

The British Association for Applied Linguistics

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I BAAL-RELATED ACTIVITIES

BAAL 83 (Leicester)
1. 'Success and Failure in Language Learning',
Keynote Paper by GORDON WELLS

EDITORIAL & NEWSLETTER PROSPECT

The last issue of the Newsletter (N/L20) was the first to go on disk, and the only bit that got garbled was where I thanked Barbara Ingram who had typed the previous six issues: 'her skilful and thoughtful --and cheerful-- typing (I intended to say!) had benefited the Newsletter enormously --and its readers, and its editor!'. Barbara has now resumed language studies sérieusement. Every success to her!

The present issue is the second to go on disk, and the first to contain as complex a paper as Gordon Wells' keynote talk, with figures and a table. All this has been accomplished, with great care and skill, by Judy Tasker, of the Language Information Network Co-ordination Project in Woburn Square. I want to thank Judy for all her help, and also the Community Languages and Education Project and its director, Euan Reid, for their kindness in allowing the Newsletter to make use of their facilities --particularly Superbrain!

Prospectively, there will be a new Editor of the Newsletter by the time the Autumn issue comes out, as the present one is sinking back to Latin and Greek. I hope he/she will not let the Association down as badly as I have this year in respect of Notes and News. I do believe (though I blush to say it) that lots of news about each other's activities is vital to a friendly association like BAAL and is implied by the title 'Newsletter'.

If this issue of the Newsletter pleases, or if it displeases, --if you want to use the Newsletter,-- if you have contributions, ideas, suggestions, news or views, or questions, do not hesitate to write or ring, or call upon:

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N.B. The copydate for the Autumn issue, N/L22, is Saturday 29th September, and for the Spring issue, N/L23, I would recommend January 5th 1985.

2. Participants List

BAAL 83 The Association's 16th Annual Meeting was held at the University of Leicester, 16-18 September 1983 (Local Organiser: Pam Grunwell). The abstracts circulated to all participants appeared in N/L19 (Autumn '83). We are now delighted to circulate the whole text of the Keynote Paper by Gordon Wells which gave such a splendid start to the Meeting whose theme was 'Success and Failure in Language Acquisition'. We are able to do this thanks to many hours of patient labour by CAROLYN LERTS who transcribed her tape of Gordon's talk, and thanks to Gordon himself who put Carolyn's transcripts into this final form.

1. KEYNOTE PAPER

'Success and Failure in Language Learning:
Some Findings from the Bristol Study'

GORDON WELLS
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
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Introduction

Let me say that I am honoured and delighted to be invited to make the opening presentation at this conference. I realise with some dismay that it is eight years since I've been to a conference at BAAL, and in these eight years the project that I have been associated with has grown and grown. In fact we have been running for twelve years now and I think that we may well go on for several more. So there are many facets of language development, success or failure, that I could talk about. My problem this evening is therefore to select, and I've chosen three that I hope to be able to address at least briefly in the time. They are:-

Firstly, the sequence of development in first language learning, and possible explanations of that sequence;
Secondly, the relationship between language ability and educational attainment;
Thirdly, the role of adults in children's language development.

* * *

Let me begin with a very brief account of the overall design. We started with 128 children, half aged 15 months and half aged 39 months, and the aim in selecting them was to ensure a representative sample of children learning English as a first language. Because the sample was relatively small by psychometricians' standards (although enormous by any linguist's standards!) we decided to exclude certain categories:-

- any children for whom English was not the first language,
- children of multiple births,
- children with handicaps,
- those in full-time care.

Otherwise, the sample was selected to be representative of the full social spectrum. Secondly, we set out to obtain a representative sample of speech from each child --in fact, ten such samples, at 3-monthly intervals, using some specialised equipment. The mechanism we used was as follows. We constructed a box containing a tape-recorder, a radio-microphone link, and an elaborate timing device, and with the help of this box we were able to "bug" the children's homes, recording samples of naturally occurring speech, at approximately 20-minute intervals throughout the day. The microphone part was worn by the child. Once this was on, under a top garment, there was nothing, except a slight hump under the child's back, to indicate that anything out of the ordinary was going on. In this way we were able to pick up samples of speech in naturally-occurring contexts.

Now this context (the home) of course is the one in which almost all data on first language acquisition has been collected. In the typical project report you find that the researcher went into the home, put down a tape-recorder and produced a box of toys, and invited the mother to play naturally with her child while the observer sat and took notes, or in the case of Roger Brown's study, two observers sat and took notes. Well, we can tell you, after making our recordings, that in many homes mothers never play with their children with toys, and in most homes it is a rather rare occurrence. So, there is going to be some difference between the data we have collected and the data collected by many other projects. I think that if you are going to explore the relationship between language development and the child's experience of language in use, then you must aim for ecological validity; you must somehow or other get through the horns of the observer paradox dilemma (Labov, 1972).

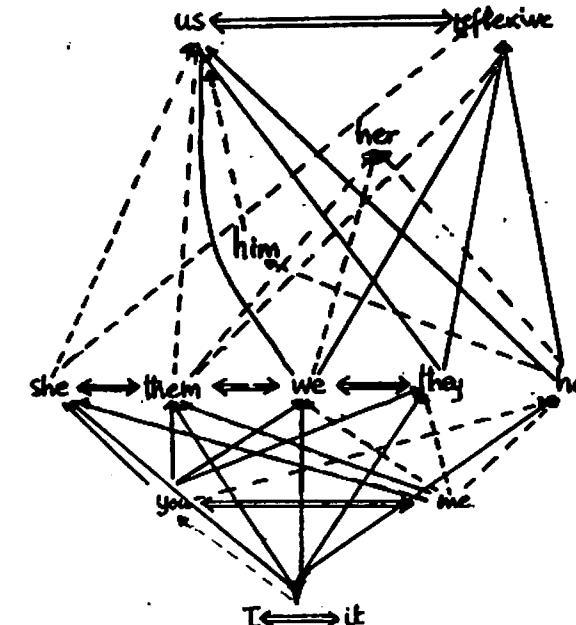
1. The Sequence of Language Development.

One of the declared aims of the project was to investigate the extent to which all children go through the same sequence in learning their first language. When I put this as the first question to be attacked, I really had a quite open mind about the extent to which all children do go through the same sequence. So it has been quite exciting as we have gone through the data,

investigating this topic, I haven't time to describe the linguistic coding carried out on the data. But, just to give you some idea of the data-base, let me say that we made 1,280 recordings, that each utterance was coded for approximately 100 linguistic categories. Multiply that together and it comes to 12.5 million data points. These data contain, for each child and for each linguistic category, the age when he/she was first observed to use, appropriately, a particular linguistic category. I shall call this *emergence. I won't call it acquisition because I have no idea when a child acquires a word or a phrase or a structure. All I know is which of my observations include the first appropriate utterance.

Taking any particular linguistic system, with all the children to contribute to information about point of emergence, it is possible to make pair-wise comparisons for each item with every other item within a system. In this way we could establish whether A emerged before B, B before A, or A and B simultaneously. (In some cases, the picture is not particularly clear enough to make any of these statements.) The outcome of one such analysis is shown in Figure 1. (See Wells, in press-a for details of the methodology.)

Figure 1 SEQUENCE OF EMERGENCE: PERSONAL PRONOUNS



The younger children we recorded from 15 to 42 months, and these are the personal pronouns that were present in the speech of at least 50% of them by 42 months. The conventions of the diagram are that any item that is joined by a solid arrow to another item is ordered at what we call the *strong level—that is to say, 8% or less of the children show the contrary order. So at least 92% of children show emergence of, for example, I before she. The dotted arrow means that 20% or less of the cases show the contrary order. This we call *weak order. The double horizontal arrow means that, to put it roughly, 80% of the children showed the items emerging on the same occasion.

Now as you can see from that small example, most of the items are either clearly ordered with respect to most other items, or else *co-emergent. There are some you will see that are not joined by lines (for example them and him: them, on balance seems to come later, but not significantly so), but these are a minority.

We have information about some 30 systems that we have analysed in that way, and in every one there is essentially the same result: that the items within linguistic systems are, by and large, ordered with respect to each other.

Then, having analysed each system separately, we selected representative items from each system and put them into an overall analysis. The reason that we had to select is that the technique involves making pair-wise comparisons between each possible pair of items. With something in the order of 250 items, the number of pair-wise comparisons would keep a computer busy for a considerable amount of time and would completely overpower any human analyst trying to make sense of the output. So we selected items that were strongly ordered with respect to other items and represented the full range of each system. We also tried to select items that would be easily recognisable by linguistically naive potential users of our description. We put some 140 items into what we called a *cross-system analysis, and what emerged was a sequence of clusters of items, with each cluster ordered with respect to adjacent clusters. We refer to these clusters as *levels. There are 10 levels and they span the age-range from 15 to 60+ months. Each level contains items from each of the major descriptive dimensions: syntactic, semantic and pragmatic (Wells, *in press-a*).

There isn't time to go into the content of the levels, but what I can say is that, by and large, they confirm Roger Brown's (1973) account of the acquisition of English. They also correspond pretty closely to the 'stages' of LARSP (Crystal et al. 1976), though I would claim that our description is broader in scope than either Brown's or Crystal et al.'s. We can also supply age norms for each of the levels, and indeed for the emergence of any particular linguistic item, and we can give an age spread over which a particular item emerges in a representative sample of children. Finally, and I think this may prove to be extremely interesting, we have frequency data at successive ages. When you collect naturally

occurring speech samples, you really do have data that are representative of children's speech to the people in their home. So I think we are in a position to claim that our frequency data probably give a very good idea of the relative frequency of items in children's speech.

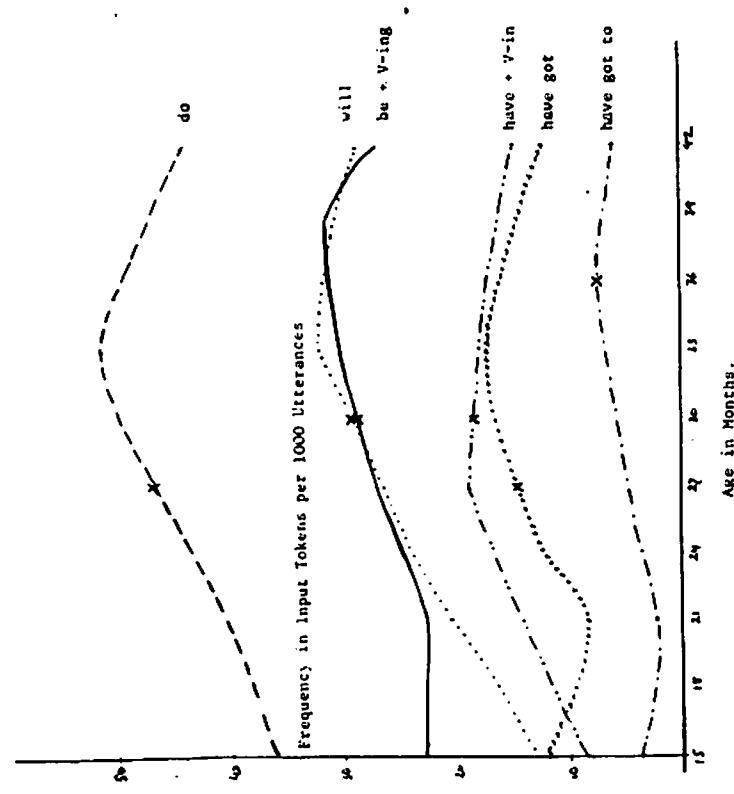
So we have a number of linguistic items within their linguistic systems, showing clear evidence of order. Why that particular order? It seems to me that there are two broad sets of answers that one might give. On the one hand, one might say that the order of emergence will be driven by the input. Or on the other hand, one might take the more 'innatist' position and say that the order is determined by the structure of the learner. Well, in fact, a little reflection makes it clear that the second could not be entirely the answer, because the structure of the learner can hardly account for the order in learning English, for the reasons that have been discussed many times before. At most it could provide some sort of pre-adaptation for learning in an order that is determined by something else, presumably characteristics of the language to be learned. So I thought that it would be interesting to try and test those two alternative hypotheses.

