** language teaching and learning for speakers of other languages worldwide. The association values professionalism in English language education; improving education through the interaction of research and practice; accessible, high quality instruction; respect for diversity, multilingualism, multiculturalism, and individual language rights; and collaboration in a global community. Through its programmes, services, and products, TESOL supports English teaching professionals and their students.

TESOL has more than 12,000 members representing 156 countries, and more than 100 worldwide affiliates. Membership comprises teachers, teachers-in-training, administrators, researchers, materials writers, and curriculum developers. Through the TESOL interest sections, members have access to the TESOL Community, an online community where members engage in discussion online or through their chosen e-mail lists. Each interest section also publishes a newsletter distributed electronically to its members two or three times a year. The newsletters feature articles that relate directly to the interest section and may be research- or practice oriented.

TESOL publishes books on a wide range of topics; two refereed academic journals, *TESOL Quarterly* and *TESOL Journal*; and two newsletters, *TESOL*

### Further reading

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*Connections* and *English Language Bulletin*. In addition, TESOL hosts the annual TESOL International Convention and English Language Expo, the largest event of its kind. The convention regularly draws more than 6,000 people from the United States and around the world.

### Website

www.tesol.org

## Text and corpus linguistics

The intensive study of texts, for educational, religious and **literary** purposes, has a very long history. For hundreds of years, concordances of major texts, such as the Bible and Shakespeare's works, have been used for detailed interpretation of word use and meaning. Since the 1890s, textual study has increasingly used quantitative methods, initially to study word frequency and later to study a wide range of language features. Such work became unfashionable in the 1960s, but has rapidly grown in influence again since the 1980s, when computer-assisted methods became widely available to study large text collections (corpora). These data and methods have had considerable influence on the design of **dictionaries** and **grammars**.

### Text analysis

Text analysis assumes that the main unit of language in use is a text. A complete text can be very short ('Exit', 'Wet Paint', 'Closed for Lunch'). Longer texts (e.g. a newspaper editorial, short story, or school **textbook**) have characteristic **vocabulary**, grammar and textual structure. It is natural to think initially of written examples, but the concept applies equally to purely spoken texts (e.g. a conversation or a transaction in a shop), or to mixed types (e.g. a lecture or a sermon). Whereas a sentence has a syntactic structure, a text has a semantic unity. It is 'about' some topic, with a coherent gist or a storyline which is not purely linguistic, but depends partly on everyday knowledge. There is also a close relation between many **text types** and social institutions: textbooks are used in schools,

sermons are given in churches, cross-examinations occur in court-rooms, and so on.

Nevertheless, different linguistic features characterise different uses of language. Different topics require different words, and there are statistical preferences for using different vocabulary and grammar in different text types. Biber (1988) has used quantitative and distributional techniques to identify words and grammatical constructions which frequently co-occur (or never do) in text types (such as conversation, personal letters and science fiction), and to identify more general textual dimensions (such as informational, narrative and persuasive). (On textual cohesion, coherence and text structure, see Halliday and Hasan, 1976; Brown and Yule, 1983.)

Beyond the most elementary stages, language learners must be able to suit their language to different social contexts, and many adults learn **English for Specific Purposes** (which are often academic). Materials should therefore embody accurate descriptions of the real language that they will have to cope with. Learners may, for example, need the features which characterise scientific and technical language, such as passives and nominalisations. Because of its social and intellectual importance, scientific language has been well researched: see Swales (1990) and Atkinson (1999) for just two such studies.

### Corpus analysis

In the 1890s, with the aim of improving court transcriptions, Kaeding (1898) used a corpus of eleven million running words to study word frequency in **German**. From the 1920s to the 1960s, Thorndike, Lorge, West and others calculated word frequencies in large English-language corpora, to set up wordlists for designing foreign language and literacy materials (see Howatt, 2004, for details). Largely under the influence of **Chomsky's** theories, quantitative work went out of fashion, but the rapid development of computers, corpora and text-processing software from the 1980s has led to a renaissance of quantitative methods.

In the 1960s, the first computer-readable corpora consisted of just one million words of running text. By the late 1990s, the larger corpora consisted of

hundreds of millions of words. A large general corpus is a text collection designed as a broad sample of language use: spoken and written, casual and formal, fiction and non-fiction, popular and technical, written for children and adults, and covering a wide range of subjects.

A significant indication of the influence of corpus linguistics was the publication in the mid-1990s of four major monolingual dictionaries of British English (CIDE, 1995; COBUILD, 1995; LDOCE, 1995; OALD, 1995), all aimed at advanced learners, and all based on detailed analyses of large text corpora. This involved wide-ranging changes in lexicographic practice, made possible by new technology. Corpus-based grammars have also appeared (e.g. COBUILD, 1990; Biber et al., 2000).

The main research tool is the concordance. Computer software can search a corpus for examples of words or phrases, and display them within their co-text. This provides dozens or hundreds of attested examples from which the lexicographer or grammarian can accurately describe typical language use. The four dictionaries differ in their details, but all contain **authentic** examples of current word usage. Indeed, only a corpus of contemporary language use can tell us which words are current, and which have dropped out of use. Other frequency information includes how often words occur, how often words with multiple meanings occur with their different meanings, and how often words are co-selected with other words (collocations) and grammatical constructions. Examples of real usage also provide information on the frequent evaluative connotations of words and their pragmatic force in different **speech acts**.

By the late 1990s, the development of bilingual corpora and bilingual corpus-based dictionaries was also proceeding rapidly. This work has corresponding implications for the practice and theory of **translation**.

Examples of patterns revealed by concordances and associated techniques can be found in Moon, 1998; Partington, 1998; Sinclair, 1991, 2004a; Stubbs, 2001; and papers in Aijmer and Altenberg, 1991, and Thomas and Short, 1996. See Barnbrook, 1996, on general corpus methods, Sinclair, 1987, on lexicographic methods, and Willis, 1990; Sinclair, 2004b; Nesselhauf, 2005; Römer, 2005; on applications to teaching **materials**.

## Outstanding issues

Because of their need to present for example 'general English', dictionaries and grammars can take only limited account of variation within a language. Whether varieties can be exhaustively classified is doubtful: apart from anything else, new text types are constantly arising. However, individual teachers or researchers can now easily set up their own smaller specialised corpora, in different languages, for learners with different specific purposes.

In addition, whether any corpus, however large, can truly represent a whole language is also doubtful. A language is continually growing and changing, and it is not theoretically possible to have a representative sample of a potentially infinite population. A general corpus must sample mainstream uses, such as quality newspapers, widely-read fiction and everyday conversation. But who is to say what would be appropriately-sized samples of more specialised text types such as research articles on bio-chemistry, business correspondence or television chat shows? A more modest aim is a balanced corpus which samples widely, is not biased towards data which are easy to collect (e.g. mass media texts), and does not under-represent data which are difficult to collect (casual conversation). The value of corpus data is not in doubt, but there is much debate on how to design the optimum corpus.

Although corpus work has profoundly influenced dictionaries and grammars, its influence on teaching materials has been more modest. There is often a lack of correspondence between traditional accounts of English usage and what **native speakers** actually say or write (as attested in corpora), but the exact place of findings from **authentic** data is disputed.

## Related areas and conclusions

The study of attested language use, in several branches of linguistics and the social sciences, has provided much of the theory behind **communicative language teaching**. Approaches such as contrastive rhetoric, **conversational analysis**, **discourse analysis**, **intercultural communication** and **stylistics** differ in their linguistic, sociological or literary focus, but they all investigate how language forms are used in real communication.

The technology underlying corpus linguistics has given access to new data, and opened up research topics which were previously inconceivable. We now have facts about language use which no amount of introspection or manual analysis could discover, but it will take time before this mass of new evidence is fully interpreted for its relevance to teaching materials and teaching practice.

**See also:** Authenticity; Conversation analysis; Corpus linguistics and language teaching; Discourse analysis; Grammar; Linguistics; Notions and functions; Pedagogical grammar; Schema and script theory; Variation in language; Vocabulary

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MICHAEL STUBBS

## Text types and grading

Choosing the types of texts that go into a course and deciding on their sequencing can be guided by considering text types, topic types, and readability. Texts provide opportunities for learners to meet language features and to become familiar with discourse structures. **Research** on text types thus has important implications for language curriculum design. The selection and grading of text types in language courses will directly affect what can be learned.

A major distinction in research on **reading** is between expository texts and narrative texts. An important grammatical distinction between these two text types lies in the types of conjunction relationships (Halliday and Hasan, 1976) that each typically contain. Narrative texts commonly involve conjunction relationships where all the sentences and clauses are of roughly equal value in terms of the message they express. That is, they express time sequence and inclusion relationships where each idea follows another in a steplike sequence. Expository texts, on the other hand, use a range of weighted relationships like cause and effect, generalisation and example, contrast, and summary, where one sentence or clause is given more importance than the other. Expository text thus requires more sophisticated interpretation skills.

Biber's (1989) corpus based research has identified eight text types which differ from each other in the clusters of grammatical and lexical features they contain. These text types are: intimate interpersonal interaction (telephone conversations, face-to-face conversations); informational interaction (business calls on the telephone, spontaneous speeches, interviews, personal letters); scientific exposition (academic prose, official documents); learned exposition (press reviews, popular magazines, academic prose); imaginative narrative (fiction, prepared speeches); general narrative exposition (newspaper reporting, non-sports broadcasts, humour); situated reportage (sports broadcasts); and involved persuasion (speeches, interviews, professional letters, magazines). Scientific exposition, for example, is characterised by use of the present tense, long words, nouns rather than pronouns, lexical variety, passives, relative clauses and adverbial subordination, etc.

Biber's research is significant for language teachers because it shows that if language courses make use of a limited range of text types, learners will meet a limited range of grammatical and lexical features. If learners need **languages for specific purposes**, then the appropriate text types must be used. If learners have wide general purposes, then their course should include the full range of text types.

The selection of text types can be specified further by reference to Johns and Davies' (1983) topic types. A somewhat similar genre based classification can be found in Derewianka (1990). Johns and Davies' topic types deal mainly with expository text. They include, for example, characteristics and physical structure texts which describe what things are like, instruction texts which tell the reader how to do things, process texts like life cycles and descriptions of manufacturing processes which describe how things are formed, and state/situation texts like newspaper accounts and historical accounts which describe what happened. Texts which are of the same topic type, for example, physical structure, can be on quite different topics, for example the structure of an ants' nest or the structure of a business organisation, and still share the same basic components of parts, location of the parts, characteristics of the parts, and function of the parts.

Although over a dozen topic types have been identified, typically only a small number of them are important for learners working within a particular subject area.

The choice and grading of the text types to include in a course will depend on **needs analysis**, learners' proficiency level, and degree of background knowledge. Learners with academic purposes will need to work with the scientific exposition, learned exposition and informational interaction text types. Learners who need to use the target language as a second language in daily life will need to work with intimate interpersonal interaction, informational interaction, and involved persuasion text types.

Biber and Conrad's (2009) research has shown that spoken and written language differ in that grammatical complexity in spoken language is primarily clausal, while complexity in written language is primarily phrasal – largely involving

the complexity of noun groups. Different complexity measures are thus needed for spoken and written language.

An important factor in the choice and grading of texts is readability (Carrell, 1987), and vocabulary knowledge plays a very significant part in all readability measures. This importance is reflected the central importance of **vocabulary** in graded reader schemes. Carrell argues that background knowledge should also play a significant role in the grading of texts for second language learners. This means that teachers should consider the amount of knowledge learners bring to the text when grading texts for difficulty. Successful comprehension of a text usually requires that learners bring substantial knowledge to the text.

Text types are an important consideration in the design of language courses, because familiarity with the important text types and the patterns that lie behind them will strongly affect the ease with which learners read and the skill with which they write.

**See also:** English for specific purposes; Language for specific purposes; Material development; Reading; Text and corpus linguistics; Vocabulary

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PAUL NATION

## Textbooks

Textbooks are one particular resource amongst a wide and diverse range of teaching **materials**, but a highly significant one.

They are bound collections of textual and visual material, designed for teaching and learning a foreign language and following particular methodological and didactical principles. Since the second world war, *textbooks* have been complemented with supplementary materials, which together constitute a teaching *course*: a teacher's book, workbook, glossaries and grammar books, audio-visual materials (cassettes, videos/DVDs, slides, pictures, etc.), together with resources produced by combining television, information technology and the internet.

The terminology changes according to the country. English-speaking countries use the word 'textbook' for what in Romance-language countries is called a *manuel* (from *manus*, meaning 'hand' in Latin) and in Germany *Schulbuch* (meaning 'school book'). The specific elements are thus found in this combined terminology: school, a work which can be held in the hand, and text.

## History of textbooks

The **history** of textbooks is very long; there are traces of them in Ancient Rome. In modern Europe, it was in 1631 that **Comenius'** *Janua linguarum* opened the way for textbooks which multiplied in various countries in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (cf. the publications of SIHFLES – Société Internationale pour l'Enseignement du Français Langue Étrangère ou Seconde).

In general the evolution of textbooks can be attributed to changes in methodologies of language teaching, but political, economic and social contexts and advances in the references sciences are of great

importance too. The politico-economic influence is very noticeable in the contemporary world as a consequence of the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages** produced by the Council of Europe and used as a methodological framework in many other countries in the world (Byram and Parmenter, 2012)

Götze (1994: 29–30) distinguishes five generations of foreign language textbooks for teaching German in the twentieth century which follow developments in methodology: the 1950s, and the grammar-translation method; the 1960s, and the structuralism-behaviourism in audio-lingual and audio-visual methods; the 1970s, and the communicative approach; then, fourth, an intercultural approach followed by a fifth generation oriented towards competence skills. This needs to be complemented by current trends since 2000 to develop **task-based** learning.

However, textbooks and language teaching methods seldom belong to just one category. More often they combine aspects of different methods. Furthermore, methods may differ according to the language to be taught and the country in question.

One specific area has appeared since the 1970s, that of textbooks for teaching second languages in post-colonial contexts or in connection with migration. This is an intermediary situation located between foreign language and mother tongue, and the language of schooling (Verdelhan-Bourgade, 2002).

Finally there is the development of textbooks for specific needs, such as the language of tourism or of business, for example.

### The functions and criticisms of textbooks

More than anything else textbooks continue to constitute the guiding principle of many foreign language courses throughout the world. The prime function is to aid teaching and learning. Certainly at **beginners'** level, textbooks provide guidance with respect to grammatical and lexical progression. They translate the **objectives** specified in the curricula into structured units, offering teaching texts and materials, task sheets, references, practice and sometimes also test materials. To a large extent textbooks determine the selection of texts, the

choice of modes of working in the classroom – as a whole class, in groups, in pairs, individually – and provide the means of assessing learners.

They also have important secondary functions. They are often the only source of training in **teaching methods** for teachers in many countries, and also the means of contact between school and learners' families, giving them information about what students are learning and how. The textbook also has a cultural and ideological role, transmitting knowledge about the values and cultures of foreign countries and the learners' own country. In short the textbook is the tool which provides the best value for money (Christenbury and Kelly, 1994).

Nonetheless, many criticisms are made against textbooks from several standpoints. Such criticism has existed for a long time (Boutan, 2002). The most basic one is to criticise the lack of quality and the presence of errors.

Criticisms of methodology focus on the (lack of) authentic documents or learner activity or teacher creativity; in Britain the textbook is often replaced by *task-planning*. Modernist criticism prefers the use of the computer or the **internet**. A further criticism is concerned with response to the **identities** of learners and argues that textbooks are often inappropriate for the specific context of learners. This is the origin of the trend over the last 30 years to produce textbooks which are particular to a given country or language and appropriate to the age of the learner. However, some countries sorely lack textbooks – or any other pedagogical material – and the training in how to use them, despite world-wide aid programmes.

Despite the development of information technology resources, the textbook seems to be destined to remain for some time to come the preferred tool for the teaching of languages, since it can also be in the form of an electronic book.

### Textbook analysis and textbook evaluation

With the exponential growth of the foreign language textbook market, it became important to design instruments that were able to **evaluate** and compare textbooks in a systematic and objective way. To that end, from the 1960s onwards, lists of criteria were developed, which evolved with changes in

textbooks' approaches to teaching foreign languages. On the basis of these lists, textbooks could be evaluated with respect to aspects as varied as design, contents, structuring and sequencing, types of guidance offered, forms of interaction envisaged, grammatical and lexical progression, variety of text types, variety of **exercise types**, function of **audio-visual** materials, success in translation of curricular goals, etc. Examples of such lists are Engel et al. (1978/1979), Bertoletti-Dahlet (1984), Sheldon (1988) or Kast and Neuner (1994), providing criteria for evaluating the various aspects of textbooks mentioned above; or Sercu (1998) or Byram (1993) in which the focus is on one particular aspect, i.e. foreign language textbooks' success in integrating the teaching of language and culture.

Even though criteria lists can help to make the evaluation process transparent, it is important to realise that they cannot be considered wholly objective, since the selection and weighting of the different criteria may have been inspired by local concerns, circumstances or objectives: for example, focus on grammar or the current methodology.

In all cases, it will be important to know who performed the analysis, why it was undertaken, what was analysed, how the analyst(s) proceeded, and the function of the analysis.

## Textbook research

**Research** on language textbooks varies in terms of its significance and its scientific and geographic diversity. In the past, Weinbrenner emphasised three dimensions: a process-oriented, a product-oriented and a reception-oriented approach (1992: 23). There is also research which is historical and bibliographical (Boutan, 2002; Minerva and Pellandra, 1993; Pasquale, 2009; SIHFLES), methodological (Verdelhan-Bourgade, 2002), discourse-oriented (Cordier-Gauthier, 1999), sociological (Brugilles and Cromer, 2008), cultural, often focused on the we/they relationship or the intercultural (Auger, 2007), anthropological or sociolinguistic (Byram, 1993).

Research on textbooks is sometimes linked to textbook production, with researchers themselves being authors. The production of textbooks is thus

a means of carrying research on methodology forward. This research, found above all in many European and Mediterranean countries, in Africa and the Americas, tends to be organised in networks – IARTEM (International Association for Research on Textbooks and Educational Media), MANES (Manueles Escolares), and RIMAMED (Réseau International sur les Manuels Scolaires Autour de la Méditerranée) for example – which carry out various activities: research programmes, creation of data banks, conferences, and publications.

Specialist centres gather significant holdings of textbook archives: the Georg-Eckert-Institut in Germany; the Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique and the Centre d'Études de Documentation et de Recherches en Histoire de l'Éducation in France; and CILT, the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, in the United Kingdom

Empirically, too little is known about the use of textbooks; how textbooks influence the learning process in comparison with other teaching materials; what research instruments are most reliable in the field; how visual materials influence the learning process; how effective textbooks are in transmitting knowledge or promoting the acquisition of independent learning skills. There is not enough detailed research on the use of textbooks by teachers, which is doubtless very diverse. The development of research depends on the conservation policy for textbooks in different countries, the refinement of satisfactory tools of analysis, the evolution of knowledge and the acknowledgement of its importance by national and international scientific bodies.

