

# *The British Association for Applied Linguistics*

No. 16

NEWSLETTER

Autumn 1982

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## 1. PAPERS PRESENTED

The following 19 papers were given at the 15th Annual Meeting of the Association, held at Henderson Hall, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, from Friday 17th to Sunday 19th September 1982, with the theme 'Learning & Teaching Languages for Communication'.

1. Dr. R. J. Alexander (Bremen Univ., West Germany) 'Communicative Syllabuses and Communicatively oriented Textbooks: the Theory and Practice in Adult English Teaching in the Federal Republic of Germany'.
2. T. Bloor (Aston Univ.) 'Language learning implications of a discourse analysis of a TV FLT Programme'.
3. F. Castaños (London Univ.) 'Approaching ESP as Conceptualization'.
4. S. Dingwall (Lancaster Univ.) 'Focus on the teacher: some EFL/ESL teachers' views on teaching'.
5. Dr. R. Dunning (Leicester Univ.) KEYNOTE PAPER 'Experimenting with Interaction'.
6. Dr. E. Freedman (Leicester Univ.) 'Evaluation of the East Midlands Graded Assessment Feasibility Study'.
7. M. Friel (Essex Univ.) 'Assessing spoken discourse in a communicative teaching programme'.
8. E. M. Hamp Lyons (W. Illinois Univ., U.S.A./Edinburgh Univ.) 'The communicability of text'.
9. J. Holmes (Wellington Univ., New Zealand) 'Speaking English with the Appropriate Degree of Conviction'.
10. N. Lees (Leicester Univ.) 'Aspects of Standardisation within a Communicative Assessment Syllabus'.
11. W. T. Littlewood (Swansea Univ. Coll.) 'Foreign Language Performance and the Learner's Personality'.
12. R. F. Mitchell (Stirling Univ.) 'Mother Tongue and Target Language as Means of Communication in the FL Classroom'.
13. B. W. Page (Leeds Univ.) 'Defined syllabuses: crutch or straitjacket?'.
14. B. C. Parkinson (Stirling Univ.) 'The Evaluation of a "Communicative" French Course'.
15. J. B. Pickering (Oxford Univ.) 'On Defining Vowel Targets on a Communicative Basis'.
16. B. Rollason (Royal Military Coll. of Canada) 'Historical and sociological barriers to communication: the teaching of Canada's official languages'.
17. J. L. M. Trim (CILT, London) 'Yes, but what do you mean by "Communication"?'.
18. A. Trosborg (Aarhus Univ., Denmark) 'Cooperation in Native-Nonnative Speaker Communication'.
19. J. M. Wilding (Claire's Court Prep. Sch. Maidenhead) 'Which way to Jupiter: the visual perception of writing systems'.

The Keynote Paper appears in this Newsletter, together with the abstracts, in some cases revised and enlarged, of the other papers.

There were changes in the programme: in particular, flight cancellation prevented the Guest Speaker, Professor H.-E. Piepho (Giessen Univ.), and illness prevented Joyce Gilmour Zuck, (Michigan Univ.), from joining the Meeting.

The papers by Fernando Castaños, Sylvia Dingwall, Mike Friel, and Brian Pickering, were presented by students enjoying the assistance of the four postgraduate scholarships generously offered by the Bell Educational Trust in respect of this year's Meeting. (Marked 'Bell P/G' in Abstracts)

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I

BAAL MEETING 1982 (NEWCASTLE)

1. List of papers presented (see opposite).
  2. Keynote Paper } Roy Dunning.
  3. EMREB's GAFS
  4. Notes on the Meeting: from the Chairman, Sam Spicer;  
from Mary Willes.
  5. Abstracts.
  - (6. Participants list.)
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2. KEYNOTE PAPER at the Association's Annual Meeting, held at Henderson Hall, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 17-19 September 1982, with the theme of 'Learning & Teaching Languages for Communication'.

Experimenting with Interaction

Roy Dunning  
University of Leicester

I would like to begin by offering some words of explanation about my title 'Experimenting with interaction' so that you will interpret it in the sense I intend it.

The data I shall be referring to have been produced by second-year secondary school children from Leicestershire who are taking part in the East Midlands Graded Assessment Feasibility Study which I co-ordinate on behalf of the East Midland Regional Examinations Board in a project linking the Board, the University and the East Midlands LEAs. (A brief account of this Study follows this paper.)

There are two levels of interaction involved: managerial and linguistic. By 'managerial interaction' I refer to the discussions we have with the teachers in the project: standardisation meetings, project administration meetings, in-service courses, private talks; the discussions teachers have amongst themselves -departmental and interdepartmental meetings; and the discussions the teachers have with the children about the work to be done. By 'linguistic interaction' I mean the interaction in French between teachers and taught and between the children engaged in language learning.

I want first to relate modern language teaching in general to the communicative tendency in particular. Anyone familiar with modern language teaching in England will know that it is course-book based and exam-ridden. Most lessons are ex-cathedra in style; 'work' is writing; oral work is teacher-dominated.

HMIs criticise schools for failing to teach their children to communicate (and teachers for failing to use the language being taught as a means of communication in the classroom). In setting up the EMREB project, then, it seemed to me that if modern language teachers are to change, they have to engage critically in just those aspects of language learning and teaching

they have (in the main) been content to leave to others. The keystone of the structure of the managerial interaction I spoke of is the co-operative elaboration of an assessment syllabus which sets out:-

- (1) the learning objectives;
- (2) the functions and topics to be mastered;
- (3) the modes of assessment;
- (4) procedures for setting up communicative tasks and methods of scoring.

Language exponents are also suggested. The objective of this managerial interaction is to seek to ensure that teachers are not simply consumers of material produced by others. Unlike most Graded Objectives Schemes there are no tests: teachers have to learn how to construct tasks which can be seen to elicit the language functions which underlie the assessment objectives.

The teachers' problem in the classroom is how to move themselves and their pupils away from monolithic direction to a more flexible to-ing and fro-ing between different kinds of activity in which the teachers become presenters, managers, bit-players, field consultants and barefoot doctors —roles for which none of them has been trained, and for which (whisper it not in Gath) there are no trainers.

The necessary interaction on which the project is predicated carries the implication therefore that in-service work on communicative language teaching can never be restricted to purely pragmatic issues (like making cue cards or overhead transparencies), however helpful teachers find such discussions. They have to come to grips with theoretical problems which are not easy to grasp and for which there are no reach-me-down solutions.

The principal problem is to focus learning on communication. Many teachers see this as a matter of content; of tacking on to the standard paradigm a few conversational items —often as learned dialogues of the 'survival' type— or as the introduction into the course of the 'role-play situations' which are now a prominent feature of CSE (and some GCE) examinations. I suspect that this may be equally true of much of what is termed communicative language teaching —the grafting on to the gnarled old trunk of a few new gesticulating limbs. I make this point not to separate out the EMREB project as different and superior —I have no evidence for comparison— but as a statement of the problem and a warning against facile solutions. The work we have done so far at Level One (first year secondary) has produced children right across the ability range with a reasonable ability to ask for and give information about themselves in the topic areas laid down in the assessment syllabus; we have built in unpredictability at the paradigmatic level (the children may know, for example, that they will be asked their age, address, occupation, but fictional information will be cued on a card from which the role play is developed). The exchanges are predictable in two senses:

- (1) the kind of information to be transmitted has been the subject of the pre-assessment practice stage; and
- (2) the turntaking will be regularised such that whoever starts seeking information carries on until their questions are exhausted; at which point the roles are reversed.

The first kind of predictability is inevitable in criterion-referenced assessment and is offset by the increased reliability accruing from the shorter gap between learning and testing. But the second —although I could perhaps have predicted it— was certainly not an intended outcome; and it was this element of the exchanges between the children that I wanted to modify with a view to reducing the predictability of the structure. And it is to these discourse problems that I now turn.

### Discussion of the data

If we look at the linguistics of verbal interaction in the foreign language classroom, the focus on communication exposes the dichotomy between the sentence-grammar base of the teaching and the discourse-grammar base of the intended outcomes.

At sentence level, the learners can internalise rules which, whether they can formulate them or not, can inform their practice, even allowing them to predict how to structure their meanings in contexts where their experience is no guide. At discourse level, however, they are likely to use native language strategies or to develop interlanguage features to plug communicative gaps.

For English learners of French the ethnography of speaking rules to be learned may not diverge as radically from the native behaviour as for, say, English learners of Japanese. But, whether the aspects of communicative interaction we wish to learn are culture and language specific or not, the problem remains the same for teacher and learner alike: there is no discourse grammar available; and, if there were, it would be unlikely to approach a standard sentence grammar in its accessibility.

Un niveau-seuil attempts a catalogue of exponents of various speech acts but it offers no useful guide to their context of utterance - 'all the factors which, by virtue of their influence upon the participants in the language-event, systematically determine the form, the appropriateness, or the meaning of the utterances' (Lyons 1977:572).

### In-service discussions

The purpose of our discussions with the teachers has been to focus on the framing of communicative tasks in the assessment syllabus which would stimulate increased linguistic interaction between the children. It is a main requirement of the syllabus that the talking is to some purpose. In the transmission of information - in Level Two about interests, attitudes and intentions in the topic areas of school and leisure interests - the children are asked to record the information gained and to report it later to the teacher in writing. In the transactions they have in the direction seeking task to recapitulate the information received; and in the purchasing task to negotiate the purchase of specific goods. In the descriptive task they have to draw a picture from their partners' specifications (they have a photo or a cartoon stimulus). As you would expect, the purposive element in an assessment mediated by cue cards tends to impose an adjacency pairing structure on the ensuing exchanges of a fairly simple kind.

#### Example:

Comment s'appelle ton prof?  
M. Smith.

The pairing reveals the sentence grammar on which it is based such that the elided forms can be extrapolated: Mon prof s'appelle M. Smith. This basic pattern is undergoing some modification as a result of our attempts to encourage more flexible turntaking. I shall focus on the contiguous areas of:-

- a) the exchange of personal meanings (albeit simulated);
- b) the emergent discourse features.

In the initial discussions with the teachers I suggested that whilst maintaining the information gap principle as the basis of our transmission activities we might look to tasks which overloaded the listeners' channel

capacity to process the data in review (thus stimulating the demand for repetition and clarification). I further suggested that in the transactions (buying) we might require the handling by the learner of a variety of options within a context of (predictable but unknown) constraints.

The cuing of information on cards inevitably focuses the children on establishing a semantic network to cover all the features required by the cue. Usually—given that the children understand that they are being encouraged to be flexible in their turntaking—the structure is of a chain of adjacency pairs: the information exchange takes place in parallel chunks. Once speakers have responded to a request for information in a topic area, they follow up with a similar request to their partner.

This chaining is not, however, unvarying. The fact that they are operating with a semantic grid in mind (i.e., the framework of all the semantic options open to them) does not enforce a rigid adherence to whatever topic order seems suggested by the layout of the cue card. Example - an exchange about interests in school:

- (1)           A1    Tu es forte dans la musique?  
              B1    Oui, j'ai assez fort.  
              A2    Ah.  
              B2    Er, comment s'appelle ton prof de la musi/dessin?  
              A3    Mlle Ros. Et toi?  
              B3    Mlle Lavisse . . . Tu es fort en dessin?

(Incidentally the teacher had cued a boy-girl exchange between two girls—a fact which she later regretted . . .)

I shall refer to this sequence again later, but here I would point out how the delaying by B of the option opened by A creates a discourse problem. It is evident from the recordings that the children normally attempt flexibility in exchange by tacking on questions (not necessarily 'et toi?') to the answers given. Here B's responses to A's "Mlle Lavisse" closes the frame. The speaker then needs a formula to re-introduce the topic or to re-focus one not concluded, e.g. à propos/pendant que j'y pense. The learners cope, as here, by pausing and re-opening the topic. There are three strategies open to the teacher:-

- (i) to predict these needs and deal appropriately with the relevant language beforehand;
- (ii) to be on hand when the language forms are needed;
- (iii) to expect a subsequent recall by the learners of what they would have liked to be able to say, but couldn't.

In the main, where the children feel a need to say what they don't know how to express, they draw heavily on their stock of L1 signals (with or without gestures). Example:

- (2)           Tu t'appelles comment?  
              Je m'appelle Jean-Paul.  
              Ah . . . et toi?  
              Je m'appelle Marie.  
              Ah.

or:

- (3)           Tu aimes le dessin?  
              Oui.  
              Hmm.

or:

- (4) Tu as quelles matières aujourd'hui?  
Er . . . maths . . .

Such signals occur in the interstices of the exchanges. In the recordings they are more frequent in the child-to-child than child-to-teacher exchanges. Whether this is because of the inferior/superior dimension or because the teacher-child exchanges are transactional is not clear.

Two factors influence the discourse:-

- (i) the information is cued and therefore the cue-card has to be scanned before information can be given;
- (ii) the information gained has to be recorded.

Where, under the influence of either of these features, information is sought which goes beyond the partner's capacity or wish to respond in a time limit imagined to be acceptable to the other, then other strategies are used -foregrounding, repetitions, interjections.

### 1. Foregrounding:

This strategy enables the speaker to highlight the information requested by placing it at the beginning of the utterance so that time can be created for it to be handled appropriately:

- (5) A On a maths avec qui?  
B Maths, maths . . . avec M. Legros.

or:

- (6) A Pardon, madame, pour aller à la boulangerie, s'il vous plaît?  
B La boulangerie? . . . er . . . prenez . . .

This particular discourse feature is probably a reduced form of what was presented by the teacher as an interactive item:

- (7) A Pour aller à la poste, s'il vous plaît . . .  
B Eh bien/voyons/la poste . . .

The children find their way to it quite naturally since most have learned at an earlier stage the foregrounded question form of the type:

- (8) Le français, tu aimes ça?

### 2. Repetitions:

These are often vocalisations signalling that a turn is still in progress and may not be interrupted. They therefore function as a holding-off device whilst the data are scanned.

- (9) A Tu as quelles matières aujourd'hui?  
B Er maths, maths, . . . l'anglais.

They also of course serve the double purpose of informing the writing and of holding up any further exchange:

- (10) A1 On a géo à quelle heure?  
B Onze heures et demie.  
A2 Repeats/writes: Onze heures et demie.

### 3. Interjections:

These are usually learned formulae, often overgeneralised and used inappropriately, as in the case of the boy who can't recall all the detailed directions he is supposed to repeat. He simply says to his partner role-playing a stranger in the formal style:

(11) Tu répètes

But these interjections can be used to vary the repetitive strategy:

(12) A Tu as quelles matières aujourd'hui?  
B Maths, maths, l'anglais . . . un moment . . . sciences  
et français.

Sometimes they can signal that the listener is not ready to attend (usually because he is writing notes):

(13) A Tu es fort en l'anglais?  
B Un moment . . . Pardon?  
A1 Tu es fort en anglais?  
B1 J'ai assez fort.

There is finally an example of the creation of a discourse gap. The speaker wishes to acknowledge the message but express a different view:

(14) A (On a maths) avec M. Legros.  
B Ah, merci.  
A1 M. Legros . . . je déteste M. Legros.  
B1 Ah, oui . . . j'adore M. Legros.

### Deficiencies

There is of course ample evidence in the exchanges of deficiency in the communicative strategies adopted. It is rare for the children to both perceive and repair the damage.

An instance of this is evidenced in a passage quoted already:

(15) A1 Tu es forte dans la musique?  
B1 Oui, j'ai assez fort.  
A2 Ah.  
B2 Er, comment s'appelle ton prof de la musi/dessin?  
A3 Mlle Ros. Et toi?  
B3 Mlle Lavisse . . . Tu es fort en dessin?

Here the adjacency pairing of the surface structure does not realise appropriately the underlying semantic structure of the exchange: the subjacent sentence grammar of A3 + B3 does not have its expected extrapolation. A3 (Mlle Ros) answers B2 but the addition of Et toi? does not stand for a parallel to B2. What is meant is not:

but 'Comment s'appelle ton prof de dessin?'  
'Comment s'appelle ton prof de musique?'

This interpretation is made clear later on in the exchange

(16) A1 Tu aimes Mlle Ros?  
B1 Oui, j'ai aimé Mlle Ros. Et toi?  
A2 Oui, j'ai aimé Mlle Lavisse.

There is, in the data, an example of a girl becoming aware that her partner cannot respond appropriately to the question put:

(17) A1 Tu aimes ton professeur de sciences?  
B1 Monsieur Smith.