I attempted to operationalize the two hypotheses as follows. On the one hand, I characterised the input in terms of frequency, because it is possible from our samples of conversation to get the frequency with which the items in question were addressed to the language learners. On the other hand, I have put my head on the block and attempted to calculate relative complexity of items within linguistic systems. Clearly, I have not got time to defend my proposals here, and I know that, in any gathering of linguists, there will be as many answers as there are members of the audience. But I do offer an invitation to anybody who would like to come up with a different order, to see whether their order is better than mine in accounting for our data. However, what I will do is tell you what the outcome was for four linguistic systems:—auxiliary verbs, pronouns, sentence meaning relations (essentially the case-frames provided by a case grammar), and fourthly, the interpersonal functions, or speech acts. For each system I did a rank-order correlation between relative complexity and order of emergence, and for all four, the correlation was between $r_s = 0.8$ and $r_s = 0.9$. Then I ranked the items in the input in order of frequency for the same four systems and did another rank-order correlation between input frequency and order of emergence. Again I got correlations between $r_s = 0.8$ and $r_s = 0.9$ —for three of the four systems; the odd one was the system of interpersonal functions. As it only takes one counter-example to disprove the hypothesis, it seems that complexity is left holding the field. And I believe that that is probably the better contender of the two that I compared. Given similarity between learners in whatever they bring to the learning task, and, different complexity in the language to be learned, then it is the complexity of items that more or less determines the order in which they will be learned.

However, it is clear that, to learn, the child must have input, appropriate, relevant input. And variation in the frequency of the input can affect the order of emergence in this way: if you have two items of equivalent complexity, then the child is able to learn both of them at about the same point. However, if one of them occurs much more frequently than the other in the input, then one might predict that the more frequently occurring one will emerge first in the child's speech. We have two or three examples where this is the case.

I hope I will not be accused of sexism when I tell you that the clearest case of all is he and she. I personally cannot see any reason for saying that either he or she is more complex than the other, but he occurs something like twice as frequently in the input as she, and he emerges quite clearly before she. There are one or two other cases, like that, that seem to show that in fact the final explanation will involve at least an interaction between complexity and input frequency.

Figure 2 AUXILIARY VERBS; FREQUENCY IN INPUT IN RELATION TO MEDIAN AGE OF EMERGENCE (From Wells, in press-a).



But we did not leave it at that, because the high correlations between input frequency and order of emergence were really rather tantalizing and I was not really inclined to let them drop. The orders of frequency in the input were arrived at by pooling all the data from all the children at all ages. But of course it is possible that the input frequency of items is not constant over time; indeed a little closer inspection showed that it was far from constant. I can give you some idea of what it looks like from this graph of six of the auxiliary verbs.

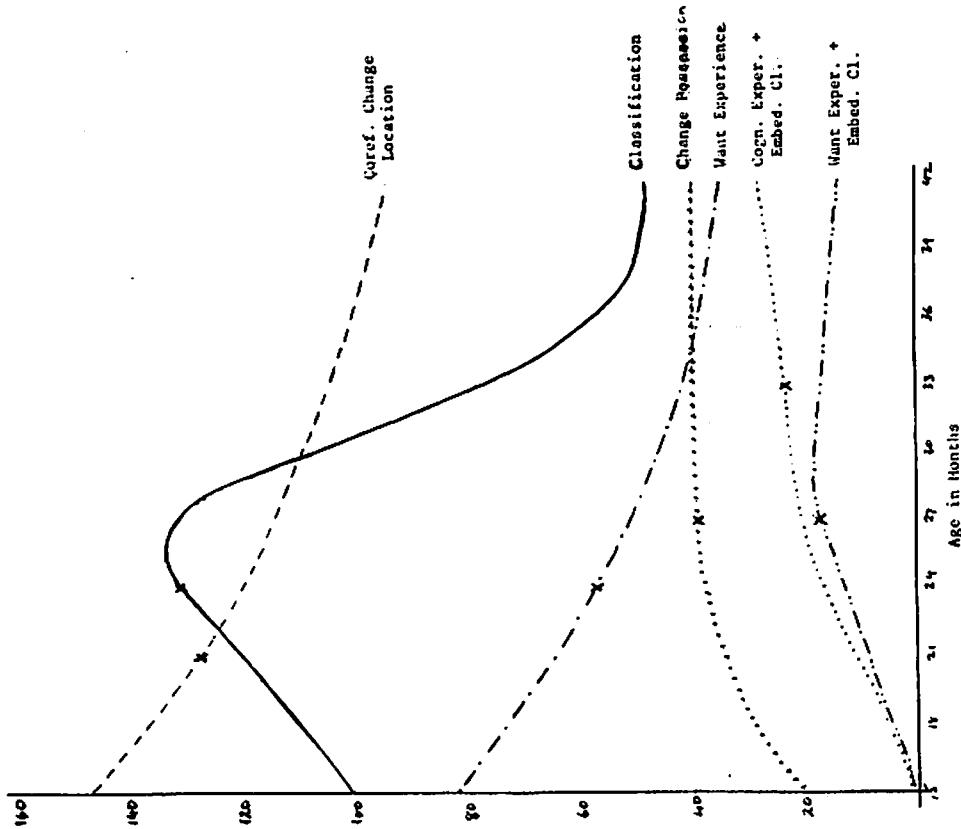
They more or less follow the same curve, with perhaps two exceptions. They start with a very low frequency, rise moderately steeply to a peak, and then drop off again. What is even more interesting is that the increase, the upward part of the curve, precedes the point of acquisition by the child (marked by X). It does so really rather neatly, so that at the point where the child seems to have mastered the item in question, frequency in the input begins to drop off again. Now that is the case for what we might call 'optional' linguistic systems --that is to say, those that are not necessarily present in every utterance. (It is possible, if you try hard enough, to speak without using auxiliary verbs, and apparently parents are rather good at doing this, although I don't suppose any of them are conscious of attempting to do so.)

So the question arises, if we get this high correlation between input frequency and order of emergence --and, what is more, apparently a rather carefully tailored increase just before the child needs the data to learn them-- what is it that cues this behaviour in the parent? Well Bruner, I recall, two years ago at the B.P.S. conference in Edinburgh, proposed to do away with L.A.D. and to substitute L.A.S. --the 'language assistance system'. So instead of having an innately programmed learner, we now have innately programmed parents, who somehow or other know how to tune input to the language learner. I find that no more implausible than the innate L.A.D. (which I do not find altogether implausible, incidentally). But I do find it quite implausible that parents should be able to 'tune' the frequency of specific items in their speech so finely.

So where do the cues come from? I think that the answer is probably from the child. In a number of ways. Firstly, what I showed you on the graph was the curve of frequency with the point of emergence superimposed. But emergence is based on speech production and, of course, the chances are that the child is already beginning to comprehend the items in question before he first produces them. It may well be, therefore, that the increase in frequency in the adult speech is cued by the child's apparent comprehension, rather than by his first production (cf. Cross, 1977). Secondly, I think that there is evidence that the varying frequency of items is cued by the child's physical behaviour. This I think is extremely interesting. In Figure 3 (below) we have a number of sentence meaning relations, and no longer do we see the same pattern of gradual increase to a peak and then drop off.

Three items look very much like the auxiliary verbs, but the other three are obviously very different. There are two points to make about this: firstly, sentence meaning relations are not an optional system. Every utterance, apart from yes, no and so on, must contain a choice from this system, and therefore some items must start with a very high frequency if the others are to start with a very low one. If we look at the items that occur with very high frequency to begin with, we find that one of them, *co-referential change of location*, i.e. coming and going, starts very high and gradually drops off. Now at the point at which we started our observations, 15 months, children are just beginning to walk. And, as they walk they fall and tumble, and they go to places they're not supposed to. So not surprisingly, mothers tend to talk an awful lot about where the children are going and so on. As they become more stable on their legs, and more aware of what they may and may not do, it is no longer so necessary to concentrate on the child's physical movements. The other one that starts very high is *want experience* --utterances like What do you want?, Do you want so-and-so?, Oh, you want so-and-so. Before the child can talk, the mother has to find out what the child's needs are by asking. But, of course, as soon as the child himself can talk about what he wants, make his wants clear, then there is less need for the mother to ask, so the frequency drops.

Figure 3 SENTENCE MEANING RELATIONS: FREQUENCY IN INPUT IN RELATION TO MEDIAN AGE OF EMERGENCE
(from Wells, in press-a).



The other interesting one which is not cued I think by the child's own development, but by some sort of social norm, is the one we call *classification, which covers utterances like What's that? That's a so-and-so. It reaches a peak at the age of 24 months, and drops off again very sharply indeed two or three months later. That corresponds quite clearly to the point at which children are increasing their vocabulary at an enormous rate. But it is also the point at which mothers are very conscious that their children should be beginning to produce intelligible words, and they actually deliberately set out to teach or encourage the learning of particular lexical items.

So the final explanation, I think, is that the actual sequence of development, which is very similar from child to child, is largely determined by the learner, as he brings his learning strategies to bear on the evidence of language in use. He learns first the categories that are easiest to grasp, and is progressively able to cope with more and more complex ones. He cannot learn without evidence, however, and this is the crucial role of the input. Adults who talk with young children pick up cues of various kinds which lead them progressively to modify their speech so that, to a considerable extent, the relevant evidence is available and salient at the point when the child is ready to work on it.

2. Language and Educational Attainment

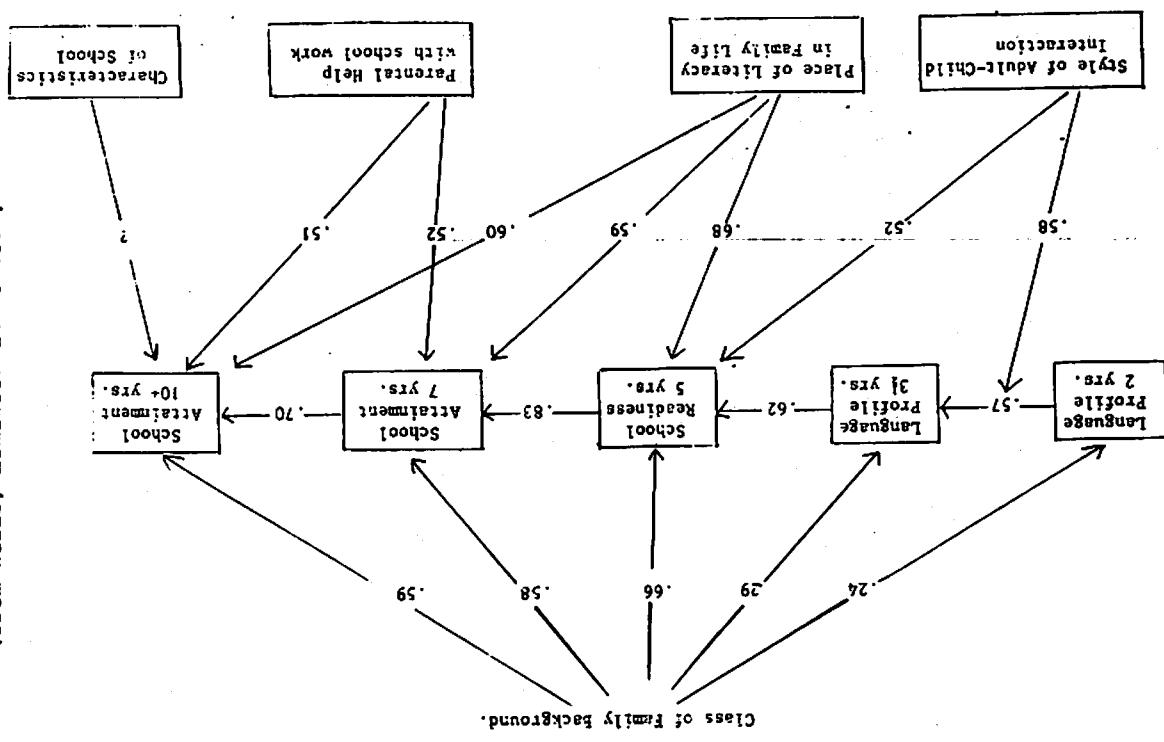
I would ask you now to make a leap of several years from about the age of three on to the age of five. Unfortunately, we were unable to secure funding for all 128 children. In fact, we were reduced to following one quarter of them. Nonetheless, we were still able to select 32 who were representative of the original representative sample, and we have followed these children ever since. And it looks indeed as if we may continue to follow them for the next five years, as they go through secondary school. At five, we picked them up again, and recorded them again in their homes just before they started school, using the specially constructed box. Then, after they had been in school for about six weeks, we made our first observation of them in the classroom --this time adding an observer and a video camera, because we felt that there was no possibility of using the same technique of unobserved observation in the classroom. At about the same time, we also administered a variety of tests, got the teachers to assess the children using a fairly comprehensive performance assessment instrument that we designed, and interviewed the teachers, and the parents. Over the next two years we made two more observations in the classroom and, when the children were in their sixth term of school, coming up to the age of seven, we administered more tests, gave another teacher assessment and interviewed the parents again. At that point I thought that the study had finished, but in 1981 the Spencer Foundation came up with a grant to enable us to re-assess the children at 10+, which we did and completed last Christmas. Again we gave a battery of tests, we got the teachers to assess the children, we interviewed the headteacher, we interviewed the

parents, and, for the first time, we interviewed the children as well. We have just completed the initial analysis of these data.