**See also:** Authenticity; Cultural studies; Literary texts; Planning for foreign language teaching; Syllabus and curriculum design; Text types and grading

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IARTEM – International Association for Research on Textbooks and Educational Media. [www.iartem.no/](http://www.iartem.no/)

MANES. [www.uned.es/manesvirtual/](http://www.uned.es/manesvirtual/)

RIMAMED – Réseau International sur les manuels scolaires autour de la Méditerranée. <http://rimamed.org/>

SIHFLES – Société Internationale pour l'enseignement du français langue étrangère ou seconde. <http://fle.asso.free.fr/sihfles/>

MICHÈLE VERDELHAN AND LIES SERCU

## Third language learning

In recent years research on third language acquisition (TLA) or multilingualism or plurilingualism has been increasingly intensified (Cenoz et al., 2001a, 2001b, 2003; De Angelis, 2007; Aronin and Hufeisen, 2009). An overview of the new discipline reveals that scholars have focused on sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic and educational aspects of multilingualism. Sociolinguistic studies investigate multilingual communities, whereas psycholinguistic studies focus on the individual multilingual learner, and educational studies of third language learning concentrate on specific learning contexts and the conditions and products of language learning. The most frequently researched third languages are **English, German, and French** (for a list of studies see Jessner, 2008a).

### Definitions and terminology

The term 'multilingualism' covers a range of meanings. Whereas for some researchers, multilingualism is used to refer to bilingualism as the most commonly studied form of multilingualism, a growing number of researchers take the strong stand that bi-, tri-, and quadrilingualism should be seen as subtypes of multilingualism. They also

believe that TLA is not simply extended **second language acquisition** (SLA) but represents a different, more complex language learning process. In the field of multilingualism a variety of terms have been used to refer to identical phenomena deriving from either the complex nature of use of various languages in a multilingual context or the researchers' backgrounds, ideologies and purposes (for a detailed discussion see Kemp, 2009).

Furthermore, whereas the roles of L1 and L2 were clearly defined in traditional language acquisition research, emphasizing changes in multilingual (in the sense of more than two languages) development has added more terminological problems. It has become clear that from a long-term perspective the term L1 cannot easily be applied to a multiple learning context since dominance (level of proficiency or frequency of use) does not necessarily correspond to chronological order of acquisition and is also subject to change due to its interdependence on a number of factors.

### Processes in multilingual learning

Languages are acquired in natural and instructed contexts and the two often intertwine and in many cases worldwide, English is studied as a third language (Cenoz and Jessner, 2000). This is the case, for instance, in bilingual migrant children such as Polish children in Germany who come into contact with English as a first foreign language at school. Moreover, in all minority language contexts, such as the Basque Country or Friesland in Europe, English is learned as a third language, if introduced as the first foreign language at school. But third language learning can also take place at school when a second foreign language is taught, for instance French or Spanish in German schools (for more examples of trilingual scenarios see Hufeisen and Jessner, 2009).

The main goal of a number of scholars has been to describe multilingual phenomena in order to investigate differences and similarities between second and third language learning processes. In contrast to second language learning, in third language learning the routes of learning or order of acquisition show greater diversity. In contrast to SLA where we have to deal with two ways of how

two languages are acquired, that is either simultaneously or consecutively, in TLA four types of acquisition have been identified. In their overview of forms of acquisition of seven languages Todeva and Cenoz (2009: 7) present thirty-two possibilities.

### On the status of L2

In a multilingual system **transfer** phenomena not only take place from the L1 to the L2 and vice versa but have also been evidenced from the L1 to the L3 and from the L2 to the L3 and vice versa. Combined cross-linguistic influence occurs 'when two or more languages interact with one another and concur in influencing the target language, or when one language influences another, and the already influenced language in turn influences another language in the process of being acquired' (De Angelis, 2007: 21). This expansion of transfer possibilities already shows that multilingual acquisition is a far more complex process than SLA, where the role of the L1 in the development of the L2 has been researched extensively.

In a number of studies it was found that the L2 in the multilingual system fulfils a particular role in the L3 learning process. When L3 learners rely on their prior language knowledge, they tend to fall back on their L2 as a default source and supplier language in the learning process. One of the most crucial questions in psycholinguistic research on TLA is thus related to the status of the L2 in third language learning.

In a number of studies it turned out that in L3 production the speakers did not rely on their L1 as expected, but on their L2, and in several studies of learning an L3 of Indo-European origin it could be shown that L3 learners whose L1 is typologically unrelated to the L2 and/or L3 tend to transfer knowledge from their L2 or in the case of bilinguals from the related L1 (for an overview and list of TLA studies see Jessner, 2008a). The activation of prior language knowledge is influenced by factors such as the psychotypology (perceived linguistic distance between languages), recency of use, the level of proficiency in the target language, psychotypology, the tendency in language learners to activate an earlier second language in L3 performance, and the learner's perception of correctness

of a target word (for an overview see De Angelis and Dewaele, 2009).

### The dynamics of multilingual development

Multilingual development is both a dynamic and a complex process and nowadays scholars are realizing more and more that in the study of multilingualism, the interaction of a variety of factors needs to be taken into consideration. Individual factors in language learning such as **motivation**, **attitudes**, cognitive factors and personality traits, and also physical traits of multilingual learners (e.g. hearing capabilities) contribute to the complexity of multilingualism research. Furthermore during the lifespan of a multilingual person a variety of the factors can be subject to change; for example motivation to learn one language may change (Dörnyei, 2009). The investigation of the complexity of multilingualism seems to lend itself to an approach from a dynamic systems theory/complexity theory (DST/CT) perspective, a recently much discussed approach in the field of (second) language acquisition research (see e.g. De Bot, 2008).

In the Dynamic Model of Multilingualism (DMM) (Herdina and Jessner, 2002; Jessner, 2008b) DST/CT is applied to multilingual acquisition and use. Based on DST/CT principles, the development of a multilingual system is characterized by its non-linearity, reversibility, (in)stability, interdependence, complexity and change of quality. Multilingual systems are adaptive and dynamic, which means they are able to change depending on the perceived communicative needs of the multilingual individual. Their development includes both acquisition and attrition processes.

In DMM it is argued that a holistic approach is a fundamental condition of a DST/CT approach. Holistic approaches to **bilingualism** seem to be most frequently deployed in discussion deriving from Grosjean's idea of the bilingual as a competent speaker/hearer with very specific attributes (e.g. 1985), which provided part of the basis for Cook's work on the L2 user and multicompetence (e.g. 1992). Grosjean and Cook both argue for a perspective on bi- and multilinguals which not only places the focus on the specific **skills** developed via contact with two or more languages but also on the

non-applicability of monolingual norms in multilingual contexts and consequently in research on bi- and multilingualism. In this perspective, emergent properties of the multilingual system (skills and abilities developed by multilingual users which are not to be found in monolinguals) have to be focused on as does the interdependence of all parts of the system.

In DMM these skills have been termed M(ultilingualism)-factor or effect. They are language-specific and non-language specific skills used in language learning, language management and maintenance. Language management skills refer to the integration and separation of language resources and the act of balancing communicative requirements with language resources. The key factor of the M-effect – as it might also be referred to since it is difficult to decide whether it constitutes a precondition or a result of multilingualism – is metalinguistic awareness or multilingual awareness (Jessner, 2008b). This knowledge – and awareness of this knowledge – influences further language learning or learning a second foreign language, as proposed by Hufeisen in her Factor Model, which together with DMM has also become influential in the development of multilingual teaching (see Hufeisen and Jessner, 2009).

### Teaching third languages

Ideally the developments in research on third language learning and multilingualism should be reflected in education, both in teaching and curriculum. The importance of an enhanced focus on the prior language knowledge in language learning should also become more apparent in **teaching methods** and curriculum development. Consequently multilingual didactics should form an integral part of **teacher education**. This would finally lead to an integrative model of multilingualism or a multilingual approach to teaching in all instructed settings on all levels.

A number of cross-language approaches to language education have been suggested to foster synergy effects and cross-fertilization through cooperation between the languages. These suggestions present the results of research on multilingualism and of scholars interested in language awareness. For example, Hawkins already in 1999 referred to language learning as language apprenticeship by

emphasizing that the main aspects of language learning concern the process of how to **learn to learn** a language and to engage in cross-language comparisons with particular reference to the role of L1 in second language learning. This is captured in the idea of multilingual awareness as a core ability of multilingual proficiency (or multicompetence), as discussed above, which has been suggested by Jessner (2006) as a prerequisite for multilingual teaching. She describes multilingual awareness as consisting of both metalinguistic and cross-linguistic awareness, components which can also be trained in the classroom.

In a number of European projects, new approaches to multilingual teaching have been developed. For example, the EuroCom (European Comprehension) project ([www.eurocom-frankfurt.de](http://www.eurocom-frankfurt.de)) has concentrated on how to provide European citizens with a solid linguistic basis for understanding each other, at least within their own language family. Such an approach includes optimal inferencing techniques in typologically related languages in order to develop at least receptive skills in the new language and has so far been applied to Romance, German, and Slavic language families. At the centre of interest in other projects has been the creation of synergy in language learning by learning and teaching beyond language borders (see Hufeisen and Jessner, 2009, for more details).

The ultimate goal of all these efforts is to arrive at a common curriculum for teaching languages in institutional contexts (Hufeisen and Lutjeharms, 2005). Such an integrated approach to language teaching requires the cooperation of all the language teachers in an institution as well as teacher training that focuses on developing language and language learning awareness among the teachers, students, and teachers as learners, since language learning is a life-time process. Furthermore such a curriculum should be able to integrate **minority and/or heritage languages** as well as a number of foreign languages which are of interest to the social community, and it should be based on the training of all teachers as multilingual teachers (Krumm, 2005; Baur and Hufeisen, 2011).

A multilingual approach to teaching and learning presents a prerequisite for making progress in understanding the phenomenon of third language

learning and multilingualism. Such a holistic understanding is necessary if in the future, migrant education not only focuses on the deficits of multilinguals in the dominant language, but on all the linguistic and cognitive abilities of a multilingual learner.

**See also:** Bilingualism; Bilingual education; Council of Europe Platform for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education; Intercomprehension; Language awareness; Migrant and heritage languages; Motivation; Plurilingualism; Second language acquisition theories; Transfer

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## Threshold Level

The Threshold Level is an objective for modern language learning and teaching designed on behalf of the **Council of Europe** in the perspective of the Council's overall aim: to promote mutual understanding and collaboration among the inhabitants of its member states. The objective focuses on the ability to communicate with speakers of another language in such a way as to adequately transact the business of everyday life as well as to establish and maintain social contacts. It was assumed that such an objective would appeal to the large majority of potential foreign language learners and that it might induce many of them to undertake a pertinent language learning effort. For this effort to be successful it should be sustained long enough to enable the learners to reach their aim. It is essential for this that, throughout the learning process, the learners are aware of making progress in their **acquisition** of the **skills** required, and of doing this in a way which is both efficient and economical.

Considerations like the above led to the development of the Threshold Level as an objective for the acquisition of communicative ability and to the

formulation of a set of principles that should determine the nature of the learning experiences to be proposed for leading up to it. The Threshold Level was thus deliberately designed as a point of orientation in the development of learning systems in which the features deemed relevant to language learning were to be meaningfully interrelated. The foundations for such systems, including those for the model used in the construction of the Threshold Level, were laid in the early 1970s by a group of experts convened by the Council of Europe to investigate ways and means of promoting language learning in Europe (Trim et al., 1973). The elements proposed were brought together and further concretised in a model for the specification of behavioural objectives by **van Ek**, who also undertook the first exemplification of the application of the model for the **English** language, resulting in the first publication of the objective in 1975 (van Ek, 1975).

In a further study, van Ek expanded the original model into a more comprehensive one with special regard to the educational implications of learning a foreign language (van Ek, 1986). This expanded model was subsequently concretised for English (van Ek and Trim, 1991a).

### Components

In the Threshold Level, communicative ability is conceived as skill in functioning appropriately in a range of situations in which the learner is likely to need to use the foreign language. The first step towards defining the objective, therefore, is to describe these situations. This is done with special regard to such features as the *setting* in which the envisaged communication act takes place, the *transactions* the participants are likely to engage in, the *roles* they are likely to play, the *topics* they are likely to deal with, and the *communicative intentions*.

The next step is to indicate as explicitly as possible what learners might be expected to do in the various situations in which they are likely to find themselves and to analyse the skill involved in terms of the ability to fulfil certain language functions and to handle certain **notions**. The language functions denote what people are supposed to do by means of language (e.g. describing, inquiring,

denying, apologising, etc.) and the notions stand for the concepts with regard to which people fulfil the language functions. Thus, if we say 'I'm sorry for being late' we fulfil the language function of *apologising* while referring to the concept of *lateness*. Among the notions, a distinction is made between *general* notions and *specific* notions. General notions are such as may be expressed in almost any situation, and specific notions are those which are likely to be expressed typically in particular situations only. In most situations the need may arise to refer to time, to place, to quantity or quality, to express relations between entities, etc. A notion, such as 'potatoes', on the other hand, is most likely to be expressed in connection with 'eating' or with 'agriculture'.

In order to give maximum guidance to users of the specification, each functional or notional item is provided with so-called 'exponents', i.e. actual language forms in the language concerned (words, structures, idioms) that may enable learners to meet their requirements both effectively and economically. These exponents are selected so as to ensure 'maximum efficacy with minimum means'. Together they represent a functional **grammar** core as well as a restricted though highly effective lexicon. The exponents are not meant, however, as anything like a prescribed grammar + vocabulary. They have the status of recommendations only, and how the individual learner is to fulfil the various functions and to handle the various notions is, in principle, left entirely open. Yet, they do provide guidance with regard to such matters as the overall range of linguistic ability expected of the learners at the level concerned, as well as the degree of formality/informality envisaged, and they can be used as checklists (e.g. by course designers). Collectively, the exponents indicate the range of linguistic and, to a certain extent, that of **sociolinguistic competence** expected of the learners.

In addition to this the latest version of the Threshold Level (van Ek and Trim, 1991a, *Threshold Level 1990*, re-issued in 1998 as *Threshold 1990*) deals with *discourse* competence, *sociocultural* competence and *compensatory* competence. Discourse competence is described as the ability to use appropriate strategies in the construction of texts, particularly those formed by stringing sentences

together. It covers the ability to open a conversation and to end it, to contribute to the construction of a coherent dialogue, etc. It also covers such matters as the interpretation and processing of a written text, including the distinguishing, within a text, of more or less coherent parts, the establishment of links between these parts, the distinguishing between essential and non-essential information, etc.

Sociocultural competence is treated as 'awareness of the sociocultural context in which the language concerned is used by **native speakers** and of ways in which this context affects the choice and the communicative effect of particular language forms.' The distinction of this type of competence recognises the fact that the use of a particular language implies the use of a reference frame which is at least partly determined by the sociocultural context in which this language is used by native speakers. The Threshold Level describes sociocultural competence in systematically organised lists of 'what the learner at this level is supposed to be aware of or to be able to do' in using the foreign language.

Similarly it deals with *compensatory competence* as an essential component of communicative ability. This involves the use of **strategies** and techniques enabling the learners to cope with unpredicted demands as well as failures of recall. Again, the appropriate strategies and techniques are listed in terms of behavioural ability.

Finally, in recognition of the more general educational benefit learners may derive from 'learning for Threshold Level', the objective contains a component called **learning to learn**. The behavioural ability specified in this component is meant to facilitate the achievement of Threshold Level on the one hand and further learning or learning in other directions (e.g. other languages) on the other.

### Target-groups and related objectives

Originally, the Threshold Level was developed as an objective for foreign language learning by **adults** wishing to acquire what might be regarded as a general communicative ability. It was not long, however, before its potential for school education was noted and van Ek was commissioned by the

Council of Europe to develop a version for schools (van Ek, 1977). This adaptation to a different target group was readily made possible by the flexibility inherent in the objective, due to its systematic nature and its explicitness, which enables separate elements, sub-categories or even whole categories to be replaced by others to satisfy the requirements of diverse target groups. Meanwhile, in the most recent version of the Threshold Level (van Ek and Trim, 1991b), the flexibility has been increased to such an extent that it has become an integral element in the specification. Consequently, the distinction between versions for adults and for schools is no longer maintained.

Since 1975, the Threshold Level has been used on a large scale by the designers of **syllabuses** of all kinds: for curriculum reform, for examination development, for **textbook** writing and course design. As such it has become a powerful tool in the development of the prevalent communicative orientation of language teaching and learning. On the basis of the same model, a lower-level objective roughly halfway between zero and Threshold Level was developed and published as *Waystage* (van Ek et al., 1977). Subsequently, *Waystage*, too, was revised on the basis of the expanded model and newly published as *Waystage 1990* (van Ek and Trim, 1991b). There then followed the development of an objective above Threshold Level, for which, again, the same model proved to be suitable. Exemplified for the English language, it was given the name of *Vantage* (van Ek and Trim: 2001). *Waystage*, Threshold Level and *Vantage* Level together form a system of flexible objectives ranging from a very elementary level to an advanced one, all described in terms of one and the same model of specification, and therefore suitable for the systematic planning of learning facilities for a very large and diverse section of the potential language learning public. Threshold Level may be regarded as the key element in the series, with *Waystage* as a reduced version and *Vantage* Level as an expanded one.

### Versions for other languages

Since Threshold Level is primarily specified in terms of what the learners can *do* in the foreign

language rather than what they are supposed to *know* of the language, it is readily adaptable to other languages than English. Meanwhile, separate reference level descriptions, based on the six level descriptors in the *Common European Framework of Reference* have been developed in several languages ([www.coe.int/lang](http://www.coe.int/lang)).

In many cases the versions for other languages than English have been developed by teams of leading researchers in the field from the countries involved. This has led to a strong consensus as to the major parameters to be distinguished in specifying objectives for modern language learning and teaching, as well as to procedures for treating them. The opportunities this offers for intensive collaboration, if not harmonisation, on an international scale have been only partly exploited so far and remain to be used to full advantage by interested individuals and institutions.

**See also:** Assessment and testing; Communicative language teaching; Council of Europe Modern Languages Projects; CRÉDIF; Notions and functions; Politeness; *Vantage* Level; *Waystage*

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JAN VAN EK

## Total physical response

Total physical response, or TPR, is a language teaching method in which physical movement plays a central role. Linked initially to research into skills training, the method was developed by the research psychologist Professor James Asher of San Jose State College in California in the 1960's. The method aims to be stress free and suitable for learners of all ages and abilities. Since its first introduction, TPR has spread world-wide, enjoying particular popularity with teachers of young learners. The approach is methodologically linked to the nineteenth century work of Francois **Gouin** (1894).

In a TPR language class, new language is introduced by the instructor in the form of commands or instructions accompanied by appropriate actions modelled by the instructor and a small group of four students who copy the actions observed by the rest of the class. The students do not repeat the commands. Subsequently all students are invited to model the particular action both in groups and individually. The atmosphere in the class is always playful. The instructor attempts to ensure that students understand the commands before they are asked to model them. The point is never to catch a student out but rather to reinforce internalisation of language through watching others perform and performing oneself.

The TPR classroom is a sensory rich environment of posters and teaching aids. Starting at **beginners'** level with a few simple props such as tables, chairs, books and windows, students learn classroom vocabulary following the instructor's commands based initially on combinations of these objects with a series of common verbs such as walk, run, point, touch, turn, sit and stand. Commands such as 'walk to the door' form the principal basis of these early lessons. As students progress, new verbs, new nouns and more complex grammar

forms are introduced. It is a central tenet of TPR that there is very little in language that cannot be presented through movement and commands, including complex grammar forms.