She cannot (or does not) repair the damage but presses on with a change of topic:

(17) Tu aimes le maths?

Later she gets a similar response in reply to a question like A1, so at her third attempt, she changes tack, saying: 'Tu aimes . . . comment s'appelle ton professeur de français?' and gets in response: 'Madame Smith'.

The change seems to show sensitivity to her partner's deficiencies rather than be pure tact in the presence of the teacher. Another example of the absence of explication in the event of a failure in communication occurs where two boys are playing the shop assistant and customer roles. (In the assessment the adult role is played by the teacher.) The following exchange takes place:

(18) A1 Je voudrais un porte-clés.  
B1 Oui.  
A2 Qu'est-ce que vous avez comme couleurs?  
B2 Bleu, vert, brun, et rouge.  
A3 Bon.  
B3 Oui, c'est tout?  
A4 C'est tout . . .

Presumably the shopkeeper identifies 'bon' as a colour and that was what was intended. Where the children do repair deficiencies in the exchanges they are usually stylistic -a repair made to their own language without intervention from the teacher.

(19) A1 Le français, c'est où ça?  
B1 C'est au sept.  
A2 Salle sept?  
B2 Oui.

This then becomes the adopted mode:

(20) A1 L'histoire, c'est où ça?  
B1 Salle deux.

There is a nice example of self-adjustment during an exchange of directions to various points. In three successive practices one child produced:-

1. Vous tournez la première rue à gauche.
2. Vous tournez la . . . vous tournez à gauche . . . c'est la troisième rue à gauche.

(This was recapped by his partner as: je prends la troisième à gauche.) His final version ran:

3. . . . prenez la deuxième rue à gauche.

Where there are attempts at repairs to the semantic fabric, they come in the main in the direction-giving activities. This is not surprising since many children have problems with right and left and the appropriate selection of the correct item of a minimal pair in L2 is often difficult. It is in this area that the children correct themselves and their partners:-

Self-correction:

(21) Vous tournez la première rue à gauche, à droite, pardon, à droite. C'est à gauche.

Correction of partner:

(22) . . . C'est à gauche (recap)  
Non, c'est à droite.  
C'est à droite (recap)

The storing of gauche/droit in close proximity is therefore not always a disadvantage. And it is interesting to note in this connection how well the children can negotiate in transactions where the options open to them are structured with a similar degree of paradigmatic regularity. The following is a shopping scene in which the teacher plays the shopkeeper:

- (23) A1 Je voudrais un cendrier, s'il vous plaît.  
B1 Un cendrier, oui, voilà les cendriers. Oui, 20 fr, 25 fr.  
Lequel préférez-vous?  
A2 Je prends le 25 fr, s'il vous plaît.

or:

- (24) A1 Je voudrais une glace à la fraise, s'il vous plaît.  
B1 Ah, je regrette, mademoiselle, je n'ai pas de glaces à la fraise. Mais j'ai vanille, chocolat, citron et pistache.  
A2 Hmm . . . je voudrais une à la pistache, s'il vous plaît.

or even:

- (25) A1 . . . je voudrais un porte-clés à 13 fr, s'il vous plaît.  
B1 A 13 fr, oui. Qu'est-ce que vous préférez comme couleur?  
A2 Qu'est-ce que vous avez comme couleurs?  
B2 Euh, bleu, jaune, vert et noir.  
A3 Je voudrais un porte-clés bleu, s'il vous plaît.

Apart from the tight grip on the paradigmatic framework, you will notice the example of an embedded 'side-sequence' (to use Jefferson's term) which follows a question with a question, holding off an answer to the first question until more information has been supplied.

(At this point the videos of classroom interaction were shown.)

I think you will agree that these second year children show some evidence of an approach towards mastery of interactive strategies. If, however, we are to aim at communicative competence in Loveday's sense of 'an active process of cultural symbolisation', then, given the complexity of the task and the poverty of our resources, it will, like the impossible, take a little longer.

Roy Dunning

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and at school', in Uttering, muttering, ed. C. Adelman, (Grant-Macintyre).  
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Press).

3. Roy has provided the following brief account of EMREB's  
Graded Assessment Feasibility Study. See also Elaine  
Freedman (Abstract 6) and Nicola Lees (Abstract 10).

#### The East Midlands Graded Assessment Feasibility Study

The Study was initiated some five years ago by the East Midlands Regional  
Examinations Board (EMREB). It links the University of Leicester School  
of Education, the Examinations Board and the East Midlands Local Education  
Authorities (LEAs). The progress of the Study is monitored by a Steering  
Committee on which each of the LEAs is represented by its Modern Languages  
Adviser(s).

The Study was set up to investigate the feasibility of replacing the  
existing, norm-referenced General Certificate of Education/Certificate of  
Secondary Education (GCE/CSE) examination in modern languages by a series  
of criterion-referenced graded levels, each focusing on communication.  
French is the present subject of the Study; other languages will follow  
in due course.

There are three levels so far: Level One, which was certificated for the  
first time in 1982; Level Two, which will be certificated in 1983; and  
Level Three, which is in process of experimentation prior to certification  
in 1984. It is likely that Level Four will be a '16+' qualification  
(either a CSE or an experimental joint GCE/CSE 'Mode 3' examination).

For the purposes of the Feasibility Study (that is to say, until the Board  
makes the certification of the Levels publicly available), each Level is  
(roughly) associated with its chronological equivalent in the secondary  
school (i.e. Level One is begun by first year children; Level Two by  
second year children; and so on).

The syllabus is arrived at by negotiation and experiment. It is an assess-  
ment syllabus: it sets out the learning objectives, the language functions  
and notions, the topic areas and the assessment tasks and procedures. The  
learning objectives are expressed as statements of what the candidates are  
to learn to be able to do within the language areas to be assessed in the  
various modes.

For Level One there are two assessment modes: Talking and Writing/Reading; for Levels Two and Three there are three modes: Talking, Writing and Reading.

Talking is intended to be functional at each Level; Writing/Reading at Level One and Reading at Level Two are conceived in non-functional terms as supporting the language learning process. It is hoped that for Levels Three and Four all modes will be assessed functionally. Each Level contains three Units which are continuously assessed.

As distinct from other Graded Objectives schemes, there are no centrally formulated and distributed tests. Instead the assessment syllabus lays down guidelines for the procedures and the format of the assessments, specifying the number and content (in functional terms) of each. This structure is intended to give the teachers complete control of when and what to test within the framework of the syllabus they have helped to elaborate.

The syllabus guidelines require the Talking assessment to be a functional exchange between two children (for example, one in which each seeks and gets specific information from the other). The content of the exchange is controlled by cue cards on which the exchangeable information is cued in symbols or in written French (English may not be used). The information cued relates to the fictional person role-played by the candidate. Thus, although the functions and topics of the dialogue are predictable, the lexical and structural exponents are not. During the assessment this exchange is monitored by the class teacher, who judges each performance according to its degree of acceptability and appropriacy. The children are required to make notes during the exchange of the information they have gained in talking. They write this information up later, first as a scenario —the written form of the dialogue— and secondly as a report —the account (in the third person) of what they have learned.

As part of the pre-assessment practice procedures, some schools make use of a Progress Card which sets out for the children the immediate objectives to be reached. These objectives are formulated so that the learner can see what has to be mastered in the next block of time (for example, 'I can tell someone my age', 'I can ask someone their age', etc.). When the children think they can perform these tasks, they tick the appropriate column. When they think they have mastered the functions, they can ask to be assessed. The Progress Card is intended to enable the children to see what they have to learn and to give them some control over when they are to be assessed.

Graded assessment has brought about a considerable change in the classroom practices of teachers. This in turn has required a change in the content and form of In-Service courses. Teachers have to learn to develop their theoretical understanding as well as their practical competence, if communication is really to become the focus of the classroom.

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#### 4. NOTES ON THE MEETING (Newcastle 1982)

First, a farewell note from the retiring Chairman,  
Sam Spicer:

This year's Annual Meeting which was held at the University of Newcastle on the theme "Learning and teaching languages for communication" was reasonably well attended (92 compared with 97 last year and 65 in 1979

-the all-time low) and in my opinion, which I believe is shared by the large majority of those who attended, it proved to be both a pleasant and professionally useful gathering. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to congratulate and to thank not only all those who presented papers but also the Local Organiser (Janet Price) and the Assistant Secretary (Euan Reid) who worked so hard and efficiently in organising the meeting. The only major disappointment was the absence of our distinguished guest speaker, Professor Piepho; but happily John Trim agreed to fill the empty slot in the programme and his paper was very well received.

The A.G.M. also went very smoothly and as Chairman I wish to express my appreciation and thanks to all those who contributed to the discussions and especially to the officers of the Executive Committee who presented reports. Our Treasurer, Pam Grunwell, was faced with what could have been a difficult task, namely to persuade members to agree to raising the subscription. However, her report was, as usual, very clearly and cogently presented and the meeting agreed by a very large majority to accept that the subscription rate for next year should be raised to £7.50. A proposal made by Janet Price that there should be a special concessionary rate of £3.75 for unemployed, retired and student members was also accepted. Another potentially controversial matter on the agenda was the question of the Association's attitude to the participation of South African applied linguists at Conferences and Seminars organised by or under the auspices of BAAL. Happily, however, the meeting quickly came to the decision that we should accept the advice of AILA that no affiliated organisations should have official connections with South African organisations but that Conference and Seminar organisers should be free to accept applications from individuals from South Africa if they so wished. On a more positive note I was pleased to report that although Applied Linguistics was, like most other subjects, suffering from the government's decision to reduce expenditure on universities and other institutions of Higher Education, it seemed fairly clear that it was nevertheless surviving and that particularly at graduate level the number of applications for M.A.s and Diplomas for next year was well above the more pessimistic forecasts. One reason for this is the exceptionally good employment record of those who obtain qualifications in Applied Linguistics, and this was one of the points I made when I wrote on behalf of BAAL in support of Michel Blanc's efforts to prevent the abandonment of Birkbeck's M.A. in Applied Linguistics as a result of a decision by the authorities not to fill a vacant senior post. I was pleased to be able to add that Michel Blanc's efforts had been crowned with success and that their M.A. scheme will continue.

Another major decision taken at the A.G.M. was that next year's meeting should be at Leicester Polytechnic and we were all delighted to accept Pam Grunwell's offer to act as Local Organiser. Anyone who has a suggestion as to what should be the theme of next year's meeting should write to the Assistant Secretary, Euan Reid.

The last matter I have to report is the unanimous and enthusiastic election of Chris Brumfit to the chairmanship of the Association and of Tom Bloor, Bill Littlewood, Rosamond Mitchell, Richard Rossner and Carol Sanders to the Executive Committee. The full membership of the Committee for the coming year is thus as follows:-

Chairman	Christopher Brumfit
Secretary	John Roberts
Treasurer	Pam Grunwell
Assistant Secretary	Euan Reid
Membership Secretary	Janet Price
Elected Members:-	Tom Bloor
	Bill Littlewood
	Rosamond Mitchell
	Richard Rossner
	Carol Sanders
Co-opted Members:-	Sam Spicer
	John Trim
(Newsletter Editor)	John Mountford

Finally I would like to say how much I have enjoyed being Chairman for the last three years and to record my appreciation of the untiring efforts not only of the officers and the Executive Committee but also of all the active members of the Association who have succeeded not merely in keeping BAAL alive even in these hard times but actually in extending its contribution to the support and development of academic and professional activities in the field of Applied Linguistics in this country.

Sam Spicer  
Chairman 1979-82

## Second, an impression of the Meeting, from Mary Willes.

All BAAL Meetings are in some respects similar. Ours is an established organization now, with traditions that ensure a comfortable familiarity will characterise regular events. Mid-September arrives, and with returning families and shortening days comes the weekend of the Annual Meeting. The place has been agreed in advance. It is confidently assumed by the rest of us that the detailed and extensive work that falls to the Local Organizer and to the Assistant Secretary will have been done. We have only to turn up, to arrive at the Reception Desk and to find and greet friends of long standing. There we are, at the start of another Meeting, collecting keys, leaflets, programmes, and identification discs, while absorbed in several concurrent conversations, and taking in at the same time the locations of residential rooms, dining room, BAAL notice board, conference rooms, and bar. It has all started again. There is the Keynote Address, the Wine Party, the plenary sessions, the choices to be made, not easily, from a branching programme. Saturday evening arrives, with the A.G.M. for members, and for those present not members of BAAL, a break, a chance of air, exercise, sunshine, and a little envy. Sunday morning: some thinning out of attendance but a noticeably more serious attention from those who remain, by this time into their stride and anxious to enter into more discussion than time will allow. Sunday lunch, and departure to the temporarily distant world of domestic preoccupations and public events, homes, families, gardens, newspapers, television, telephones.

This year it was at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, at Henderson House Conference Centre. Against everything that was familiar, some things were distinctive. A Conference Centre differs from a residential institution that offers conference facilities in the vacation. The arrangements were smooth and

well practised. Blue draperies behind the speakers, and a banner proclaiming the identity of this organization, suggested the unlikely possibility that the Annual Meeting might be the subject of news coverage.

It was, to a degree that we do not always achieve, an outward looking and internationally minded meeting, and that despite the fact that our distinguished guest speaker Professor Piepho, from the University of Giessen, failed to arrive. No word was received as the time allotted for his lecture approached. Everyone sympathised with the organizers' uneasiness. Nobody seriously expected an embarrassing hiatus. John Trim stepped in, was introduced by our Chairman as 'our distinguished visitor from overseas', and filled the role, effortlessly, lucidly, securing and holding our attention by the vitality and interest and challenge of what he had to say. There were however speakers from outside the United Kingdom, from West Germany, from the United States, Canada, New Zealand; their audiences were as varied, and included a particularly welcome group from the People's Republic of China, currently based for one year at the University of Lancaster. The sense of belonging to an international community, always present in some degree at a BAAL Meeting, was unusually strong.

So, in my experience, was the sense that withdrawal for a couple of days from institutional and other concerns can be no more than partial. Undercurrents of anxiety were there all the time. Nobody was unaware of damage to institutions and individuals inseparable from so deep and prolonged a recession as we now experience.

The theme agreed on for the meeting, 'Learning and teaching languages for communication', set limits to the variety of our preoccupations. We explored the theme in some detail and the emphases were on how learning and teaching is attempted, how it is monitored, how its effects are evaluated, and on teachers' and learners' perceptions of the learning process, and, more generally, on what, in such a context 'communicative' can mean. It was, in sum, a useful Meeting, it was widely enjoyed, it had some breadth of view; it had moments of inspiration. The recollection is wrapped in the warmth of a sudden brief return of golden summer weather.

Mary Willes

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ABSTRACTS

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1. Richard ALEXANDER 'Communicative Syllabuses and Communicatively oriented Textbooks: the Theory and Practice in Adult English Teaching in the Federal Republic of Germany'.
  - (i) The Nature of Communicative Syllabuses This section of the paper reviews briefly recent developments in West German adult language learning syllabuses; in particular, the attempts to set up a communicatively-oriented syllabus by the German 'Volkshochschulverband' are considered. A syllabus is taken as consisting of and implying the following:-
    - (1) a statement of linguistic content, i.e. the list of items to be taught;
    - (2) a decision about which part of the language it is desirable to teach (registers, etc.);
    - (3) the methodological implications for teaching of the choices made in (1) and (2); i.e. the list of items to be taught and the parts of the language to be taught are complemented by a consideration of what methods are to be employed in the teaching process;
    - (4) pedagogical analysis of the material -assumptions are made about theories of learning, etc. and/or acquisition;
    - (5) a general approach, e.g. an orientation towards, say, fluency rather than accuracy;
    - (6) a practical guide for the teacher;
    - (7) an administrative instrument.
  - Points (6) and (7) have important consequences in that the syllabus -via its certificating procedures (7)-- both constrains the teacher and also channels the energies of the writer of teaching materials. The work which has been done roughly along the lines of the Council of Europe recommendations is outlined briefly with attention being paid to the 'Grundbausteine', 'Aufbausteine' and 'Zertifikat' frameworks.
  - (ii) Textbooks in adult English teaching and their organizing principles Against the background of Section (i) a short survey is given of the types of textbooks and courses on the market and currently in use at evening institutes and comparable institutions in the Federal Republic. Different selectional, grading and methodological criteria are discussed with respect to the materials under consideration, e.g. functional grading, structural-functional grading, functional-structural grading and notional-functional grading.
  - (iii) Writing communicative teaching materials Some of the problems involved and encountered in writing materials which attempt to satisfy the manifold demands made of adult language teaching are discussed. Examples of material taken from a new course book, which is currently in preparation (On the Way, Klett Verlag) and on which the author is working with others, are used as an illustration of one way in which the question of communicatively-oriented English teaching is being tackled. In particular, the pedagogical analysis and the general approach behind the course places emphasis on encouraging motivation to learn in the classroom. To this end a colourful and attractive graphic layout underlines the communicational-interactional and game-oriented approach of parts of the book. Much attention is directed towards drawing the learner into the learning activity and towards stimulating individual and group participation in problem-solving and associated activities, while at the same time providing opportunities for practising realistic communication situations and using language for genuine communication. As can be imagined, it is not always easy to satisfy these -on occasion- contradictory demands.