So let me try and give you some salient results from this part of the longitudinal study. Perhaps I should add, before I give you any results, that one of the motivations for continuing the study was dissatisfaction with the somewhat acrimonious theorising about the relationship between social class, language, and educational attainment, which can be summarised by the term 'linguistic disadvantage'. There have been many fairly strongly worded contributions to this debate, but in particular I can think of three. Firstly, that which came from Bereiter et al. (1966) who claimed that many lower class, particularly black children, come to school with no more than a few words and a repertoire of expressive grunts. This was followed, but not in the same vein, by Bernstein's (1971) much more elaborated theory. And thirdly, we have Labov's (1970) quite different account of the problem in terms of dialect mismatch. But two things that all these theorists had in common were: firstly, they tended to place the responsibility for the problems of lower class children in the home. Bernstein, of course, certainly attempted to overcome that in his paper 'Education cannot compensate for society' (Bernstein, 1970), and Labov has pointed out that schools really should adapt to children rather than expecting children to adapt to schools. But essentially the problem was located in the children when they came to school --that they failed to match the expectations of the school. The second problem with all these theories was that they were based on anecdote and speculation rather than on systematic evidence. Since in Bristol we had, by 1975, systematically observed a representative sample of children's naturally occurring conversation in their homes, I thought we were in a good position to find out just how far differences in home experiences would be related to educational attainment.

If we take a profile of oral language development of these 32 children at age three and a half, and we look at the relationship between that and the battery of tests at age 5, we find a correlation of $\Sigma = 0.6$ -fairly substantial. And if we look at the correlation between oral language as assessed at age 5 on entry to school, and the tests that were administered at age 7, we again find a correlation of about $\Sigma = 0.6$. So it does seem as if differences in oral language ability are to a considerable extent responsible for, or at least strongly associated with, tested attainment, both at 5 and at 7. However, there is a snag. The correlation between oral language development in the pre-school years and what we call 'family background' (which is somewhat similar to what Bernstein called social class) was only about $\Sigma = 0.3$ and barely significant. So it seems that the relationship between oral language ability and family background cannot really account for the educational underachievement of lower class pupils, since the correlation that would be required between language and family background is not there before the children go to school. However it emerged strongly as soon as we made assessments of the

Figure 4 RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HOME ENVIRONMENT, LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL ATTAINMENT AT 10+ YEARS
(from Wells, Homewood and Offord, 1983).



children in the classroom. At ages 5 and 7, tests of educational attainment show a correlation of $r = 0.6$ with family background (Wells, 1981b). I think, on the basis of that evidence, one has to say that the situation is not as simple as the theorists propose. In fact when we investigated more closely the transcripts of the recordings made in the children's homes, we could not find any clear evidence of language uses in the classroom which did not already occur in the home. There were differences in emphasis, of course, but there were neither forms nor functions used in the classroom that had not already occurred in the children's homes, and this would be true for almost all the children, irrespective of family background.

However, there was a test that we gave at age 5 that seemed as if it might provide a much more satisfactory explanation. Based on the work of Marie Clay (1972), her 'Concepts about Print' and 'Letter Identification' tests, we constructed an index that we called 'knowledge of literacy', and this index has a correlation with tested attainment at age 7 of $r = 0.8$, which is substantially higher than the oral language correlation. If we follow it through and look at the correlation between knowledge of literacy on entry to school, and tested attainment at age 10, the correlation is still $r = 0.7$. What is more, knowledge of literacy is highly correlated with family background ($r = 0.6$). Looking further into the data from the interviews with parents, and going back over the transcripts themselves, there is a clear relationship between knowledge of literacy, family background, and such behavioural characteristics as the parents' own frequency of reading and writing, the frequency with which they read stories to their children, and the amount of time the children voluntarily engage in activities associated with literacy. All these characteristic behaviours are found in high scorers on the knowledge of literacy test, who also subsequently are very likely to be high attainers in school. Figure 4 (below) summarises some of the major findings in this area (Wells et al., 1983).

As you can see from this Figure, the high correlations are generally in the area of reading and writing, vocabulary and study skills. These are activities that are essentially to do with written language. On the other hand, the oral language measures -- oral language as assessed by the teacher and the oral tasks -- are not nearly so strongly correlated with attainment. They are also not strongly correlated with family background.

I hope to get time to return to what I see as the possible implications of that in a few minutes. Let me for the moment just briefly expand on this interesting thread that is connected with literacy. Why should it prove such a key to the link between language, family background and attainment? I think there are a number of reasons. First, in the primary school, the acquisition of literacy forms a major part of the curriculum, and a major part of any assessment of attainment. Secondly, and I think this is really rather important, reading and writing introduce the child to a range of uses of language that go beyond the experience of ordinary conversation in the here-and-now. Margaret Donaldson (1978) has referred to it as 'disembedded; thinking and use of language. Bernstein calls it 'context-independent'. In listening to stories in his very early years, and in learning to read and write, the child is coming to understand how language is not necessarily restricted to the here-and-now ongoing activity, in the way that Olson (1977) describes it being when talking about spoken language. In stories he begins to discover, for the first time, that there is a different relationship between language and experience. In ordinary conversation, and particularly in activity-based conversation, to use Searle's (1977) terms, 'words match the world', but in written language, the relationship goes the other way --'words create the world'.

In spite of every endeavour to base school work on first-hand experience, a great deal of what forms the subject matter of the curriculum cannot be experienced at first hand, and is introduced, and must be introduced, into the classroom symbolically --through words, spoken in the first place, written in text and reference books later. If the child is going to succeed in school, he has to be able to handle this 'disembedded' use of language, this use of language to bring into existence experiences that are not encountered at first hand. At home, stories and the exploration of written language generally, prepare some children, but not all, for this more context-independent use of language in school. In a society that places such emphasis on skill in symbol manipulation, whether it be in reading and writing natural language, or in other symbol systems (mathematics and so on), it is clear that, in order to succeed academically, you have to be able to manage language in its fullest symbolic mode, and that that ability is a passport to high status, reasonably well-rewarded occupations. Parents who hold such occupations tend, when they spend time with their children, to engage in activities which exploit these skills which they themselves value and enjoy. So their children come to school already familiar with written language. They have a head-start in the school system. And, since the school system depends upon literacy and symbol manipulation, those children go through easily. For the others, of course, it is just the opposite. So, in a way, our whole society, and certainly our educational institutions, buttress the social class system through the emphasis on Bernstein. In the end, therefore, I don't disagree very much with Bernstein. His account of the social transmission of educational inequality got to the heart of the problem when he saw it as arising from the

child's everyday interactions with his parents. Where he was mistaken, I believe, was in thinking you could distinguish and dichotomise two codes of spoken language. If he had kept to his initial distinction between relatively context-dependent, and relatively context-independent uses of language, and tied that up with the distinction between spoken and written language, I think I would have been in almost complete agreement with him.

2. The Role of Adults in Children's Language Development

Now may I turn to the third topic, which I hope will link the first two together; the role of adults in a child's language development. Of course adults include teachers as well as parents. I have already presented you rather sketchily with the evidence on the sequence of emergence of language and I have claimed that this sequence holds to a very great extent for all children, at least in our sample, but I suspect also for all children learning English as their first language. I have argued that the order is largely determined by the complexity of what has to be learned as that interacts with the strategies employed by the learner. In fact I am extremely sympathetic to the view that the child is, relatively speaking, an autonomous constructor of his own language. That is to say, the child is responsible for the 'what', and the 'how' of language learning. In the literature, the innatist and the environmentalist positions are usually contrasted and seen as incompatible opposites. But I see no reason to treat them in that way. Indeed I told you earlier that the correlations that we obtained in support of the two opposing hypotheses were of the same order in three out of the four systems examined. What I wish to propose, therefore, is that a child's language learning results from an interaction between the drive from within (and I am using 'drive' in a non-technical sense) to master his first language, and the evidence that is provided by those who interact with him, and the quality of that evidence.

Clearly, the parents have an important role in providing evidence. But equally clearly from our own and other studies, the evidence can be extremely impoverished and children will still learn and they will still learn in the same sequence. If I had followed the same sequence of development as the other children -- all the stereotypes of the disadvantaged child in having parents who only swear at him when he gets in their way, and otherwise hardly talk to him at all. Yet George has learned English, and he followed the same sequence of development as the other children -- only more slowly. So the parents provide the necessary evidence. B.t., more importantly, I think we can see that the kind of evidence that they provide can fairly strongly affect the rate of language development. As an index of the variability in rate of development, let me say that at the age of three and a half there was a gap of three years between the most and the least advanced children in our sample. And this gap does not get any smaller as the children get older. So we have naturally been concerned to see

If we can establish any connection between variability in rate of learning and the quality of the parents' interactions with the language learner.

There have of course been other studies in this area. There was the study by Newport, Gleitman & Gleitman (1977) that concluded that, with respect to syntax, adults on the whole do not provide much help; and then a similar study by Furrow, Nelson & Benedict (1979) that reached the opposite conclusion. There was also the study by Cross (1977), already referred to, that found that semantic and discourse features of adult speech were associated with the level of language development achieved. In fact it would be fair to say that there is some confusion in this area of language development studies at the present time, partly I think because the methodology has varied from one study to another and partly because most of the studies, with the exception of that by Cross, have been limited to investigation of the syntactic characteristics of the input (Wells & Robinson, 1982).

In the investigations that we have carried out in Bristol (Ellis & Wells, 1980; Barnes et al., 1983), what we have found is that the formal characteristics of the input do not vary very much across the families, and perhaps for that reason, therefore, they are not associated with variation in rate of development. Where we have found strong evidence of a relationship between variation in the input and variation in rate of development, is in what might be called the 'contingent' nature of the adults' speech --the incorporation of the child's topic within the adult's subsequent utterances-- and various ways in which that can be managed.

If we go back to the point before the child can talk at all, we can see in slow motion what must occur for any conversation to succeed. Firstly, the two participants must establish an interpersonal relationship: I know that you know that we both know that we're attending to each other. And then both participants must together focus on an object 'out there', whether that object be a physical object (which it clearly is for the very young language learner), or a topic which is built up through the talk that occurs. Since in conversation, or in any other context, we can never transmit our thoughts direct to the mind of another, we encode them in a verbal form, and the listener tries to match in his own mind the idea in the mind of the speaker by using the cues provided by the message, the context, and by drawing on shared knowledge. But he is unlikely to hit upon exactly the same meaning as was in the mind of the speaker, and so in his subsequent turn he is likely to negotiate the meaning that the two of them are constructing together. Even if you follow adult conversation, you will find evidence of this picking up and checking and modifying previous utterances. If you look at very early conversation, you will find that this occurs really rather frequently (see Figure 5).

Figure 5 CONVERSATION BETWEEN MARK (23 MONTHS) AND HIS MOTHER (from Wells, 1981a).

1	Mark: Mummy(v)	[Mark is looking in a mirror and sees reflections of himself and his mother]
2	Mummy	Mother: What?
3	Mark: There there Mark	Mother: Is that Mark?
4	Mark: Mummy	Mother: Mm
5	Mark: Mummy	Mother: Yes that's Mummy
6	Mark: *	
7	Mark: Mummy	
8	Mark: Mummy	
9	Mark: *	
10	Mark: *	
11	Mummy(v)	
12	Mummy(v)	Mother: Mum
13	Mark: There Mummy	
14	Mummy(v)	Mother: Mum
15	There. Mark there	Mother: Look at Helen
16		Mother: She's going to sleep
17		(long pause)
18		(Mark can see birds in the garden)
19	Mark: [care](=look arthat)	
20	Birds Mummy(v)	Mother: Mm
21	Mark: jobs (=birds)	Mother: What are they doing?
22		
23	Mark: jobs	Mother: Oh look
24	Mark: jobs break	They're eating the berries aren't they?
25		
26		
27	Mark: Yeh	Mother: That's their food
28		They have berries for dinner
29		
30	Mark: Oh	

There are a number of features that I think are important in this extract, but I shall confine myself to talking about the last sequence, because it seems to me to be such a good example of mother-child conversation. *"Eax"*, says Mark, meaning "look at that". So mother looks. And as she signals her attention ('mm') and Mark specifies what it is he's looking at ('birds'), inter-subjectivity of attention is established and the triangle of communication is completed. Then the mother does what I see as being the most important thing: she invites the child to tell her more about the topic that he has chosen and that they both know they are both attending to. He does so and she picks up his answer and extends it further in a number of short, well-formed sentences that both provide him with a model of how to express what it is he's observing and at the same time, through language, offer him information about the event that has aroused his interest. An example, it seems to me, of the ideal 'language lesson'.