Since speaking is allowed to emerge freely, when students feel ready, a 'silent period' is an integral part of the method. The research basis of the method suggests that speech will begin naturally when sufficient language has been internalised. In more advanced TPR classes, however, speech plays a regular role in classroom activities as students begin to give instructions to others as well as follow them.

TPR is rarely used in isolation; rather the method is particularly favoured as a means of introducing new language. The model is that cognitive knowledge of the structures of a language should follow and is the result of **acquisition** or internalisation not the cause of it.

The proponents of TPR argue that the method successfully harnesses the natural language acquisition mechanisms most usually observed in very small children by encouraging learners first to understand through observation, then to act in response to speech and, after language is internalised, to begin to speak. In Asher's view this is the natural order for language acquisition in both children and adults. In using the term acquisition to describe this process, Asher, in common with Krashen and Terrell in *The Natural Approach* (1992), identifies it as a process of internalisation of language distinct from the cognitive learning of grammar and vocabulary and the conscious knowledge of such structures. Asher expressed the concept thus:

A reasonable hypothesis is that the brain and the nervous system are biologically programmed to acquire language, either the first or the second in a particular sequence and in a particular mode. The sequence is listening before speaking and the mode is to synchronise language with the individual's body.

(Asher, 2003: 2-4)

In developing the theoretical basis of TPR Asher spent much effort observing the behaviour of very small children as they interacted linguistically with parents and other adults. Most particularly he noted



the key interaction in which adults spoke to an infant, encouraging the child to perform certain actions. These most usually took the form of commands such as 'look at me'. When the child performed the action they were rewarded with smiles and more attention. By the age of three, most children exhibit a very considerable ability to understand and act upon language whilst still being unable to speak more than a comparatively few words. Asher called this condition 'comprehension fluency'. It is a central tenet of TPR that in language acquisition, by children or adults, comprehension fluency is both a precursor of fluent speech and also, importantly, its prerequisite. Asher argues that speech is the result of the acquisition of language, not the cause of it.

The experimental basis for TPR has been described in considerable detail, most particularly in Asher (2003). As Asher wrote at the time, 'The Rosetta Stone of language acquisition was in the choreography of language and body movement. Nature had revealed, I believed, one of the great secrets of learning' (Asher, 2003: 1–2) and the significance of focus on 'right-brain' activities has since then been the focus of a further book (2002).

A criticism commonly levelled at TPR is that it is suitable only for beginners. However, a number of publications have outlined strategies for using TPR with intermediate and advanced learners (Seely and Romijn, 2002). Further, TPR does not attempt to teach speech. This has led to some criticism, especially emanating from those less familiar with the theoretical and experimental basis of the method. On the other hand, 'TPR' is widely used and is habitually cited in reviews of language teaching methodology as an established approach alongside other innovations of the second half of the twentieth century.

**See also:** Direct Method; Humanistic language teaching; Language awareness; Motivation; Neurolinguistic programming; Risk-taking in language learning; Suggestopedia

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ROBIN CAIN

## Transfer

Transfer is primarily a psychological phenomenon and therefore an important concept in learning **psychology** in general. Transfer refers to how previous learning influences current and future learning, and how past or current learning is applied or adapted to similar or novel situations. 'Transfer, then isn't so much an instructional and learning technique as a way of thinking, perceiving, and processing information. Therefore it's fundamental for all learning' (Haskell, 2001: 23). There are different levels and kinds of transfer. Content-to-content transfer is making use of what we know in one subject area in the learning of another area; procedural-to-procedural transfer refers to using the procedures learned in one skill area in another skill area; declarative-to-procedural transfer occurs when learning about something helps in actually doing something; and strategic transfer is when knowledge about our mental processes, such as how we learn or remember, is gained through monitoring our mental activities during learning (ibid.: 31f.).

In the more specific context of language learning, transfer has been a long-standing issue in

**applied linguistics** and in foreign language pedagogy. It has been of huge importance not only in the domain of **second language acquisition**, but also in the pedagogic domain, with widespread assumptions that transfer, both negative and positive, has a major impact on second language learning and should therefore inform teaching decisions. But transfer is also an important phenomenon for linguists who are interested in language contact and language change. When two or more languages are spoken by groups of speakers in the same geographical area, over time, features from one language can be transferred to the other language, especially when the languages in question are unequal in terms of prestige, institutional support and demographic factors (Treffers-Daller and Mougeon, 2005).

On a very general level, language transfer in the context of acquisition can be defined as follows: 'Transfer is the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired' (Odlin, 1989: 27). The definition brings out a number of features. The neutral term 'influence' indicates that positive and negative impact may arise. Second, the source of these impacts is the similarities and differences between the language systems. Third, the definition is consistent with multiple language learning, so that L2–L3 influences (and so on) are also covered by transfer. In the specific context of multiple language learning, the term 'cross-linguistic influence' is also often used and may be more appropriate since it has a greater neutrality than the more active sounding transfer. It is important to note that transfer/cross-linguistic influence in general arises from a learner's *conscious* or *unconscious* judgment on language similarities or differences (Odlin, 1989: 27–8).

In the 1950s and 1960s, research on language transfer was very much linked with **contrastive analysis**. Rooted in a **behaviourist** theory of language learning as 'habit formation' (habits of the L1 were believed to be 'transferred' to the habits of the L2), attempts were made to establish a hierarchy of difficulty for different language combinations and to predict where learning difficulties would occur (Skehan, 2007: 412). In this

view the typological difference from one language to another was supposed to be the main reason for error (the L1 interfering with the L2), whereas the learning of typologically close languages would lead to positive transfer because of the similarities between the languages.

In the 1970s this view was challenged by the developments in first language acquisition research. Criticizing the model of behaviourist learning, **Chomsky** proposed a more cognitive approach to language learning. Language, in this view, was not simply a matter of habit formation, but rather had its own natural acquisition principles and its own developmental course. Learners follow their own 'internal syllabus', and errors were explained in developmental terms rather than as a result of L1 transfer (Benson, 2002: 68). Dulay and Burt (1974) argued that the majority of errors were intralingual and not interlingual, as the second language seemed to be learned in the same ways as the first.

In the 1980s, views on transfer became more complex and different types of constraint on transfer played a more important role in **research** on transfer phenomena: on the one hand descriptive factors like language competence, sociolinguistic and task effects and language distance/psychotypology, on the other hand linguistic influences, psycholinguistic influences and developmental factors (Skehan, 2007: 413). Moreover, individual variation obviously plays an important role. Factors such as personality – characteristics like anxiety or empathy, **aptitude** for phonemic mimicry, proficiency, mimicry – influence transfer phenomena. Furthermore, transfer in linguistic subsystems like phonology or syntax, including discourse transfer (i.e. types of **politeness**, requests and apologies) has been emphasized as an important type of transfer which interacts with other subsystems (Odlin, 1989: 48–70).

Whereas language transfer has very much been investigated in the context of L2 acquisition, many researchers are now especially interested in transfer/cross-linguistic influence within multilingual constellations. As Cenoz et al. point out (2001: 8), the processes used in **third language acquisition** may be similar to those used by L2 learners, but the additional language or languages complicate these processes. Third language acquisition presents

more diversity than second language acquisition. It can take place in natural and formal contexts, and the degree of specific features concerning typology, proficiency, mode, age and recency is high (Cenoz et al., 2001: 10).

For pedagogical decisions and implications for language teaching, knowledge and consciousness-raising on transfer phenomena are of specific significance. This may happen through the analysis of transfer-based errors, through the analysis of similarities or differences between languages or through translation of sentences or texts, which illustrate specific transfer processes – positive and negative. In schools, languages are often taught separately, so children are not aware that the languages they learn interconnect with each other. Integrative language curricula which emphasize **language awareness** across the different languages would be helpful in order to raise the potential for positive transfer in multilingual settings.

**See also:** Contrastive analysis; Error analysis; Intercomprehension; Interlanguage; Language awareness; Third language learning

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ADELHEID HU

## Translation

Translation and foreign language teaching are historically and conceptually linked through their common goal of communication, but also divided through the different perspectives which each brings to this goal. Translation is explicitly concerned with mediating between two languages, usually both in the written medium. In a professional context it presupposes a high degree of proficiency in both source language (SL) and target language (TL), linguistically and culturally. Foreign language (FL) teaching on the other hand aims to bring about various degrees of proficiency in spoken and/or written language and is only implicitly concerned with **mediation** between languages and cultures in so far as the learner is already proficient in at least one natural language. The use of translation in the FL classroom makes this relationship explicit, and has been an aspect of FL pedagogy through the ages (Kelly, 1969: 171). From its mid-nineteenth-century heyday in the form of the

grammar–translation method, translation was largely rejected as an FL teaching method in the approaches which emerged from the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century: naturalistic methods (**Reform Movement; direct method**), structuralist/behaviourist methods (**audio-visual** and **audiolingual methods**) and the **communicative** approach. However, while translation has continued to be a feature of many traditional FL classrooms, new ideas for exploiting the communicative potential of various types of translation began to emerge during the 1990s, particularly in **higher education**. This happened largely as a result of the development of translation as an academic discipline and the growth of professionally-oriented degree courses.

### The grammar–translation method

In the traditional **grammar–translation method**, translation is used as a means of both practising and testing knowledge of the language system. The approach is deductive, typically starting from the presentation of a rule, which is then practised by the translation of sentences into the L2 on the basis of a bilingual **vocabulary** list. At more advanced stages, the translation of connected passages, often of a **literary** kind, may be required. Translation into the L1 is typically used as a test of **reading** comprehension, presupposing a close if not literal translation strategy, and indicating, for instance, that the learner has recognised certain structures in the SL text such as passives, subordinate clauses and particular vocabulary items. In other words, the focus is on the form, not the message or the sense, contrary to the practice of many literary translators up to the beginning of the nineteenth century (see Newmark, 1988: 45) and beyond. The use of ‘oral translation’ by the teacher to explain the meaning of words and phrases is also a common pedagogic strategy. The grammar–translation method is still used with less commonly taught languages, in autodidactic courses, and in some universities.

The conception of translation as practised in the grammar–translation method is, however, a narrow one, based largely on the teaching of classical languages. Indeed, the focus is even narrower, since stylistic objectives – emulating authoritative L2 writers – receded over time from its Renaissance

origins in favour of manipulating grammar and memorising vocabulary (Kelly, 1969: 173–6). Given its focus on the language system, such an approach tends to operate in a cultural and situational vacuum, ignoring questions such as the translation of institutional and administrative terms, numbers, the bridging of cultural gaps, the role of context, and the intended readership. These are all issues of relevance to the professional translator, normally engaged in non-literary translation, and to the development of what has become known as ‘translational competence’ (Campbell, 1998: 1–21), which is normally distinguished from linguistic competence.

### Professional translation

While translation in various forms has been an intermittent if controversial feature of language teaching through the ages, most courses in translation for professional purposes did not emerge until after World War Two, although translation as an ‘administrative necessity’ dates back 3,000 years (Kelly, 1969: 171). The post-war period saw a surge in the demand for non-literary translation for political, social and economic reasons and a concomitant growth in the number of institutions offering professionally-oriented courses. The teaching of translation for professional purposes is therefore much newer than the teaching of translation for language learning, and the role which language teaching plays in the development of translation competence is a relatively new topic (but see Malmkjær, 1998). The development of translation as an academic discipline (variously known as translation studies, translatology, translation theory) has revealed a number of approaches – contrastive–linguistic, descriptive, functional – of which the contrastive–linguistic approach in particular shares common ground with translation for language learning.

Characteristic of the approach which developed in the 1960s (e.g. Catford, 1965; Vinay and Darbelnet, 1995) was the focus on solving structural translation problems. Solutions would often be presented, for instance, as a set of possible linguistic ‘transpositions’ or ‘shifts’ where the SL and TL differ: ‘This text is intended for ... /*Le présent*

*manuel s'adresse à ...*' (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1995: 97). Contrasting L1–L2 patterns were also used in the traditional **contrastive analysis** method of language teaching, not as translation pairs, but rather as the basis for attempting to predict learning difficulties in order to target pedagogical attention in the form of L2 drills. In the 1980s, a revival of contrastive methods was proposed in a mentalist/deductive framework as a means of raising learners' awareness of particular features of L2 syntax. The use of contrastive patterns in the form of translation pairs is, however, still in use as a general method of language teaching in some universities (see, e.g., Sewell and Higgins, 1996: 45–65), following in the 'comparative stylistics' tradition of Vinay and Darbelnet.

### Literal versus free translation

One of the central issues in translation throughout the ages has been the 'literal versus free' debate. In language teaching the use of translation as a linguistic encoding or decoding **exercise** requires a close, rather than a 'free', translation strategy. In L1–L2 translation, the L1 text or sentences are often constructed, or less obviously chosen, to 'force' the learner to use particular parts of the L2 language system. In such cases, the L1 text is simply a means of getting to the L2 and has no particular value of its own, and there is some burden on the learner to recognise what structure or vocabulary item is being prompted, like understanding the rules of a game. The texts used for L2–L1 translation are by contrast usually **authentic** texts (possibly edited), but the focus is still on the learner showing, through the medium of the L1, that the structures and vocabulary of the L2 have been understood.

While translation in language teaching is understandably characterised by an L2 orientation, regardless of whether the L2 is the SL or the TL in a translation exercise, in translation studies different approaches may be characterised as SL-oriented or TL-oriented. The contrastive–linguistic approach is generally characterised as source-text (ST) oriented in the sense that the function of the target text (TT) is assumed to be the same as that of the ST with the consequence that translation decisions

naturally remain focused on linguistic rather than cultural or contextual issues. Later approaches, such as the functionalist view developed in Germany during the 1980s (see Kussmaul, 1995) are characterised by a TT orientation, in which translation decisions are taken in relation to the situation and purpose of the TT rather than that of the original. This includes decisions on whether to add or omit information, to make cultural adjustments according to the experience and knowledge of the target readership, or linguistic adjustments according to TL **genre** conventions. For instance, cultural conventions differ when indicating the size of a house or a flat: so, while translating 'How many bedrooms?' with '*Wieviele Schlafzimmer?*' is formally correct, it could be embarrassingly misleading in the target German culture if the question relates to the size of the accommodation (see Kussmaul, 1995: 94). It has, however, also been argued that an approach reflecting professional practice contributes to language learning in so far as it may improve passive knowledge of SL vocabulary and grammar (usually the L2), and focus attention on the different ways in which SL and TL fulfil their communicative purpose (see Sewell and Higgins, 1996: 121–34). Recent research using Think Aloud Protocols (TAPs) may also contribute to our understanding of translation competence.

During the period when translation has been developing as a subject concerned with producing a TT for a specific situation and purpose rather than as an exercise in formal transcoding, the teaching of translation, particularly in higher education, has often been marked by some confusion of purpose. There are, however, signs that synergies are now beginning to emerge and to be explicitly acknowledged, leading to more imaginative ways of integrating and adapting professional aspects of translation and even **interpretation** (spoken–spoken communication) into language teaching. Two factors may be said to be supporting a return to favour for translation. First, some recent thinking on language learning has stressed the potential of **translation in language teaching**, if the process is regarded as the development of 'multi-linguistic competence' (reported in Malmkjær, 1998: 1). Second, translation as it is studied for professional purposes is not only in the ascendant as a university

subject, it is also diversifying to include many different types of translation including the production of 'parallel' texts (tourist brochures, legislation), pre- and post-editing for machine translation, media translation (sur- and subtitling; voiceovers), websites, localisation and **drama** (including adaptation). These 'modes' are beginning to serve as a rich source of innovative, communicatively-based ideas for the use of translation in language teaching (see, e.g., Sewell and Higgins, 1996; Malmkjær, 1998), although there is no empirical research base yet to support claims that such methods promote **acquisition**.

**See also:** Contrastive analysis; Grammar–translation method; Higher education; Inter-cultural competence; Interpreting; Translation in language teaching; Translation theory

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MARGARET ROGERS

## Translation in language teaching

**Translation** can appear to be a natural and obvious means of teaching or learning a new language: a way to aid learning, practise what is known, diagnose problems, and test proficiency; it is also a useful skill in itself. In addition, it allows learners to relate new knowledge to existing knowledge, promoting noticing of linguistic features, and **language awareness** of differences and similarities between the new and existing language. In addition, the tackling of translation problems can be intellectually stimulating and aesthetically satisfying. Moreover, like other uses of students' own languages, it can help facilitate classroom management and control, and allows students to maintain their own sense of first language **identity** by relating the new language to it, while also building a new bilingual identity.

## Rejection

Despite these apparent advantages, the mainstream literature on language pedagogy for over 100 years, and **second language acquisition** theories (SLA) from the 1970s onwards, have routinely rejected or ignored translation as a desirable component of language teaching and learning. This dismissal was part of a larger radical shift in language teaching away from bilingual teaching, in which the students' own language is used for explanation, commentary, and classroom management, towards a **monolingual** principle, by which everything is done in the language being taught and, in extreme cases, any use of the students' own language is banned or even punished. Given this shift, translation, which by definition involves use of two languages, was inevitably a casualty.

Opposition to any use of translation is often confounded – sometimes disingenuously – with arguments against its very specific use in the **grammar–translation method** (GT), which focuses on developing written accuracy through translation exercises, dominated language teaching in European secondary schools in the nineteenth century, and continues in many contexts to this day. Rejection of GT originated in the late nineteenth century, when the **reform movement** attacked it for its lack of attention to spoken language, fluency, extended texts and authentic examples (Howatt with Widdowson, 2004: 187–210). Yet the Reform Movement campaign by no means sought to outlaw translation altogether, continuing to advocate it as an efficient means of teaching some aspects of the new language such as vocabulary (Sweet, 1899/1964: 197–210).

Reasons and evidence supporting the replacement of bilingual with monolingual teaching have remained rather vague, and for this reason have been difficult for proponents of translation in language teaching (TILT) to contest. Nevertheless, theories and research traditions favouring exclusively monolingual teaching necessarily implied the rejection of TILT. Following the Reform Movement, almost all subsequent language teaching movements, including those which continued to focus upon conscious knowledge of grammar rules or language learning as habit formation, have made the assumption that monolingual teaching is best, and that explicit use and comparison with the students' own language(s) is at best ineffective and at worst damaging. (Exceptions include the **bilingual method**, **suggestopaedia**, and the popular self-study courses of Michel Thomas. Although **contrastive analysis** compares languages as a predictor of error, it did not entail the use of two languages in actual teaching.) Further impetus to the monolingual principle was provided by the SLA belief dating from the 1970s that acquisition was an unconscious process facilitated by attention to meaning, and that errors were relatively unaffected by first-language interference. Many popular versions of **communicative language teaching** (CLT) likewise assumed that attention to meaning in monolingual **native-speaker** environments was enough, and **task based language teaching** and

**testing** has continued this tradition. All assume that the goal of foreign language learning is to become a user of the new language in monolingual situations and approximate to native-speaker norms, rather than seeking to develop a bilingual non-native expertise in the language and the capacity to mediate between the two languages through translation, commentary and explanation, or **mediation**.