2. Tom BLOOR 'Language learning implications of a discourse analysis of a TV FLT Programme'. The current paradigm of FLT assumes that for successful learning/acquisition to occur students must participate in communicative activities in L2. An analysis of a TV language teaching programme ('Ensemble') in terms of Sinclair and Coulthard's acts bears out the expectation that broadcasts provide minimal opportunities for learner discourse turns. Nevertheless researchers have claimed a high degree of success for BBC language programmes and the evidence is that the TV programmes are often the only part of the BBC package that learners use. Surprisingly, the visual element appears to have only a reinforcing or motivating role since the sound is almost exclusively comprehensible without vision. Also the direct teaching element of the course is judged by viewers to be of greater value than the embedded sketch, film, etc. This evidence suggests that either our assumption of the need for interactive learning is unfounded or that the tacit contribution of the learner to the apparently unilateral communication has been seriously underestimated.

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Weir, R, 'Paragraphs', in Bar-Adon A and Leopold W F (eds.), Child Language: a book of readings, Prentice-Hall, 1971.

3. Fernando CASTANOS (Bell P/G) 'Approaching ESP as Conceptualization'. Contrary to what we have believed, definitions, classifications, generalizations, and so on, are not illocutions. Therefore, if we wish to realize the old ESP objective of describing specialized discourses as combinations of these operations, we need to postulate a fourth unit for discourse analysis, alongside the sentence, the proposition, and the illocutionary act. I call this fourth unit propositional act. Propositional acts are best seen as operations from and upon conceptual frameworks, and they can be characterized as combinations of types of (logical) subjects and types of predicates. These typologies have been produced on the basis of a critical examination of analytic philosophy and structural semantics literature. The distinction between propositional and illocutionary acts prompts a reconsideration of the nature of academic discourses. For example, we see that the point of scientific discourse is to construct theories about the world, rather than affect the acts of the participants in the communicative event where it (the discourse) takes place. Perhaps academic discourse in general cannot be so precisely characterized as scientific discourse in particular. But it can at least be said that whereas in everyday life the construction and modification of conceptual frameworks is either a means to an end or a by-product of other discourse activities, in the academic world it becomes an end in itself. Academic discourse is suspended from the normal interactive milieu of language, though its occurrence presupposes some sort of interaction. This incompleteness of academic discourse is a crucial characteristic of it, but it tends to be neglected by the communicative approaches to language teaching which give paramount importance to the fact that in discourse courses of action are negotiated and brought about. (University of London / 75 Broadlands Way, Colchester)
4. Silvia DINGWALL (Bell P/G) 'Focus on the teacher: some EFL/ESL teachers' views on teaching'. For some time now, it has been part of the TEFL/TESL professional orthodoxy to stress variation among language learners. This variation has probably been assumed by practising language teachers since time immemorial, but in the late 1960's it was found necessary to emphasise it in reaction to too literal applications of behavioural learning theory. Thus, there has been considerable talk about such things as variation in learners' needs, motivations, learning strategies and background knowledge. It is the main tenet of this paper that this move to concentrate on the learner has contributed to a neglect of variation among teachers (at least in the applied linguistics literature - see Politzer, 1981), and that there is now a need to redress the balance (but not swing the pendulum right back again) by devoting more attention to the nature of heterogeneity in the ELT profession. The paper describes a few of the findings of a survey of ELT teachers' views about issues in language teaching based on replies to a questionnaire distributed with the magazine Modern English Teacher and among some teachers visiting Lancaster University. Over 550 teachers replied from approximately 50 different countries. The methodology is discussed in Dingwall (1981). One conclusion of the survey was about the extent of confusion which appears to exist among some of the respondents about communicative language teaching. Some seemed to advocate a "communicate or be damned" approach. However, studies of 'plateauing' and 'pidginization' raise questions about whether the main efforts of language teachers should be directed to 'facilitating communication' as opposed to other aspects of language and language learning. But to what extent are applied linguists responsible for seeing that their ideas are understood and implemented?

The fact that many respondents appeared to feel that apparently theoretically incompatible approaches (e.g. 'behaviourist' and 'cognitive') need not be practically incompatible is also pertinent to the issue of accountability of applied linguists. Various ways in which the teachers in this survey seemed to conceptualize one area of language teaching were suggested through an analysis of their replies to questions about the treatment of error. These examples illustrate one dimension of variation in the attitudes of language teachers, namely the relative importance they attach to 'fluency' and 'accuracy'. This kind of variation among teachers, while undoubtedly known intuitively among teacher trainers, should, it is argued, be documented more thoroughly. Not only is this kind of information relevant to the trainers of teachers, but it can also contribute to the working out of a professional identity among ELT teachers (see Altman 1980, and Stevens 1981).

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5. Roy DUNNING 'Experimenting with Interaction' (KEYNOTE PAPER: full text appears in this issue; see also Abstracts 6 and 10). The East Midlands Graded Assessment Feasibility Study will be certificating its Level Two in 1982 - 83. The paper looks at some of the problems presented by an assessment syllabus seeking to define situations to elicit verbal interaction in French between two pupils. The paper will be supported by video examples of the language production discussed.
6. Elaine FREEDMAN 'Evaluation of the East Midlands Graded Assessment Feasibility Study' (linked to KEYNOTE PAPER). The evaluation of the East Midlands Graded Assessment Feasibility Study forms part of the work of the East Midland Regional Examinations Board C.S.E. Research Project. Evaluation of the Study has developed hand-in-hand with the Study itself since its inception in autumn 1979, and the paper describes the three phases of evaluation which have taken place. These are: 1979-80 pupil and teacher attitudes; 1980-81 pupil attitudes and achievement; 1981-82 pupil achievement at Level One, and pupil attitudes at Level Two of the Graded Assessment guidelines. The problems of design of such evaluations are discussed, and the results of the 1979-80 evaluation reported. These showed that the majority of pupils were enjoying both the teaching and the assessment aspects of the work, the questionnaire findings being substantiated by their voluntary comments. More than 70% of all the pupils (drawn from the whole ability range) felt the level of difficulty of both the teaching and the assessment to be appropriate for them. Furthermore, neither the enjoyment nor the difficulty of the teaching or the assessment was related to the ability level of the class involved, and lower ability

children showed the same degree of enthusiasm as their more able peers. The vast majority of the teachers also found their work on the Study to be very enjoyable, and the time-consuming nature of the preparation involved, especially for the assessment aspect, did not detract from this enjoyment. Their enjoyment was not connected to external factors, like the ability level of their classes, but was linked to their rate of progress through the units. The teachers thought that their pupils actively enjoyed the work and that progress in over half the classes was better than that they ordinarily expected. A close relationship between teacher and pupil opinions was found, and the pupils' enjoyment of both the teaching and the assessment strongly echoed their teachers' enthusiasm. As well as gathering the information needed to form part of the basis for discussions concerning the continuation of the Study, the evaluation has more recently provided a method for establishing the reliability, from school to school, of teachers' assessments of pupil performance. Furthermore, it will in addition be monitoring the scheme's standardisation procedures themselves.

7. Mike FRIEL (Bell P/G) 'Assessing spoken discourse in a communicative teaching programme'. One of the main concerns of communicative methodologists has been to establish criteria for their syllabus designs, teaching materials and tests which are based more on the linguistic operations the learners will be expected to perform than on the accuracy of discrete parts of their utterances. While this has stimulated numerous ideas for syllabus categories and activities for teaching, the design of new instruments to assess them has been relatively neglected. And it has usually been assumed that 'criterion referencing' of the kind envisaged requires a return to more subjective forms of test scoring. However, it is feasible to reconcile criterion referencing with objective scoring, and this paper presents a case for an assessment instrument which does just that. The Discourse Co-operation Test has been designed for use with learners attempting to acquire certain conversational skills in English, or any foreign language. It consists of three parts: Part 1 assesses learners' ability to co-operate and implicate (in the Gricean sense) when faced with an interlocutor who does not converse in the stereotyped pattern of the average coursebook. The learner is placed in unpredictable, 'real-time' conversational settings, and selects his replies from the series of regressive multiple choice alternatives presented to him in four short conversations. His speed of response is also scored. Part 2 assesses the learner's ability to select the grammatically accurate utterances presented in a more traditional multiple choice format. Again, both correct choice and time are assessed, the items tested being primarily those which contribute most to the cohesion of the discourse. Part 3 assesses the ability of the learner to produce correct responses when presented with the cue of a functional label in the mother tongue (as well as the 'bare bones' of the utterance). This part looks for 'appropriacy' of utterance, and calls for controlled creativity, while still being possible to score objectively. The tests are very simple to write, administer and score, and the results are proving reliable in initial trials. In 3-4 months, pre-tests and full-scale applications will have shown whether satisfactory reliability and validity can be attained. Discourse Co-operation Tests are suitable for continuous assessment and are also easily adapted for use with computers and language laboratories or for self-assessment with audio-tape. (University of Essex / 5 Rye Close, Brightlingsea, Essex)

8. Liz HAMP-LYONS 'The communicability of text'. In the reading process, there are three essential components: the reader, the writer, and the text. The point at which all three interact successfully may be called communication. When a fluent writer constructs a clear text which is read by a fluent reader with the appropriate background knowledge and experience, communication may take place. However, it is also quite possible that no communication will take place, or that miscommunication will occur. As the reader and the writer do not normally come face to face, communication between them takes place solely by means of the text: the extent to which the text mediates communication between reader and writer is referred to here as its communicability. The concept of communicability is introduced and discussed: some procedures for its investigation and measurement, and for the selection of communicable text for a given situation, are suggested. (Western Illinois University / Sept. '82: University of Edinburgh, Institute for Applied Language Studies, 21 Hill Place, Edinburgh EH8 9DP)
9. Janet HOLMES 'Speaking English with the Appropriate Degree of Conviction'. All languages have linguistic devices which enable their users to convey differing degrees of certainty concerning the validity of the proposition asserted and to make assertions with differing degrees of conviction. The paper discusses two scales and a number of categories for the classification of lexical devices expressing degrees of certainty and conviction in English. The data classified includes written and spoken material covering a wide range of topics, formal and informal contexts, male and female speakers and the speech of children as well as adults. The implications of the analysis for ESL learners are discussed. Native speakers of English clearly understand and sensitively interpret the modal and affective meaning of a wide range of lexical devices expressing certainty and conviction. Moreover the frequency of such devices in speech is approximately twice that in written language and varies according to the topic and function of the interaction. Since lexical "hedges" are perhaps more easily taught and learned than prosodic and grammatical strategies for expressing degrees of certainty and conviction, the second language teacher may find this classification useful in selecting items to teach and contexts for practising the expression of these aspects of meaning. (Till Christmas 1982, Lancaster, then New Zealand)  
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10. Nicola LEES (Bell P/G) 'Aspects of Standardisation within a Communicative Assessment Syllabus' (linked to KEYNOTE PAPER). The East Midlands Graded Assessment Syllabus comprises at present three levels, all at different stages of definition. Level One was certificated for the first time in Summer 1982, whereas Level Three is at present under preliminary experimentation. The project will continue to be called a

'feasibility study' as further levels develop towards 16+. This allows for any adjustments which may show themselves necessary with time. The syllabus is an assessment syllabus, in that it specifies functions to be assessed in each unit. There are two modes of assessment: Talking, which comprises Speaking and Listening (see Widdowson 1978) and Writing/Reading. At Level One there are eighty discrete oral items, whereas Level Two has three more integrated, interactive assessments. Assessment of Writing/Reading is optional and simply supportive of Talking, although it should become more functional at higher levels. It should be stressed that in the assessment syllabus there are no centrally administered tests, nor any CSE-type moderation procedures. Teachers carry out the continuous assessment in their own classrooms in normal teaching time. The EMREB syllabus has many features of a communicative syllabus -it specifies content in terms of functions, general and specific notions, uses the concepts of the information gap and of using language for transactional purposes. Furthermore, the criteria by which performance is to be assessed are communicative criteria: acceptability and appropriacy. The teacher is required to judge whether an utterance would be meaningfully interpreted by a native speaker in the way in which the speaker intended in that context. Clearly these features represent a new approach to assessment for all teachers, and a great deal of discussion and co-operation amongst participants is needed for them to come to grips with the problems arising. Although it is not a teaching syllabus, the EMREB syllabus necessarily has implications for the classroom practices of the teachers involved. One would expect to find pupils being prepared for the assessment procedures specified -working in pairs, using cue-cards, note-taking etc. and being encouraged to communicate as much as possible in French.

In my research during the school year 1981-82 I was investigating the extent to which following Level One of the assessment syllabus exerted a standardising influence, firstly on the classroom practices of the teachers and secondly on the assessments they made of their pupils' performance. Data were collected in several ways:-

- 1) systematic classroom observations of eight teachers throughout the year using an instrument of my own design;
- 2) interviews with these eight teachers;
- 3) organisation of and attendance at regular standardisation meetings during the year;
- 4) discussion of sample oral and written performances with native speakers.

As yet analysis of the data is only preliminary. However similarities and differences are already emerging. Early in the year teachers showed a high degree of disagreement in their judgements of oral and written performance, although their opinions gradually converged with successive meetings. Writing met less unanimity than Talking -maybe because teachers have traditional grammatical standards for judging writing, maybe because the standpoint of the 'native speaker' is less clear in assessing Writing. On the other hand assessing Talking at such an early stage is a completely new departure for teachers, and there are no established criteria to which they can refer. Through investigating the standardisation process within the context of a communicative assessment syllabus, I hope to reach a fuller understanding of the communicative criteria of acceptability and appropriacy.

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11. William LITTLEWOOD 'Foreign Language Performance and the Learner's Personality'. Some recent studies have shown how different speech communities prefer different strategies for 'doing things' with language. For example, compared with speakers of English, German and Hebrew speakers use more direct forms for requests, Japanese speakers are less inclined to disagree openly, and German speakers prefer different conversational strategies. Foreign learners often transfer their preferred mother-tongue strategies to their foreign-language performance. These studies are often taken as indicating further dimensions of communicative competence which foreign learners need to master. However, they raise important problems for foreign language teaching. In particular, they bring us face to face, in an extreme form, with a problem already inherent in communicative approaches to foreign language teaching: if we become over-zealous in specifying the communicative patterns which learners must acquire in order to perform appropriately, we risk reducing their chance of relating to the foreign language at a deeper level and integrating it with their own personality. An important issue in personality theory is the extent to which behaviour is controlled by consistent personality traits or by immediate situational factors. This issue is also important when we consider the relationship between preferred communicative strategies and the personality. It may also help us to understand how some but not all learners can adopt the preferred strategies of the foreign community.