My second example is rather different (see Figure 6 below). This mother, too, is keen to talk with her child, but the resulting interaction takes a quite different form.

**Figure 6 CONVERSATION BETWEEN THOMAS (25 MONTHS) AND HIS MOTHER
(from Wells, in press-a).**

Thomas: * biscuits

Mother: Those were got specially
'cos we had visitors
at the weekend
Who came to see Tommy?
Who came in a car?

Thomas: See Grannie Irene/g/car

Mother: Grannie Irene's coming next weekend
But who came last weekend?

Thomas: Auntie Gail in/g/train

Mother: Auntie Gail's coming
They're coming on the train yes

Thomas: Colin in/g/train

Mother: Colin - Colin - er - and Anne came
in the car didn't they

Thomas: Colin/g/Anne

Colin/g/Anne

Mother: Yes

Thomas: Colin/g/Anne

Colin/g/Anne

Mother: Colin and Anne came in the train

Thomas: In/g/train

Auntie train

Mother: No not Auntie train darling(v)

Auntie Gail and Grannie Irene
are coming on the train on Friday

Thomas: Auntie Gail in/g/train

Mother: That's right

Note how this mother takes over the control of the conversation as she selects the topic and monitors the child's utterances to ensure that they are factually accurate and grammatically well-formed. A language lesson of a very different kind! If the first mother sustains and extends her child's communicative initiations, this mother directs the conversation in a much more deliberately didactic manner. She no doubt believes she is facilitating her child's development. However, we have found that children whose conversational experience tends to be of this kind actually make slower than average progress. And I do not believe this association is entirely coincidental.

It seems then, that both to learn his native language and to learn through that language, the ideal situation for the young child is to interact with a more mature member of the culture who encourages him to propose topics for conversation and, having made the effort to understand what the child means and understands, helps him to extend those topics in a collaborative enterprise of meaning construction. Where conversation of this kind is associated with the reading of stories and with exploration of the imaginary worlds created by stories, the child experiences what seems to be the ideal preparation for school (Wells, 1982). And this is indeed what we found. Together with knowledge of literacy acquired through listening to stories, experience of collaborative conversation prepared children to meet the language demands, both oral and written, that were made of them in their first months at school (Wells, in press-c).

However, when we came to compare the language experienced at home and at school, the results painted a very gloomy picture. On almost every measure, schools provide less opportunity for children to use their existing linguistic resources or to add to them except in very narrow areas of vocabulary (Wells, in press-b). This was true for every child, irrespective of social background. Many infant schools pride themselves on providing an 'enriching' language environment to compensate for the presumed inadequacies of lower-class homes. Yet there was not a single classroom where any of the children studied had the same opportunity to talk with an adult as they had in their own homes. What we found was that, whereas in all homes children initiated more than half of the interactions, this was reduced to about 15% in the classroom. And whereas, at home, parents extended the child's meaning in 38% of their utterances, the proportion of such extending utterances dropped to 14% at school. Compared with their experience at home, children found themselves forced into a respondent role at school, being required simply to listen or to answer questions, more than half of which were 'display' questions, to which the teacher already knew the answer. Teachers on the whole did not seem to be very interested in what the children had to contribute; they were much more concerned to pursue their own topics, requiring children to follow their train of thought, without any of the negotiation of meaning that was characteristic of conversation at home.

Table 1 COMPARISON OF ADULT-CHILD CONVERSATION AT HOME AND SCHOOL
(n = 32) (from Wells, in press-b).

	Home	School	Sig. level of difference
Absolute values			
Mean no. of child utterances to adults	122.0	45.0	p < .001
Mean no. of adult utterances to child	152.7	128.7	n.s.
Mean no. of child turns per interaction	4.1	2.5	p < .001
Mean child syntactic complexity	3.1	2.4	p < .001
Mean adult syntactic complexity	3.5	4.3	p < .001
Mean no. of categories of semantic content in child speech*	15.5	7.9	p < .001
Proportional values (child)			
Initiation of interaction	63.6%	23.0%	p < .001
Exchange-initiating utterances	70.2%	43.8%	p < .001
Complete statements	11.2%	28.0%	n.s.
Questions	12.7%	4.0%	p < .001
Requests	14.3%	10.4%	p < .05
Elliptical or moodless utterances	29.4%	49.4%	p < .001
Utterances in text-contingent exchanges	9.4%	6.3%	p < .10
References to non-present time	9.1%	6.4%	p < .05
Proportional values (adult)			
Exchange-initiating utterances	59.9%	78.7%	p < .001*
Complete statements	26.2%	24.5%	n.s.
Questions	14.3%	20.2%	p < .01
Requests	22.5%	14.1%	p < .001
Elliptical utterances	5.7%	5.8%	n.s.
Requests for display	2.1%	14.2%	p < .001
Extending child's meaning	33.5%	17.1%	p < .001
Developing adult's meaning	19.3%	38.6%	p < .001

* For this comparison only n = 16

This is not a situation in which children are going to increase their command of language very effectively. Nor is it one, I would argue, in which they are going to learn very effectively through language either.

It may well be argued that, given the adult-child ratio in the classroom and the pressure on teachers to ensure that all children cover the curriculum, these findings are entirely to be expected. That may be so, but it is not a satisfactory answer. In my view what is needed is a great deal more attention to the interactions through which learning and teaching are carried out. For just as the style of interaction adopted by the parents can significantly facilitate, or alternatively impede, a child's learning at home, so I believe can the teacher's style of interaction significantly affect the ease or difficulty that children experience in learning at school and --equally importantly-- their motivation to do so.

There are already some teachers who have discovered how to promote an interactional environment that is conducive to effective and creative learning. With greater understanding and some help in changing their patterns of classroom organisation, there are, I believe, many more who would be able to do so. To find ways of promoting such a change in classroom interaction in the interests of more effective learning is a challenge which I hope this Association will be willing and able to accept.

Gordon Wells

Note: I should like to acknowledge the support that we have received from the Social Science Research Council, the Nuffield Foundation, the Spencer Foundation and the Department of Education and Science in carrying out the research reported in this talk. GW.

* When Gordon gave his talk he could still be billed as 'Centre for the Study of Language & Communication, University of Bristol' with which we have associated him for so many years. But his work on Carolyn Letts' transcript was done at a very busy time when he was about to leave for OISE, where, from September '84, he will be Professor in the Department of Curriculum. In addition to his teaching (M.Ed. and Doctoral students in the area of language and learning) he will begin research involving the development of a suite of computer programs to assist in the analysis of conversational texts, in collaboration with Dr. Brian Rosser (Polytechnic of Wales, Computer Studies Dept.). He is also hoping to start another longitudinal study of language and learning, this time with two levels of intervention, one in the home and the other in the school. It will involve bilingual children from two of the 'heritage language' communities in Toronto as well as monolingual speakers of English. Our thanks to Gordon for seeing his talk on to paper for the Newsletter, and our best wishes to him in Canada!

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2. Participants List (BAAL 83)

** 118 participants: 79 members, 39 guests, publishers' representatives or representatives of Associate Membership bodies. Members' addresses will be found in the brand-new, much-to-be-welcomed Membership List included in this summer mailing (replacing the elusive list of May 1982). Non-members, indicated by an asterisk, have short addresses added. Associate Members and publishing houses are underlined. I'm sorry this participants list is overdue; that's my fault entirely and nothing to do with Janet Price (Membership Secretary) and Euan Reid (Assistant Secretary) to whose patient labours we owe the new and up-to-date Membership List. JDM.

Richard ALEXANDER; Paco ARIZA; Guy ASTON; *Mrs A. BARNARD, Sch of Educ Univ Newcastle u Tyne; Roy BEVAN; Ruth BIRNIE; Meriel BLOOR; Tom BLOOR; Chris BRUMFIT; *Christine CALFOGLOU, 346 Patissia St Athens Greece; Joanna CHANNELL; Mike CLARKE; *J. CLINE-BAILEY, Fourah Bay College Sierra Leone/Univ Durham; Pam CZERNIEWSKA; Alan DAVIES; *Sarah DEATH, CILT; Yvonne DE HENSELER; *Tony DICKINSON, Douglas Rd E4 6DA/Univ London; *Peter DONOVAN, CUP CB2 2RU; Lucile DUCROQUET; Roy DUNNING; Adrian DU PLESSIS (CUP); *Caroline EGERTON, Collins Educational WLX 3LA; Rod ELLIS; Peter ETHERTON; *Dr Chitra FERNANDO, Dept of Ling Macquarie Univ Sydney Australia; *David FRANCIS, Hodder & Stoughton Sevenoaks; Elaine FREEDMAN; *Mrs Pat GAFFEY, Dept of Ling Science Univ Reading; John GALLEYMORE; Edie GARVIE; *Dr K. GÖDDE, c/o Reinhard Hartmann; Walter GRAUBERG; *Brita GREEN, Univ York 1 Station Rd Upper Poppleton York; Derek GREEN; Peter GREEN; Pam GRUNWELL; *Diane HALL, Thomas Nelson & Sons Nelson House Walton u Thames; Liz HAMP-LYONS; Ali Nasser HARB; Brian HARRISON; Reinhard HARTMANN; *Roger HAWKINS, Dept of French Univ Sheffield; Patricia HEDGE; *Liet HELIWIG, Lang St Unit Univ Aston; Peter HILL; Roland HINDMARSH; Charlotte HOFFMANN; Thelma HOWELL; Howard JACKSON; Allan JAMES; Carl JAMES; *Helen JAMES, Univ Sussex 37 Lyndhurst Rd Hove; *Michael Johnson, Longman Group Burnt

Mill Harlow; Mike JOHNSON; *Brigitte KALDEICH, Pergamon Press
 Headington Hill Hall Oxford; Leilla KEANE; *Martin KENWORTHY, Sch of Educ Univ Leicester; Nicola LEES; *Carolyn LETTS, Dept of Ling Sc Univ Reading; *Pippa LINE, Sch Sp Path Leicester Poly; Bill LITTLEWOOD; G.P. LOFTUS; Mark LOWE (HBJ/Academic Press); *Michael LYONS, Edinburgh Lang Foundation 11 Gt Stuart St Edinburgh; Paul MEARA; *Prof MIGNAULT, c/o Reinhard Hartmann; *Kay MOG福德, Dept of Speech Univ Newcastle u Tyne; *Caroline MOSELEY, 26 Burdon Terrace Newcastle u Tyne; John NORRISH; Mehrroo NORRHOVER; Lubasa N'ti NSEENDI, 42 Tollington Way London N7; Michael Palmer; Alison PARKES; Brian PARKINSON; *Michael PERKINS, Speech Therapy Section Leeds Poly; Martin PHILLIPS; Robert PHILLIPSON; Alison PIPER; *Prof Lotwar POHL, Inst App Lang Stud Univ Edinburgh; Janet PRICE; Ben RAMPTON; Mike REYNOLDS; Euan REID; Michael RIGGESPORD; John ROBERTS; Margaret ROGERS; *Keith ROSE, ELT Division Longman Group Burnt Mill Harlow; Carol SANDERS; David SCARBRUGH; *Mary SHIELDS, Basil Blackwell 108 Cowley Rd Oxford; Margaret SIMONOT; *Tove SKUTNABB-KANGAS, Nyveg 17 4050 Skibby Denmark; *Rae SMITH, Sch of Sp Path Leicester Poly; *Jane STOKES, Sp Therapy Dept Tower Hamlets London; Michael SWAN; *Stephen TAUROZA, Univ Siena Italy/Dept Ling Univ Nottingham; David TAYLOR; Stephen THOMAS; Richard TOWELL; *John TRIM, CILT; *Marion TRIM, Dept of Ling Sc Univ Reading; Anna TROSBORG; Jeremy VANSTONE; Mahendra VERMA; Catherine WALLACE; *John WALLACE; Edward Arnold Ltd 41 Bedford Sq London WC1; M.J. WALLACE; Hermann WECKER; Gordon WALLS, OISE Toronto; Sidney WHITAKER; Cristina WHITECROSS; Claire WICKHAM; Josephine WILDING; Mary WILLES.