### Pragmatic reasons for not using translation

Arguably, however, rejection of translation has more to do with expediency and commercial interests than language-pedagogic and SLA theory and research. Its persistence through radical changes in linguistic, language pedagogic theory and monolingual **teaching methods**, and the virtual absence of research and argument to support it, strongly suggests that its origins and rationale lie outside the applied linguistic field. A more credible source is the Berlitz method, a kind of **direct method**, developed by Maximilian Berlitz from 1882 for his highly successful language-school business, which outlawed any use of students' own languages or translation by teachers. This appeared to be necessary for classes in which the teacher did not know the students' language(s), and/or where the linguistic composition of the class was mixed. It enabled Berlitz and other language schools and institutions to employ and promote native-speaker teachers who did not need to know their students' language and whose main qualification was being a native speaker – a development which had a negative effect on the status and prospects of **non-native speaker teachers**. Monolingual teaching was also in the interests of publishers, who could produce monolingual materials, and generally in the interests of the English-speaking nations who could promote English language teaching by offering 'expert' advice on its implementation without needing to relate it to other languages.

### Support for bilingual teaching and TILT

Despite occasional authoritative voices raised in objection (e.g. Widdowson, 1978: 159; 1979: 101–11; Stern, 1992: 279–300) the dominance of the monolingual principle has persisted more or

less unimpeded in mainstream language-teaching theory and practice, especially in **English language teaching**, throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first century. From the 1990s onwards, however, a growing literature has supported a return to bilingual teaching for a variety of acquisitional, pedagogic, political, and educational reasons (for a survey see Hall and Cook, 2012). Not all of the new call for what has been called ‘bilingualisation’ (Widdowson, 2003: 149–65) and ‘bilingual reform’ (Butzkamm and Caldwell, 2009) concerns translation – much of it is confined to a return to the use of the student’s own language for explanation, discussion, classroom management and good student–teacher relations, and the legitimisation of bilingual resources for students. There is, however, also a new specific advocacy of TILT (e.g. Cook, 1991, 2007, 2010; Malmkjær, 1998; Butzkamm, 2001; Butzkamm and Caldwell, 2009: 196–204; Witte et al., 2009).

The reasons for the renaissance of bilingual teaching and with it TILT are complex and various. With regard to English language teaching they include the growth of resistance to the native speakerism and **linguistic imperialism** (Canagarajah, 1999) inherent in monolingual teaching and the unfair demotion of the status of non-native speaker teachers, the realisation that native speaker models are no longer necessary or appropriate for a globalised world where many if not most English language communications are instances of English as a **lingua franca**. This is true not only for professional translators and interpreters. In multilingual societies and a globalised world, translation is a natural everyday phenomenon. It is a major part of authentic communication in many families, schools, hospitals, courts, clinics, and many other places, and on notices, labels, menus, subtitles, news interviews and so on. Employment opportunities based on a knowledge of English are likely to demand an ability to mediate between English and another language, not only to communicate in monolingual English contexts.

### Future prospects

After the ‘long silence’ on the subject of translation in language teaching, a great deal remains to be done to remedy the virtual absence of materials

development or research on the topic during the twentieth century. Detailed work is needed on how translation activities might be differently developed and best used for: young, teenage and **adult learners**; for **beginners**, intermediate and advanced learners; by teachers who do or do not know their students’ language(s); in single-language and mixed language classes; and for learners with different **learning styles**, preferences and contexts. Some of the gaps left by the monolingual principle are now beginning to be filled, and innovative suggestions for translation activities – including many of a communicative nature and/or ones suitable for mixed language classes – have been made in resource books for teachers such as Duff (1989), Deller and Rinvulcri (2002), and González Davies (2004), while some of the more theoretical works mentioned above also contain substantial suggestions for translation activities (Butzkamm and Caldwell, 2009; Cook, 2010: 125–53). A great deal remains to be done, and the development of bilingual teaching and the reinstatement of translation, and the ‘paradigm shift’ in their favour (Maley, 2011), promises to be one of the most active and rewarding areas of language-teaching theory and practice in the future.

**See also:** Bilingual method; Identity and language learning; Linguistic imperialism; Mother tongue use in the foreign language classroom; Native speaker; Non-native speaker teacher; Second language acquisition theories

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GUY COOK

## Translation theory

Translation is an ancient art, but the scientific study of translation is relatively recent. Translation Studies as a distinct discipline has been developing rapidly since the 1970s, and seeks to bridge the gap between the study of translation as a literary phenomenon and the study of translation as a branch of **applied linguistics**. Since the 1990s the emphasis has been increasingly on cultural aspects of translation, and earlier debates about problems of meaning and equivalence have been redefined.

## Defining translation

General assumptions about translation are based on the notion that a source language text can be rendered into the target language in such a way that the surface meaning of the two texts will be approximately the same and the structures of the source language will be preserved so far as is possible without seriously distorting the structures of the target language. To this end, the bilingual **dictionary** was developed.

The use of **translation in language teaching** is a long-established practice. Some of the earliest known bilingual texts are interlinear glosses, presumably created as a means of assisting readers with understanding a foreign text. The earliest vernacular writings in medieval Europe are mainly in the form of interlinear translations of Latin texts. Later, with the development of systematic language teaching, translation came to occupy a central role.

Whilst in literary translation practice it is most common for the translation to be made into the translator's **mother tongue**, in language learning translation is used in two quite different ways. A first level of language **competence** can be tested by the use of translation *from* the foreign language. This process primarily involves **reading** and comprehension, combined with the ability to decode and then rephrase the syntactical structures of the foreign language in the learner's own language. The second stage involves translation *into* the foreign language, which demands a higher degree of active language knowledge, as demonstrated in the ability not only to read and understand in one's mother tongue, but then to restructure ideas and syntax in the language of study.

A central problem in the use of translation in language teaching concerns the question of the student's ability to demonstrate *faithfulness* to the source text. Whilst a literary or commercial translator will have few qualms about reshaping a text to suit the needs of the target readers, the student may feel constrained by the syntax of the source text and by the need to demonstrate accuracy in comprehending the text. It is important that translation as a language learning strategy should be contextualised, and the issue of faithfulness broadened beyond the strictly semantic or syntactical.

Translation always, necessarily, involves both reading and writing. Most crucially, it requires an understanding not only of the elements of the text, but also of the circumstances surrounding the text. Context can be as significant for the translator as text, and this fact makes the use of translation as a means of monitoring language competence somewhat controversial. The translator has to read the source language text, which requires a high degree of analytical expertise, decode the text and then re-encode it in the target language. The process involved goes beyond the linguistic, as a simple example demonstrates. The French translation of the English greeting 'Good morning' is 'Bonjour'. The function of the greeting is the same, the use of the adjective 'bon' to translate 'good' is a straightforward lexical substitution, but the dictionary equivalent of 'morning' is 'matin', whilst 'jour' is given as 'day'. Strict linguistic equivalence here would result in an inaccurate translation. What has

taken place is a complex process of decoding and recoding. The linguistic signs have been read in context, and a process of 'semiotic transformation' (Ludskanov, 1975) has taken place, as the linguistic signs encounter another set of signs from a different system, in this case the greeting systems operating in both source and target cultures.

## Equivalence

Defining equivalence is one of the most complex areas of translation studies. Distinctions have often been made between *linguistic* and *cultural* factors in translation, and different concepts of equivalence that result from such a distinction. Nida (1964) distinguishes between *formal* and *dynamic* equivalence, the former being a type of translation that seeks to match component parts of the text as closely as possible, the latter being formulated on the notion of equivalent effect. This, and similar endeavours to differentiate between categories of equivalence, are elaborations of St Jerome's famous distinction between word-for-word and sense-for-sense translation formulated in 384 AD, and which developed ideas articulated three centuries earlier by Cicero. Literary translators have always recognised that there are different categories of equivalence and have tended to favour a more flexible approach, that does not seek to define equivalence as sameness and recognises difference between languages. Jakobson claimed that full equivalence was impossible, and that only 'creative transposition' could be achieved (Jakobson, 1959). Today, that view is widely accepted, and equivalence is most often viewed as a dialectical relationship between the signs and structures both within and surrounding the source and target texts. Translators, whether literary, commercial or technical, tend to aim for equivalent effect, rather than for literal equivalence on the semantic or syntactic level. Where translators do not do this, and opt for semantic or **stylistic** equivalence that ignores the conventions of the target system, the result is an inadequate translation of the kind that frequently occurs in guidebooks, menus or similar texts relating to the tourist trade that have been translated without due regard for the complexity of the transformation processes involved.

The problem of defining equivalence is directly linked to another major question in translation, the notion of translatability and untranslatability. Catford (1965) distinguishes between *linguistic* and *cultural* untranslatability, arguing that these categories present different kinds of translation difficulty. Linguistic untranslatability is inevitable, since no two languages have the same structures, and the problem of translating puns and wordplay highlights this fact. Cultural untranslatability derives from the different codes of behaviour and practice in different societies. Catford takes the example of different bathing practices in different cultures, pointing out that the term 'bathroom', although translatable between English, Japanese or Finnish, signifies quite different ritualised social behavioural practices. It could also be argued that the distinction between linguistic and cultural untranslatability is a false one, since translation always takes place in a context and therefore the cultural dimension is always present.

The basic activity of translation involves the transfer of texts across linguistic frontiers. But, in that process, all sorts of things happen to the text. Translation theorists have tended to focus unduly on the problem of loss in translation, but we could equally argue that, for every element that is lost, another is gained. It is important to remember that translation always involves change; the text that a source language reader reads cannot be the same as the text that a target language reader reads. Not only do lexical and syntactical aspects of language ensure that sameness is impossible, but it is also the case that different cultures interpret meaning in different ways. For example, the absence of consistency in defining colour across European languages has been pointed out frequently. Contemporary Irish, **English** and **French** do not share terminology that covers the same interpretation of colours, and one solution to this problem is borrowing, hence the English terms *beige* or *ecru* to describe tonalities in the range from white to brown. Similarly, lexical items referring to food also vary widely, even within a relatively small geographical area. *Pastry*, *pasta* and *paté* have a common etymology, but have come to acquire completely different meanings and, as dining has become more international, have all become loan

words, since any attempt to translate them would run into problems of transferable meaning.

### Translation and innovation

In translating any type of text, the translator has only two options: to take the text to the readers, or to take the readers to the text. Different translation strategies prioritise one or other of these options, which then tend to become conventionalised within a literary system. The strategy of making readers adapt to a new type of text, in either form or content, can lead to major literary innovations. The history of European poetry, for example, is full of innovations introduced through translation. The sonnet, which originated in Italy, spread across European literatures as a direct result of translations. Often the absence of a particular form in the target literature results in the translator introducing the original form as a literary innovation. The rapid spread of lyric poetry in medieval Europe is an example of the innovative power of translations, for the lyric effectively supplanted the epic that had previously been the dominant poetic form.

However, some cultures favour a different strategy, preferring to adapt the source language text into a known literary form in the target literature. In Britain and the United States, the most common tendency in translating for the past two hundred years has been towards **acculturation**, i.e. the rendering of foreign literature into forms and language immediately identifiable within the Anglo-Saxon tradition. Russian literature in English is a case of this acculturation process, and writers like Chechov or Dostoievski have entered the English canon. The tendency to acculturate texts in translation can result in resistance to any works that are not easily identifiable within the target system, which means that not all texts travel easily across literary frontiers.

### Translation studies

Recognition of the complexities of translation has led, in recent decades, to the development of a new inter-disciplinary field known as translation studies. The subject grew originally in the gaps between **linguistics** and literary studies, between translation theorists and practitioners. The goal of the discipline

was first laid down in a manifesto by André Lefevere (Lefevere, 1978), which stated that there should be a comprehensive theory that could be used as a guideline for the production of translations. Theory and practice were therefore intimately linked from the outset, and translation studies scholars have endeavoured to avoid prescriptive theorising. The objects of study are the actual translations, and translation studies seeks to explore translation strategies through detailed analysis of what takes place during translation.

A key word in this investigation is *manipulation*. For the last thirty years, translation studies has seen the notion of textual manipulation as a central one. Given the impossibility of full equivalence, the translator is called upon to implement whatever strategies are deemed most appropriate for an adequate rendering of the source text in the target language, a process that inevitably involves decision-making, selection and other aspects of manipulatory activity. We need only look at instructions in various languages in public places to see the kind of manipulations that can occur. **Politeness** conventions in some languages may require phrasing of the 'passengers are kindly requested' variety, while other languages are content with direct imperatives. The choice of phrasing open to the translator will depend on the conventions operating in the target language, and the source text will be shaped accordingly.

Translation studies has developed in several ways since the early 1970s. In the early years, the emphasis was on challenging the notion of equivalence as sameness and on raising the status of translation as a textual activity. The expansion of research has led in two broadly distinctive directions: towards an examination of the norms governing translation in different contexts on the one hand, and towards an analysis of the history of translation practices through the ages on the other. Both translation history, which has shed light on the vastly different practices and theories obtaining at different moments in time, and translation theory, which has concerned itself with norms, have led to a change in perspectives on translation. Once seen as a secondary activity, something that could be practised by anyone with a minimal knowledge of another language, translation is now recognised as

a highly complex activity that requires a range of **skills** to be effective. The role of the translator is increasingly under scrutiny also, as it becomes clear that he or she plays a decisive role in determining what will reach the target language's readers. The translator's agency has been extensively discussed, with two key works arguing for greater *visibility* of translators, by Lefevere (1992) and Venuti (1995) respectively. The idea of the translator as *rewriter*, a concept that stresses the creative aspect of translation has gained considerable ground.

The subject has also diversified in other ways. European translation studies has started to look at the ways in which translation practice reflects changes in a culture's poetics, focusing on questions of patronage and the power relations between original author, text, translator and mechanisms of production. Post-colonial translation studies in such places as Brazil, Canada, China and India has started to examine ways in which the act of translation itself may be seen as directly linked to processes of colonisation, given that one of the things that translation does is to reinforce difference between cultures which may be interpreted to the detriment of one of the partners and to the advantage of the other. Here also, debates about equivalence have taken a new turn, for in positing the idea of equivalence as sameness, the underlying assumption was that textual transfer could take place between literary and cultural systems that were on equal terms. Revisiting the history of colonialism has meant that socio-cultural and textual relations have been viewed in a new light.

The most influential group in the new translation studies has been the *polysystems group*, led by Itamar Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury from Tel Aviv. Heavily influenced by formalist and structuralist models in their early years, the polysystems group began in the 1970s to investigate the role played by translated texts in other literatures. This trend, which was developed by José Lambert, James Holmes, André Lefevere, Theo Hermans, Susan Bassnett *et alia* shifted the focus of attention away from disputes about definitions of equivalence and away also from theories that privileged the source text. The polysystems group was concerned with broad questions about the role of translation in world literature, with how translations

might be received at different moments, what contribution translations might make to cultural development and why translation activity should vary so considerably. The group's work brought translation closer to **cultural studies** and social history, and one criticism of this approach was that it no longer prioritised linguistic questions.

Research in World Literature and Globalization Studies has also started to highlight the importance of translation. Brodski (2007) argues that translation needs to be understood as a phenomenon that underpins all cultural transactions, since translations are texts that reflect the changing conditions of society.

There has been a rapprochement between applied linguistics and translation studies, as linguists have also begun to give greater attention to questions of language in context. Computer-assisted translation has also undergone great changes, and corpus language projects involving millions of words now form a substantial field of research within translation studies.

Translation has a long history, but the scientific study of translation is a recent phenomenon. It derives in part from developments in linguistics, literary studies and cultural studies, but also from the increased global use of English, which means that millions of people now use two or more languages in their daily lives. The importance of translation in global terms is a new phenomenon, but one that is set to continue. The rise of translation studies as a discipline is linked to this process, for, as translation becomes more visibly widespread, so it is important to understand what the activity of translation consists of, in order to train the translators of the future.

Translation studies underwent its 'cultural turn' in the 1980s, at the same time that other related disciplines were undergoing a similar process of change. The basic assumption about the interdependence of language and cultural context has become a fundamental element in translator and **interpreter** training. In the commercial and business world, likewise, there is a growing interest in developing intercultural awareness, and the same holds true in tourism and the leisure industries. Translator and interpreter training world-wide is developing rapidly, stressing not only the

importance of high linguistic competence, but also the importance of cultural background knowledge.

**See also:** Corpus linguistics and language teaching; Cultural awareness; Grammar–translation method; Interpreting; Literary texts; Literary theory and literature teaching; Sapir–Whorf hypothesis; Translation

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SUSAN BASSNETT

## Trim, John Leslie Melville

b. 1924, London, UK

John Trim has been active in many fields of linguistics and applied linguistics, though he is principally associated with the four **Council of Europe** Modern Languages Projects which he directed from 1971 to 1997.

He started his academic career as lecturer in phonetics at University College, London (1949–58), and his first publications deal with phonetic features of German and English. In 1958 he moved to the University of Cambridge and in 1965 he became the first head of the Department of Linguistics. It soon attracted a large number of postgraduate students, many of whom went on to staff linguistics departments in other universities. **Applied linguistics** flourished too, and with an international dimension. The department hosted the second **AILA** Congress (1969) and held annual vacation courses in linguistics and English language. Trim himself worked on language testing and developed a lasting interest in the use of radio and television for **adult language** courses, which led to his becoming part author or consultant to several BBC courses, e.g. *Parliamo Italiano*, *Deutsch Direkt!* and *Follow Me*.

His association with the Council of Europe began in 1971, as part-time consultant at first, being combined until 1978 with his Cambridge post and from 1978 to 1987 with the Directorship of the Centre for Information on Language

Teaching and Research (**CILT**), and as full-time consultant from 1987 to 1997.

This long commitment to the Council of Europe Modern Languages Projects, with its round of conferences, workshops and report writing, may have prevented him from writing a substantial book of his own, yet it allowed him to devise and articulate a broad general framework for human communication, and he was a major contributor to the **Common European Framework of Reference** and to many other documents throughout his association with the Council of Europe. To the clarification of complex concepts and the drafting of concrete recommendations he brought an authoritative knowledge of the whole field of **linguistics** and language teaching and great skill in co-ordinating the work of experts throughout Europe. He vigorously publicised the projects' contents and values.

Trim's contribution to language education, not only in these projects but also in various language associations and initiatives, and in the editorship of linguistics journals, has brought wide international recognition through a number of honorary doctorates and other academic distinctions.

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WALTER GRAUBERG

## Turkish

Turkish is the official language of the Turkish Republic (about 78 million inhabitants in 2010), and the first language of the majority of the citizens of Turkey. Second, Turkish is, together with Greek, an official language of Cyprus. Furthermore, Turkish is spoken in the Balkans by about 1 million people, and is the first language of more than 2.5 million immigrants in Western Europe. Turkish communities also exist in Arabian countries, in some CIS states and in the Americas.

Turkish belongs genetically to the Turkic languages which are thought to be related to two other language groups, the Mongolic and the Tungusic. Together, these language groups are said to form the Altaic language family. It is not fully clear, however, whether we can speak of a genetic relationship here, or whether similarities are rather based on prehistoric convergence on a geographic area in the Eurasian steppes, where all three groups originate. It is even less clear whether the isolated languages Japanese and Korean belong to the Altaic family.

The Turkic languages comprise some thirty-three languages which are spoken in a wide geographical area, stretching from the Balkans in the west to Siberia in the northeast, the Persian Gulf in the south and the Chinese Gansu-Province in the east. Together with languages like Azeri, Turkmen and Gagauz, which is spoken in Moldova, Turkish belongs to the Oghuz branch of the Turkic languages. There is a considerable amount of mutual intelligibility between the languages of the Oghuz branch.