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\* Bill Littlewood's paper was a revised version of a paper presented at the International Conference on Cross-Language Analysis and Second Language Acquisition', Jyväskylä, Finland, June 1982. It concluded the Annual Meeting at Newcastle and aroused much interest. The full paper and bibliography will appear, I hope, in the next Newsletter. JDM

12. Rosamond MITCHELL 'Mother Tongue and Target Language as Means of Communication in the FL Classroom'. In the context of the British school system, FL teaching is typically carried out by teachers who share the L1 of their pupils. In such a context the target FL is an optional means of communication, in contrast to those settings (such as many EFL classrooms) where the target language is the only available means of communication between teacher and pupils. Current theories of FL learning and acquisition suggest that experience of communicative FL use is an important element in the development of FL competence; given the constant availability of the L1 for communicative purposes, to what extent can this experience be made available in British classrooms? This paper provides some evidence on this question, drawing on observations and audio-recordings carried out in the classrooms of a group of secondary school teachers of French, who perceive themselves as committed to a 'communicative' approach to FL teaching (CFL). Preliminary analysis of lessons recorded with first and second year classes suggests that class activities with a phatic, instrumental or expressive purpose (real or simulated) are most likely to involve communicative FL use, while those with a substantive informational or 'skill training' purpose are likely to be L1-medium. Teachers highly committed to CFL use appear to practice 'topic avoidance', dealing with cognitively demanding, abstract or 'stressful' topics either via L1, or not at all. The French spoken by these teachers appears to be the dominant source of FL 'input' for their pupils. It is lexically and structurally more complex and diverse than the syllabuses they are teaching for active pupil mastery, with language items being selected according to communicative need. However the teachers' speech in French is substantially 'simpler' than their speech in English, having important resemblances with

foreigner and mother talk (Hatch 1979; Snow & Ferguson 1977). Lastly the paper notes as a significant factor in sustaining communicative FL use in the classroom, the teachers' comparative skill in using a repertoire of 'communication strategies' (Faerch & Kasper 1980; Tarone 1980) which enable them to handle the constantly recurring comprehension 'difficulties' of their pupils without resorting to L1. (The research described in this paper is funded by the Scottish Education Department.)

Faerch, C & Kasper, G. (1980) 'Processes and Strategies in FL learning and communication', Interlanguage Studies Bulletin Utrecht 5.1, pp.47-118.

Hatch, E. (1979) 'Interaction, input and communication strategies', paper presented at the First Nordic Symposium on Interlanguage, Helsinki.

Snow, C.E. & Ferguson, C.A. (1977) Talking to Children (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Tarone, E. (1980) 'Communication strategies, foreigner talk, and repair in interlanguage', Language Learning 30.2, pp.417-431.

13. Brian PAGE 'Defined syllabuses: crutch or straitjacket?'.  
This abstract, which went astray in the post, appears on p.27.

14. Brian PARKINSON 'The Evaluation of a "Communicative" French Course'. 'Tour de France', the Scottish National French Course for the 12-14 age group, is one of several recent school FL courses claiming (inter alia) to embody a 'communicative' approach. It is, however, unique among such courses in that the 'Commercial Version' was preceded by a 'Pilot Version' used for two years in 40 schools throughout Scotland, and subject to an extensive evaluation, designed both to provide data for those re-writing the course ('Formative Evaluation') and to lead to an 'Independent Evaluation Report'. The main activities of the Evaluation Project were as follows:-

- (i) A non-empirical 'critical study' of the pilot course rationale and materials, examining underlying linguistic and other assumptions, clarity and coherence of stated aims, provision within materials for achieving aims, etc.
- (ii) Study of teacher reaction to the course by questionnaire and interview.
- (iii) Analysis of patterns of discourse and classroom organisation in observed 'Tour De France' lessons, using a specially developed segmental coding system.
- (iv) Assessment of pupil attainment, proficiency and attitude by a battery of tests and essays administered near the end of the two-year course.

The present paper focuses on one part of the evaluation, relating to eight or nine 'Principles of communicative language use' expounded by the course writers in their theoretical documents. These were as follows:-

1. French as the main/only language of classroom management.
  2. Personalisation.
  3. Contextualisation.
  4. Communicative Function.
  5. (a) Initiation as well as response.  
(b) Pupil-pupil interaction as well as teacher-pupil interaction.
  6. Provision of authentic, relatively unstructured language.
  7. Comprehension exceeds production.
  8. Tolerance of certain kinds of error made in autonomous language use.
- The paper suggests that the most successful innovation was in the areas of Principle 5(b), where the 'activity sheets' designed to stimulate 'paired



speaking' were enthusiastically greeted and extensively used, and Principle 8, where the criterion of 'basic message accuracy in diagnostic speaking tests was also widely accepted, though its impact was limited by the use of different criteria for certification. As regards the other principles, however, there was a large gap between theory and observed practice. This reflected in part the unclear formulation of principles and/or the inadequate provision of materials, but also basic constraints of the British FLT situation which a course alone cannot expect to change. It should be noted that the course was in general favourably evaluated in many areas not covered by this paper, and that it was found to have been largely successful in meeting the felt needs among teachers which led to its writing. Moreover, criticisms of the pilot version will not in all cases apply to the commercial version now generally available. These matters are dealt with in the 'Independent Evaluation Report'. The research was funded by the Scottish Education Department.

Scottish Central Committee on Modern Languages Tour De France (Heinemann, London and Edinburgh). Stage 1 appeared in 1981, other stages appear at intervals.

Parkinson, B.L., McIntyre, D.I., Mitchell, R.F. 'Tour De France' Independent Evaluation Report Department of Education, University of Stirling (1982).

15. Brian PICKERING (Bell P/G) 'On Defining Vowel Targets on a Communicative Basis'. In the 1980 edition of his book, An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English, Gimson introduces the terms High Acceptability and Minimum General Intelligibility, intended as labels for two possible 'performance targets' towards which the foreign learner might strive in accordance with his own particular needs and interests. In describing the vowel systems of these two 'varieties' of English, Gimson draws vowel charts not with the dots of traditional diagrams marking the desired phonetic quality, but with much larger geometric shapes which are meant as an indication of 'permissible areas of production' (p.308) or tolerance limits. The recognition that, for communicative purposes, vowel quality may cover a far broader range than conventionally described, offers us the opportunity of defining what the communicatively relevant target areas might be for a given language teaching programme, which, in turn, would provide the language teacher with a practicable set of criteria upon which to base judgements about the relative progress of a student. Gimson does not, however, give any proposal for the way in which such tolerance limits might be quantitatively defined. As a first step towards such a definition, this paper aims to suggest a quantitative procedure, based upon an acoustic analysis of the variation in pronunciation of five female and five male speakers of common dialect background. Variation between speakers is, of course, considerable because of physiological differences and, since it is reasonable to assume that the ear ignores or levels out in some way such variation, it was necessary to make use of a normalization technique when analysing the data obtained. In an attempt to incorporate current psycho-acoustic theory, a recently developed method was compared with a well-established normalization technique (Fant 1975). At the same time, some of the token-to-token variation within the speech of one speaker was analysed and compared with the inter-speaker variation. In both cases, account was taken of the extent to which variation might be said to lie beneath the perceptual threshold and therefore to be of little relevance in establishing tolerance limits. (Copies of the paper are available from the author: J. B. Pickering, Phonetics Laboratory, 41 Wellington Square, Oxford.)

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- Stevens, P. (1977) New Orientations in the Teaching of English (Oxford University Press).
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(\* = Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden), Speech Transmission Laboratory Quarterly Progress and Status Report.)

16. Bryan ROLLASON 'Historical and sociological barriers to communication: the teaching of Canada's official languages'. After the passage of the Official Languages Act in Canada in 1969, language teaching expanded in the Federal Public Service, in educational institutions and in the private sector. Federal services became increasingly available in both official languages across the country, but this activity was not

matched at the provincial level. It became clear that the country was experiencing an anti-French 'backlash', and, through the early 70s, particularly the election campaign of 1972 and the Air Traffic Control dispute of 1976, the situation became more bitter. The federal cabinet was split on almost every issue with any linguistic overtones, the Parti-Québécois was elected in Quebec in November 1976 and Quebec refused to participate in the repatriation of the constitution of Canada in 1982. Concurrently with these political events, developments in curriculum, methodology and practice have been taking place in the teaching of Canada's official languages. These developments are, however, often thwarted at the classroom level, resulting in a low success rate in the official languages programmes, motivational problems and apparent stagnation. This paper identifies some of the major barriers to communication which presently exist inside both linguistic groups in Canada and suggests some ways in which tensions may be lowered, thus allowing more effective teaching and testing of Canada's official languages and ultimately better communication across the country. (Bryan Rollason is Director of the Language Centre, Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston, Ontario, Canada K7L 2W3.)

17. John TRIM (CILT) 'Yes, but what do you mean by "Communication"?'  
Some critics of 'communicative' language teaching have accused its proponents of impoverishing education by abandoning cultural values. Their argument is based on a correspondingly impoverished conception of communication. Is it, however, possible to pay due regard to the full meaning of the term without the phrase 'communicative language teaching' becoming vacuous? Is a form of language teaching which is not for communication conceivable, or likely?

In fact, explicit emphasis on communication marks a major shift in educational values and aims. The paper attempts to characterise this shift in relation to different modes and levels of communication and discusses its consequences for language teaching.

18. Anna TROSBORG 'Cooperation in Native-Nonnative Speaker Communication'  
In recent research on communication strategies (CS) little importance has been attached to the interaction between the L2 learner and his interlocutor. Emphasis has been on the learner's performance, and CS have been defined as his attempts to express or decode meaning in the target language (TL) in situations in which the appropriate TL rules have not been formed. Data have been derived mainly from description exercises, translation studies etc., in which the main goal can hardly be described as a natural exchange of ideas, and analyses have been restricted to a pre-occupation with the learner. The interactional function of communication and the part played by the interlocutor have been neglected (cf. Tarone 1981). The strategies he may use and their eventual contribution to shared meanings have seldom been considered in a study of CS. The data for the present study derive from the spontaneous interaction, alternately in English and Danish, between two adults, an Englishman learning Danish as a foreign language and a Dane at an intermediate level of English. The utterances of both interlocutors are transcribed and analysed. Thus CS are not seen only as strategies describing the learner's interlanguage in a situation where he lacks the appropriate TL rules. The study also takes into consideration the native speaker's strategies acknowledging that successful communication is dependent on shared interaction and develops Tarone's notion of language as 'a living organism created by both speaker

and hearer'. Focusing on the performance of both interlocutors in a natural discourse setting revealed many instances in which mutual understanding was reached through the joint efforts of both interlocutors. They used their differing linguistic systems to negotiate an agreement of meanings, and through cooperation it became possible to share ideas and intentions. Furthermore, a comparison of the L2 learner's performance with that of the TL speaker showed that many of the CS, as well as false starts, self-corrections, pauses etc., characteristic of the L2 learner's performance, are also found in the performance of the TL speaker. Finally, the importance of the feedback provided by the native speaker for language learning and communication will be considered, and a parallel will be drawn to mother-child verbal interaction. (Copies of the paper available from the author: Anna Trosborg, Dept. of English, University of Aarhus, 8000 Aarhus C, Denmark.)

Faerch, C., & G. Kasper (eds.) Strategies in interlanguage communication (London: Longman, in press).

Tarone, E., 'Some thoughts on the notion of communication strategy' TESOL Quarterly 15.3 (1981).

Trosborg, A. 'Communication strategies: Relating theory and practice', paper presented at International Conference on Contrastive Projects (Cross-Language-Analysis and Second Language Acquisition), Jyvaeskylae 1982 (to appear in Conference Proceedings).

19. Josephine WILDING 'Which way to Jupiter: the visual perception of writing systems'. The concept of letter within abecedaria may be demonstrated as dependent on acro-logical processes operating within the phonological organisation of particular languages, and definable within the Piagetian epistemological principles of combination, conservation and reversibility. Grapho-phonemic correspondences depend also on the para-linguistic operations of the visual mechanism as these are applied to the successful functioning of writing systems in the actions of reading and hand-writing. Setting aside possible known defects (and the claims of Frank Smith), the human eye appears optimally adapted to the visual processing of written language. The receptors retain an image so that strings of symbols may be accumulated as in words. In addition, the eye effectively improves the retinal image by enhancing contrasts in a number of different ways, while the vertical and horizontal meridians seem to be specialised as frames of reference in the accurate recognition of direction. However, it is the reduced, reversed image produced by the functioning of the optical lens on the retina that commands neural interpretation, and forces the brain to trigger off discriminatory transformations; the mind is obliged to refer to itself. The parameters of visual distinctive features for written characters have been difficult to isolate mainly because researchers have concentrated on European lower-case forms or ignored orientation as an integral aspect of their discreteness. Hitherto the theoretical difficulty has been: (a) to locate the visual discrimination of characters within the appropriate dimension; (b) to consider writing systems as generalisations evolving from the inter-action of different dimensions. By employing diachronic and synchronic examples, simple optical apparatus and a classroom experiment, however, one hopes to demonstrate where the essentially simple visual contrasts lie, and that these contrasts have universal application, accounting for the diversity and direction of linearity, horizontal and vertical, of writing systems. For example, in English we appear to read and write through three dimensions: (a) Capital letters are discriminated in quantum space (four dimensions); (b) Lower case and direction in two

dimensions; (c) Cursive writing (linearity) in one dimension. In the classroom experiment, child subjects demonstrated that their writing was clearly affected by their own orientation towards the visual source, while handedness and speed of adaptation were also important related parameters.

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Haas, W. (ed.) Writing without Letters (Manchester Univ. Press 1976).  
Smith, F. Psycholinguistics and Reading (Holt, Rinehart & Winston 1973).  
Southgate, V., H. Arnold & S. Johnson Extending beginning reading  
(Heinemann 1981).  
Ullman, B.L. Ancient Writing and its Influence (New York: 1932; M.I.T. 1969).

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#### ADDENDUM

13. Brian PAGE 'Defined syllabuses - crutch or straitjacket?'  
Any syllabus is a definition but the term 'defined syllabus' has come to mean a testing syllabus which gives details of the vocabulary and grammar required to be learnt in order to pass the tests. These lists may or may not be accompanied by sets of functions and notions, topics, tasks, etc. The arguments for and against such syllabuses are discussed in the context of public examinations in foreign languages in the United Kingdom, the present debate on criteria for new examinations at 16+, and the work of the Modern Languages Project of the Council of Europe. The discussion concerns both theoretical and practical aspects of the nature of communication, testing techniques and the backwash effect of teaching and learning.

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#### 6. PARTICIPANTS LIST

Coming.

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II

RECENT BAAL SEMINARS

1. BAAL Seminar: Intonation & Discourse

Held at the Department of Modern Languages, University of Aston in Birmingham, 5 - 7 April 1982.

Organiser: Catherine Johns-Lewis (Dept. of Mod. Lang., Univ. of Aston in Birmingham, Gosta Green, Birmingham, B4 7ET.

Tel: 021-359-3611 Ext. 4235).

Organiser's Report

The theme of the seminar, attended by 73 participants, was intonation in actually occurring discourse, beyond and within the sentence. There was no expectation that a single coherent view would emerge of 'the function(s) and realisation of intonation', nor that description would be stateable in terms of one set of categories or type of model. Rather, the seminar aimed to allow those working on intonation from quite different points of view to communicate their findings.

The papers fall into five main sections:-

1. Experimental and Acoustic Studies
2. Semantic Macro-Structures and Discoursal Functions
3. Intonation as Signal in Interaction
4. Regional and other Variation in Intonation
5. Intonation and Discourse in other Languages.

One major topic of debate at the seminar was the difference between experimental and descriptive studies. Another was whether current descriptions of intonation offer phonetic and phonological statements (hence semantically/functionally opposed categories) or whether in fact we are still in the position of purely phonetic statements; or whether we are assuming phonological categories, and unable to state their range of phonetic realisations. A third lively area of discussion, related of course to the second, was the status of disciplines of regional variation.

The seminar left participants feeling that the problems for analysts of intonation in actually occurring discourse are at least more sharply appreciated than they were.

The seminar benefited from the presence of the sizeable book exhibition, and the help of publishers in setting this up. The conference brochure, in which advertising figured prominently, contains abstracts of papers, and continues to be in demand. There are still a few copies left. (Cost £2.50 including postage; cheques payable to Aston Modern Languages Club; apply to Catherine Johns-Lewis, seminar organiser.)

Financial support from BAAL, the British Academy, the British Council, publishers and advertisers made it possible to assist speakers from overseas, some 12 countries being represented, and their presence gave an opportunity to hear of work being done outside of Britain.

August 1982

Catherine Johns-Lewis

Notes on the Seminar from two participants

1. Madalena Cruz-Ferreira (Manchester)

The BAAL Seminar on 'Intonation and Discourse' was the first one held on this particular subject, and great care was taken to offer a comprehensive overview of its implications, with contributions from leading authorities in the area. The scope of the papers presented ranged from basic theoretical issues to reports on recent empirical studies. It included, among others, developments

\* \*  
\* Madalena is a Ph.D. student in Linguistics at Manchester University.

in acoustic analysis, particularly applied to a phonetic definition of discourse units, and several accounts of the function and characteristics of intonation in other languages and dialects. The Seminar thus catered for a wide range of interests and contributed valuable proposals and insights to a rapidly developing research area. Its interest may perhaps be best assessed by the consistently high number of attendants at each session.