II OTHER MATTERS ELSEWHERE

1. Linguistic Association of Great Britain (LAGB) Dick HUDSON
 2. Centre for Information on Language Teaching & Research (CILT) Helen LUNT
- Conference Reports:-
- Michael BUCKBY
 - Greg BROOKS
 - Afaf EL-MENOUFY

1. News from LAGB
- The Linguistics Association held a most successful 25th Anniversary Meeting at the University of Hull (29-31 March), with Connie Cullen as local organiser. We have news of the second meeting of the Educational Linguistics section --no injustice is intended to the quality and range of the other sessions!
- * * *
- R port on the second meeting of the Educational Linguistics section of LAGB, Hull, March 29th 1984. Topic: The higher-level differences between speech and writing.
- Dick HUDSON writes:

The LAGB members at the Hull silver jubilee meeting continued to show the same interest in 'educational linguistics' matters that they had showed at the previous meeting, six months before (N/L20, p.7). Over 80 people came, which was more than half the total attendance at the Conference. The Educational Linguistics section meetings fit in well with another new development at the LAGB --the teach-in preceding the conference-- as they give members a chance to up-date themselves on a particular subject --clearly an important function of the LAGB which it has not been fulfilling until now.

Our subject was the relation between spoken and written language at the higher levels of syntax, semantics, etc. --i.e. anything except what would be covered by a discussion of writing systems. We started by recognising that writing is a lot more important than linguists have generally said, though we didn't quarrel with the general principle that speech is even more important. The differences between spoken and written language, in terms of structure as well as use, are so great that we can't assume that written language is just a written-down version of speech. Nor can we assume that a theory of spoken language can be based on data from written language, though linguists have often done just this. We mentioned in passing a long list of constructions and usages which are found in one type of language but not in the other.

Most of the discussion was devoted to the problem of identifying structural differences which can be related to the contrast between speech and writing as such. The problem comes from the fact that this contrast interacts with a large number of other contrasts (e.g. public/private, planned/spontaneous, formal/informal), and it is hard to sort out their respective effects on the structure of the language used. Much of the debate proceeded on the assumption that it did at least make sense to talk of the 'most typical' kind of speech and writing, namely casual 'vernacular' speech and formal, academic writing; but when we addressed this assumption directly we seemed to think it was very debatable and even ideologically loaded. Which just goes to show that it is hard to think straight about language when you come from a highly literate culture. We ended by making this point explicitly, in relation to a number of widely held tenets of theoretical linguistics, such as the view that a language is a set of sentences.

In spite of some inconsistencies I thought the discussion was a good one --well informed and responsible. I was pleased with the format which we had agreed beforehand: a list of nine questions as an agenda, and a panel of three expert discussants (Lesley Milroy, Mike Stubbs and Ivan Lowe) to start the discussion of each question before the floor joined in. I have written a report of the proceedings, which I have checked with all the speakers, and copies may be had, in exchange for a first class stamp (to cover printing costs) plus a stamped addressed envelope. My address is Dept. of Phonetics and Linguistics, University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT.

2. News from CILT

Contributed by Helen LUNT, Senior Research Information Officer, CILT, 20 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AP (tel: 01-839 2626)

Conference report

Second language learning: research needs and priorities was the title of a specialist conference convened by CILT, with financial support from the Economic and Social Research Council, in Birmingham in February. CILT proposed and convened the conference because of the evident need to extend the body of sound knowledge and understanding underpinning language learning and teaching, for example through empirical, interdisciplinary research.

The Centre was assisted in planning the conference by the Chairman of BAAL and by members of the National Council for Modern Languages in Higher and Further Education, and of the Education and Human Development Committee of ESRC, among others; the Centre is very grateful for their help. Forty-three people attended, most of

them for the whole weekend. Most of the participants were invited as research workers in psychology or applied linguistics, or in related areas. Some 'consumers' of research results were also present; they included representatives of HM Inspectorate, advisers, teacher trainers and teachers.

The ambitious aims of the conference (set out in N/L20 p.13) were achieved in part. The prepared papers put clearly and cogently the case for work to be done. In three main areas important questions were identified, and it was clear that there are people able to tackle them:-

Communication processes: what do second language learners need to be able to do? (Paper by David Wilkins, University of Reading)

Language learning and acquisition processes: how can and do people learn? (Paper by Steven McDonough, University of Essex)

Language learning in education: what research should be done to help improve learning? (Paper by Rosamond Mitchell, University of Stirling).

Some of the practical problems that must be tackled if a research community is to grow in this important field were also identified.

Despite the considerable common interests among the conference participants there were different viewpoints and different understandings of basic concepts, which made consensus difficult to achieve in a short conference. Those working in closely related areas may not readily accept the importance of each other's perspectives and evidence, or their relevance in educational contexts. In educational research, for example, the contributions of applied linguistics and of psychology could be thought remote from the very real problems of everyday practice of teaching and learning, and considerable effort will be needed if constructive dialogue on aims, objectives and methods is to be pursued among those concerned.

Participants were also reminded that a great deal of communication and interpretation is needed before language teachers can be expected to receive research findings, consider their importance to particular teaching/learning contexts, and modify their approaches. Some consideration was given to the implications for two-way teacher-researcher relationships.

CILT will make available a report on the conference within the next few months. A report has already been submitted to ESRC.

Conference notice

Learning and teaching languages in adult education: resources, training and professional contacts for teachers is the title of a

conference to be held at the University of Nottingham, 5-7 September 1984, for teachers of foreign languages in adult education and for those with responsibilities for or professional interest in this field. Further details are available from Sheila O'Shea, CILT (address above).

Publications

Syllabus guidelines 1: Communication, by John Clark and Judith Hamilton, has been published by CILT. Produced in Lothian Region as part of the nationwide movement towards the use of graded objectives in modern language learning, this is the first volume of a functional/notional syllabus for schools at all stages up to and beyond 'O' level.

The authors have divided the syllabus into six communicative areas:-

- A Communication in the classroom
- B Communication with speakers of the foreign language
- C Communicative activities for pleasure
- D Communication tasks
- E Games
- F Simulations and Plays
- G The development of communicative skills and strategies

Syllabus guidelines 2: French and Syllabus guidelines 3: German will be available from CILT later this year; support materials will be published by Macmillan Education during 1984.

A4 paperback, 80 pages, available from CILT Mail Order, 20 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1 5AP; order code IPI, price £6.95 + 10% for postage/handling (UK) or 15% (overseas).

CILT Language and Culture Guides. Seven further titles have been published in this series since it was reported in N/L18. The guides now available are Bulgarian, Czech & Slovak, Finnish, Modern Greek, Hungarian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Serbo-Croat, Swedish and Turkish. Several others are at an advanced stage of preparation; they are Arabic, Bengali, Danish, Gujarati, Modern Hebrew, Norwegian, Punjabi and Urdu.

The Language and Culture Guides are guides to resources available in Britain for the learning and teaching of these languages. The languages selected are those on which CILT receives a considerable number of enquiries. They are important for various reasons: some are languages of countries within the European Communities, some are languages of minority communities in Britain, some are important to international trade, and several of the languages fall into more than one of these categories. Full details of the series are available from CILT, and the Guides are obtainable from CILT Mail Order (address above).

The Language Teaching Library Publications List and Order Form, April 1984, will be available in May, and will include among other recent titles Specialised Bibliography B17: English for science and technology (March 1984). The list is available from the Language Teaching Library, CILT (address above).

3. Graded Objectives - a report supplied by Michael BUCKEY

At the last count, there were over 90 LEAs out of 103 involved in schemes of graded objectives and tests with 350,000 entries in 1983. There was a clear need to pool experiences --which has been undertaken by CILT-- and to evaluate the effects of these schemes on pupils, parents and teachers --which was the task of a research project at the Language Teaching Centre at York, funded by the Schools Council. The full report of this research was published in 1981 (see Buckby et al.); it is presented in a way designed to help and encourage discussions between foreign language teachers and others interested in 'the graded test movement'. The results, which are summarised below, are extremely positive and encouraging, while presenting important challenges to language teachers.

At the beginning of the school year 1979-80, two experimental groups were formed, one in York and one in Leeds. Each experimental group had a matching control group, in which the pupils continued with French in the normal way. Most of the pupils were aged 13+ and would have to choose during the year whether or not to continue with French in the next year. All the pupils completed an attitude questionnaire during the first two weeks of the first term. After this, the experimental pupils were given a document describing the graded objectives and tests, and the certificates which they could win. The parents and teachers of the two groups also completed attitude questionnaires, at the same time. Later in the year, both groups of pupils took a test of aptitude for foreign language learning. Space does not permit a detailed account of the responses to the pupils' attitude tests: these are given in the report and make instructive and fascinating reading for language teachers. What is extremely significant is that in both of the tests they took the two groups were very closely matched: at the beginning of the year the attitudes and aptitudes of experimental and control pupils were almost identical. The aptitude test results also showed that the language learning ability of the experimental pupils reflected extremely well the full range of ability in comprehensive schools, normally distributed.

The parents' questionnaires also present a lot of invaluable information for language teachers, but from the purely experimental point of view what matters is that the two groups of pupils started the year with parental support at the same level. A similar

Picture emerges from the analysis of the teachers' questionnaires. All the evidence indicated that the experimental and control groups were very closely matched at the start of the school year.

At the end of the school year, pupils, parents and teachers completed the attitude questionnaires again. This was done after the experimental pupils had taken a graded test, had learned the results and, where appropriate, been awarded a certificate. The results of this second administration of the questionnaires were most striking and completely substantiate the claims made for graded objectives and tests by their supporters. Very briefly, the results of the pupils' questionnaires can be summarised as follows:—

1. At the end of the year, the experimental pupils showed very significantly more positive attitudes to learning French than the control pupils.

2. The results in Leeds and York were very similar, but the gains were more marked in the York schools. This was the first year graded tests had been used in Leeds and the third year they had been used in York.
3. The more positive attitudes of the experimental pupils were shown equally at all points of the aptitude scale.
4. Experimental pupils who failed a graded test proved to have attitudes as positive as those who had passed.

5. Significantly more experimental pupils expressed an intention to continue with French the following year and reports from the schools indicate that they did in fact continue.

There is a detailed examination of the results in the report and a discussion of some of the possible implications for the classroom. All foreign language teachers will surely be encouraged by the great improvement in the attitudes of the experimental boys as compared with those of the control group boys. It appears that the attitudes of the boys who took a graded test were as good as those normally held by girls at the same stage. Teachers who have not yet introduced a system of graded tests can also be encouraged by the knowledge that the evidence indicates that they could adopt the graded syllabuses and tests produced in Leeds and York and reasonably expect to achieve gains similar to those noted in the experimental group. As far as the pupils are concerned, the report concludes that 'the introduction of graded syllabuses and tests seems to bring considerable gains and no losses'.

The analysis of the parents' replies shows a trend similar to that of their children: while the control group parents' responses remained unchanged over the year or became less positive, the experimental group parents' responses all tended to become more positive. There is a strong challenge in the report to foreign

language teachers who blame their pupils' negative attitudes on parental apathy or hostility. At the beginning of the year, some 80% of the parents indicated that they wanted their children to continue with French and a similar number said that they were glad that their children were learning French. The report suggests that the view generally held until now, that pupils' attitudes are largely determined by their parents, may be over simplistic. It suggests that the attitudes of pupils and parents influence each other and that the views held by parents may well be influenced by their children. This would imply that teachers are very instrumental in forming the attitudes of their pupils towards foreign language learning and, through the pupils, their parents. Teachers will no doubt discuss the implications of this power and responsibility, and they should be helped in this by the suggestions in the report.

Compared with the numbers of pupils and parents involved, the number of teachers who took part in the evaluation was, inevitably, relatively small. Any interpretation of their replies must, therefore, be tentative. Both groups of teachers seemed generally well disposed towards graded syllabuses and tests, and their views remained stable over the year. They believed that graded tests helped lower ability pupils to achieve higher standards and that they also benefited higher ability pupils. They also reacted in a positive way to the effects of the approach on teaching courses and methods. There were no strong objections on educational grounds.

The teachers' replies do, however, provoke a number of questions, some of which suggest problems which may arise in the future from the very success of graded objectives and tests. For example, a minority of teachers supported the view that it is better to concentrate on teaching French to higher ability pupils. As graded tests appear to encourage a wider range of pupils to continue longer with French (some 62% of the experimental pupils chose to continue after options as compared with the national average of 33% - 35%), this could present those teachers with a painful dilemma: their success with a wide range of pupils before options throws up a challenge after options. Judging by the discussions provoked amongst teachers in Leeds and York by this part of the report, teachers elsewhere will be helped by it to understand their own attitudes more clearly and to draw up sounder policies for future developments in their own schools.