### The language

Turkish is an agglutinative language in terms of morphological classification, with suffixation being the main morphological operation type. Syntactically, Turkish is a 'left-branching language' with VP and NP modifiers in front of the head, (attributive) participle-noun order, possessor-possessioned order and postpositions. Subordination and complementation in Turkish is characterised by a rich variety of non-finite verbal constructions (participles, verbal nouns, converbs) which adhere to the

left-branching structure. The case system of Turkish is nominative-accusative. The unmarked order of sentence constituents is: subject (S) – indirect object (IO)/adverbial – direct object (DO) – predicate (V). However, word order in Turkish is quite free and can best be described as an interplay between the pragmatic roles and properties and the referential status of the constituents. Turkish allows zero anaphora of those constituents which agree with their controlling element, i.e. subject pronouns and genitive pronouns.

Phonologically, Turkish has eight short vowels, which can be grouped according to the features of height, backness and rounding. A striking feature of Turkish phonology is its so-called 'vowel harmony' to which nearly all grammatical morphemes as well as most Turkish word stems are bound. With the distinctive features [+ palatal], [+ labial], and [+ high] playing the important roles, all vowels assimilate to the preceding vowel within word boundaries, with only few exceptions. As for consonants, Turkish has five pairs of voiced and voiceless stops and affricates, three pairs of fricatives, two nasals, three liquids and two approximants. There are a number of consonant alternations and assimilations. The syllable structure is comparatively simple, with (C)V(C) being canonical. Only certain consonant clusters are allowed in the coda. Word stress falls on the last syllable of the phonological word.

Concerning lexical classes, the main line of distinction should be drawn between nouns and verbs. This line is drawn on morphological grounds since some suffixes can only be combined with the first class, and other suffixes only with the second. Neither nouns nor pronouns in Turkish have a gender distinction. As is typical for an agglutinating SOV language, Turkish has postpositions of which some trigger overt case-marking on the noun they govern and some do not. There is no definite article, but there is an indefinite article, *bir*. It does not differ from the numeral 'one' in terms of phonological shape.

Due to cultural contacts with speakers of other languages throughout history, Turkish has integrated a considerable number of **Chinese**, Mongolian, Persian and **Arabic** loans into the genuine Turkish vocabulary. **French** had high prestige among the

Ottoman elite in the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, and this accounts for a considerable number of French loans. Soon after the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923, a language reform aimed to enlarge the genuine Turkish vocabulary of the standard language. In recent decades, **English** has become the main source language for new loan words.

Turkish has a long written tradition which can be traced back to Runic inscriptions in the seventh century. During Ottoman times, an Arabic-based script was used. In the course of the language reform after the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923, a Latin-based orthographic system was adopted. The orthographic system can be said to be fairly phonologically oriented (to standard pronunciation), and it does not exhibit the problems of historically older orthographic systems like, for instance, English or French.

### The study of Turkish as a second, foreign and heritage language

The state-promoted Turkish language reform was entangled with the spread of literacy, the modernisation of society and the establishment of the nation. This led to a high prestige for the written standard, viz. an association of 'good Turkish' with 'being modern', and a low status for oral structures, informal registers or non-Turkish first languages. Even though the number of people in Turkey who do not speak Turkish as their first language is estimated to be more than 10 per cent of the population, the teaching of Turkish as a second language in Turkish schools is officially non-existent.

As a foreign language, Turkish is taught in institutes of further education and university courses all over the world: thus Turkish can be said to be one of the better established 'lesser taught languages'. Modern teaching **materials** for teaching Turkish as foreign language to adults outside of Turkey are abundant, and mainly accessible through the medium of English. In Turkey, the teaching of Turkish as a foreign language to **adults** lies very much in the hands of one institution, namely the language school TÖMER, which is the language school of the state university of Ankara,

but has opened up branches in all main cities of Turkey. TÖMER has also succeeded in setting up a certified adaption of the **Common European Framework of Reference** (CEFR) for Turkish.

Also in some countries, Turkish is taught as a foreign language in **primary** and **secondary education** institutions. It is interesting to note that this is mainly based on the initiative of private educational institutions. Noteworthy are the activities of the Islamic Fetullah Gülen Movement, which has established quite a number of private schools in Central Asia, Africa and also in European countries. In these schools, the teaching of Turkish as a foreign language, and sometimes also the employment of Turkish as medium of instruction, is an integral part of the school curriculum. In 2003, an organization called the 'Turkish Education Association', which owns a number of private schools in Turkey, started a 'Turkish Olympics' (*Türkçe Olimpiyatları*), aiming at bringing together Turkish-learning pupils from all over the world in a language contest once a year in Istanbul. This has been very successful, with for example 750 students from 120 countries participating in the 8th Olympics in 2010.

In Cyprus, the island's partition into Greek and Turkish parts in 1974 led to a situation in which Turkish has become the second official language in the Greek part (i.e. the internationally recognised Republic of Cyprus), and also an official language of the University of Cyprus, although there are only a few native speakers of Turkish living in Greek Cyprus. In schools Turkish can be chosen as a foreign language after English.

Another aspect of the teaching of Turkish in schools outside of Turkey is that of the teaching of Turkish as a heritage language in minority situations, be this as a recognized autochthon minority, as in the Balkans, or an allochthon minority, as in Western Europe. A number of schools in Bulgaria and Macedonia have Turkish as the **medium of instruction**, open to members of the Turkish community. In Western Europe, and also in Australia, where Turkish is a vital migrant language, primary and secondary schools located in areas of high migrant population may offer the teaching of Turkish as a heritage language. The character of these programmes changes from country to country. In



the Netherlands, the teaching of Turkish is provided within the framework of foreign language instruction, while in the Scandinavian countries and in Germany, heritage language instruction is defined as being exclusively open to pupils with Turkish as their mother tongue, with numerous problems of definition inherent in this. In France and in a few of the German federal states, the curriculum and teaching materials are produced by Turkish educational authorities, and teachers are sent from Turkey via the Turkish embassies. In the Netherlands, in Scandinavian countries and in most of the federal states in Germany, curriculum and teaching materials are produced by the local school authorities, and teachers are employed locally. Germany, where most of the Turkish migrants in Western Europe live, has also established **teacher education** for Turkish as a heritage language, at the universities of Essen and Hamburg. Again in Germany, some schools also offer bilingual Turkish–German literacy programmes, but fully bilingual programmes, which are also open to pupils with German as their first language, are very rare. There are also some vocational training programmes, e.g.

child-carers and carers for the elderly, and support for the Turkish language development of trainees with a Turkish migration background.

**See also:** Bilingual education; German; Minority and heritage languages; Mother tongue; Mother-tongue teaching; Sociolinguistics

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CHRISTOPH SCHROEDER

# U

## Universal grammar (UG)

Since the 1950s the developing theories of Noam **Chomsky** have been a major inspiration for linguistics. The first version was known as 'transformational generative grammar' after two key concepts: language should be described in explicit formal rules (generative) and these rules must be able to alter elements in the sentence in various ways (transformations). The later version became known as 'Universal Grammar' (UG) theory after the central claim that language should be looked at in universal terms, then as 'principle and parameters' theory after the way it described language through universal 'principles' that all languages obey, and variable 'parameters' that change from one language to another. Then it became the 'Minimalist Program' after its quest to reduce all its apparatus to the basic minimum (Chomsky, 1995). Above all the UG theory has integrated language acquisition with language description, seeing acquisition as setting the values for these parameters appropriately according to the examples of language the learner hears.

Chomsky (1986) set three main questions for **linguistics**:

1. What constitutes knowledge of language?
2. How is such knowledge acquired?
3. How is such knowledge put to use?

The starting point is what people know about language, their internal 'linguistic **competence**',

not their actual speech or use, their external 'performance', nor their purposes in using language, such as communication. This knowledge cannot be separated from how it comes into being; hence language description gets intertwined with theories of language acquisition.

Universal grammar is the distinct part of the mind common to all human beings that enables them to know and acquire languages. The language 'faculty' is a separate part of the mind, thus distinguishing UG theory from general psychological theories that see language and language learning as intrinsically no different from any other mental process. The stress on knowledge implicitly contradicts many approaches to language teaching, such as the social bias to the **communicative approach** or the goal-based claims of **task-based teaching**; the emphasis on independence similarly goes against teaching methods that employ general ideas of learning, such as the habit formation concept integral to the **audio-lingual method**.

The form that this knowledge takes in the mind is necessarily complex and abstract since it has to be adaptable into all the myriad shapes that a human language can take. The nature of language is as difficult to state or to comprehend as other abstract theories such as quantum physics. The surface of the sentence is taken to be only a partial and inaccurate guide to the richness underneath. This insight was embodied in the difference between 'deep' and 'surface' structure. For example, the sentences 'John is eager to please' and 'John is easy to please' have the same surface

structure but differ at deeper levels because 'John' is the subject of 'eager to please' (John pleases people) but the object of 'easy to please' (other people please John). Since the early 1990s the UG theory, however, no longer makes a technical difference between deep and surface structure.

The principles of universal grammar are part of the composition of the human mind. English questions, for example, are formed by a rule that moves the relevant elements to the front of the sentence; any speaker of English knows that in a sentence with a relative clause such as 'Sam is the cat that is black' to ask a question you have to move the 'is' in the main clause to the front, yielding 'Is Sam the cat that is black?', not the 'is' in the subordinate clause 'Is Sam is the cat that black?' It is the role of 'is' in the structure of the sentence that counts rather than simply finding an 'is'. This principle of structure-dependency compels all languages to move parts of the sentence around in accordance with its structure rather than just the sheer order of words. Even more general principles have been proposed, such as the principle of economy: that the only elements that can appear in a sentence are those that have to.

Structure-dependency could not be acquired by children from hearing sentences of the language but imposes itself on whatever language they encounter, just as in a sense the pitch range of the human ear restricts the sounds we can hear. Children do not have to learn these principles but apply them to any language they hear.

The parameters of universal grammar are the elements of language that have to be learnt. A much discussed example is the pro-drop parameter. Some languages such as Italian do not always require a subject in the sentence (pro-drop) 'Parla' (speaks), others such as English require the subject always to be present (non-pro-drop) 'He speaks' never 'Speaks', even in sentences such as 'It's raining.' All human languages therefore have one or the other setting for this parameter. A small number of such parameters has knock-on consequences for the whole grammars of the languages. While the actual parameters are built-in to children's minds, their values have to be set by the sentences they encounter. Children cannot choose any variation for the language they are creating in their

minds but can only work within these pre-set limits. All the evidence they require to set the parameters must be available in the actual sentences they hear, called 'positive evidence', rather than through parents' corrections or explanation, 'negative evidence', since this is the only type of input all children everywhere are known to receive. The pro-drop parameter could be set for English by hearing examples of sentences with dummy subjects such as 'There's a book on the table' or by noticing the type of inflections used in the present tense ('He likes' versus 'I/you/they/we like'). Provided only that a child encounters a reasonable amount of normal speech, language acquisition will take place.

**Second language acquisition**, however, might be different. Specific concentration of examples or grammatical explanation may be needed to get students through barriers that the child acquiring their first language (L1) does not encounter. The UG module may be no longer available for learning a second language (L2), whether because of the learner's age or because of the prior acquisition of the first language. Research suggests that, like L1 children, L2 learners know things they could not have learnt from language input, such as structure-dependency or indeed 'eager/easy to please', but these may be derived from the first language rather than from UG. The parameter values from the L1 transfer to the L2; for example Spanish learners carry over their L1 pro-drop setting to English. But this is not always predictable; for example English learners do not carry over their non-pro-drop L1 setting to Spanish. The restriction to positive evidence in L1 acquisition may not apply to L2 learning: L2 learners can benefit from forms of negative evidence, such as correction, in ways unparalleled in L1 acquisition.

As the UG theory has developed, it has made a sharper distinction between the fixed properties of language called the 'computational system' with which all minds are equipped, and the language-specific **vocabulary** that has to be used with these principles to get actual sentences of a language. To Chomsky himself, language acquisition is seen as chiefly a matter of acquiring idiosyncratic lexicon items: all variation, and hence all parameters, are part of the lexicon.

In itself this type of syntactic description could be a resource for language teaching in that it often covers basic issues that are important right from the first lesson of a course. **Spanish** differs from English in having no need for subjects; **Japanese** subject–object–verb word order differs from English SVO in almost every sentence. However, its abstractness of expression has led to few practical applications in **syllabuses** and **textbooks**. One tangential teaching use for a time was taking the descriptions as a basis for grammatical explanation techniques, called ‘cognitive code learning’.

The general issues that UG theory has raised for language teaching are the idea that the crucial aspect of language is knowledge, not performance or function, the claim that acquisition depends on the language input setting certain parameter values in the mind, and the possibility that certain teaching methods such as grammatical explanation may after all be beneficial or indeed necessary.

**See also:** Acquisition and teaching; Mother tongue; Native speaker; Psycholinguistics; Second language acquisition theories

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VIVIAN COOK

## Untutored language acquisition

The systematic study of language acquisition outside formal learning situations such as the classroom got under way in the early 1970s. In contrast to **bilingualism**, where acquisition studies concentrate on the simultaneous or consecutive acquisition of two languages by children, informal language acquisition studies consider the **adult learner**. The interest of such learners is that they are already cognitively mature speakers; they can draw on ‘the mother tongue, plus the entire experience of learning it’ (Rutherford, 1989: 452). This allows research on language acquisition and use to rid itself of two major sources of interference: the stage of cognitive development of the learner and the effect of ‘learned knowledge’ on the acquisition process (rather than ‘acquired knowledge’ in Krashen’s terms, see the **monitor model**).

Research in this area has been overwhelmingly European, but undertaken from a variety of theoretical viewpoints. As in some other areas of **linguistics**, formal and functional approaches compete, with the result that most important questions are subject to controversy, as will be shown. There is, however, agreement on what these questions are:

- What is the amount and quality of linguistic knowledge available to the learner at the outset of acquisition (the ‘initial state’)?
- What is the path that acquisition takes (**developmental sequences**)?
- What pushes the learner along the path (communicative needs, **motivations** and **attitudes**)?
- What shapes the path (**transfer**, universal linguistic constraints, processing complexity, and the type of input)?
- What causes acquisition to stop (**fossilisation**) and why is this end-state subject to so much individual variation?

These questions will be reviewed after a brief historical and methodological description of the major empirical work, and a final section will be devoted to the relevance of the findings to language pedagogy.

## Empirical research

The major empirical work of the 1970s was on the acquisition of **German** and, to a lesser extent, **English** and Dutch. The methodology was almost always **cross-sectional**, with standard tape-recorded socio-linguistic interviews used as the main data collection technique. The Heidelberg project ('HPD': Klein and Dittmar, 1979) and the Wuppertal project ('ZISA': Meisel et al., 1981) each investigated the acquisition of German by more than forty Italian and Spanish adult immigrant workers. Both projects studied the development of syntax. HPD also analysed lexical development, communicative behaviour and the social correlates of acquisitional success, while ZISA analysed the role of socio-psychological factors explaining differences between learner-types. In the so-called 'Harvard project', Schumann (1978) also correlated the (non-)acquisition of basic morpho-syntactic features of English with psychological and social variables in the elaboration of his **pidginisation** hypothesis. In Hawai'i, Huebner (1981) followed the development of one absolute **beginner** over a period of twelve months. These latter studies are the first published **longitudinal analyses** of second language acquisition. Using a similar methodology to HPD's, Jansen et al. (1981) studied the effect of L1 knowledge on word order in the L2 Dutch of eight Turkish and eight Moroccan learners in their elaboration of the **alternation hypothesis**. This study was among the first published explicitly **cross-linguistic analyses**.

These early projects mostly restricted themselves to (morpho-) syntax, were concerned with the acquisition of one L2 and were only beginning to use a longitudinal methodology. Research in the 1980s went beyond these limitations in at least four ways:

- the range and type of data-collection techniques used,
- the systematic adoption of longitudinal analyses,
- the number and range of L1s and L2s used in cross-linguistic comparisons,
- the range and type of linguistic phenomena investigated.

By far the most comprehensive investigation is the European Science Foundation's (ESF) *Second*

*Language Acquisition by Adult Immigrants* (Perdue, 1993). This was a co-ordinated, comparative longitudinal study in five European countries (France, England, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden). It followed the untutored language acquisition of groups of 4–8 immigrant beginners over a period of 30 months, using a shared data-collection schedule. Ten different L1–L2 combinations were studied. Areas of investigation were, in language production, the development of syntax and lexicon in association with the means for referring to time and space, and in native/non-native speaker interaction, the way mutual understanding was or was not achieved. Other projects of a similar functional-pragmatic orientation, and using similar methodologies studied other linguistic cases of acquisition – that of Italian in particular (Giacalone-Ramat, 1992) – so that the linguistic development of six major European languages was relatively well described by the mid-1990s.

All these projects used recorded data, which were transcribed and stored on a computer. The ESF data form part of the world-wide 'data bank' on language acquisition (CHILDES, see MacWhinney, 1991). The availability of these computerised data gave a new impulsion to more formal (**universal grammar** inspired) research on untutored language acquisition. Up to the mid-1980s, generative research had concentrated on cross-sectional studies of university students of L2 English. These researchers were now able to test their theories on longitudinal data from relatively many languages. Thus Hilles (1986), for example, re-analysed the Harvard corpus (Schumann, 1978) to see whether learners with L1 Spanish – a language which allows omission of the grammatical subject – learning English – a language which does not – manage to master this typological difference (or 'parametric difference' in generative terminology).

## Descriptive generalisations

All this empirical work resulted in a consensus on the descriptive generalisations across the languages studied. Lexical categories (nouns, verbs, adjectives) are acquired first and related to each other by simple juxtaposition. Then closed-class words (pronouns, prepositions, articles) are acquired. Acquisition of

the L2 morphology comes last, and is not mastered by all the learners; subject–verb agreement is, for example, non-existent outside the very last stages of acquisition. The development of subordinate clauses (relatives, infinitives, etc.) is also very late. This development can be seen as a progression from the ‘language-neutral’ to the ‘language-specific’: whereas all languages have nouns and verbs, not all languages have prepositions or articles, and fewer still share the type of verb morphology shown by English (as learning difficulties with the progressive, for example, amply illustrate). It is this English-specific morphology which is acquired last. It can also be seen as gradually making the relations between items within an utterance, and relations between utterances, more explicit. A beginning learner of English who produces an utterance like ‘Father, Rome.’ (the ‘topic-comment’ structure of the following paragraph) leaves a lot to be inferred by the interlocutor (whose father? What is the relationship between father and Rome?). This relationship is made more explicit with the acquisition of determiners and prepositions: ‘My father is from Rome.’

The **developmental sequences** towards individual L2s seem to be highly determined. Indeed, ZISA present their main results as an implicationally related sequence of developmental stages based on the re-ordering of utterance constituents from an underlying canonical word order. No learner was found to re-order the stages, and no learner missed out a stage. Bartning (1997) reviews the major findings and proposes the following general developmental sequence: a ‘pre-basic’ stage consisting of a restricted lexicon used in rudimentary topic-comment structures, then a ‘basic’ stage where utterances are structured around a non-finite verb form (the ‘Basic Variety’, Klein and Perdue, 1997); this is followed by intermediate stages characterised by the gradual development of closed-class words, a variable morphology and the beginnings of subordination, and an advanced stage where the morphology becomes systematic and the range of structures available to the learner increases. Finally, a minority of learners attain a near-native level where sentence-level grammar is mastered, although some grammatical intuitions (as shown by Coppeters, 1987) and discourse organisational procedures remain non-native.