There was noticeably efficient assistance to the participants, and a very friendly atmosphere in which the work took place, making possible easy contact and discussion among the participants, both during the sessions and in the ensuing informal meetings.

## 2. Eugene Winter (Hatfield)

First, I must make it clear that I was not expecting to report on this seminar, but I would like to do so because of the effect it had on me. I was attracted to this seminar because the title meant to me that the speakers would tackle the live thing. You know how long we've all paid lip service to the notion that speech is primary. I was not disappointed. The 18 papers presented were of an impressive standard and most stimulating. It was especially helpful to have the impressive booklet to the conference that Catherine Johns-Lewis had prepared for us.

As someone who needed a contrast and change from written paragraphs, I was particularly interested in the intonation cuing of their spoken equivalents, in the general phenomena of interruptions and of discourse types. I was very inspired by Dr. Elizabeth Couper-Kuhlen's notion of prosodic cohesion in her paper 'Intonational Macro-structures'. Her description of 5 types of (semantic) cohesive relation rang true in my ears. Drs. P. French and J. Local's paper 'The Prosodic Structure of Interruptions in English Conversation', together with their superb handout, helped to clarify many misconceptions I had about what was actually happening when interruptions of the speaker took place. Catherine Johns-Lewis's quietly confident paper 'Intonation as Differentiator of Discourse Types' was a salutary reminder of the very important cues in intonation which we take for granted and ignore.

My own very perverse taste in this seminar doesn't mean that I did not appreciate any of the other papers. Unlike other conferences I have attended I could truthfully say 'never a dull moment'. Indeed, the variety and breadth of the other papers opened my eyes to the need for regular conferences of this standard for all matters of spoken discourse. Such was my elation at the whole of this conference that I and my colleagues at Hatfield are hoping to emulate it by repeating it, and asking all the previous contributors to follow up their papers. We can only hope we can approach the standards of organisation which Catherine Johns-Lewis achieved. This has been one of the best conferences which I have attended in years.

Could we remind readers that the Hatfield (BAAL) Discourse Conference is being held from Monday 11th to Wednesday 13th April 1983. Write for details to: Dr. James Monaghan, Conference Secretary. Send a 100-word abstract of your paper. (The School of Humanities, Hatfield Polytechnic, Hatfield, Herts., AL10 9AB.) See also p.55.

\* \*  
\* Eugene is Reader in Contemporary English at Hatfield Poly.

## Participants list

Coming.

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2. LMP/BAAL Seminar: Language & Ethnicity (Jan. '82)

See N/L14 (Spring '82) pp.4-16 for extended coverage. With the Organiser's Report which follows, and which mentions publication now due of selected papers, documentation of this Seminar is complete.

Organiser's Report

This seminar was a BAAL conference-type seminar rather than a BAAL committee-type seminar. It attracted wide interest and over 80 applicants were accepted, the only reason for that limit being the size of the room used. The seminar was jointly organised by the Linguistic Minorities Project and BAAL, the joint directors were Verity Saifullah Khan and Alan Davies and the administration and financial arrangements were taken care of by Jenny Norvick and other members of LMP. The seminar lasted from the afternoon of Thursday January 7 to lunch time on Saturday January 9 and was housed in the London University Institute of Education.

The intention of the organisers was to bring together scholars working in disciplines relating to Language and Ethnicity, theoretical and applied, so as to view language as a form of ethnicity and tease out ways in which ethnicity is shaped and transmitted through language. Papers were invited and circulated beforehand to all participants and then introduced in the seminar by appointed discussants who usually worked in fields other than those of the presenters. The programme was divided into a series of Perspectives, each with one or more papers, viz.:-

1. The Social Psychological Perspective  
Paper: R. le Page and A. Tabouret-Keller; discussant C. Husband.
2. The Educational Perspective  
Papers: P. Newsam, A. McLeod; discussants T. Gorman and M. Stubbs.
3. The Sociological Perspective  
Papers: M. Blanc and J. Hamers, G. Williams; discussant D. Parkin.
4. The Sociolinguistic Perspective  
Papers: V. Edwards, R. Hewitt; discussant C. Criper.
5. The Social Anthropological Perspective  
Papers: L. Baric, L. Milroy; discussant G. Cohen.
6. The Trainer's Perspective  
Papers: P. Furnborough, T. Jupp, R. Munns, C. Roberts, R. Grillo, E. Nightingale; discussant V. S. Khan.
7. The Pupil's Perspective  
Paper: H. Rosen; discussant M. Rosen.

In addition to the academic programme two enjoyable social evenings were held: a 'Poets' Evening' celebrating poetry from different cultures, and a party in LMP with video of multi-cultural classrooms.

The drawbacks of the seminar were threefold: first there were really too many participants for any viable discussion to take place, second only a small number were residential, most going home or staying with friends, and third the fields covered were too wide. But the advantages were considerable and clearly won the day: at least five reports on the seminar were circulated shortly after, buff and rebuff papers written overnight circulated freely during the seminar, a selected set of the papers will appear as a special issue of the Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development edited by the present writer in September 1982, and participants clearly enjoyed the occasion very much. The organisers thank BAAL for a donation of £50 and LMP for making up the deficit of £85. The total cost of the seminar was £1784.

cont.



This seminar has helped in charting the areas common to language and ethnicity. The interest in these areas is such that BAAL should consider the possibility of a follow-up seminar in perhaps two years time concentrating on a more narrow theme, perhaps that of the implications for training and education of theoretical discussions of 'acts of identity'.

August 1982

Alan Davies  
Dept. of Linguistics  
University of Edinburgh

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III

RECENT CONFERENCES ELSEWHERE

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1. Linguistics Association of Great Britain

Following Connie Cullen's reports in the Spring issue (N/L14) we have received the following report from a Well-Placed Correspondent. Our thanks are recorded in the Editorial.

LAGB Autumn '82 Meeting (Canterbury)

The latest meeting of the LAGB was held at the University of Kent at Canterbury (local organiser Bob Veltman) from Wednesday to Friday the 22nd to 24th September, 1982. Over 100 people attended, and enjoyed a programme satisfyingly dominated by graduate students and recently appointed staff. There was even one paper given jointly by a postgraduate and an undergraduate. The future looks surprisingly undepressing.

The opening evening was devoted to two papers of general interest: an overview of the methods and results of the Bristol language acquisition group, presented by Gordon Wells, and an analysis of the syntax of aircraft radio messages 'Do pilots speak pidgin?' by Alison Davis (Ulster Polytechnic).

Thursday morning was reserved for syntax. The first two papers: 'Welsh passives' by Bob Borsley (West London I.H.E. but now back at U.C.L.) and 'On so-called pronouns and articles in English' by Rose Maclaran (Birmingham University but now at Dublin) both exploited Generalised Phrase Structure Grammar as developed by Gazdar et al. The second session covered a variety of disparate topics: Peter Zohrab (U.C.L.) in a paper called 'Referential dependency, coindexing and coreference' attacked theoretical linguist(ic)s in general and the reliance on intuitions in particular; Hale Öztekin (U.C.L.) discussed the implications of agreement phenomena in Turkish finite sentential complements for the Government-Binding framework, and Susan Price (Salford) accounted for some frighteningly complex Spanish comparative sentences with a new 'accessibility condition'.

The afternoon was given over to problems of aspect. Harold Somers (UMIST) gave 'The classification of events by Vendler and Dowty compared to Chafe's and Cook's verb classification' and then asked the audience if he really should have; whereas Barbara Prangell (U.C.L.) was in no doubt that the Praguean notion of 'privative opposition' was the correct tool for handling the contrast between Polish Perfective/Imperfective and English Progressive/Simple; and Rose Morris (U.C.L.) gave a convincing account of the correlations among participant roles, transitivity and aspect in (especially) English.

After dinner, John Lyons (Sussex) gave a brief outline of the activities of the European Science Foundation and its involvement in linguistics. He urges anyone interested in its various projects to contact him directly at Sussex.

The evening session was the turn of the pragmatics. First Joanna Channell (York) sort of gave a paper or something on 'Vague expressions', and then Robyn Carston and Stephen Neale (both U.C.L.), using the neo-Gricean framework of Sperber & Wilson, taught us how to distinguish misleading utterances from downright lies. The session ended with John Partridge from the host institution being 'Sorry!' - analytically speaking, and indeed looking the part as he gave his paper swathed in bandages.

The last morning began with two papers on diachronic linguistics. Kate Burridge (S.O.A.S.) gave a witty and macabrely illustrated talk 'On the development of negation and other related changes in Dutch', and Joan Beal (Newcastle) took a diffuse look at deletion in the history of English, arguing that most previous analyses had been simplistic. The second session had Frans Plank (Hanover) regaling us with his usual array of mind-bogglingly complex morphology, from Quechua and everywhere else; while Max Wheeler (Liverpool) neatly dissected 'Atomic phonology' for us —perhaps splitting the atom so we don't have to. The morning ended with Graham Nixon (Sheffield) discussion 'Articulatory clarity and the -i variable'.

The final session, lexical semantics, was opened by Tze Chi-Wei (Beijing Foreign Trade Institute and Edinburgh) discussing the problem of context-bound synonymy: i.e. where different words may mean the same in some contexts but not all. Alan Cruse (Manchester) entertained us with some highly suspicious speculations about the private lives of sundry animals in a (successful) attempt to deal with certain problems of hyponymy; and the proceedings closed with a paper by Kit-Ken Loke (York) on 'New evidence for the inherent meaning of sortal classifiers in Mandarin and Cantonese', appropriately reinforcing the fact that the Association welcomes papers analysing exotic data as well as ones propagating exotic theories.

#### News from the Business Meeting

At the business meeting it was decided that, while funds permit, the LAGB will invite a distinguished overseas scholar to address the Association at each meeting, not only at the Spring meeting as heretofore. Professor Eve Clark (Stanford) has already accepted an invitation to come and talk on language acquisition at the Spring meeting next March (this will be the annual Linguistics Association Lecture), and we are approaching Francesco Antinucci (Rome) to give what will be called the 'Henry Sweet lecture' at the Autumn meeting 1983.

Following a suggestion by Rose Maclaran, it was also decided that at future meetings the first afternoon would be set aside for some form of teach-in/seminar/discussion of some area of current theoretical interest. Three of the areas tentatively suggested were: Generalised Phrase Structure Grammar; Government-Binding Theory; Metrical Phonology. Details of what will actually be provided at the Sheffield meeting will be given in the relevant circular.

The editorial future of the Journal of Linguistics was also discussed, and arrangements are in hand to ensure a smooth transition (probably into Nigel Vincent's hands) when Erik Fudge's term of office ends on the last day of 1983.

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It is worth noting that impecunious members of LAGB —especially those who give papers— receive considerable financial help towards their conference expenses. Why not join? Information about the Association appears inside the back cover of JL. Applications for membership should be sent to the Membership secretary: Andrew Compton, Department of Linguistics, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham NG7 2RD.

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2. Workshops in the Role and Training of Helpers for Self-Access Language Learning Systems (Edinburgh, May 1st - 3rd 1981).

Bill Cousin writes:

In May 1981 a weekend of Workshops in the Role and Training of Helpers for Self-Access Language Learning Systems was mounted in the British Council Edinburgh Centre under the auspices of the British Council and the Scottish Centre for Education Overseas, (S.C.E.O.), Moray House College, Edinburgh. An international group of some 25 experts with a known interest in such approaches to language learning met by invitation to share experience from as far afield as Chulalongkorn University in Thailand and the CRAPEL in the Université de Nancy II in France.

James McCafferty, Director of Consultancies with the British Council and on secondment to S.C.E.O., with the help of Leslie Dickinson of S.C.E.O., had prepared a simulated background to the Workshops, - the setting up of a self-access system for a German banking consortium, - and with this framework, participants were able to concentrate on the problems of the role and training of helpers.

It was considered that the examination of the issues was well-timed as the increasing specialisation of the demands for language instruction were bound to lead to an increase in the individualised and self-access approaches familiar through the work of the CRAPEL in France and, to a lesser extent, through on-going work in S.C.E.O. There was evidence for a considerable spread of self-access approaches to language learning.

The role of the helper appeared from the Workshops to be a very varied one, drawing on skills such as librarianship and talents such as counselling which were not necessarily to be found in the traditionally trained teacher. However such skills would probably be provided from within a team of helpers not all necessarily teachers though for the foreseeable future it was likely that teachers would supply the bulk of the team of helpers.

Helpers would probably learn the skills necessary on an ongoing programme which would underline their strengths and weaknesses -for sympathetic counselling, for example. As the sort of learning networks based on authentic texts delineated by James McCafferty might be rather unlike conventional teaching materials it was likely that helpers would need great confidence in the resource of materials and support in the initial stages of exploiting it.

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Bill Cousin's Report of the Workshops (and the other Occasional Papers listed below) are available from S.C.E.O., Moray House College of Education, Holyrood Road, EDINBURGH, EH8 8AQ.

1. David Carver & Michael J. Wallace (Eds) SCEO Microteaching Papers (1981) £1.50
2. SCEO/BAAL: Papers for Workshops in Self-Directed Language Learning (1980) £1.50
3. Leslie Dickinson (Ed) Report of the SCEO/BAAL Workshops in Self-Directed Language Learning (1980) £1.50
4. Michael J. Wallace Microteaching and the Teaching of English as a Second or Foreign Language (Research Report to ODA, Year 1) (1979) £5.00
5. Michael J. Wallace Microteaching and the Teaching of English as a Second or Foreign Language (Research Report to ODA, Year 2) (1980) £5.00
6. David Carver & Leslie Dickinson (Eds) Self-Directed Learning: Collected Papers in Self-Directed Learning in English Language Learning (1982) £1.50
7. Bill Cousin (Ed) Report of the Workshops in the role and training of helpers for Self-Access language learning systems (1982) £1.50

(Cheques payable to Moray House College of Education)

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IV

ARTICLES

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1. Michael STUBBS

Language, education and society:  
on editing books on applied linguistics.

The editor of the Newsletter has asked me to write a short article on my experiences of editing a series of books on applied linguistic topics, as an example of one kind of activity, mainly academic from my point of view, but partly commercial, which BAAL members find themselves doing. The series in question is entitled Language, Education and Society, and is published by Routledge and Kegan Paul. RKP asked me to take on the general editorship in 1979, the first book is being published in autumn 1982, another ten or so books are in press or under contract and in preparation, and should therefore appear over the next two or three years. And I have vaguer plans for books which will appear after that.

The main duties of the academic editor of such a series are to find authors and books, to assess the merit of proposals or whole manuscripts which arrive out of the blue or as the result of specific invitations, and to try and provide constructive comments on draft chapters of books in preparation.

What I find most exciting about such work is to see individual books grow from sometimes vague initial proposals to often rather different finished and polished products, and overall to see a whole section of a publisher's list build up from the rather hazy initial idea which I had of such a series.

My own responsibility is therefore predominantly academic, in trying to advise the publisher on the academic merit of the book. It would, however, be unrealistic if I did not keep an eye on whether the book is likely to be a commercial success. I have to try and advise also on likely audiences, since the books in the series are aiming for the most part at the mass market end of the academic range, and mainly, though not exclusively, at student audiences. A very interesting article from the academic publisher's point of view has been provided by Stevenson in the Times Higher Educational Supplement, 5 June 1981. One point which he makes is that it is becoming increasingly common for authors to be introduced to publishers via what he calls "academic book brokers", of which one variant is the general editor of a series. More books are nowadays being commissioned within series, though he emphasises that publishers still always welcome unsolicited ideas.

There are two basic, related decisions to be taken at the outset of such a series by the academic editor and the editor at the publishing house with whom he works: whether to have a series of books which "covers" an area of knowledge in some comprehensive and systematic way; and whether to have all the books of identical or similar format, length and level of difficulty. We decided against both of these courses from the very beginning.

A clear example of a series which does attempt a comprehensive coverage of an area, with all books of identical format, laid out according to a Baconian conceptual classification, is the Methuen Essential Psychology series. The basic conception of such series, which is therefore very different from mine, seems to be that there is a finite number of topics which have to be covered. Such a strategy may well be appropriate for an area which is fairly well defined, perhaps by academic tradition. Comparable series, at least in format, are the Fontana Modern Masters and the Oxford Past Masters series. They are admittedly open ended lists of masters, with no internal structure to the list, but the underlying assumption must be that there is a decideable list of "masters" which can be drawn up. In such series, then, first the topic is decided and then an author is found.