The last chapter of the report was written by the teachers involved in the experiment. Before writing it, they read the rest of the report and met in two groups, in Leeds and York, to discuss their reactions to it. In this chapter, the teachers expand on the statistical findings, offer explanations for the results based on their own professional experience and respond to some of the challenges referred to above. They also raise a number of interesting questions and challenges of their own. This is an invaluable chapter and it evokes in graphic ways the transformations produced in classrooms by the introduction of

Graded objectives and tests, and the inevitable changes in methodology. One teacher tells how one recalcitrant pupil framed her certificate and secretly displayed it in her bedroom alongside her Sid Vicious poster! What comes over very strongly in the teachers' comments is a feeling of great confidence in themselves, in their pupils and the future success of foreign language learning in their schools. It is clear that this confidence has not always been there and that their schemes of graded tests are very largely responsible for it. Their response to the suggestion that the success of graded tests may present some teachers with the 'painful dilemma' referred to earlier is a good example of their impressive and thoughtful confidence: "The feeling was that, at present, we can and should cope with a substantial majority of children studying a foreign language to the age of 16, and hope that, as teachers' knowledge, expertise, confidence and experience grow, this will gradually increase, possibly eventually to cover all children. Clearly, teachers foresaw problems in the case of pupils with 'remedial' problems and of very slow learners. But we felt it pays to remember a parallel change of attitude and expectations which has already come about over the last decade, concerning the earlier years of secondary education (11-14)".

Michael Buckby
Language Teaching Centre
University of York

Graded objectives and tests for modern languages: an evaluation,
M. Buckby et al., Schools Council, 1981 (available from CILT).

Conference Reports:-

4. History of Reading

A Colloquium on the History of Reading was held at the Centre for the Teaching of Reading, University of Reading, on Saturday 17 March. The occasion was supported by the U.K. Reading Association, and was multi-disciplinary; the speakers included historians, teacher educators, psychologists and psycholinguists.

Tony Pugh (Open University) opened the proceedings with a paper on 'The relevance of the study of the history of reading'. With copious examples, he made the point that current practices and assumptions are always historically grounded, and need to be seen in perspective if assumptions are to be questioned, and practices modified without repeating old mistakes.

Prof. Magdalen Vernon (Emeritus, University of Reading) reviewed 'The experimental psychology of reading' from its emergence in the 1870s until the present. She traced the influence of the early studies of Cattell and others on teaching methods, and on the new wave of cognitive psychology which has succeeded behaviourism.

Dr Michael Clanchy (University of Glasgow) gave an interim report on his research into 'The role of mothers in teaching their children to read in the Middle Ages', particularly the conclusions that might be drawn from the changing representations of, and attention given to, books in pictures of the Virgin and Child.

Professor Redmond Burke (University of Wisconsin) stressed the methodological problems inherent in 'Approaches to studying reading interests of earlier civilizations'. Quotations from earlier authors, for instance, may not be directly from their works, but from aural memory or from anthologies of excerpts.

Similarly, 'The interpretation of statistical data on the levels of literacy in nineteenth-century England and Wales' --Dr Lance Dobson (formerly University of Newcastle and Open University)-- is bemoaned by inadequate and shifting definitions of literacy, to such an extent that the data are of little value.

Correctives to the usual view that reading was only taught by alphabetic methods before the mid, or late, nineteenth century were given by two speakers. Dr Ian Michael (University of London) provided 'Early evidence for whole-word methods', going back at least to the seventeenth century, and Dr Joyce Morris (London) showed that phonic approaches were in existence by the mid-sixteenth. Both papers however implied that alphabetic methods predominated until the last century; and Dr Morris further argued that 'Phonics-- (still needs to develop) from an unsophisticated past to a linguistics-informed future'.

Peter Horner (Rolle College, Exmouth) gave a highly amusing illustrated talk on 'The development of reading books in England from 1870'. And Greg Brooks (NFER) wound up the day by describing programmes for 'The teaching of silent reading to beginners'. He showed that these approaches were used by few teachers, and only in the first half of this century, but argued that certain features of the method would be worth reviving.

If certain overall themes emerged they might be: the indirectness of the link between psychological findings and teaching methods; the need for better-based methodologies, both historical and pedagogical; and the diversity, and earlier origins, of teaching methods.

Thanks to modern technology, it is hoped to publish the proceedings (A.R. Pugh & Greg Brooks, eds., in association with UKRA) by September. The price will be £3.00 to UKRA members and £4.00 to others. Inquiries and orders should be sent to The Organising Secretary, Colloquium on the History of Reading, 212 West End Lane, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 5RU, and cheques made payable to 'Reading Colloquium'.

NFER, Slough

Greg Brooks

5. Fourth National Symposium on English Teaching in Egypt

The Centre for Developing English Language Teaching (CDELT) of the Faculty of Education, Ain Shams University, Cairo, has been in existence since 1976, but it is only since 1981 that it started the organisation of a national symposium to be held annually in Egypt, "with the purpose of getting together all those involved in the teaching of English in the country: teachers and administrators, from the Ministry of Education and Faculties of Arts and Education, and at all levels, from primary to tertiary, and for specialists and non-specialists.

The symposium is usually held at the end of March and hosted at one of the teaching institutions in Egypt, e.g. the first one was held at Ain Shams University, the second at Cairo University, etc. It is generally subsidized by the United States Information Service, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the British Council. The host institution usually does the organisation in collaboration with CDELT. Each year, a theme is selected as the focus of related topics in the field of English teaching, and in addition to contributions from local experts, Egyptian and foreign, keynote speakers are invited from Britain and the U.S.A. Among those who were invited in previous years were, for instance, Professor James Alatis, from TESOL and Georgetown University, Dr. Evelyn Hatch, from the University of California at Los Angeles, and Professor Geoffrey Leech, from the University of Lancaster. Throughout each symposium publishers usually hold an exhibition of books related to the particular theme of the symposium, and the proceedings of the symposium are always published soon afterwards.

Last March, from the 27th-29th, the fourth such symposium was held at the ESP Unit, Alexandria University, and the theme, obviously, was English for Special Purposes. The Arab Maritime Transport Academy --very much the place for the application of ESP-- took part by arranging a very well guided visit to its big quarters; and the British Council and the American Cultural Centre in Alexandria hosted the evening receptions.

The invited British speaker this year was Professor John Swales, from the University of Aston in Birmingham. His keynote address was entitled "ESP comes of age?" The American speaker was Dr. Ann Johns, from San Diego State University, who talked about "The shape of ESP texts". A third keynote address was given this time by Dr. Salah El Araby, from the American University in Cairo, and he talked about "ESP v. ASP", i.e. Arabic for Special Purposes!

Papers were presented by participants from various ESP-oriented institutions in Egypt, e.g. The Police Academy, The Faculty of Tourism and Hotel-keeping, The Arab Maritime Academy, The British Council Teaching Centre in Alexandria, etc. As usual, discussion groups were organised to discuss various issues throughout the period of the symposium and come up with recommendations relating

to the interests of members of the group, e.g. tertiary-level teachers, etc.

A questionnaire distributed among participants during the symposium tried to seek the favourite theme for next year's (1985) symposium, and the majority decided on 'Language and Literature in EFL'. It is hoped that the invited British speaker for this will be Professor H. Widdowson, from the Institute of Education, London.

(for address see Reviews section)

Afaf El-Menoufy

REVIEWS

1. BEARDMORE Bilingualism: basic principles
2. BENTAHILA Language attitudes among Arabic-French bilinguals in Morocco
3. KACHRU (ed.) The Other Tongue - English Across Cultures
4. PATEMAN (ed.) Languages for Life
5. WILES Children into Pupils

Haugen

El-Menoufy

Trudgill

Davies

Czerniewska

1. BAEITENS BEARDMORE, Hugo Bilingualism: basic principles
(Clevedon, England: Tieto Ltd. 1982). 172 pages.

Reviewed by Einar HAUGEN

For one who has grown up bilingual in a society that is strongly if not repressively anti-bilingual, and who has made the problems of bilingualism an object of research and writing, the reading of almost any new book on the topic gives a sense of *déjà vu*. He mumbles to the author, yes, this is my life you are describing; these are some of the problems I not only have had to face, but have tried from time to time to formulate and solve.

The fact that new books are still being written on the same theme, that more experiments are being performed, and that a flora of novel terminology has been launched by later researchers does not greatly alter one's awareness of what it means to grow up bilingual among monolinguals, whose language is not only dominant, but world-wide in its value. A "Language of Wider Communication" (LWC), to adopt one scholarly euphemism, makes every "Language of Local Communication" (LLC), as we might call it, not merely socially unacceptable, but downright superfluous. Only when one LWC collides with another LWC, as in Quebec or the American Southwest, is there enough interest in the problem to stir up the media. Aside from a few isolates like the Mennonites in Pennsylvania or the Doukhobors in South Dakota, most other non-English languages in the U.S.A. have become shadow languages.

Meanwhile Europe (and to some extent Australia) has Americanized itself by producing an industrial watershed that has attracted immigrants. The American problem has migrated to Europe, and European scholars are awakening to the fact that they, too, have foreigners in their midst, and that they have children who have to be taught, and in the process either acculturated, assimilated, or rejected.

Hugo Baetens Beardmore (hereafter BB), is, as his name suggests, such a born bilingual, who has made of himself what I shall call a bilingualist. This means that he practises what may be called Bilingualistics, a convenient name for the field of bilingualism. His birth in Belgium and education in the United Kingdom guarantees his status as a bilingual, and his publications since 1971 in French, English, and Netherlandic are his credentials as a Dilinguist.

The volume under review is the first in a new series entitled Multilingual Matters, edited by Derrick Sharp, and published by a firm mysteriously named "Tieto," which also publishes a Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, by 1982 already in its third volume, as well as a Journal of Language and Social Psychology, edited by Howard Giles and John Edwards.

This astonishing new activity in the United Kingdom should presumably be seen in the light of England's new bilingual problems, as well as its well-known older ones. So far very little of the work cited is English, being mostly American and Canadian, with a sprinkling of Continental, not least Belgian, examples. This is not surprising when we realize that BB teaches English at the University of Brussels.

BB's book, we learn, grew out of a "pressing need" for an introductory work on bilingualism, since he found Weinreich's 1953 classic too difficult and this reviewer's 1956 book inaccessible. In any case he is too kind to say that both books are by now thirty years out of date. Weinreich turned to other matters in the few years he had left of his life, while I have found the volume of output in recent years too voluminous to master. BB has given the tyro a new primer of 147 pages with 21 pages of bibliography. It is appropriate to mention here that about simultaneously there appeared two fuller introductions, Francois Grosjean's Life with Two Languages (Harvard University Press, 1982) in English and Tove Skutnab-Kangas' Tvåspråkighet (Liber Läromedel, Lund, 1981) in Swedish.

The materials in BB's book are organized into five chapters. In Chapter 1 (Definitions and Typologies) he wrestles manfully with determining just what he is writing about, beginning with Bloomfield's "native-like control of two languages". I would suggest that this is just as unrealistic as Chomsky's "ideal native speaker", merely multiplied by two (or more). He compares the elusiveness of its definition with that of defining a "word", but it would be more to the point to compare it with that of a "language". Before we can be sure of what the "two languages" of the bilingual mean, we need to determine what the "language" of the monolingual is. As is obvious, "language" overlaps with "dialect" and "style". Is one who speaks a "language" and a "dialect", or for that matter two "dialects", bilingual? Is one who speaks in two different "styles" bilingual? Some have claimed as much. Just

how well do you have to know your second "language" to be bilingual?

Among the definitions BB considers is the one I proposed in my first book (The Norwegian Language in America: A Study in Bilingual Behavior, 1953): the ability to "produce complete, meaningful utterances" in the other language (p.7). By producing one-word utterances like "Manana!" he faults this definition as "minimalist". This is a misunderstanding, due to my reluctance to use the equally undefinable word "sentence". After all, this was before Chomsky. I meant what might now be called the competence required "to generate well-formed sentences", which obviously means enough grammar and lexicon to communicate at least simple ideas in the language. But after so defining it, I continue, "From here it may proceed through all possible gradations up to the kind of skill that enables a person to pass as a native in more than one linguistic environment" (p.7). For this latter skill BB uses the word "ambilingual" after Halliday.

In the rest of Chapter 1 he goes on to introduce a plethora of more or less precise modifiers of the word "bilingualism" and related phenomena, proposed by writers on the subject: societal vs. individual; horizontal vs. vertical (and even diagonal!); primary vs. secondary; equilingualism; ambilingualism; balanced (? vs. unbalanced); semilingualism; functional; receptive vs. productive; symmetrical vs. asymmetrical; incipient vs. recessive; additive vs. subtractive; ascribed; successive; early vs. late. Among other technical terms he launches here are: immersion learning; deficit hypothesis; biculturalism; communicative competence; BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) vs. CALP (Cognitive and Academic Linguistic Proficiency); registers; diglossia; demotic vs. katharevousa; ei-ethnia! By this time I would think the beginner's head may well swim at what sounds more like glossolalia than bilingualism. But perhaps this is a fair picture of the confusion in a field where every scholar feels entitled to make up his own technical terms. But surely the organization here could have been sparser and more precise.