Concerning very late stages of L2 acquisition Carroll et al. (2000), von Stutterheim and Lambert (2005) and Lambert et al. (2008) show that although very advanced learners manifest a high degree of formal accuracy at the sentence level, they have not fully mastered the functions that the forms serve in context. It is argued that to attain native like proficiency, learners must acquire the principles of use that underlie complex communicative tasks such as telling a story or giving directions. These principles that are dependent on the specific encoding system of the target language seem to be very resistant to acquisition.

Explanations for this developmental sequence are, however, very controversial, as a brief examination of the major research questions will show.

### Explanatory generalisations

Klein (1986) proposes three sets of factors determining the structure and success of the acquisition process: (1) The initial cognitive/linguistic disposition of the adult speaker; (2) Exposure to the language; (3) His or her propensity to acquire. These factors interact, and their relative weight changes throughout the acquisition process. All factors are taken into account in functionalist approaches, whereas more formal approaches are content to study the interaction of the learner’s cognitive/linguistic disposition (1) and the L2 input (2) (see Perdue and Gaonac’h, 2000 for a discussion of the differences between a functionalist and a formal approach).

1. The adult learner masters the L1, and this is the most straightforward way of defining the learner’s ‘initial state’. This incontrovertible fact gives rise however to widely differing interpretations. Researchers working within the generative paradigm analyse the similarities and differences between L1 and L2 in terms of ‘parametric variation’. The human language faculty may be seen as consisting of universally valid principles and of areas subject to cross-linguistic variation – ‘parameters’ that have to be ‘set’ during L1 acquisition. The L1 grammar intervenes differently in L2 development depending on whether the two languages

have similar or different settings for these parameters. In the first case, acquisition is facilitated, whereas in the latter case acquisition is more difficult and more error-prone. This type of latter-day **contrastive analysis** hypothesis leads, however, to different predictions. Some argue that it is impossible for the adult to recapitulate the ‘parameter-setting’ process of L1 acquisition and that although the universal principles are initially available (the learner’s language is a natural language), the typological set of the L2 is inaccessible. Others argue that non-language-specific learning strategies available to the cognitively developed adult, but not to the child, compensate at least partially for this ‘handicap’. A third position is that the language faculty remains intact in the adult learner, who is indeed capable of acquiring the parametric set of the L2, and therefore, capable in principle of learning the L2 perfectly.

The functionalist position is that such a debate, confined as it is to the core grammatical properties of a language, over-simplifies discussion of what is initially available to the learner: functionalists propose that those aspects of communicative competence which are most language-neutral comprise the initial learner hypotheses, in particular, the adult speaker’s fully transferable knowledge of how information is organised in discourse. In a recent study on L2 input processing at the initial stage of exposure, Rast (2008) discusses the linguistic knowledge available to the learner from a functionalist approach. Based on her study, Rast claims that at this stage learners do not only rely on linguistic knowledge derived from their L1 to approach the learning task.

2. The learner needs exposure to the language. This incontrovertible fact is also interpreted differently following the theoretical bent of the researcher. The formalists adopt the computer metaphor of ‘input’, whereas the functionalists see the learner as essentially engaged in a process of learning by interaction with interlocutors. The generativists see the input as impoverished in many respects, a further mechanism is therefore needed to account for acquisition, namely, the language faculty (‘Universal Grammar’ –

UG – in generative terminology). UG provides further mechanisms to compensate for the poverty of the L2 stimulus. These mechanisms are however logico-deductive in nature, and say nothing of the actual perceptual mechanisms the learner relies on to analyse the input.

Functionalists working within the framework of the ‘competition model’ (Bates and MacWhinney, 1989) test the validity of certain perceptual cues – word order, morphology, semantic relations – in the interpretation of sentences in different languages. Their general hypothesis is that, initially, the learner will rely on the validity of the perceptual cues of the L1. For example, a speaker of English relies heavily on word order in interpreting an English sentence – subject is in initial position, etc. – so that when faced with German input, where initial position is frequently filled by non-subjects, this English learner must revise the word order strategy and pay more attention to morphology.

Other functionalists working in the tradition of linguistic interaction see the interlocutor as crucial in the intake of L2 material, and try therefore to theorise the relation between interaction and acquisition. Native/non-native interaction in fact throws a clearer light than native/native interaction on the communicative strategies (Kasper and Kellerman, 1997) and on the work required to achieve mutual understanding (Bremer et al., 1996) in any conversation. The sequences of turns which develop around communicative breakdowns turn out to be the most revealing of the learner’s present difficulties. These analyses have given rise to the notion of ‘sequences of potential acquisition’ (SPA) (De Pietro et al., 1989): a difficulty occurs which hinders comprehension in some way, the native expert intervenes to clear up the difficulty, then the learner re-uses the native’s intervention. We see therefore a pedagogical exchange, of a meta-linguistic nature, embedded in a conversation, and this exchange provides corrective feedback for the learner. There are however conditions to be met for this to succeed. First, the linguistic item under meta-linguistic scrutiny must be mutually recognised. Second, the learner must be ‘ready’, i.e.

capable of integrating the item into the interim grammar, or, in other words, at the appropriate stage of a **developmental sequence**. This second condition is an instance of what Klein (1986) calls a 'critical rule': such a rule corresponds to a tentative hypothesis that the learner is presently working on, and which needs positive or negative confirmation. The SPA is a possible source of evidence.

3. The learner's propensity to acquire consists of the whole set of factors inciting the learner to apply his or her linguistic capacities to the L2 input: motivations, attitudes and communicative needs. This very extensive field of investigation will be illustrated by work from the large empirical research programmes already mentioned (HPD, ZISA, ESF and the Harvard project). These factors may be divided into language-external and language-internal.

Bundles of language-external socio-biographic factors such as the length of stay in the L2 environment, the type and amount of contact with native speakers, general educational level, instrumental or integrative motivation, and attitude towards L2 speakers, are correlated with linguistic factors defining the level of proficiency in the L2. HPD found, for example that the quantity of leisure-time contact with native speakers of the L2 was a generally good predictor. Schumann calculated from such factors a measure of socio-psychological distance of a learner from the L2 community which, in the case of his informant, was great, and had the consequence of restricting L2 contact to a necessary minimum, which in turn provoked early fossilisation.

Language-internal factors have to do with the way communicative needs may push acquisition along. Whatever the external circumstances of the learner (which can strongly affect the type of **vocabulary** acquired), certain communicative **functions** are recurrent, for example, the necessity to express determination, or temporal, spatial or causal relations between items (Andersen, 1984: 79, terms these functions 'relational meanings'). There are many such functions and all are not equally important for the learner in communication, thus the order in which such functions receive

linguistic expression over time reflect their communicative urgency.

The language-learning achievement of adults in an informal setting has thrown some light on the 'end-state': adult language acquisition not only often halts at a non-native mastery of the language, but the degree of inter-individual variation is great. Functional, grammatical and neurological reasons have been proposed as explanations. The functional approach to these problems is summarised in the previous paragraph – acquisition will cease when the communicative needs are met. In this respect, the Basic Variety (Klein and Perdue, 1997) can be seen as a first attempt at comprehensively describing a low level of potential fossilisation. Formal grammatical explanations for **fossilisation** were implicit in the discussion above of the initial state: if the adult has complete access to the acquisitional potential of the language faculty, then complete success is in principle possible, and grammatically non-relevant factors such as the external factors discussed above are responsible for lack of success. If on the other hand such access is no longer available, then ultimate success is in principle no longer possible. The neurological correlate of this latter position is of course the critical age hypothesis.

## Relevance for pedagogy

How does the type of work described here bear on language learning in the classroom? Although such a question is premature, there are two types of remark to be made. First, although the outcome of the process is variable, the path learners take towards a L2 is surprisingly highly determined, and the hypothesis to be entertained is that language pedagogy will be all the more successful – other things being equal – if it closely follows the reported developmental sequences. Pienemann (1985), for example, attempted to teach syntactic structures in a different order from the untutored developmental sequence first uncovered in the ZISA project, and found that pupils did not take into long-term memory pedagogical input for which their 'interim grammars' were not ready. All is, however, not equal, and the role of external (psycho-social) factors in determining the relative success of



untutored language acquisition should be stressed. Corder's (1967) caveat for successful acquisition: 'given motivation' is, whatever the learning situation, of the essence.

The question of how untutored language acquisition studies can contribute to developing efficiency in L2 learning is unsatisfactory at this point, as it does not provide clear guiding assistance to L2 teachers. Yet the question of the relation between language **acquisition** and **teaching** has recently given rise to growing interest (cf. Véronique, 2000, 2005; and Watorek, 2008).

**See also:** Acquisition and teaching; Adult learners; Psychology; Second language acquisition theories; Sociolinguistics; Universal grammar

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MARZENA WATOREK

CLIVE PERDUE

## US Standards for Foreign Language Learning

The National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project (1993–96), a large-scale national effort, set forth an agenda that is intentionally visionary and challenging for learners. In the United States, foreign language standards were developed simultaneously with standards in other disciplines as part of a federal initiative whose purpose was to influence the quality of instruction and student performance in the various states. Standards for foreign language learning establish goals and expectations for learners by defining what students should know and be able to do as a result of language study. The initial document, *Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century (SFL)*, presented five goal areas within which there are eleven designated standards. The rationale and discussion of the standards was to apply to all languages. Consequently they would be broad in scope but amenable to specific languages, and in fact, that is what happened subsequently.

The next series of documents appeared in 1999 and 2006, now entitled *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century (SFL)*, and added ten sets of language-specific standards all aligned with and expanded from the original 'generic' standards. Publication of the standards will include a package with a print copy of the generic with all language-specific versions on CD.

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## Impact and influence

Over the decade following the publication of standards, the collaboration and acceptance of them among language communities for both commonly taught and less commonly languages in US schools, have enhanced their influence. The standards are intended for students from kindergarten through **secondary schools**, but since their publication, many language organizations in the US have endorsed them as pertaining to undergraduate higher education as well. A federal project was funded (2008–11) to determine the impact of standards (ACTFL, 2010a) shows that 80 per cent of states reporting confirm that their state standards align with the national ones. Likewise at the district level, 61 per cent say that their curriculum is ‘most definitely’ aligned with national/state standards and 26 per cent describe their curriculum as ‘in progress’ of realignment. Eighty-nine percent of teachers responding to the survey consider themselves to be familiar with the national standards, and 72 per cent agree/agree strongly that standards influence how they plan lessons. (N.B.: Teachers choosing to respond to the survey are more likely to be professionally active.)

Comparisons of the foreign language standards and those in the **Council of Europe** (2001) **Common European Framework of Reference** reflect the distinct origins of each set, the educational and political context in which each arose. Some have found that the specific ‘can-do’ tasks set forth in Europe are more useful for measurement, for student self-awareness and for prescriptions for teaching. That kind of directive can be achieved where ministries of education play a determining role in education. The US standards are intentionally broad, are designed as ‘content’ standards (i.e. they address the question ‘what should students know and be able to do?’) and the determination of ‘performance’ expectations (that address the question ‘how good is good enough?’) is left to states and district authorities. These definitions were in the federal legislation that supported standards development and reflect the federal and state separation of responsibilities in the US where states and local districts determine curriculum. In some districts students do not begin the study of a foreign language

until high school with a maximum possibility of four years; in other districts students may have the opportunity of a long sequence beginning in early grades. Most recent enrollment data (2007–8) show that just 18.51 per cent (ACTFL, 2010b) of students were taking a foreign language. This context is why goals set forth in the standards, while ambitious and meant to promote a higher quality of learning, must also be broad so that states will volunteer to take up the challenge. Fortunately, the consensus built around standards through professional leadership successfully translated to states.

After the initial appearance of standards, a great deal of support material was produced: state frameworks, exemplary unit lesson plans, district curriculum maps often available on websites; methods textbooks that use the standards as organizing principles (Hall, 2001; Shrum and Glisan, 2010); videotape libraries of standards-based classrooms with supporting website for professional development (Annenberg Learning Channel, 2003, 2004). The Decade of Standards survey (ACTFL, 2010a) indicates that classroom teachers, teacher education faculty who teach methods, supervisors at state and district level, have all made a switch in their writing, their professional development workshops, and in research projects toward using the terms interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational in lieu of listing isolated skills to discuss communication.

## Goals, materials and outcomes

The five goal areas (communication, cultures, comparisons, connections, communities) and accompanying standards incorporate several frameworks that differentiate them from more traditional views of language learning. The most significant change involves a focus away from discussion of communication in terms of the four separate skills of **listening, speaking, reading and writing**. Borrowing from the structure of the discipline of communication, the standards are built on three modes of communication: the interpersonal, the interpretive and the presentational (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1996: 33). This schema recognizes that language learners engage in different cognitive tasks and employ distinct strategies when, for example, they speak in an

interpersonal mode or in a presentational one. In the former they negotiate meaning in two-way exchanges, whereas in the latter they must deliver their message to an audience where interaction is not assumed. Likewise, reading of a message in a letter or e-mail can be clarified through correspondence with the writer, a condition not present for an interpretive task with a fixed text. Establishing standards around modes accommodates research and instructional variables more effectively and assesses student communicative performances more accurately.

Cultural learning and the 'cultures' goal is more fully integrated into all the standards, and adapts an **anthropological** approach to foreign-language education whereby students understand the perspectives of the target culture through study of its practices and products. Such an orientation requires greater planning for **cultural awareness** and encourages students to develop higher-level skills of cultural analysis and synthesis through observations, discussions and experiences (Lange and Paige, 2003). Furthermore, in the cultural comparisons standard (4.2), cross-cultural competence is sought as students gain insights into their own cultures through the study of another (Fantini, 1999).

The standards for the 'connections' goal refer both to cross-disciplinary learning and **content-based instruction** which Met (1999) ties to constructivist theory and the role that meaning plays in learning. The pragmatic nature of the 'communities' goal links directly to purposeful language learning and to the ultimate reasons today's students pursue language and cultural competencies. This goal area is also becoming more attractive to language departments in **higher education** where the content of courses must move beyond the traditional literature emphasis in order to attract students whose primary majors are in other departments (MLA Ad-hoc Committee on Foreign Languages, 2007). The Decade of Standards survey (ACTFL, 2010a) has data indicating rank order of emphasis on standards in classrooms (communication, cultures, comparisons, connections, communities), which are easiest to teach (communication, cultures) and which are most difficult (communities, connections).

The outcomes projected by standards represent student performances or end results. The curricular means to those performances are described as a

weave of processes, content areas and delivery systems (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1996: 2). Learners must develop process abilities in communication strategies, learning strategies and critical thinking skills. They must also learn to use the language system, acquire cultural knowledge, and bring their prior subject matter knowledge to the foreign language classroom. Finally, today's learners must be skilled users of technology to communicate and to access culturally authentic materials.

**See also:** Cross-cultural psychology; Graded objective; History: after 1945; Proficiency movement; Syllabus and curriculum design; Vocational education and training

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JUNE K. PHILLIPS



## Validity

Language test validity can be defined as the extent to which the test is testing what it claims to test. This is very important because it is necessary to be able to generalise from a student's test performance to describe what a student can and cannot do in the target language. For example, if a group of students were to take an **achievement test**, it should be possible to explain their test results in terms of the aspects of the **syllabus** that they have mastered. This can only be done if it is possible to be confident that the test is actually measuring the language abilities or features being described.

The term 'validity' is also traditionally linked to test purpose, for tests are not intrinsically valid. Rather, validity is a property of the context in which the test is used. It also follows that a test is not universally valid, i.e. there are degrees of validity, and tests can be more or less valid for their purposes.

### Earlier conceptualisations

What are often termed 'traditional' conceptualisations of validity considered the concept as composed of different types of validity, and a range of methods were proposed to gather information on these:

- Face validity: how acceptable a test is to the public. This has often been determined by conducting interviews with or distributing

questionnaires to test users (e.g. students, parents, admissions officers at educational institutions) to find out about their **attitudes** and reactions to, and feelings about, a test they have just taken or looked at.

- Content validity: how representative items are of the content a test is expected to include and how adequately the expected content has been sampled. This has usually been measured by asking expert judges to assess the content of the test by analysing the items and comparing this analysis either to the test specifications or to the syllabus on which the test is based. In some studies the judges have been provided with a set of pre-determined criteria against which they judge/rate the test.
- Construct validity: how well a test measures the underlying theory upon which it is based. This has usually been measured by comparing or correlating: the test-takers' performances on different sub-sections of the test; each sub-test with the whole test; the test-takers' scores with their biodata and psychological characteristics. Statistical procedures such as factor analysis and multitrait-multimethod analysis have often been used in order to investigate the construct validity of a test. Also, information about a test's construct validity has been gathered qualitatively by asking test-takers how they have responded to specific test items. Such data has been gathered either concurrently or retrospectively using think-aloud protocols or questionnaires in order to throw light on

what the test is actually testing, i.e. the language knowledge and/or skills that the test-takers actually use in order to complete each test question.

- Criterion-related validity: how well a test correlates with another measure of the students' abilities. This type of validity includes both concurrent validity and predictive validity. 'Concurrent validity' refers to how comparable test-takers' performance on a test is with their performance on another measure. Typically, test results have been correlated with teachers' ratings of the students, the test-takers' self-assessments, the test-takers' performances on parallel versions of the same test, or their performances on a similar test, i.e. another test that is considered to test the same aspects of language. 'Predictive validity', on the other hand, refers to how well a test predicts the test-takers' future performance, and has been measured by comparing (correlating) the test-takers' scores on this test with their scores in final exams or with other measures of their ability, such as teachers' ratings (collected at a future time).

### Current conceptualisations

Towards the end of the twentieth century concerns were raised that the concept of validity had become diffused and that test developers were in danger of forgetting that test scores are only an abstract representation of the test-takers' language ability. Therefore, a unified view of validity has been developed that emphasises the inferences made from test scores and the consequences of those inferences. This unitary view of validity subsumes all validity considerations under construct validity, arguing that it is not possible to make a judgement of the quality of the inferences taken from test scores unless there is evidence of what the scores might mean.

So the way validity is approached has changed. First, researchers are encouraged to validate a test in as many different ways as possible, each method contributing to the picture of a test's validity. It is also clear that validation must be considered from the initial stages of test design onwards. Nor should validation be limited to a single study. Rather,

multiple studies of a test are encouraged, across time and context, in order to ensure that the interpretations being made of test scores continue to be justified. A wide variety of quantitative and qualitative research methods are used for validation purposes, and an argument-based approach has been adopted in more recent studies. The aim of this approach – which is still being further refined – is to investigate and support a clear linkage between test performance, interpretations, and uses by providing an assessment use argument.

**See also:** Action research; Assessment and testing; Reliability; Research methods

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TINEKE BRUNFAUT  
JAYANTI BANERJEE

### van Ek, Jan Ate

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Jan Van Ek is best known for his work on **English** and **applied linguistics**, and his involvement in the

### Council of Europe modern languages projects.

His name is often associated with the **threshold level**, initially published for English in 1975 and revised and updated in 1991. The Threshold Level, together with **waystage**, the lower level derived from it, constitutes one of the first attempts to formulate **objectives** for modern languages in behavioural terms and has had a great influence on curriculum development for modern languages in Europe.