A series such as the red Cambridge University Press textbooks on linguistics must cover at least a basic number of topics, though even here it is evident that many of the books in the series are not attempts at a neutral coverage of a topic, but are personal theoretical statements, and all the more interesting for that. Rather more open ended again is the Blackwell series on Language in Society, where it would be difficult if not impossible to decide a specific number of topics in advance, since topics will to a large extent be defined by their authors; although there is an attempt here to keep the level of the writing constant, at approximately third year undergraduates and above. The Longman series on Applied Linguistics and Language Study would seem to be another example of this genre of series.

A rather different type of series again is one where the subject matter is rather more specialised. For example the blue CUP linguistics books are much more specialised monographs on narrower topics than their red counterparts. Or again, the Edward Arnold series on Language Disability and Remediation is an example of rather more specialised books. In such series, the strategy must be in general to find an author first and invite him or her to write about a special area of interest and expertise.

For the RKP series, we rejected immediately the decide-the-topics-then-find-the-authors model. First, it is simply not obvious that the area of

Language, Education and Society can be laid out in advance according to any logical and comprehensive plan. On the contrary, any attempt to do so would probably merely reflect my own particular preoccupations and blind spots and would tend to exclude innovative ideas from authors. Second, there is the very general danger that, having settled on a topic, one is unable to find a good author and ends up with a poor book.

If my editorial strategy sounds rather hit-and-miss or even hopelessly vague, then of course it can only be judged against the books which eventually appear in the series. However, although I do not have specific topics comprehensively mapped out in advance, I do have what I think is a coherent editorial view. Some of the books in the series may well advance knowledge of different specialist topics. Other books are not on specialist technical areas, but aim rather to advance the quality of rational debate on topics of educational and social importance. It is my firm belief that academics have a responsibility to write clearly and persuasively about language. I do not mean that each individual linguist has such a responsibility. Fundamental research, with no foreseeable practical applications, must always continue, and the choice of whether to concentrate predominantly or exclusively on such research will always be based at least partly on individual ability and preference. But, as a group, linguists have the responsibility to convey the best of current research and knowledge to those practitioners who need it. One very simple argument in favour of this view is that, if professional and trained linguists do not write about language, then others will. And we could all cite discussions of language by non-linguists where basic facts have been badly mangled and conceptual muddles abound. In addition, whether anybody writes about language or not, practical value judgements and socially important decisions will continue to be made by everyone involved from individual teachers to governments. It is surely better that practical decisions which affect thousands of children are based on the best research available, and on the best and most rational debate that can be mustered. Even if linguists do not have all the answers, they could at least be expected to contribute valuable material to the debate.

Ultimately, the problem is to find the correct balance between current research and theory and practical applications, and I take it that this is one definition of applied linguistics.

The main function of such a series, as I see it, is therefore to disseminate important ideas to people who need them. Just what effect academic ideas will have in practice is always impossible to predict

accurately, not least because authors can never write in a vacuum. Especially in the area of language in education, they are always writing in the context of well-entrenched ideas and prejudices. Yet dissemination and the best way to present ideas is often not explicitly considered as an issue in its own right.

A more definite idea of the series will emerge if I provide a list of the books currently in preparation. (Readers will recognise the names of several BAAL members amongst the authors.) The first book to appear is Linguistics and the Teacher edited by Ronald Carter, and containing articles by Gillian Brown, Peter Gannon HMI, Michael Halliday, Katharine Perera, and John Sinclair. It also contains a version of Dick Hudson's article on what all linguists can agree on, which has been reproduced recently in this Newsletter (N/L15), and an article by Mike Riddle, also well known for his work on linguistics in schools for BAAL and LAGB. This is an excellent first book in the series, since it is specifically on practical linguistics for teachers, and not on the rather vague flirting with the more peripheral aspects of language study which characterises much teacher training. The following books are in press or in an advanced stage of preparation:-

Margaret Meek and some of her colleagues have written a case study of teaching several pupils with reading difficulties, an excellent example of action research, in which the roles of teacher and researcher are inseparable.

Lesley and James Milroy are writing a book on authority in language: a sociolinguistic analysis of prescriptivism.

Mary Willes is writing a book on how children are turned into pupils, based on her observational research in infant schools.

Margaret Deuchar is writing a book on British sign language used by the deaf.

David Pimm is writing a book on the language of mathematics and of mathematics teaching.

Ken Levine is writing a book on literacy and illiteracy in advanced societies, based on field work and case studies in an English city.

Kim Plunkett is writing a social psychological study of the development of language and thought.

Elinor Ochs and Bambi Schieffelin are preparing a collection of their very well known articles on the acquisition of conversational competence.

Verity Khan and her colleagues at the Linguistic Minorities Project are preparing two books on their work, one aimed predominantly at researchers, and one at teachers.



And Ron Carter has begun work on a second book which will provide an introductory textbook on educational linguistics, systematically illustrated with naturally occurring texts and discourse, spoken and written.

Having said above that my basic strategy has been to find the author then the topic, I do however admit to having in mind several topics on which interesting books could be written, but for which I have not yet found an author. These include:-

- a fresh approach to EFL, ESL and/or ESP;
- a historical study of the changing place of language and languages in the British and/or American education system;
- a discussion of language planning and policy in schools, LEAs and/or at government level;
- children's writing and/or books written for children.

Proposals are welcome in these and other areas.

I am unsure of the genre in which this article is written. It seems to hover uncertainly between an attempted definition of applied linguistics, Don's Diary, and an extended advertisement. Its overall illocutionary and perlocutionary intent are therefore also obscure. However, I conclude by issuing a welcome to any proposals for books from BAAL members. The proposal may take the form of an initial letter to me, or a more detailed description of a project, or of course a draft manuscript.

Michael Stubbs

Dept. of Linguistics,  
Univ. of Nottingham, NG7 2RD

September 1982

## 2. Derrick SHARP

### The Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development

At the time of writing, July 1982, the Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development is halfway through publication of its third volume, each volume including four issues. From the beginning the aim has been to range widely, geographically, in content and in level. The stated intention was to publish articles "making a contribution to theory ..... reporting research studies and ..... describing educational systems, teaching or learning strategies or assessment procedures" (Editorial, Vol. 1, No. 1). So far we have succeeded in maintaining a reasonable balance amongst the many and varied interests in the multilingual and multicultural fields.

Since the time some four years ago when we started to plan the launching of the Journal, 53 countries have been involved in some way in the production. Mostly this means that articles have been submitted, but we have also received contributions in the form of book reviews and reports for our regular sections on work in progress and readers' response. All countries are multilingual and multicultural to some extent, and we are expecting the number represented in our pages to continue to rise steadily, quite apart from those to be found in our subscription list.

It is not easy to categorise the topics covered so far, but it is important to make the attempt in order to indicate the range of our concerns and the type of contribution we seek. Theory has figured largely, as in an examination of bilingualism and biculturism as individual and societal phenomena, and in cross-cultural research on cognitive style. Naturally there is a strong link between theory and practice, as in any applied field, illustrated by articles on speech therapy and the bilingual child, on studies of socio-cultural factors affecting bilinguals' attitudes and attainment, and on early bilingualism. Language acquisition, particularly the practicalities of bilingual development, is a recurring theme. There is a growing interest in bringing up children bilingually in the family, and we have had accounts of infant bilingualism in Spanish/English, English/German, English/Finnish and Danish/Finnish. The wider context of school has included a study of language switching in the elementary classroom and the investigation of mother/child language switching in a bilingual community in Wales. Fieldwork, often concerned with language acquisition, has also covered studies of bilingualism

in schools and of bilingual educational policy. Other articles have explored multicultural education programmes and multicultural remedial education.

Ethnic minorities constitute a very large category, which includes studies of migrant and guest workers in Scandinavia and Europe, and of Asian workers in the U.S.A. One paper looked more generally at ethnic diversity in American classrooms, another raised the issue of whether Hindi and Urdu are two languages or one, and considered the educational implications for immigrants in England. Other topics were a study of minority schools designed to preserve mother tongues; and examination of Asian language schools in England; an account of the language and cultural features of Bengali families in Cardiff; attitudes to English among Asian pupils in England; and studies of Mexican-American and Anglo-American elementary school students and of Anglo-American and Latvian-American students, both in the U.S.A. Articles with a more theoretical bias included a bilingual model for immigrant children, and the psychological assessment of immigrant children.

In the category of language policies and literacy programmes we find a mixed bag. There have been examinations of language policies in specific situations, such as African primary education, triglossia in Nigerian education, or the language medium in Hong Kong secondary schools. Literacy programmes have featured sometimes in the context of particular countries, such as Ghana and the Sudan, sometimes concerned with the wider, more complex issues of mother tongue and minority languages and the relationship between them. We have also published articles on mother tongue maintenance among linguistic minorities in England, and among Turkish and Moroccan immigrants in Holland.

Under the heading of assessment we find papers on language assessment for linguistic minorities; the use of cloze tests in bilingual education; the preparation of a subject vitality questionnaire; the development of a second language assessment battery for Spanish-English bilinguals; and monitoring attainment in Welsh schools. The evaluation of immersion programmes deserves special mention because of the effort and funding which have been devoted to immersion programmes in Canada, and more particularly because long-term evaluation is now possible and is producing significant results.

Another important section may be headed languages in contact and conflict, and the context of situation. We have published a number of articles in this area, such as an examination of language 'contact universals' along the Germanic-Romanic linguistic border; a treatment of the paradox of national language movements; the language frontier in Switzerland; the linguistic

situation on the U.S.A.-Mexico border; bilingualism in Belgium; and the hidden language conflict in Finland. What promises to be a lively, interesting and valuable debate about the nature, function and progress of bilingual education in the United States of America is at present developing (not yet in print) between John R. Edwards and Thomas Donahue. There have also been two articles on pluralism, the first on the pluralist debate and educational policy in Australia, the second on cultural pluralism in Malaysia.

To complete any categorisation it is usually necessary to have a section labelled 'various'. Physiological studies should not properly be placed here, but the other examples are indeed various: bilingualism in a minor industrial enterprise in Finland; ethnic music in education; and education and architecture in a multicultural school.

We hope that the examples given will serve to reinforce the idea that the range of our concerns is literally world-wide. To list more would become tedious, and to attempt to define our field more closely would be a waste of time. We look for a positive approach, and an emphasis on the advantages of being bilingual rather than a stress on the problems involved, while at the same time we would be foolish to deny the existence of such problems. We are aware, too, that there are many controversial aspects, such as semilingualism, 'native-speaker proficiency', and the large area of mother tongue maintenance and mother tongue medium in education. If we think in terms of a co-ordinated, co-operative approach to issues such as these, the questions multiply. For example, if we agree on the need to involve parents and lay members of a community in the education of the children, how do we set about it and what are the variations in approach needed from community to community or group to group? How do we train the teachers? Is a list of agreed priorities a realistic aim?

Pressure on space in JMMD is building up, a good indication of increasing interest and involvement, but we need to consider future policy. One possibility is to be more selective, but this would work against the long-term aim. Another is to increase the number of issues in a year, but this would raise the cost of a subscription. One positive step forward is a series of special issues, one each year, so that we may give extended treatment to substantial topics. The first, in 1982, will include papers from the BAAL/LMP Seminar on 'Language and Ethnicity' which was held in London in January, 1982. For 1983 the special issue will be on 'Language attitudes in multilingual settings'.

Of more importance, perhaps, is a new series of books under the general heading of Multilingual Matters. Bilingualism: basic principles, by

Hugo Baetens Beardsmore, is already available. Others to appear soon cover a survey of research into the effect of immersion programmes in Canada over a period of ten years, bilingualism and special education, and guidelines for bringing up children bilingually (an account of personal experience).

This brief account of our work over the last four years or so is given in order to provoke response and discussion. We hope it will do so. Are there important points we have overlooked? Are we on the right lines in selection and emphasis? Constructive suggestions for future development will be most welcome, as will requests for further information. Please write to the Editor at the address below.

Derrick Sharp  
Department of Education,  
University College of Swansea,  
Hendrefoilan,  
Swansea SA2 7NB.

July, 1982

\* \* The first six titles in the series Multilingual Matters, of which Derrick is General Editor, are:-

1. Bilingualism: Basic Principles by Hugo Baetens Beardsmore.
2. Evaluating Bilingual Education: A Canadian Case Study by Merrill Swain and Sharon Lapkin.
3. Bilingual Children: Guidance for the Family by George Saunders.
4. Language Attitudes among Arabic-French Bilinguals in Morocco by Abdelâli Bentahila.
5. Conflict and Language Planning in Quebec Richard Y. Bourhis (ed).
6. Bilingualism and Special Education by Jim Cummins.

Further information and sample copies from:

Multilingual Matters Ltd.  
Bank House, 8A Hill Road  
Clevedon, Avon BS21 7HH

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David CRYSTAL Directions in Applied Linguistics (London: Academic Press, 1981) ISBN 0.12.198420.6 £10.40

Reviewed by Roger SHUY

If, like David Crystal, all important applied linguists would make themselves vulnerable by attempting a tentative classification of the domains of applied linguistics, some progress might begin toward defining this area of study. As things stand at present, the world has little grasp of what is meant by applied linguistics and those of us who feel that we are working in the field have vastly different perspectives and definitions.

To begin with, I am personally grateful to Crystal for his willingness to make himself vulnerable, for taking a crack at what many would consider to be an impossible task. The fact that I do not completely agree with his tentative definitions is not as important as the stimulus he has given me to ruminate about the problem. As Crystal points out, each AILA meeting seems to redefine the field somewhat and it is likely that we have not seen the end of the creativity of linguists to think of new places to use their knowledge and skills. Each of these new places can cause linguists to pause and ask the question, "Is what I am doing really linguistics or something else?"

For too many years now what has been considered "clear" applied linguistics has been contrasted to what has been considered "questionable" applied linguistics. Crystal attempts to address this issue directly first in a chapter called the scope of applied linguistics. The distinction seems to be at the heart of Crystal's division of chapters into "first order" and "second order" studies. "First order studies" are those which attempt to "investigate the nature of applied linguistic problems directly, by obtaining some data and analyzing or commenting on it somehow". Crystal's chapters on first order studies include language in education, language disability, reading, stylistics, foreign language teaching and translation. His chapters on second order studies, "empirical, methodological and theoretical issues which may be studied independently of any specific area", include an evaluation of the Bullock Report, a chapter on the difficulty that norm-oriented linguists have with applying their field to speech pathology (aberration rather than norm oriented) and a final chapter on the problem of being objective in applied stylistic analysis.

Crystal's stated aim of the book is "to motivate a direction for a theory of applied linguistics". He clearly disclaims any possible understanding of his effort as that of providing a comprehensive view of applied linguistic studies. Other disclaimers include the fact that the various chapters were written for widely different audiences and that the span of writing continued over ten years (evidence of this can be found in the delightful footnote 11 to chapter 9, page 146, which begins, "I no longer agree with the argument of this paragraph").

One might easily argue with Crystal's recurring theme that applied linguistics deals with "problem solving". This position is particularly crucial in chapter 2, "Language in Education", in which the concept of "problem" is treated as a negative problem. However common the negative problem is to applied linguistics, it is an unsatisfactory view of problemness. We study the difficulties or mistakes of non-native speakers, minority social dialects, reading errors, etc., as though these were the major work to be accomplished. A case could be made, though Crystal does not make it, that positive problems are the more crucial work of applied linguists. By positive problems I mean, simply, the way to get things done with languages, whether or not a negative problem intrudes itself. For example, one important area of applied linguistic work is to carry pragmatics and speech act theory to the classroom level. The work of Searle, Grice and others clearly points the way to increasing the language learner's ability to complain, request, apologize, report facts, promise, etc., felicitously and appropriately. Such positive problem solving appears to be denied by Crystal, however, when he argues that, as applied linguists work collaboratively with the professionals in the fields we touch upon, such as education, literature and medicine, the linguists cannot and should not attempt to define the problem. It must be defined by the professional in those fields. However good it is to work collaboratively with such professionals, I cannot agree with Crystal that linguists must take only the problems identified by them as our work. They define negative problems only. Our work is more than that. We must be pro-active, not merely reactive. They cannot know the potential that linguistics has to offer. Only we know that. To absolve ourselves from the responsibility of deciding what the problem is, as Crystal suggests, is to miss many of the problems that we can address, simply because we do not permit ourselves to identify them.