Chapter Two, devoted to interference and code switching, also takes its starting-point in Weinreich's and my manual, and then goes on to report on newer issues. The fact that my distinction between switching and interference (1956, p.39) was basically phonetic, seems to have escaped BB. Since he does not give phonetic transcriptions for his examples, it is hard to tell just what he means. He finds the difference in the social situation: interference is language-internal, switching language-external, which I can accept. In effect, interference is the transfer of a word or phrase into a second language, which usually involves both phonetic and grammatical adaptation. Switching is a more or less conscious resort to a second language when the listener understands both languages, and need not involve any phonetic adaptation. Obviously, this demands mastery of both language systems, since the resulting utterance must not be meaningless, and recent studies

have shown that they are no less grammatical than most monolingual sentences (I miss reference to Poplack's work here). This seems to invalidate Weinreich's claim that the "ideal bilingual" does not switch in mid-stream (1953, p.73). But "ideal bilinguals" are as rare birds as Chomsky's "ideal speaker" and other purely mental constructs.

Chapter Three tackles the dreary topic of measuring bilingualism, mostly a summary of work done in Canada, of course Lambert, Macnamara and Mackey. This work reached its apex in the conference proceedings edited by Kelly (1969). This is primarily a field cultivated by psychologists and educationists. BB concentrates on such problems as language dominance and language attitudes, omitting regular language testing and contrastive linguistics. Some account is also given of experimental attempts to correlate bilingualism with intelligence, an old chestnut that plays an exaggerated role in the thinking of the populace. It may be simple-minded, but it should be a priori obvious that anything one learns improves one's intelligence if the learner perceives it as valuable. When Mexican immigrant children in the 1920s were tested on American intelligence tests, they did badly and were made to feel that their Spanish was worthless. Canadian children in more recent times have been immersed in French and had every possible motivation to do well in both languages, so that the results have been uniformly positive. BB cites Balkan (1970), who tested upper middle-class school children in Switzerland, and found that French-English bilinguals had many advantages over French monolinguals, as they should!

Chapter Four is devoted to "theoretical considerations". Assuming that "there is to date no cohesive theory of bilingualism as a linguistic phenomenon", he explores avenues toward such a theory without in the end making more than a few suggestions. He appears convinced that such a theory does exist for monolinguals (whom he alternately calls "unilinguals" and "monoglots"), and he approvingly cites t-g-linguist Crystal's description of bilingualism as being in a "pre-theoretical frame of reference" (p.99). He regrets the "downgrading of t-g approaches in bilingual studies", although the downgrading is in fact on the other side. In a recent t-g-dominated introduction to linguistics by V. Fromkin and R. Rodman the term "bilingualism" is entirely missing, and there is no account of the work done in the last generation.

There is certainly no reason why ideas from t-g could not be carried over into bilingualistics. In a 1977 article, cited by BB, I discussed the concept of "bilingual norms". One could also refer to the writings of N. Hasselmo (1972) and L. Selinker (1972) as evidence of theoretical thinking, leading e.g. to the idea of "interlanguage", the blends of language norms that arise between bilinguals. Children do not really distinguish languages until about the age of three. Up to that time they exhibit a kind of single "underlying structure" reminding one of the universals assumed in t-g grammar. Contact situations lead to linguistic

convergence, as we have seen, though the extent to which we can draw up rules for it is an open question. It may be, as BB believes, "rule-governed", but one cannot predict with any assurance when and where a bilingual will "mix".

Chapter Five ("Problems of the Bilingual Speaker") deals with the popular question: "Is bilingualism a 'good thing' or a 'bad thing'?" Parents who have been victimized by a dominant society because of their linguistic inadequacies worry that their offspring will have the same problems. What they often fail to realize is that the barriers are less linguistic than cultural, racial, ethnic, religious, financial, educational, or whatever else separates the human race into mutually hostile groups. BB focuses on "the conflicting demands made upon the bilingual individual by the two linguistic-cultural communities in which he finds himself" (p.127). It is questionable whether this last chapter is strategically placed in the book, since it emphasizes the difficulties over the advantages, although BB's conclusion is overwhelmingly in favour of the bilingual option. He concentrates on two aspects of the problem: the danger of anomie, and the possible educational strategies to combat it.

His survey of anomie shows clearly that it is in no way a result of bilingualism, though it can be induced by the biculturalism that underlies it. Anomie is as likely to occur among monolinguals as bilinguals; every adolescent has to face the problem when he moves out of his home environment to the school. As for the problems of the school and its bilingual programme, if any, their evaluation depends on the measures used. BB draws up a list of misconceptions that he finds disproved by recent research, above all in Canada. Hypotheses, e.g. by J. Cummins, have tried to untangle the effects of differing social backgrounds; the child must have (1) a certain threshold of competence in its native language, and (2) adequate support from its home environment. Otherwise, "immersion" programmes will surely turn into "submersion" programmes, acting as a "subtractive" force to wipe out the native language rather than as an "additive" force to promote its learning and use.

In sum, one can say that this little book is a useful introduction into a field that has by now become almost impenetrable. It introduces the beginner to many of the terms used in technical discussion, even if not always enlightening him. It omits many topics, e.g. the political problems of bilingual states, and concentrates on the individual bilingual's problems. As such, it gives a good survey of current research and opinion, without entirely overwhelming the non-technical reader.

Harvard University

Binar Haugen

2. Abdellali Bentahila Language attitudes among Arabic-French bilinguals in Morocco. Multilingual Matters 4 (Clevedon, Avon, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd., 1983). X + 182 pages, ISBN 0 905028 15 5, casebound £9.90 (\$19).

Reviewed by Afaf EL-MENOUFY

This book is a useful addition to the growing field of social psychological studies of language. The author, a Moroccan bilingual as well as a linguist, investigates Arabic-French bilingualism in Morocco from an interdisciplinary viewpoint, trying to combine what he calls the 'Moroccan's insight', gained by living the situation with the 'foreigner's objectivity', achieved through his data-gathering and testing methodology.

The book begins by giving a brief survey of "The language situation in Morocco"; this is Chapter 1. From this emerges the complex multilingual nature of the situation on the one hand -- involving French, two varieties of Arabic (classical and Moroccan colloquial) as well as a few Berber dialects; and its uniqueness on the other hand -- being different from bilingual communities in North America or West and Central Africa, and only comparable to the situations in Algeria and Tunisia (most comparisons are made with the Tunisian situation). In view of what comes up in later chapters, it is felt that more could have been said here about classical arabic and its status in modern times --this would have explained some apparent inconsistencies in the results of the tests in the following chapters, e.g. when classical Arabic is rated as most necessary for a Moroccan (p.34) at the same time that it ranks lowest in its being used (p.77).

In Chapter 2, "Approaches to the Study of Bilingualism", the author, very briefly and uncritically, surveys the different approaches in previous studies, especially with regard to the Moroccan situation. Here again it is felt that more could have been provided about the findings of previous sociolinguistic studies (e.g. Abbassi 1977 and Gravel 1979), at least to make clear the advantages gained by the author's interdisciplinary approach.

Chapters 3-5 include the main contribution of the book: the empirical data used and its results. Ample information is provided about the respondents and the tests and questionnaires conducted, with explanations regarding the extent of their validity or limitations under certain conditions. The author also provides comments regarding possible interpretations of the result of each questionnaire or test separately, but only occasionally relates the results of the different tests, either within the same chapter or across the different chapters.

Chapter 3, "Languages, Attitudes and Views of the World", is one of the most interesting chapters of the book. The tests and questionnaires try to find out possible correlations between attitudes towards the languages used and how the use of a

particular language may affect the user's way of thinking. The results of the sentence completion test in particular show a very striking correspondence between the use of a language and the attitudes to others and the world that it engenders in the user – despite the author's reluctance to take this as supporting evidence for Whorfian views! Incidentally, this aspect of interference is not usually given much attention in foreign language teaching situations.

In Chapter 4, "An Examination of Language Choice", although the discussion of the bilingual's choice of language in a variety of situations is extremely interesting, it tends to be obscure at various points by a number of inaccuracies. For instance, added to the three varieties so far considered in tests and so on (i.e. French, classical Arabic and Moroccan Arabic), a fourth variety, Arabic-French, only referred to briefly before in the context of code-switching, is here introduced as 'a choice'. It is not always clear what it implies: sometimes it seems to imply a mixture of Arabic and French with code-switching (as its use in 'general topics', p.63), sometimes the implication could only be that they are two separate languages which are equally used (as its use in 'newspapers read' or 'books preferred' (p.68) – and here Arabic must refer to classical Arabic – or in 'films preferred' (p.70), where Arabic presumably refers to the colloquial), and at other times it is not clear what it refers to exactly, and even whether it has a written form, e.g. its use in 'self-expression' (p.68), and in 'taking written examinations' (p.67). The author does not offer any explanation why he introduces it as a choice, nor does he say much about it except when he talks about the disapproving attitudes towards code-switching.

Also, many of the situations considered for language choice involve conversation only, and yet the author includes classical Arabic as a possible choice although it is only used, as he himself states (p.4-5) in the written medium or in the reading-out form (e.g. broadcasting). In fact he ends up leaving out the ratings for classical Arabic because they --not surprisingly!-- so low in these situations.

Sometimes the choices are simply reduced to either French and Arabic only, or French, Arabic-French and Arabic, leaving the reader to work out which variety of Arabic is implied, e.g. whether it is Moroccan Arabic, as its use for communicative purposes (p.65), or classical Arabic, as its use in writing letters (?) (p.66); but which variety is it in 'receiving lessons/lectures' or 'taking oral examinations' (p.67)?

All throughout, the author does not sufficiently relate the results of the different tests in a way that makes it possible for the reader to have an overall picture of the situation. However, one gets the impression that this may be, at least to some extent, due to the nature of the topic investigated, where there are so many interacting factors involved.

Using the matched guise technique, Chapter 5 investigates "Reactions to Arabic, French and Code-switching". This is the first time, the author states, that this technique is used in the Moroccan situation and its main advantage lies in its showing attitudes or perceptions which may not be easily admitted by direct questioning. Three such tests are conducted, and they show that although French is not selected as the favourite language in direct questionnaires, French 'guises' receive the highest evaluation. However, it is felt that since the choice here had to be made between French and Moroccan Arabic only –classical Arabic being excluded because it is not used in conversation-- it was only to be expected that the French guises would be rated higher on traits such as 'educated', 'important', 'rich', etc., if Moroccan Arabic is the language of the uneducated masses and already proved, according

to the attitude tests in Chapter 3, to carry no prestige of any kind. In spite of this, the evaluations of French and Moroccan Arabic are found to be significantly different only when French is spoken without a marked Moroccan accent. When French is spoken with a pronounced Moroccan accent it seems to be judged the same as Moroccan Arabic, or even lower, as the author reports on the case of the Pez speaker. The author still concludes from this that French is more favourably perceived whatever its variety (p.108), although one would have thought that such results would suggest that there must be factors affecting evaluation here other than the French-Arabic difference only. Perhaps this is one of the limitations of the matched guise technique, or perhaps more research is needed on this particular point.

In Chapter 6, "Problems of Language Planning", the author discusses Arabization in relation to bilingualism, and conducts more tests to find Moroccan attitudes towards both phenomena. The reader feels here that the author is too immersed in the situation to be able to separate the different issues involved: for instance, it is not clear whether he discusses the desirability of Arabization at all or how it should be carried out (as seems to be actually the case). He takes it for granted that the reader knows exactly what is meant by Arabization, when in fact it is not clear whether it simply means having an Arabic education system with French as a foreign language or no French at all or whether it involves more than that. He takes the respondents' answers which favour bilingualism and at the same time think highly of Arabization as a reflection of "a conflict between ideology and practicality" (p.152) –an interpretation which has been common in the field so far (cf. e.g. Bourhis, 1982). I do not see why such seemingly contradictory results should be interpreted only as a conflict. They could be seen as representing aspirations for a future situation that combines the means of establishing identity (an issue which seems to be underestimated by the author) as well as the advantages of the access to the developed world provided by the foreign language, which happens to be French in this case (interestingly enough, in one of the questions the majority choose English as the favourite foreign language!). Such aspirations are not as practically

impossible as the author seems to imply.