Van Ek studied English Language and Literature at the University of Amsterdam (1949–55). He taught English at secondary level before he was appointed staff member at the English Institute of the University of Groningen, where he obtained his PhD (cum laude) in 1966. He became director of the Institute for Applied Linguistics at the University of Utrecht (1966), but returned to Groningen to become reader (1971) and later full professor of English Language (1980–86).

Van Ek was president of AnéLA, the Association for Applied Linguistics in the Netherlands (1972–74), he was involved in curriculum reform committees for modern languages in the Netherlands, and gave numerous lectures both at home and abroad. He was honorary member of the Dutch Association of Teachers of Modern Languages.

Van Ek became associated with the work of the Council of Europe on Modern Languages in 1971, when he became member of the Modern Languages Project Group. He chaired the project group in a subsequent project. He retired from the University of Groningen in 1986, but continued his studies on objectives for modern languages for the Council of Europe (van Ek, 1986a, 1986b; van Ek and Trim, 2001). In 1991, a revised and updated version of The Threshold Level (Threshold Level 1990), written together with John **trim**, was published to be followed by **vantage level**, a specification of objectives above Threshold Level, also written with John Trim. Van Ek has been adviser to many authors of Threshold Levels for other languages, including those for Basque and Russian.

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GÉ STOKS

## Vantage Level

Vantage level is the highest level in a three-level system of specifications of learning **objectives** developed within the **Council of Europe's** programme for the promotion of language learning in Europe. It has been designed to provide those learners who, having reached **threshold level** or a comparable level of communicative foreign language ability, wish to continue their learning to a higher stage with an enriched equipment adequate to deal effectively with the complexities and demands – seen and unforeseen – of daily living. Vantage Level is, in essence, an expansion of Threshold Level, characterised by a relaxation of the constraints still inherent in the circumscribed, though considerable, range of the earlier objective.

**See also:** Assessment and testing; Council of Europe Modern Languages Projects; European Language Portfolio; Threshold Level; Waystage



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JAN VAN EK

## Variation in language

Psycholinguists talk about variation in language use as ‘lack of invariance’. The difficult double negatives of that phrase betray an expectation or desire that language should be used with less variation. Variation often seems a key problem too for language learners and their teachers. From a **socio-linguistic** perspective, however, variation is more profitably seen as an opportunity for better self-expression and more precise understanding, not just as a stumbling block to learning and use which users must learn to negotiate. Variation is not an optional extra for users of a language; it is an unavoidable central feature.

Variation occurs because language is as various in practice as the people who use it. We differ in as many ways as we are alike, perhaps more. We don’t all pronounce words in exactly the same way every time we use them or just as our parents or grandparents did. I don’t pronounce the ‘same’ words exactly as you do, or use them with exactly the same inflections of meaning. I have different habits of language use (my ‘idiolect’). We use a different **grammar** and **vocabulary** and ways of articulating – **pronunciation** and intonation – when we talk to children or to adults. In the same way, those we talk with change their ways of speaking to fit the topic, situation and the identity they perceive in us. A conversation with a call centre operator takes different forms from a formal written letter of complaint to the company of that operator. As sociolinguistics teaches, **age**, **gender**, **class**, **occupation**, **education** and more – all we tend to think of under the label of our ‘**identity**’ – are negotiated between speakers through variations in language use. I can speak like you to show my affiliation with your ideas and beliefs, or simply to deceive, or I can deliberately speak in a way which tends to shorten the conversation. Variation accomplishes all this and more for fluent language

users. Indeed, even the variation of speaking language poorly tells your listener something about you, if not as much as they may sometimes think!

## Variation may increase

As a language like **English** becomes used by ever more people for an ever wider range of purposes, variation increases too. Contrary to what might be expected, there is no evidence at all that variation decreases as a language becomes used as a ‘**lingua franca**’. Learners may need to read academic textbooks in English, but also wish to participate in online chat, to listen to music and to write exams. Medical or engineering notes must be written in Mumbai, Manila and Miami, but they will inevitably and quite appropriately vary across those different sites. Users may be proud of being German, or diffident about being a teenager. A *lingua franca* can be used to negotiate all such identity claims and the different functions we require our language to serve in different media (written, spoken, the internet).

## Language teaching

Conventional language teaching identifies or at least posits a ‘**standard**’ form of, for example, ‘educated English’, or ‘correct’ written English, or General American English as ‘target’. This is more easily done for written forms than for the spoken language. But even where the attempt is relatively successful, we must not lose sight of the fact that a standard form is only ever, at best, a privileged set of variations, usually the variations of the richer or more powerful users of the language presented for pupils’ emulation – and unattainable for the vast majority (compare older ideas of ‘**native speaker**’ standards in TEFL). At more advanced levels learners may take courses in **language for specific purposes** (LSP), including the *register* or special appropriate language of business language or engineering, where typical more specialised terminology, phraseology and genres are studied and practised. These are particularly obvious examples of the relevance of variation to language learning.

**Communicative language teaching** identified early on the need for strategic competence in those

who would communicate in a given language, beyond linguistic or even discourse or socio-linguistic competence. The fact of variation means users will inevitably, at all levels, have to deal with forms they have never before heard or read.

In practice learners cannot be expected to deal with too much variation all at once, at least in the classroom. They must, however, be prepared by their teachers to expect and to be able to deal with the pervasiveness of variation in all communication. Progress can be made by presenting norms and models, as has ever been the case, but it is also essential to introduce into classrooms as full a range as possible of voices of actual users of the language, which necessarily brings variation into the classroom too. Teachers and materials should come from Africa, America or Asia as well as Europe or Australasia. Learners are learning not 'the language' even if such a thing can be identified, but to use certain aspects of a language for their own purposes. A key reason many applied linguists working in language education advocate the use of modern or contemporary creative or **literary texts** (fiction, song, drama, advertising and the like), is that such texts often engagingly exploit and exhibit a wider range of variation than any other text type does. Carter and Nash (1990) argued that a defining and uniquely interesting and pedagogically valuable feature of such texts is their 're-registration' or orchestration of registers for communicative purposes. Most text types are characterised by a clearly identifiable style designed for a clearly identifiable audience. The forms of a financial report, or exchanges with service staff in a restaurant, permit little variation. Literature, however, differs in typically and noticeably featuring a range of different styles in the same text, with the intended audience less precisely specifiable. Language users continually, creatively, effect variations in language use, to differentiate themselves from previous users and their perceived ideas and positions.

This final issue needs to be underlined in the discussion of variation. Sociolinguists increasingly emphasise that variation in our language use is not simplistically determined by where we were born or what we are using language for. Individuals also demonstrably make choices all the time about which words they prefer to use, how they prefer to

pronounce them, and so on. We often, for example, quote or imitate the ways others speak to signal our distance or our sympathy for that way of thinking or those kinds of people. Writing an academic paper, say, or chatting with a supermarket checkout agent, involves choices according to how expert or ordinary we wish to sound to others, how alike or unlike. A letter to a friend can be jokey, serious or lacking in confidence, while containing arguably the same message. Variation can then become interesting, even fun, if sensitively introduced and explored through such texts, because it is what humans do with language rather than considering language as an abstract system, with the troubling lack-of-invariance problem with which I began this entry. Language with all its splendid variation is more usefully considered a resource or affordance for a learner rather than a nuisance.

**See also:** Identity and language learning; Second language acquisition theories; Pronunciation teaching

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GEOFF HALL

## Viëtor, Wilhelm

b. 1850, Kleeberg, Germany;  
d. 1918, Marburg, Germany

Viëtor devoted his academic work mostly to phonetics. Previous to his university career, he was a teacher at a *Realgymnasium* in Silesia. He became

interested in foreign language teaching there, but also in Britain during a stay as *Lektor* of German at the University College in Liverpool. His pamphlet *Der Sprachunterricht muß umkehren!* (Language teaching must start afresh) (1882), written during a holiday in Wales, became the opening trumpet call of the so-called **reform movement**. For fear of the expected reactions in the academic world, he used as a pseudonym *Quousque tandem [abutere, Catilina, patientia nostra?]*, i.e. the first words of Cicero's challenge against Catilina in front of the Senate. He declared himself as the author in the second edition in 1886.

In the nineteenth century, the teaching of (mostly) **French** and (a little) **English** followed the ways of teaching Latin. The so-called **grammar–translation method** used semantically disconnected sentences, frequently taken from literature, for grammatical analysis and **translation**. Towards the end of the century the foundation and growth of scientific phonetics, besides the general failure of the grammar–translation method, caused a demand for a Reform Movement which, like phonetics, arose simultaneously in Britain (Henry **Sweet**), Denmark (Otto **Jespersen**), France (Paul Édouard Passy, 1859–1940) and Germany (besides Viëtor, Hermann Klinghardt, 1847–1926).

Viëtor maintained that oral language had priority over the written one and that it had to be used in order to be learnt. He limited the value of **grammar** teaching to functional aspects and demanded that rules be found inductively from observation of speech. He disputed the value of translation for the learning process, looking at it as a special skill that the ordinary school was not concerned with. He encouraged oral methods of teaching, including the **monolingual** explanation of word meanings. The primary aim of teaching was for him oral communication. All this included a sharp criticism, not only of conventional teaching habits but also of the knowledge of the average foreign language teacher who could, as a rule, speak English or French neither fluently nor phonetically correctly.

Viëtor's slim volume is written in a challenging style. He does not give arguments but postulates. Yet he obviously takes sides in some scientific controversies. For him, language is something sensual and empirical, a psychological process with

communicative effects. It is not something logical and ideal, a system of formal rules. This issue between the sensualist and the rationalist approach to language created a long controversy among pedagogues. Viëtor's linguistic ideas also predetermined certain psychological ones. For him the human mind was dominated by experience and by associations which come from them, not by a general logical faculty which could be trained by any systematically organised subject. Again this psychological issue between a rationalist and an empirical approach to learning foreshadowed debates to come.

In the field of foreign language teaching, Viëtor initiated the rivalry between the traditional German humanistic *Gymnasien*, cultivating Greek and Latin, and new *Realschulen*, cultivating French and English. This meant a rivalry between the aims of a classical and general education in the liberal arts and more down-to-earth knowledge which even included practical skills. Besides such repercussions on the German pedagogical scene, Viëtor's short publication laid the ground for modern foreign language teaching in many European countries. If a teacher even today taught their class strictly according to Viëtor's rules, they would not be altogether wrong or outdated.

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WERNER HÜLLEN

## Vocabulary

There are three major questions to consider when looking at the place of vocabulary in a language

course. What vocabulary should be learned and in what order? What needs to be learned about particular words? How should vocabulary be learned?

### What vocabulary should be learned?

Corpus based studies of vocabulary frequency have a very striking message for vocabulary learning. In terms of their frequency of occurrence in the language, all words are not created equal. A relatively small number of different words accounts for a very large proportion of the running words in written text or spoken language. The ten most frequent words account for 25 per cent of the words on any page and in any conversation. The 100 most frequent words account for 50 per cent, the 1,000 most frequent words for around 75 per cent, and the 2,000 most frequent for around 80–90 per cent. These 2,000 most frequent words, the high frequency words, are useful no matter what use is made of the language and they are essential for normal language use. They are the essential core of any language programme. Lists of these words for English can be found in **west** (1953), and the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1995).

If learners intend to go on to academic study, their next vocabulary goal after the high frequency words is the academic vocabulary (Coxhead, 1998; Nation, 2001). The most recent academic vocabulary list (Coxhead, 1998) contains 570 word families and covers between 8.5 per cent and 10 per cent of the running words in most kinds of academic text. It is useful for learners across a wide range of academic subject areas. It includes words like *analyse, data, function, legal*. For learners with very special purposes, such as studying mathematics or working with computers, there is usually a technical vocabulary that they need to learn.

The remaining vocabulary is the low frequency words of the language. There are thousands of these. For example, *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (1961), the largest non-historical dictionary of English, contains 267,000 entries which consist of approximately 114,000 word families including proper words. A word family is a base word, for example *learn*, and its closely related inflected and derived forms, *learns, learned, learnt, learning, learner, learnable* (Bauer and

Nation, 1993). Somewhere between 6,000 and 9,000 word families are needed to cope with listening and reading involving unsimplified English (Nation, 2006).

The high frequency words of the language need to be learned first. They deserve a lot of attention, and because they are a relatively small group of words, they are a feasible goal for language learners. Learners will also get a good return for their learning effort. The low frequency words do not deserve classroom time because there are so many of them and they are not frequent. However, learners need to learn them. Teachers can help learners with them by training them to use the strategies of guessing from context, direct learning, using word parts, and **dictionary** use.

### What needs to be learned about words?

There are many things to know about each word and the learning of particular words is a long-term cumulative process. This process involves the strengthening and enriching of knowledge about the form, meaning and use of each word. This knowledge is both receptive (the knowledge needed for **listening** and **reading**) and productive (**speaking** and **writing**). Knowing the form of a word involves knowing its **pronunciation**, its spelling, and, if it is a complex or compound word, its word parts. Knowing the meaning of a word involves knowing the concept that lies behind the various uses of the word, the particular meanings it has in certain contexts, and its various associations, such as opposites, synonyms, and members of the same lexical set. Knowing the use of a word involves knowing its **grammar**, its typical collocations (Sinclair, 1991), and the constraints on its use such as German vs Austrian use for German, or French vs Canadian for French, formal and colloquial use, and so on. Words differ in the degree to which these various aspects are predictable from learners' knowledge of their first language, and from the regular patterns in the second language.

### How can vocabulary be learned?

Vocabulary can be learned incidentally or intentionally. Intentional learning is faster and more

sure, but it is important to see the various ways of learning vocabulary as complementing each other. These include learning through input, learning through output, direct teaching and learning, and fluency development. The learning from these four strands overlaps, but each provides opportunities for learning and aspects of knowledge that are not easily provided in the other strands.

In order to learn vocabulary through meaning focused listening and reading, learners need to already know at least 95 per cent of the running words, and preferably 98 per cent. For many learners this will mean using simplified material. Research on guessing words from context shows that small amounts of vocabulary learning can occur in this way. If learners read a lot, then these small amounts can become larger amounts (Nagy et al., 1985). Research on vocabulary learning through listening to stories (Elley, 1989) shows that vocabulary learning is increased if the teacher draws the learners' attention to them without interrupting the story. Glossing words in written text also increases learning. The strategy of inferring words from context is the most important of all the vocabulary learning strategies and it is worth spending time training learners in its use. It is possible to design speaking and writing tasks so that learners pick up vocabulary as they do the task (Joe et al., 1996). It is also important to make sure that the high frequency vocabulary and academic vocabulary are moved from receptive use to productive use.

Although teachers often feel that vocabulary needs to be learned in context, there is considerable research which shows that the direct study of words using word cards with **translations** is a very effective way of quickly expanding vocabulary knowledge and results in the implicit knowledge needed for normal language use (Elgort, 2011). Computer-based vocabulary learning programmes are more widely available and apply the results of learning research well (Nakata, 2011). Such learning needs to be supplemented by other strands of learning. Learners need to be trained in direct learning. This training should involve use of the keyword technique (Pressley et al, 1987), and information about spacing repetitions, avoiding lexical sets (Tinkham, 1997), and the use of word part analysis. Learners can also benefit from training

in dictionary use. When teachers deal directly with words, they need to decide if they should provide rich instruction or deal with the word quickly. Rich instruction involves spending time on the word, focusing on its form, meaning and use, and involving learners in thoughtfully processing the word. A word deserves rich instruction if it is a high frequency word and if the goal of the lesson is vocabulary learning. Intensive reading can provide useful opportunities for rich instruction.

Learners not only need to know vocabulary, they need to become fluent in its use, either receptively or receptively and productively. Fluency development activities should involve meaning-focused listening, speaking, reading and writing. They should involve no unknown vocabulary, and they should encourage learners to process the language faster than their normal speed.

Vocabulary learning can be maximized by giving careful consideration of what vocabulary to focus on, and how to focus on it.

**See also:** Dictionaries; *Français fondamental*; Lexicography and lexicology; Mental lexicon; Reference works

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PAUL NATION

## Vocational education and training

Situated between language learning for general purposes in schools and **languages for specific purposes** in industry, language learning in vocational education and training (VET) covers the contribution languages make to the professional development and personal growth of (young) **adults**. It sees

language learning as an important phase of a life-long educational process and, at the same time, introduces work-related tasks which arise from the challenges of vocational qualification processes.

Language learning in VET is informed by recent changes in the structure of work, in new social and political developments and new self-concepts of young people. These challenges have changed **attitudes** and led to new methods of language learning which stress hands-on, project-based, cooperative forms of learning. This holistic approach tries to combine learners' needs and the demands of work, it leads to new delivery modes such as distance learning and **CALL**, and it encourages flexible learning formats and different **learning styles**.

Language learning in VET has long been seen as directed towards routine demands which trainees experience in their immediate work context, such as formulaic business letters or lists of lexical items in engineering. It is now increasingly seen as an important contribution to the professional growth of employees in which the communication aspects of work and life are linked to more specialised job-specific knowledge. Communicative competence is thus perceived as a key qualification which is central to the job prospects of learners.

The sometimes precarious balance between educational aspects (expressed in the wants of learners) and training aspects (expressed in the needs of industry) is reflected in the ways in which different countries set their priorities. In immigration societies such as the USA or Australia, vocational language learning is predominantly regarded as a step into a new job market, with the language of work learned as a second language. In Europe, what is often called vocationally-oriented language learning (VOLL) is primarily a means to increase learners' job qualifications through competence in one or more foreign language.

### Language learning in VET in a world of economic and social change

Vocational language learning has to be discussed in the context of the far-reaching economic, social and cultural changes at the end of the twentieth century. Of particular importance in our context are the:

- **internationalisation** of economic activities;
- importance of information processes and information technology;
- changing character of work with its emphasis on teamwork and key qualifications;
- increasing number of internationally mobile workers;
- enlarged role of education in a world of lifelong learning;
- changing self-concepts of young people with new attitudes to work.

These new parameters have a direct influence on VET and the role and forms of language learning in a vocational context. The most important consequence is that the requirements of industry and the interests of employees are no longer opposed: the **needs** of industry and the wants of workers, professional qualification and personal growth complement each other. The common interest is to create a workforce consisting of people who can deal with new challenges. That is why communication processes are more and more regarded as central to modern work – and life. The consequences this has for language learning depend to a large extent on the role vocational education and training play in different countries.

### Vocational language learning in immigration countries: USA and Australia

The main function of vocational language learning in immigration countries such as the USA and Australia is to provide access to employment in the new country. In the USA, workplace literacy programmes used to offer short, intensive, immediately job-related language skills, often at **beginners'** level, designed to help recent immigrants to gain entry into the job market. These low-budget, low-skill programmes were aimed at easing the way for immigrants into mostly basic manufacturing jobs. This approach has been criticised by Elsa Auerbach (Auerbach, 1992) as restricting learners to only those minimal language skills immediately relevant for their present menial jobs. Instead, she advocated linking workplace programmes to general literacy skills and education for citizenship, in order to integrate the immediate communication

demands at work into the development of personal and social skills.