Crystal offers sound advice in many topics in this book, particularly in areas involving spoken language acquisition, the teaching and learning of foreign languages and stylistics. He has found that the most influential way to bridge the gap between fields "is by collaboration in the production of materials". In foreign language learning and stylistics this may well be true. But I can speak for almost a dozen wasted years of attempting to cause an American commercial publisher to see the linguistic issues involved in both reading and writing materials. The established misinformation not only about language, but also about learning theory, coupled with a severe conflict of concern between a company whose major interest was necessarily to sell books and an advisor (myself) who knew that the research evidence showed that what would sell was actually theoretically and practically wrong, was eventually overwhelming. After twelve years of trying to carry out Crystal's suggestion to collaborate on the production of materials in the field of native English literacy, I've come to the clear conclusion that materials get more in the way of literacy than help, that they are based on a wrongheaded theory of learning, that they work to extend the learning time unnecessarily by underestimating student ability and intelligence and by making something that could be learned in one year extend to three or more years primarily in order to sell three or more books rather than only one.

In Crystal's chapter on reading, he deals only with the application of language forms, especially with intonation and grammar. I would hope that his future consideration of this area be turned to matters of comprehension, where linguistics is becoming better tooled up for application with its advances in semantics, pragmatics and speech act theory. The field of reading has not done much with a category of comprehension called inferencing. This is right on target for current linguistic application.

The difficulty (if not damage) that linguists have created for reading specialists in the past has been largely a result of two things: 1) linguists have focused only on language forms, and not on language functions in their thinking about literacy and 2) linguists have not understood the essential learning theory controversies into which their suggestions have been placed. The two major learning theory distinctions were well described by Magoon as reductionist and constructivist (1977). The reductionist approach, based on a misguided attempt to apply the scientific rigor of the physical sciences to the social sciences, says, in essence, that in order for a child to learn something, that subject first has to be broken down into individual small pieces, or as the current educational fad puts it, into component skills (skills hierarchies result from such thinking, and proliferate like rabbits). In contrast to the reductionist theory is the constructivist approach which says, in essence, that when you break the big pieces into little pieces you also pay a price. You remove context, for one thing, and any sociolinguist worth his salt would scream very loudly at such behavior. Context provides meaning, which the reductionist advocates seem to ignore.

But linguistics, as it is often viewed by other fields, can be deceptive. Crystal talks about the organizational levels of language, as all good linguists do (phonology, morphology, lexicon, syntax, discourse) etc., from small to large. It is not accidental that the major progress in our field has been from small units (phonology in the forties and fifties) to larger units of syntax in the sixties and seventies and now of discourse in the eighties. We are tackling more and more holistic, constructivist units. Perhaps this is how a field of study should progress, but our own experience will tell us that the removal of context in doing it this way hampers the progress tremendously.

So, when teachers of reading and reading theorists isolate sounds or letters in phonics study, or words in vocabulary study, they are in one sense pedagogically sound, for they isolate a problem. But the paradox is that this very isolation removes the problem from recognizable context, working against the very learning we are trying to accomplish.

All of this is to say that applied linguists face a paradox. It is not possible to be only a linguist when applying linguistics to reading (one must also know conventional reading theory and educational psychology or get mouse-trapped by things like the reductionist fallacy noted above). On the other hand, it is also not possible to be a non-linguist and apply linguistics to reading (one must also know enough about linguistics to know what linguistic theory, research and general knowledge is available for



application). In this sense I disagree with what Crystal appears to be saying about collaboration between fields. The linguists must also know reading or the reading specialist must also know linguistics. Better yet, both collaborators should know both fields.

The rest of Directions in Applied Linguistics admits to different kinds of problems. As Crystal himself states, the topics are only suggestive of what can be done. He deals with the application of linguistics to religious language only through stylistics, for example, omitting the important ethnography of communication work done by Samarin, Tedlock, Basso, Sherzer and other American sociolinguists. The chapter on advanced conversation in foreign language teaching was written before the major work on conversational analysis flourished and is, therefore, out of date. Many of the recent areas of applied linguistics, such as applications to doctor-patient communication, courtroom language, the development of writing, the language aspects of testing, the language of advertising, the language of negotiation and the service-encounters of daily business transactions are not treated. In contrast, Crystal focuses a great deal on applied linguistics in speech theory. But even here, the application is primarily to the negative problem, the way of identifying pathology, rather than to the positive problem of how to make linguistic knowledge an integral part of the speech therapist's understanding of the language systems of the people being diagnosed. In my opinion, the positive problem is a harder one to solve and one in which the ultimate benefits to speech therapists will be tremendously more useful.

A lesson to be learned from this book is of great concern to publishers as well as linguists. However important Crystal's individual contributions may have been in the various contexts in which they first appeared, when put together in a single book at a later point in time, they simply do not hang together. As a typical reader of a book titled Directions in Applied Linguistics, written by an acknowledged leader in the field, I expected more coherence, more completeness, more development of ideas, Crystal's introductory disclaimers notwithstanding. The fact that Crystal made these disclaimers should have caused me to expect something different, but it didn't. I believe this is because we readers really want a complete and coherent book on this subject. Perhaps this book will do exactly what the author wanted, to stimulate others to build on his "tentative classifications" and definitions. If so, the book will accomplish its goal. Meanwhile, the warning to publishers is obvious. Even excellent individual works such as those of Crystal, present difficulties when brought together in a single volume. Perhaps the title of the book is the culprit. Essays in Applied Linguistics may have been more appropriate. Or perhaps, Toward a Description of Applied Linguistics would have been more accurate. As things stand, however, we have what some have called a "non-book" book, notwithstanding the excellence of its content.

Roger W. Shuy

Georgetown University  
Washington D.C.

September 1982

Magoon, A. Jon. 'Constructivist Approaches in Educational Research' Review of Educational Research 47 (1977) 651-693.

cont.

Shuy, Roger W. 'A Holistic View of Language' Research in the Teaching of English 15 (May 1981) 101-111.

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Pamela GRUNWELL The Nature of Phonological Disability in Children (London: Academic Press, 1981)  
ISBN 0.12.305250.5 £12.80

Reviewed by Ron BERESFORD

This book deserves a review rather than a book notice, as here. It is based upon a doctoral thesis and has the usual format of this publisher and is value for money. There would seem to be an intended threefold readership: phonologists specially interested in speech development and phonological universals; speech therapists involved in the management of children with speech problems; and linguists/psycholinguists interested in children's language. From the title this could be assumed, particularly by the last two groups of readers, but the book does not live up to its title: the nature of such disability is not satisfactorily explained. Indeed, possible arguments against there being such a specific disability are not examined. The explanation offered in the last chapter (Ch.6) 'Explanation and Remediation' is more speculation than explanation. The statement (p.167) that 'the disorder can be characterised as resulting from a specific phonological learning disability' is not informative or new; and 'As the disorder is defined by its symptoms, ...' (accepting a misuse of 'symptoms' for 'signs') would not provide a definition of the disability (p.172). Further, 'This explanation of phonological disability based on the analysis of developmental deviance suggests deficiencies and dysfunctioning in the neurophonological organizational component of the language learning mechanisms' (p.181) is hardly enlightening. To cite, as the author does on p.177, Fairbanks (1954) and Peterson (1955) that:

Phonological development probably depends upon a learning sequence comprising at least the following abilities:  
(a) to monitor one's own speech auditorily and through sensory and proprioceptive feedback channels; (b) to compare this "auditory image" with a stored "image" of the speech of others and analyse any differences;  
(c) to match these perceptual differences with changes in the organization of speech production; (d) to effect these modifications in the motor patterns that control production and in the underlying phonological organization;  
(e) to check the effectiveness of these revisions by repeated applications of this cycle until a satisfactory speech pattern is achieved...'

and to draw attention to (c) and (d) above, is not explanatory nor is (p.181):

The basic disability of these children therefore is in their organization of the phonological patterns of speech production. They are failing to create normal phonological systems.

A more suitable title might have been 'The Nature of Phonologically Disordered-language in English-speaking Children'.

cont.

The strength and merit of the book is in the account given in Ch.5, and in an appendix, of what the phonological features of such 'deviant' language are. The data is first-hand from seven children, diagnosed by clinicians as having 'a severe "functional articulation disorder"'; no other data is cited (p.9 §1). Ch.2 is a useful review of the investigation of 'phonological disability'; Chs. 3 and 4 provide a background with a review of relevant speech assessment procedures and an outline account of phonological development in children. In this latter chapter, the author leans heavily on the work of David Ingram and the 'phonological processes' described by him (ref. Phonological Disability in Children, London 1976). Dr. Grunwell cites evidence from her corpus to support these 'processes' (of particular interest are the 'other "simplifying processes"' demonstrated here).

Ch.1 is a general introduction, headed 'Phonological Disability in a Linguistic Framework', in which several good points are made: e.g. p.5 §2 (emphasising the importance of the phonological level in speech assessment); p.6-7 (her criticism of Oller and Compton and her emphasis on the need to examine the deviant phonological patterns of these children's speech). She is right to draw attention here to the fact that information about normal patterns is based primarily on speech production data but doesn't examine the implications of the fact that many such children have no apparent difficulty in comprehending adults. A further point well made (p.18) is that instability is 'normal' in the early stages of speech development. In this chapter there is an attempt to define those difficult concepts 'normality' and 'deviation'. This is attempted in terms of deviation both (a) from the adult, and (b) from 'phonological universals' such as 'the size and character of phone inventories', 'the size and character of feature inventories', and 'the consonant structure of syllables'. This latter definition (b) is less satisfactory. Another good point made (p.21 §3) is the reference to the importance of 'communicative adequacy' and a tolerance of homophones as a criterion of deviation.

The final Chapter 6 on 'Explanation and Remediation: the clinical implications' is the weakest part of the book — particularly the section 'Treatment' pp. 168-172, which fails to refer at all to the 'how' whilst summarising rather holistically the 'what'.

Perhaps this might be a place in which to correct a misrepresentation of a point made by this reviewer in an article (1972) referring to variation in utterance as a prognostic sign of possible 'intrapersonal monitoring'. The point made was that phonetically different phonological forms could be positively viewed, not 'considerable free variation' as paraphrased here (p.170 §3).

In conclusion, this is not a book which can be recommended for a speech therapist/psychologist readership. I don't think they would be satisfied with it. Phonologists may/may not be satisfied depending upon their adherence to generative phonology or their concepts of speech development. Chs. 2, 3 and 5 would be useful undergraduate reading.

R. Beresford, Subdept. of Speech,  
University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne

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VI

NOTICES, NOTES, LETTERS ETC.

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A NOTICES

1 The Modern Languages Programme of the Council of Europe

CILT, through Helen Lunt, has sent the following information.

STRASBOURG CONFERENCE (FEB. '82)

A conference was held at Strasbourg on 23-26 February this year to consider the report on the Council of Europe (Council for Cultural Co-operation) Modern Languages Programme that was presented by Project Group 4 (see Modern languages 1971-1981 below), and to make recommendations (a) on the conduct of Project no. 12, and (b) as the basis for recommendations to member governments by the Committee of Ministers. The original aim of the Programme was to develop a structure for language learning for adult language learners in Europe, using a learner-centred, motivation-based approach.

A Project Group is being formed for Project no.12. It is expected that the project will focus on teacher training in three areas: lower secondary schools; migrant education; adult education with emphasis on multi-media systems.

PUBLICATIONS

Earlier publications giving information about work done in the context of the programme have included specifications in English, French, German and Spanish of a 'threshold level' of initial language proficiency, and of an intermediate 'waystage' for English. Versions of the threshold level adapted to language teaching in schools have been published for English and for French. Several studies of special aspects of language learning by adults, important contributions to the modern languages programme, have appeared - for example, on identifying the needs of adults learning a foreign language, on approaches to self-assessment, and on autonomy and foreign language learning.

Council of Europe publications that are available through CILT, as part of its service to language teachers and researchers in Britain, are listed in the Centre's publications catalogue, and like the Centre's own publications are distributed by:

Baker Book Services,  
Little Mead, Alfold Road,  
Alfold, Cranleigh,  
Surrey GU6 8NU.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Livello soglia by Nora Galli de' Paratesi. Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1981. 350pp.

A threshold level for Italian. Parte prima: Specificazione degli obiettivi didattici. Parte seconda: Forme linguistiche. Appendice I: Inventario lessicale. Appendice II: Inventario grammaticale. Bibliografia.

Available by mail order within Britain from Baker Book Services (address above), price £9.50 + 10% handling charge. Please quote ref. CE13.

cont.

Modern languages 1971-1981. Report presented by CDCC Project Group 4 with a résumé by Mr. J.L.M. Trim, Project Adviser. Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1981. 214pp.

Résumé (J.L.M. Trim). Introduction by the Secretariat. Principles of communicative language learning systems development (contributions from those most closely concerned). Reports of pilot projects in which the principles of communicative language learning systems development have been applied in practice (in a wide range of educational situations at all educational levels). Present developments and future prospects for the European exchange of information on language teaching and research. The developing framework of international co-operation in communicative language learning systems development (the way in which a framework has been developed; how it might be strengthened and co-operation intensified). Evaluation and recommendations. Appendices: membership of the project group; index of contributors with their addresses: publications and documents issued in connection with the project; proposals for further work; national centres nominated to co-operate in the European research information service.

Report available by mail order within Britain from Baker Book Services (address above), price £4.40 + 10% handling charge. Please quote ref. CE14.

Language needs in higher education by Penelope Gardner and Derek Winslow. (Published for the) Standing Conference of Heads of Modern Languages in Polytechnics and Other Colleges, 1982. 329pp.

The report of a two-year project jointly funded by the Council of Europe, the Department of Education and Science and the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Commercial Education Scheme.

The first part describes in detail the framework within which courses in public sector higher education are designed and function. Comparisons are made with university departments and private language schools. Various perceptions of this framework and its impact on course planning, innovation and the identification of student needs are discussed.

The second part describes seven pilot studies of students' and/or employers' language needs. The courses chosen range from a language degree, through languages as a 'partner/tool' discipline, to languages for secretarial linguists.

The aims were to test staff's reception of formalised techniques of needs identification, to test the ability of institutional resource management structures to respond to such an approach and, finally, to apply and evaluate in a specific national context the 'systems approach' model of needs identification developed as part of the Council of Europe Modern Languages Project (Richterich and Chancerel: Identifying the needs of adults learning a foreign language. Strasbourg, 1977).

An extensive appendix gives full details of the survey techniques used, summaries of responses, analysis of data. The computer programme used for processing the questionnaires is given, together with notes on its use.

Available from SCHML, c/o J.D. Winslow, School of Language Studies, Ealing College of Higher Education, St. Mary's Road, London W5 5RF, price £5 incl. postage. (Cheques payable to SCHML.)

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## 2. Annual Review of Applied Linguistics (ARAL)

Robert Kaplan writes:

First published in the Spring of 1981, the Annual Review of Applied Linguistics is intended to serve working scholars and their graduate students in the various sub-fields of applied linguistics. The design of the book provides brief state-of-the-profession articles together with annotated and unannotated bibliographies of key references, with particular attention to material published in the preceding year. Each volume of ARAL has a specific theme. Volume I (1981) attempted to provide a broad review of the whole of applied linguistics; it included articles on: Bilingualism, Pidginization and Creolization, Structuro-Cognitive Approaches to Pedagogy, Notional/Functional Approaches to Pedagogy, Computer Assisted Instruction, Psycholinguistics, Error Analysis, Language Acquisition Research, Language Testing Research, Sign Language, Sociolinguistics, Macrosociolinguistics and Microsociolinguistics. Contributors included: J. Barnett, H.D. Brown, A. Caramazza, J.A. Fishman, F. Gomes de Matos, M. Hartig, L. Haynes, R.L. Jones, B.B. Kachru, R.B. Kaplan, R.I. Mayberry, M. McCloskey, J.W. Oller, F.R. Otto, J.C. Richards, L. Todd, and G.R. Tucker. Volume II (1982) has attempted to explore applied linguistic problems related to the international movements of peoples for whatever reasons. Specifically, it examines language policy, language-in-education policy, and education practice in 19 separate articles covering some 30 countries. Volume III (in production, scheduled in 1983) will be devoted to problems in written discourse. Volume IV (being planned at the moment, scheduled for 1984) will be concerned broadly with literacy, and Volume V (planned for 1985) will return to the basic overview used in Volume I. At this point, planning has not gone beyond 1985. The series is published by Newbury House (54 Warehouse Lane, Rowley, MA 01969, USA). A bibliographic index will be provided beginning with Volume III. The series brings together the work of outstanding scholars and provides a rapid bibliographic reference to the most important work being produced in the various sub-fields of applied linguistics. The publication is supervised by an editorial board including Alison d'Anglejan, Braj Kachru, Ron Cowan, and G. Richard Tucker. The General Editor is Robert B. Kaplan (Dept. of Linguistics, Univ. of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA 90007).