A second reason for opening up literacy programmes to wider aims came from the economic, technological and organisational changes which affected every workplace. Cooperative forms of production, new forms of decision-making, and multiple roles, even on the shopfloor, created new demands on the communicative competence of employees at all levels of industry. The teaching of skills required in the new high-performance workplace brought Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) back into education: rather than merely providing immigrants with access to basic jobs, work-related language skills are now discussed in the wider context of educating the whole workforce for high power performances.

Australia, another major immigration country, provides the example of a society which from the outset saw workplace literacy in social and cultural terms. Every immigrant earned the right to **English** language tuition financed by the government, which in turn stressed the dual emphasis of language provision: to help immigrants to find jobs they are qualified for, and to offer them access to the culture of their new country. The National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research (NCELTR) at Macquarie University in Sydney led the field in **needs analysis** and the development of teaching materials.

### Different traditions in European countries

Central and Northern European countries have long regarded vocational education as part of formal education, offering highly regulated, long-term training contracts where educational aspects are taught in vocational colleges and practical aspects are trained in companies. This 'dual system' seemed to offer a balance between education and training, between the interests of the individual and of society on the one hand and the interests of the companies on the other. Language learning in the dual system covered a wide range of options from a continuation of school-based learning to languages for special purposes.

The second tradition, perhaps best expressed in the UK, tended to see vocational training less as a

responsibility of the state, but more that of the individual seeking entry into the job market. This approach led to short, modular courses immediately related to the needs of industry, which could react quickly to changes in the job market.

### ***European unification and its consequences for vocational language learning***

Since its foundation in 1949, the common European cultural heritage has been the basis for the cultural work of the Council of Europe. Education for peace and democracy has always meant providing chances for citizens of different countries to meet and exchange views in the languages of their neighbours. Language learning in this view was no longer the privilege of an elite, but a basic social and political interest and instrument for everybody. After its early emphasis on general language ability, the work of the **Council of Europe modern languages project** soon included the politically sensitive group of young adults in vocational education and industrial training. These young people were seen as an underprivileged group which had often dropped out of language learning in general education. Their motivation for meaningful vocational language learning arose out of the new challenges of training and work. The language work of the Council of Europe consequently emphasised the dual aspect of VOLL as a combination of work-related language skills with personal growth and social awareness (Egloff and Fitzpatrick, 1997: 227).

In France and Germany, this political dimension of language learning was institutionalised in the vocational youth exchange programmes of the *Franco-German Youth Office*, a powerful instrument of intercultural cooperation between the two countries. The language of the neighbouring country has increasingly been learnt in an environment of joint action-oriented, work-related projects.

Vocational education and training soon became a top priority of the European Union (EU) in Brussels, which was expressed in the setting up of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) in Thessaloniki, Greece. Research and development in youth exchange projects with a foreign language component were instituted on a large scale in the LEONARDO

Programme, an ambitious long-term project of the fifteen EU member states and their Eastern European neighbours, informed by the overall vision of the future European society as a 'Learning Society' (European Commission, 1995). Foreign language learning and intercultural learning are again seen in both economic and political terms.

### **Key issues in vocational language learning**

A decisive factor for the present condition of language learning in VET is the fundamental change in foreign language teaching methodology from the **communicative approach** to pragmatist and constructivist views. They are expressed in the attempt to base foreign language learning on the experience and the interest of learners and to enable them gradually to take charge of their own learning through making learning:

- learner-centred
- content-based
- project-oriented
- reflective
- holistic
- intercultural.

Language learners start from their experience, choose methods and strategies together with their co-learners, involve teachers mainly as consultants, and take on responsibility for their own learning. They become aware of their learning strategies, and begin to evaluate their own progress. This vision of self-directed learners, which reflects recent developments in learning psychology, has fundamental implications for language learning in vocational education.

Learners, employers and the language teaching industry have identified as key issues in language learning in VET needs analysis, the question of contents, intercultural learning, delivery modes, **evaluation** and accreditation, and last but not least the training of trainers.

### ***Needs analysis***

All stakeholders in VOLL agree on the necessity of data as a solid basis for developing foreign language courses in a vocational context. But, as Maggie Jo



St John points out for the field of Business English, data are hard to come by, because most companies still consider information on their operations as confidential. 'Needs analysis is about understanding learners and also about understanding the communication events which the learners will participate in' (St John, 1996: 6). And even if a profile of the language skills needed at work has been established, the question remains how to prioritise and package them. Since the early 1990s, needs analysis has often been integrated into the more comprehensive framework of linguistic auditing, which offers methods for the systematic analysis of the entire communication needs and potentials within corporations (Reeves and Wright, 1996).

### ***Content-based language learning***

The most striking advantage VOLL has compared to many other forms of language learning is its face **validity**. In a vocational setting, language **tasks** arise from the immediate work context, are immediately relevant for the completion of work, and engage the learners in meaningful activities. The demands of training and work thus constantly engage the learners in 'focused communication tasks' (Ellis, 1993) which lend themselves to a hands-on, team-oriented approach. Learners can see and experience the relevance of what they are learning.

Analyses of work-related language use have demonstrated that the domain extends far beyond its previous concentration on lexis, terminology and syntax. **Genre** research has so far been mainly based on written texts, because companies are still reluctant to disclose data on oral language use such as in meetings. What we know has established the importance of larger units such as moves and frames which distinguish the language of business and technology.

There is a shift from concentrating on language systems to placing vocational language into the wider context of communication patterns which are often governed by social and cultural aspects such as power relationships, formality, strategies and negotiation.

### ***Intercultural learning***

The importance of negotiations within teams as well as between businesses and clients has

stressed the aspect of social and cultural relations in training and work contexts. It is no longer enough to know what to say, but it is more and more necessary to put linguistically correct utterances into a culturally appropriate context. Multicultural dimensions influence work performance from teamwork within small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) to customer orientation in a multinational company.

Multiculturality at a first level refers to work relations within companies. It concerns what is often called 'the culture of the workplace', the complex system of mostly unwritten rules which govern social interaction at work. At a second level it describes 'corporate culture', the ethos or mission that large companies try to foster as a unifying bond for their diverse workforce. It is only at a third level that interculturality refers to the sphere of multinational work contacts.

### ***Delivery modes***

As new methods of transmitting information have changed the communication systems within industry, they have opened up new avenues for learning in a work context. The trend is toward flexible learning units on a modular basis, accessible from various entry points at or away from work. Forms of self-study, computer forums, **tandem learning** partnerships and intensive contact sessions constitute multiple patterns which no longer demand class attendance. These forms of learning need self-directed learners who understand their learning styles and who can pace and monitor their own progress. The consequence for vocational language learning is to stress cognitive processing, procedural knowledge, **language awareness** and transfer abilities.

### ***Evaluation and accreditation***

Language learning in vocational education faces the challenge of providing data for assessing progress of linguistic performance in many specialist vocational domains. Work in this field explores means of process-oriented evaluation in an occupational context (Oscarsson, 1997: 55–65). The work of the *National Council of*

*Vocational Qualifications* in the UK is one of the foremost attempts to set up standards in a national context.

The transnational dimension of assessment has informed the recent work within the Council of Europe in its attempt to develop a **Common European Framework** for credits and credit transfer (Council of Europe, 1996). Rather than erecting a superstructure on top of different national (and often regional) systems, it suggests a graded model accommodating national qualifications, but making it possible to compare their respective standards. This process-oriented form of evaluation finds its expression in the portfolio approach, e.g. the **European Language Portfolio**. Learners can document their progress by collecting evidence of their language learning, which gives employers the chance to recognise the language profile of prospective employees.

### **Training the (language) trainers**

The stress is on trainers here, as opposed to teachers, indicating the growing feeling within the profession of occupying a space of their own in the language teaching community. Rather than seeing themselves as teachers, people working in language teaching in vocational education and training are becoming aware of their special contribution, the double mission of contributing to the educational formative process of their learners and of equipping them with tools for their professional career.

Vocational language trainers do not necessarily need a double qualification in language teaching and an industrial subject. What they need is openness to the world of work, and curiosity about how things work in industry, commerce and administration, which in many cases might imply the readiness to modify their world views. They need this openness to accept their new role as facilitators, acknowledging and making use of the competence their learners have in their specific fields of work. Language learning in a vocational context thus becomes a collaborative effort in which the exchange of information between trainer and learners provides the basis for authentic communication processes. The issue of trainer training for language learning in VET highlights the unique

contribution it makes to language teaching. It offers chances for a new relationship between trainers and learners, for collaborative and self-directed learning, and for combining personal growth and professional qualification in the learning process.

**See also:** Adult learners; Autonomy and autonomous learners; Content-based instruction; Cross-cultural communication; Global education; *Handlungsorientierter Unterricht*; Intercultural training; Task-based teaching and assessment; Teacher thinking

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GERD EGLOFF

# W

## Waystage

An early-learning **objective** designed to provide learners with a broad range of resources at a very elementary level so as to enable them to cope, linguistically speaking, in temporary contacts with foreign language speakers in everyday situations. Waystage is the lowest level in a three-level system of behavioural objectives developed under the auspices of the Council of Europe. The central element in this system is the **threshold level**, from which Waystage was derived through a process of reduction. It contains what its authors considered to be the most basic categories within each of its parameters: the most essential situations, topics and **functions**, inescapable general notions, important specific notions, and their simplest and most basic lexical and grammatical exponents to enable the learners to cope at least minimally in those communicative situations which may be most directly relevant to them. Originally published as *Waystage* (1977), the objective has since been re-issued as *Waystage English* (1980) and revised (1991) on the basis of the expanded model of specification used in *Threshold Level 1990* as *Waystage 1990*.

**See also:** Assessment and testing; Council of Europe Modern Languages Projects; Threshold Level; Vantage Level

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JAN VAN EK

## Widdowson, Henry George

b. 1935, Leicester

Widdowson was educated at Alderman Newton's Boys' School, Leicester, and King's College Cambridge. From 1958 to 1961 he lectured at the University of Indonesia before joining the **British Council**, for whom he worked for six years, serving mainly in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. In 1968 he joined the Department of Linguistics at the University of Edinburgh, where he took his PhD and worked for the next nine years. In 1976 he was appointed Professor of Education at the London University Institute of Education, following the retirement of Bruce Pattison, with specific responsibility for **English** as a Foreign Language – later English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). In the 1990s he combined this post with positions in the Universities of Essex and Vienna, holding a Chair in English Language at the latter from 1998. He served with distinction as one of the first editors of the journal *Applied Linguistics*, and chaired the British Council's English Teaching Advisory Committee from 1982 to 1991. In 1986–88 he was a member of the Kingman Committee

of Inquiry into the Teaching of English Language, where his minority dissenting report, suggesting that the official findings lacked a clear basis in language **acquisition** theory, was very influential.

Although Widdowson has carried out some empirical work, he has been mainly a theorist of language and language teaching; his extensive writings have addressed most significant areas in the field. They have been particularly notable in literature and stylistics, **communicative language teaching**, **English for specific purposes** (ESP) and discourse, but he has also written on pedagogy, **teacher education**, critical linguistics, and **reading**. His approach has been distinctive and original, his works written in a style that is pungent, careful and occasionally polemical.

His most notable contribution to practice is probably an approach to stylistics and literature which has been adopted by both **mother-tongue** and foreign language teachers. His 1975 book *Stylistics and the Teaching of Literature* typifies his procedure: texts, usually poems, are rewritten to reveal the effects of detailed lexical and syntactic changes, and thus to highlight the significance of the original form. In *Teaching Language as Communication* (1978) he examines the discourse bases of language in order to push towards a greater concern for genuine language use rather than the concentration on formal categories of earlier traditions. This is one of the most important texts of the **communicative language teaching** movement.

His later writing and editorial work develops these themes in volumes of essays and in monographs which extend his ideas in response to the changing scene in English language teaching. A key theme of his work has been the need for rigorous thinking and open debate; in his later years he has shown some impatience at what he perceived to be an unwillingness, particularly by critical discourse analysts, to recognise the limits of their procedures. Intolerant of obfuscation, Widdowson consistently defends clear-thinking and clear presentation of ideas. For international ESOL, he has probably been the most influential philosopher of the late twentieth century.

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CHRISTOPHER BRUMFIT

## Writing

Initial composition studies were motivated by the question 'What does the composing process look like?' The second question that emerged was 'Why do writers make the decisions they make?' According to these two basic questions, text production is considered as a cognitive problem-solving process, but also as a form of social interaction in which the sociocultural context plays an important role. These two perspectives are the starting point for the following overview of research into, and the teaching of, L2 writing. First there are accounts of the process paradigm and cultural issues in research, and these are followed by an outline of four prominent approaches to instruction with the key words 'creativity', 'communication', 'cognition' and 'skills'.

## The process paradigm

One of the first comprehensive collections to be devoted to research on L2 writing was published in

1990 (Kroll, 1990), and since 1992 the field has had a journal of its own (*Journal of Second Language Writing*). The investigation of the socio-cultural, -political and interactional aspects of writing characterises the state of the art of research into L1 writing, but L2 research has continued to be affected primarily by the process paradigm.

Due to the still relatively narrow data basis and the lack of a comprehensive theory of the L2 writing process, the results of individual studies can only be generalised with significant restrictions. It is, however, possible to identify some trends (see Krapels, 1990):

- L1 and L2 writing processes have similar basic structures, but they differ in frequency and the ways in which the individual processes are carried out. Writing strategies are also similar, but they are manipulated in different ways.
- Writing expertise and language proficiency are key factors, but they are independent of one another (Cumming, 1989). L2 proficiency has an effect on L2 writing *performance*, but writing strategies affect L2 writing *competence*.
- In L2 text production, not only content-planning features play an important role, but also realisation problems of a purely linguistic nature. Models of L2 writing processes thus often include a separate L2 problem-solving process (Krings, 1994) or make a distinction between a cognitive-strategic component and a semantic-linguistic text component (Whalen and Ménard, 1995).

With regard to individual aspects of L2 writing, the following trends are becoming discernible:

- Skilled writers plan more than unskilled writers. Skilled writers plan more at global levels, less-skilled writers plan almost only at local levels. In general, the initial hierarchical planning usually takes place in the **mother tongue**. When the planning has progressed further, L2 is used to translate the plan into text.
- The transfer of ideas into written language is more problematic in L2 than in L1, and is slower and more troublesome. Writers either write in L2 from the start, or they translate. The degree to which the mother tongue is used is

dependent of how difficult the writing task is, and the use of L1 mainly helps the writers to retain thoughts for a short time.

- The revision patterns of L1 and L2 writers are quite similar. There is an interrelation between L2 proficiency and revision behaviour. Furthermore, during revision, experienced L2 writers focus more on the content than on parts of the text. They also revise at a level above that of words or phrases and revise in a more differentiated way than inexperienced writers.
- L1 writing strategies seem to play an important role in L2 writing. Writers with a considerable experience in L1 writing make use of their writing competence in relation to audience, writing strategies and planning patterns.
- Use of the mother tongue is a widespread strategy, but it varies considerably. This strategy uses L1 as a source for **vocabulary**; it also helps writers to find ideas, and sometimes it supports text organisation. The strategy is especially helpful for writers with a low level of L2 competence, but for more advanced learners it is quite counter-productive.
- When writing their own texts which are based on texts written by others, L2 writers adopt more material from the sources than L1 writers do. Whereas lower proficiency L2 writers integrate the material less well into their own texts, writers at a higher proficiency level are more capable of integrating it into their texts.

## Cultural issues

From a social perspective, the cultural technique 'writing' does not only take place in the minds of the writers. On the contrary, interactive, social and cultural factors (Kubota, 2003) shape both form and content of texts as well as the writers' ideas about the purpose and nature of writing.

Within discourse communities (Pogner, 2003) or cultures, there are conventions concerning how the production of knowledge and the negotiation of meaning 'usually' take place, and how the knowledge produced is passed on. Conventions place constraints on the individual writers, but they also provide the potential for producing knowledge and negotiating meaning in conjunction with others.

Since the 1960s, the study of Contrastive Rhetoric has been concerned with cultural issues. It interprets text organisations in different languages/cultures, either as an expression of thought patterns or as the result of rhetorical education. In the last decades, it has expanded its research subject area considerably with regard to the languages examined, and the text types, social contexts and discourse communities involved (Connor, 2003; González and Tanno, 2000). Thus, in his review, Huckin (1995/96) demonstrates that cultural issues play an important role in **genre** knowledge and in mastering genres. Some of the text features that can vary from culture to culture are:

- amount of personal information and degree of courtesy (request letters)
- level of formality (submission letters, academic essays)
- type of **politeness** (apology letters, academic reports)
- point of view (academic essays)
- degree of self-reference (job letters)
- use of meta-text (academic reports).

### Teaching writing

The ‘research space’ described above can be summed up as a tension between the two approaches, ‘writing as a cognitive problem-solving strategy’, and ‘writing as a culturally conditioned activity’. Which role do these two perspectives play in instruction?

Silva (1990) sums up the development of ESL writing instruction as follows. The concentration on lexical/syntactic features (controlled composition) was replaced by a focus on the discourse level (current-traditional rhetoric and Contrastive Rhetoric). The emphasis was then placed on the writer’s composing behaviour (process approach) and finally on the genres in the academic discourse community (academic writing).

Silva criticises this state of affairs, as it seems to be characterised by an unproductive approach cycle. For this reason, the remainder of this entry will examine how this unproductivity has been overcome. For this purpose, four prominent approaches to writing instruction will be presented.

1. Expressive-creative writing promotes writing as an expression of self-realisation. Interest in and enjoyment of writing are to be encouraged by means of the playful use of language and active use of **literary** forms (Pogner, 2010). The Anglo-American concept of ‘creative writing’ is supported in Europe by approaches which also include the concept of the ‘free text’ in L2 teaching.
2. The communicative-functional approach gives particular emphasis to the **functions** of written texts. It focuses on the informative intention of writers and, in particular, on the adequacy of the ‘communication offer’ which the texts make to their readers. The communicative perspective is promoted by the increasing use of new communication technologies (computer, **internet**, e-mail and mobile devices).
3. Writing is a complex cognitive process in which knowledge is organised hierarchically on the one hand and, on the other, is transformed into linear sentence chains, which in turn form a complex textual web. When writing goes beyond knowledge-telling, it can be of service for transforming or generating knowledge and thus promote intellectual development.
4. In order to make it easier for writers to manage their writing, they learn specific skills in order to obtain a better mastery of the individual processes involved. In teaching, different techniques are practised in order to supply contents, encourage planning behaviour, include the reader, and promote revising behaviour. Texts are rewritten and adapted to fit different rhetorical situations. The goal is to enable the writers to select their linguistic formulation as a result of conscious communicative choices. The learning of text conventions and genres (Hylland, 2003) is also significant in this context, because text production is constrained, but also made easier, by genre conventions.

The four approaches described above should not be considered as incompatible opposites. Instead, they can be combined or integrated, for example in the context of workshops in which a group of writers together goes through a complex writing process ‘in slow motion’. In the collaborative production of

a text, the writers can step out of the writing process in 'didactical loops' in order to reflect on their rhetorical choices – but also on their own writing processes. In this way, the linguistic knowledge and process awareness of the learners are both strengthened.

**See also:** Audiolingual method; Listening; Non-native speaker teacher; Pronunciation teaching; Reading; Schema and script theory; Skills and knowledge; Speaking; Standard language

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KARL-HEINZ POGNER



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