## 3. Royal Society of Arts: 'English at Work in the World'

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The three lectures given under the above title earlier this year are published in the Journal of The Royal Society of Arts for June 1982 (No. 5311 Vol. CXXX) together with the discussions which followed them.

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|-----|-----------------------|--|
| I   | <u>David Crystal</u>  | 'Fact & Fiction in Contemporary English'                                   |
| II  | <u>John Haycraft</u>  | 'Building up a World Organisation for Teaching English'                    |
| III | <u>Peter Strevens</u> | 'World English & the World's Englishes - or, Whose Language is it Anyway?' |

The June issue of the R.S.A.'s Journal costs £1.00. The address of the Society is John Adam St., London WC2N 6EZ.

4. English Language Research Journal (ELRJ)  
edited by Chris Kennedy

Chris has sent the following notice:

The journal is concerned with English Language teaching, learning and research with an emphasis on English for Specific Purposes. The term ESP is to be interpreted broadly so that a large number of practical and theoretical areas can be covered which will be of interest to those involved in ESP.

Topics include analysis of spoken and written discourse, computer text analysis, language varieties, study skills and syllabus/materials design.

The journal appears annually at the end of the calendar year. A list of contents in the 1981 issue appears below. The 1982 issue is in preparation and will include articles by V. K. Bhatia (Legal Language), J. Holmes (Tag Questions), M. Phillips (Study Skills), E. Smythe (Oral Skills in ESP), J. Port-Fox (Bilingual Reading Texts), and J. Swales (Examination Papers).

Contributions in the form of articles, reviews and research reports are invited. Further details may be obtained from:-

Mrs. Anne Preston  
Secretary (ELRJ)  
English Language Research  
University of Birmingham  
PO Box 363  
Birmingham B15 2TT

Copies of the 1981 issue of the ELRJ are available. Articles include:-

- 'Specificity in Language Course Design' (S. Andrews)
- 'Needs Analysis and Syllabus Specification' (Dave Willis)
- 'Towards Team Teaching' (Tony Dudley-Evans)
- 'The Role of Definitions in Scientific and Technical Writing: Forms, Functions and Properties' (Steven Darian)
- 'Spoken Discourse in the EFL Classroom' (Jane Willis)

And book-reviews:-

- Stubbs, M. Language and Literacy: The Sociolinguistics of Reading and Writing (J. Holmes)
- Labov, W. and Fanshel, D. Therapeutic Discourse (R. Mead).

To order your copy, send £2.50 (including postage) —cheques payable to The University of Birmingham— to Mrs. Anne Preston (as above).

\* \* \* The October 1982 issue of the British Linguistic Newsletter gives information on an American journal in the same field edited by Grace Stovall Mancill: ESP Journal, English Language Institute, The American University, Washington DC 20016, USA.

5. Modern English Publications Ltd.

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Modern English Publications, in the person of Richard Whitecross, husband of Christina Whitecross (OUP), has kindly sent the Newsletter its 1982 catalogue and a sample issue of MET (Modern English Teacher), a quarterly magazine of practical ideas for Teaching English as a Foreign Language, now in its ninth year. Among its new books: Language Testing edited by J.B. Heaton, and Individualisation edited by Marion Geddes & Gill Sturtridge. Address: PO Box 129, Oxford OX2 8JU (Tel: 0451-31592).

6. LEXeter '83

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Reinhard Hartmann has now sent out the Second Circular for LEXeter '83, the next in his series of International Conferences on Lexicography held at Exeter. There will be five main sections covering historical (Reuven Merkin), bilingual (Ladislav Zgusta) and learners' (Tony Cowie) dictionaries, and computer-aided (Frank Knowles) and terminological (Juan Sager) lexicography. It is hoped that a European Association for Lexicography will be formed. Dates: Fri. 9 - Mon. 12 September 1983. Address: Dr. R. Hartmann, The Language Centre, University of Exeter, Exeter EX4 4QH.

7. Nottingham: M.A. in Linguistics & Modern English Language

\* \*

The Departments of Linguistics & English Studies have combined to launch this one-year full-time course to begin in 1983. BAAL members involved are Margaret Berry (grammatical theory, discourse analysis), Chris Butler (syntax, semantics, computational linguistics), Walter Grauberg (language teaching, applied linguistics) and Michael Stubbs (discourse analysis, educational linguistics). Leaflet and/or very smart brochure from Dept. of Linguistics, Univ. of Nottingham, Nottingham NG7 2RD.

8. SELMOUS

George Blue has kindly supplied the following Note & Notice. (Those of us who could never quickly recall what the letters stood for can now relax!)

SELMOUS

Association of Lecturers and Tutors in English for Overseas Students

(Originally an acronym for Special English Language Materials for Overseas University Students.)

SELMOUS was formed at a meeting held in the English Department of the University of Birmingham in June 1972. It began with seven members from five universities, and there are now about twenty-two members from eleven institutions.

Membership is open to holders of posts in institutions of higher education in the U.K., whose principal function is the teaching of English for specific purposes to overseas students, the production of materials for these students and related research. Members often run pre-sessional courses, conduct term classes, normally co-ordinating with main subject departments, and frequently help students individually with academic and technical writing and other language problems.

Meetings of members are held two or three times a year for the exchange of views and materials, and a seminar, open to any interested person, is held every two years, usually during the Easter vacation. The last SELMOUS seminar was held at the University of Essex in 1981, and the theme was



'The ESP Teacher: Role, Development and Prospects'. The papers from this seminar have been published by the British Council (ELT Documents 112). In addition, a conference organised jointly by SELMOUS, the UWIST Communication Studies Unit and the University of Aston Language Studies Unit was held at Aston in September 1982. The title of this conference was 'Communication in English', and the aim was to explore the common ground between ESP and communication studies. (See N/L14 p.44, Note from John Swales, Head of EFL in the Language Studies Unit at Aston.) The next seminar is to be held from 24th to 26th March 1983 at the University of Exeter, and the theme is to be 'The ESP Classroom: Methodology, Materials and Expectations'. \* \*

Chairmanship of SELMOUS is held in rotation, the outgoing chairman (1981-82) being George Blue of the Language Centre, University of Southampton, and the chairman for 1982-83 being Gregory James of the Language Centre, University of Exeter.

Membership of SELMOUS has recently been extended to include lecturers and tutors from all institutions of higher education in the U.K., and the annual subscription is for the time being fixed at £5.00 for each institution from which members are drawn.

Enquiries and applications for membership should be addressed to Mr. Gregory James, SELMOUS Chairman 1982-83, The Language Centre, University of Exeter, Queen's Building, EXETER EX4 4QH.

\* \* English for Academic Purposes (edited by A.P. Cowie & J.B. Heaton) was published by BAAL for SELMOUS in 1977.

## 9. Hatfield (BAAL) Discourse Conference

See Eugene Winter's announcement on p.29.

\* \* To quote from the Hatfield handout:

The theme of the conference will be the analysis of short texts, spoken and written. Our aim will be to achieve a 'renewal of connection' between established methods of linguistic analysis and their applications both in foreign language teaching and the study of the mother tongue. We therefore invite interested scholars to join us in taking stock of what we already know about the way language works in texts, and exploring the possibilities for future development.

The conference should be of interest to those concerned with the way language texts are made up and those who are concerned with the problems of the Contemporary English Language syllabus in tertiary education at home and abroad.

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## B. NOTES

1. Edie GARVIE has produced a bright yellow leaflet to publicise her activity as a freelance Lecturer/Consultant in Multi-Cultural Education with special interest in curriculum change and development, language in education, and the in-service training of teachers. In it she makes the case for a 'roving consultant' providing a service for LEAs with no designated Adviser for Multi-Cultural Education. Edie's article 'From TESL-to-Immigrants towards Multi-Cultural Education: A changing view in Britain' can be read in N/L12 (Summer 1981). For more information on her activities at home and abroad, her publications and the success of Breakthrough to fluency (Blackwell 1976), contact Edie at her home: 117 Saltmarsh, Orton Malborne, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE2 ONW (Tel: Peterborough (0733-) 233474). \* \*
  2. Catherine JOHNS-LEWIS not only organised the Intonation & Discourse Seminar in April but produced a daughter in July. Congratulations to Catherine, Geoff, and Alexandra (b. 4.7.82)! \* \*
  3. Silvia DINGWALL writes:  
Any BAAL member interested in seeking rest and inspiration in a rarified atmosphere (1950 metres) might consider a holiday in a well-equipped chalet in the wild and beautiful Lötschental valley, Wallis, Switzerland. Excellent walking and climbing (June-September) and skiing (Dec.-April). Local Swiss-German interesting because valley very isolated until 1950s. Reductions to BAAL members. Contact: Silvia Dingwall, Dynamostr. 1, Baden CH-5400; or Dingwall, Petersfield (0730-) 2258.
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C. LETTER(S)

From Mary Willes, about Applied Linguistics in the context of Communications degrees.

Dear John,

The immediate purpose of my writing to you is to describe the situation in which I am currently working, and to find out who, among the readership of the Newsletter, has experience similar to mine. My hope is that there will be a response; I am very much aware of a need for exchange and collaboration.

I am one of the lucky ones, I am in full time employment, but at a price. What I do is interesting and demanding work, but it is not what I would have chosen to do, and I think there are other areas of work in my own institution to which I could effectively contribute. My developed interests are in the professional preparation of teachers, and particularly, of teachers of English to multilingual classes, and I still have some work to do in that area. It is very little in amount. Nearly all my time is taken up with a new degree, which has only just recruited its third intake and has still to attain to classified status. It is called B.A. in Visual Communications. We see it as standing or falling by its educational value - but it is slanted towards a defined range of jobs, and it includes a six week period of placement with firms and organizations who employ graphic designers, in-house journalists, and specialists in television and tape-slide production. It recruits very well, and partly no doubt because it is so new, it is instinct with vitality. The students are as lively as any I have ever taught, and more curious, and certainly more imaginative, than many. In short, this is one of the Communications degrees, designed and set up in the mid and late seventies. No two are exactly alike; the distinctive character of this one lies in the even balance, for the student, of academic and practical studies. They all study photography, graphic design and television. In the second and third years they collaborate in the execution of projects that approximate in the third year rather closely to the sort of briefs that they are likely to get in the course of professional work.

There are obviously all sorts of problems in the operation of such a degree; how, for example, to secure the necessary breadth and variety of experience without superficiality? How can such a course be fairly and intelligibly assessed? It is not with these and similar problems that I am concerned here, though I am, inevitably, as concerned about them in reality as any of my colleagues. I have general responsibilities in relation to this course and its development; I also have a specific responsibility for the academic, theoretical part of it. Two full days of the students' week are spent on these studies. What we try to do in those two days is to offer some of the sorts of experience that are part of nearly all Arts degree courses. Arts graduates generally get the chance to learn to understand and produce the sorts of written and spoken English that characterise the range of professions they are likely to join and that belong with society's expectations of a graduate. We take this responsibility very seriously, and I define my role partly at any rate as that of a linguistically informed English teacher. That seems to me to be a perfectly reasonable role for a member of BAAL, closely allied to that of an ESP specialist. There is a great deal to know that I don't know (but am, I suppose, equipped to find out) about, for example, the English of caption-writing and the spoken English appropriate to the presentation of draft materials to prospective clients. The English of advertising is already (mercifully) well researched.

I have also to engage in some descriptive work, and here the relevant question for me is what are the students' present and predictable needs? So far as future teachers are concerned, the answers are pretty evident; language is central to the educational process. Teachers are obliged all the time to

produce texts and to evaluate texts. They are inevitably and essentially concerned with the later stages of language acquisition, with initial and with post-initial literacy. The case for their having access to the most up-to-date and principled information about these and related topics seems now incontrovertible, and the difficulties of securing it on their behalf are familiar practical and financial ones. It did not always seem like that. Readers who were members of BAAL at its inception, and for half a decade after, will recall a period when the relevance of Linguistics to the education of teachers was itself problematic.

It seems to me that we are at just that same stage now so far as education of people who see their future as part of the communications industry is concerned. We are finding our way towards definitions. In those degrees that offer Linguistics as a compulsory component and/or an option, the value of the study of language is simply assumed. It retains its autonomy; it is offered initially so that the student may make an informed choice. If, when he may choose, he chooses to take the study further, he has presumably decided that it is relevant for him; language is of compelling interest, or it is the unique, central, inescapable mode of human communication and for that reason is important to anyone who has a special or a general interest in such communication.

This last is the principal defence I would offer for the inclusion of the subject in a degree like our own. Time and energy and attention are all limited. We have to select from the rich variety of the subject, or rather, to put the matter realistically, the time is so limited that I have to make a selection from what I could hope to offer.

This is what I try currently to do. I concentrate on just two ways of conceptualizing communicative processes. We can think of them as like messages to people who receive them, or we can think of the process of negotiation between speakers, between language-users, as actually creating messages. I try to get students to recognize some of the differences between two realizations of language -- speaking and writing. I try to get them to recognize what is meant by saying that communicative activity creates and sustains societies. That is about all. As for how: well, I concentrate on making problematic what they do. I try to extend our common range of reference to include, in addition to language use, all sorts of still and moving images. (I do draw and paint, and have steadfastly refused the term 'hobby' applied to this serious alternative form of work, and I have some reading in Art History and even a degree to prove it --you just never know what will come in handy!) I want the students to be able to conceptualise what they do, to think about it, to talk about it, not to be locked into an uncritical acceptance of the ideas about their activity current in society. I should like to think I am still firmly inside the subject, engaged in the exploration of a legitimate application of Linguistics that is new to me. I am not sure. Much more important, I worry that any selection determined by students' interests and needs may deny or misrepresent the needs of the subject. We all have this problem all the time, but it takes an especially acute form in a composite course of study like this.

There are all sorts of problems. It would be good if we could use the Newsletter as a way of opening up the discussion of them.

With best wishes,

West Midlands College  
of Higher Education

Mary.

11 Oct.'82

VII

EDITORIAL & N/L PROSPECT

BAAL members who have contributed by writing, phoning, responding to letters —and to phone-calls!— will know how grateful I am to them. Within BAAL, I am sure everyone will echo my thanks to Michael Stubbs and Derrick Sharp for their articles specially tuned to the Newsletter; editorship is an important theme to explore —and Michael throws in 'one definition of applied linguistics' for good measure. From far outside BAAL, I would like to thank Roger Shuy for adding an international distinction to the Newsletter with a review of David Crystal's Directions which David himself has welcomed and will respond to. And from just outside BAAL, I would like to thank Neil Smith for his chairmanly magic in securing instant reporting of LAGB's Autumn meeting for the Newsletter.

The Newsletter is now up-to-date. All Seminars (of which there were no fewer than four between September '81 and April '82) have been reported; and the Association's Annual Meeting, held in September, is documented, abstracts and all, in this issue, which also includes, as is customary, the Keynote Paper.

For the Spring issue, I have in hand from the Annual Meeting Bill Littlewood's paper 'Foreign Language Performance and the Learner's Personality' and I am inviting both Professor Piepho, who fortunately suffered nothing worse than a flight cancellation, and John Trim, who stood in for him, to let their papers appear. I also have in hand the Summary Discussion Document of the Working Party on the Language of Minority Communities prepared for the National Congress on Languages in Education, and hope to have other coverage of the NCLE.

I have continued to underline names of BAAL members, strictly according to the list of May 1982 —my apologies for any errors! And \*\* indicates me acting editorially.

If the Newsletter pleases, or if it displeases, —if you have contributions, ideas, suggestions, news or views, or questions, do not hesitate to write or ring or call on:

John Mountford  
Editor

69 Glen Eyre Road,  
Southampton SO2 3NP  
(Tel: Southampton (0703) 767373)

N.B. The copydate for the Spring issue, N/L17, is Saturday 29 January, and for the Summer issue, N/L18, will be Saturday 7 May 1983.