In this respect, perhaps it would have been useful for the author to compare Morocco with some other Arabic-speaking country which does not have the problems of the bilingual situation. In fact, such a step is necessary before he could attempt to evaluate the "inadequacy of Arabic for the requirements of a developing nation like Morocco" (p.156). For instance, in countries in the Middle East, e.g. Egypt, it is hardly the case that classical Arabic has proved inadequate for modern practical needs, or that there is a shortage of very rich and interesting modern materials available in it (as the writer seems to imply). When some of the sciences are taught in English at tertiary levels in Egypt, for instance, it is because of the specially international nature of the world of science, and the rapid development in some of its branches in a way that makes translation inevitably lag behind, even when it is possible. In fact, this may provide an explanation for what seemed to be inconsistent answers in one of the questionnaires: "that while the majority of the respondents believe in the possibility of using Arabic to teach science, most of them do not favour the realisation of this possibility" (p.150). It would be rather superficial, I think, to interpret this also as a sign of conflict.

The final chapter of the book, "Conclusion", is a useful summary of what the author attempted to do throughout the book. His aim has been to explore the patterns of attitudes underlying the language situation of a bilingual community, and the wealth of his empirical data undoubtedly succeeds in doing that. It is felt that with this data --the main contribution of the book in my opinion-- and with more of his Moroccan insight in relating and reconciling the implications of the results of this data, the author should be in a good position to positively help in the future evolution of the language situation in his country.

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Afaf El-Menoufy
Abbasi, A. (1977) 'A sociolinguistic analysis of multilingualism in Morocco'. Unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of Texas.

Bourhis, J.R. 'Language policies and language attitudes: Le monde de la Francophonie', in Attitudes towards Language Variation (1982) ed. E.B. Ryan and H. Giles. (London: Edward Arnold).

Gravel, L. (1979) 'A sociolinguistic investigation of multilingualism in Morocco'. Unpublished Ph.D thesis, Columbia University Teachers College.

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Since her return to Cairo after her year in London (see N/L18), she has kindly sent the conference report which also appears in this issue.

3. KACHRU, Braj B. (ed.) The Other Tongue - English Across Cultures. (University of Illinois Press, 1982)

Reviewed by Peter TRUDGILL

This volume is one of a number to appear in recent years that deal, in one way or another, with "English as a world language". Others include Pride (1982), Richards (1979), Fishman et al. (1977), Smith (1981), Bailey and Gorlach (1982), Wells (1982) and Trudgill and Hannah (1982). These deal, variously, with native varieties of English other than British and American; non-native varieties; and different sociolinguistic and educational issues. The precise subject matter of this particular contribution is clear from its title, which is a clever one, contrasting as it does mother tongue English with other tongue or second (etc.) language varieties of English. The book, in other words, is intended to examine English as a world language with, as Ferguson writes in his (very nice) preface, particular reference to "the structure and use of non-native varieties".

The book grew out of a conference on "English in Non-Native Contexts" that was held at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the summer of 1978, but many of the twenty chapters are actually papers commissioned especially for this book. There is a helpful introduction by Kachru (which, however, is a little mystical in places, with, for example, languages being described as "having destinies"). The first section then contains papers by Fishman, on the sociology of non-native English; Strevens, on localised forms of English; Kachru, on models for non-native Englishes; and Nelson, on intelligibility. The second section contains mainly descriptive studies by Bokamba, Bangbose and Zwengler on different varieties of African English; papers by Cheng, K.K. Sridhar, Richards and Stanlaw on English in Asia; and papers by Craig and Haynes on Caribbean English. Section 3 contains papers by H. Kahane and S. Brice Heath on American English; a paper by Rose Nash on Puerto Rico; and one by Moag, mainly on Fiji. Part 4 has two papers, by S.N. Sridhar and A.L. Weir, on non-native English literature; while Part 5 consists of a lone paper by Kachru entitled "Meaning in Deviation: Towards Understanding Non-Native English Texts".

According to Kachru, the book is not intended to be "merely an anthology" of case studies of English as a world language, and indeed the only "other tongue" varieties of English to be dealt

with in any depth are those of Nigeria, Kenya, The People's Republic of China, India, Singapore, Japan, Puerto Rico and Fiji. One could, of course, query the legitimacy of inclusion of the two chapters on Caribbean English in this book on the grounds that English is not exactly a separate, second language for native speakers of English-based Creoles in most Caribbean areas in the way it is for, say, speakers of Hindi in India. This point is, however, discussed and defended adequately in the otherwise rather weak paper by Craig, "Toward a Description of Caribbean English". (There is one very serious typographical error in Craig's chapter. The chapter contains four broad (though Craig calls them "narrow") phonetic transcriptions of "The North Wind and the Sun", comparing English RP, Jamaican, Trinidadian and Barbadian pronunciation. The passage labelled "one variety of Trinidadian" is in fact the RP passage. What the other passages are I am not competent to say, but the one labelled "one variety of Southern British" is, of course, not RP.)

What is extremely perplexing, however, is the inclusion in this book of two chapters on the English of the United States. This would make considerable sense if these chapters were devoted to a discussion of the English of those many people in the United States for whom it is a second language. This, however, is not the case. The chapters do have the merit of being interesting and valuable papers in themselves, and of bringing two distinguished scholars to the book. But Kahane's paper is actually on "American English: from a colonial substandard to a prestige language", while Heath's is entitled "American English: quest for a model". They have, that is to say, very little to do with English as "the other tongue".

Other quibbles that I would make about the book as a whole include the use of the term "British English" throughout when what is meant is clearly English English, and the ignoring of Irish English as an independent variety. The book, too, could have benefited from a greater emphasis on ethnography of speaking-type issues --although this is a concern-- and from a more Le Pageian perspective (see especially Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, forthcoming) on the difficulties inherent in the term a language. (This is particularly true in Nash's somewhat ingenuous discussion of what she is pleased to call "Spanglish" and "Pringlish" in Puerto Rico.)

Kachru's book is, however, a very valuable contribution. It is at its best in its descriptive chapters: those papers which describe in detail the structure and/or use of particular new Englishes genuinely fill a number of gaps in our knowledge, and I would single out C.-C. Cheng's paper on "Chinese varieties of English" as being particularly valuable. The more theoretical chapters are, perhaps inevitably given their genesis as conference papers, mostly too brief and, crucially, too barren of data to be at all persuasive. Kachru's "Models for non-native Englishes", however, is conceptually helpful, and Nelson's "Intelligibility and non-native varieties of English" does contain some useful

experimental data. As to one of the more controversial issues associated with the new Englishes: the message comes across from this book very clearly indeed that it is not only inevitable but right that Nigerian English should be Nigerian, Indian English Indian, and so on. Prator's "British heresy" (Prator, 1968), that is, is probably not really British, and certainly not heresy.

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Peter Trudgill

R. Bailey and M. Gorlach (eds.) English as a World Language. (University of Michigan, 1982)

J. Fishman, R. Cooper and A. Conrad (eds.) The Spread of English. (Newbury House, 1977)

R.B. Le Page and A. Tabouret-Keller Acts of Identity. (forthcoming)

C. Prator "The British heresy in TESL", in J. Fishman et al. Language Problems of Developing Nations (Wiley, 1968)

J. Pride (ed.) New Englishes. (Newbury House, 1982)

J. Richards New Varieties of English. (RELC, Singapore, 1979)

L. Smith (ed.) English for Cross-Cultural Communication. (Macmillan, 1981)

P. Trudgill and J. Hannah International English: a Guide to Varieties of Standard English. (Edward Arnold, 1982)

J. Wells Accents of English. (Cambridge, 1982)

4. PATEMAN, T. (Ed.) Languages for Life. (University of Sussex Education Area, Occasional Paper 10, 1982). ISBN 0-905414 09 8

Reviewed by Alan DAVIES

In this booklet Trevor Pateman has brought together four contributions to an Open Lecture Series on 'Language and Education' given in the University of Sussex in the Autumn Term of 1981. The title's plurality "Languages for Life" is emphasised early in the editor's introduction ..'what students must grasp first of all is the fact of linguistic diversity and the central part recognition of that fact must play in policies for language teaching' (p.5). Grasping that central fact, however, does not necessarily lead us to agree with him that the chief obstacle to serious thinking about

a language policy for schools is 'the unreflective hold of a Canute-like prescriptivism'. Surely there are more basic concepts to be learned such as some understanding of the nature of language, part of which --but only part-- is indeed related to language variety. And it really is too unreflective to repeat unthinkingly the denigration of Bernstein, 'the remorseless criticism' to which his work has been subjected. Bernstein pro and contra have attracted their band wagons: a serious production of this kind important it would be appreciated in those very diverse areas, Scotland and Wales, if the label Britain could be used in place of the ubiquitous and offensive (and incorrect) England . . . England is not monodialectal and not even monolingual, nor will become so' (p.5). Britain will do and does try to acknowledge the reality of ethnic and linguistic diversity.

Harold Rosen contributes a chapter 'Language in the Education of the Working Class'. It is a typically pungent piece of journalism. And it typically appeals to a range of populist sentiments among English teachers which Rosen from the ex cathedra position of the only Chair in Mother Tongue Education in Britain should be finely and logically critical of rather than open to. To take two examples:-

1. Rosen savages the normative insistence on Standard English. If the linguistic demands of the school mean anything, it means the acquisition of Standard English, which is firmly counterposed to dialect. (p.12). But surely, we ask ourselves, Standard English is important isn't it. Surely we don't have to choose between Standard and dialect. But Rosen will have none of that wishy-washy liberalism. Choose we must. This is the stuff of witch hunting.
2. Rosen refers to Barnes with approval and says that the 'verbal resources for learning can be released more effectively in groups of pupils working without the teacher' (p.15). How serious is this suggestion? It looks like advocacy of a deschooling policy, it denies value and seriousness to the school as a teaching endeavour.

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- But, of course, Rosen never fails to remind us that he is after all aware of his responsibilities as a Professor of Education for the Mother Tongue and thus manages, if we aren't looking, to have it both ways. 'I am in no doubt that working class children have particular cause to need literacy' (p.16). So are all the appeals to working class language meant to refer to the spoken language? That does make some sense after all, although it raises serious issues about error. How is the teacher expected to know when a child's spoken English is dialectal and when it is wrong? Or is everything the child says equally valid? That may be sensible but it is not necessarily the same as the encouragement of dialect. But I am left by Rosen's chapter with a feeling of unease about his playing to the gallery of easy options and ignoring the harsh realities of a disadvantaged world. Take this sentence: 'The vacuum left by the abandonment of traditional grammar teaching can be filled by inviting working class pupils to study their own language, the diversity which surrounds them and the linguistic

myths which have helped them (sic) to keep them in their place' (p.17). We can pass over the populist abandoning of traditional grammar. But how does Rosen suggest working class pupils (or any other pupils) should study their own language? What tools does he offer them? Once again it looks very much like an easy play to the anti-scholarly, falsely humanistic tendencies in English Teaching. Rosen knows better and should not allow himself to be cast as leader to this motley.

Carol Sanders contributes a chapter on 'Changing Attitudes to Language: Diglossia in British Schools'. Sanders takes a somewhat hectoring tone towards linguistics: 'We need to ask why it is that our conceptions of language seem to equip us inadequately to be members of a multi-cultural, multi-lingual society, even in spite of several decades of linguistics as an established discipline in many colleges and universities'. I'm just not sure about this 'need to ask'. Can such heavy social responsibility be laid at the door of linguistics? Isn't it a bit like blaming historical teaching and research for failure to achieve international peace?

Linguistics also seems to blame for the bewilderment of teachers, a bewilderment partly caused by the 'fact that many children of West Indian origin born in Britain do not speak Standard English as we think they should' (p.22). That sentiment bewilders me too. Should we expect children of West Indian origin to speak Standard English when many children of other (working class?) origin do not acquire spoken Standard English either?

Expectation and the role of education are important. Sanders correctly points out that 'not all Creole speakers speak the same way'. That is a linguistic fact and its social/educational implication is no doubt that all individuals' speech should be equally valued. But educational institutions ('schools', in Sanders' title) are normative - all institutions are - which means that they impose communalities: these are certainly the case for the written language and partly so for the spoken, at least in its receptive mode. If not, then there is no foothold left for communication and learning to proceed. (It is of course a fallacy that developing societies are any less normative --in spite of the lack of official schools-- than are developed ones). But what I find quite unacceptable about Sanders' chapter is her argument about the reality of 'the language trap' for the black anglophone writer: 'it is also said that the black American writer finds himself in a 'double bind', English being the only language that he has in which to express his feelings against an English (or American) culture' (p.29). This suggestion that English does not belong to the anglophone writer of Black American, West Indian (Indian, African...) origin I find insulting. It suggests that political social criticism of a society has to be in some other language. But if the concern is with literary meaning or criticism then what matters is that the writer writes well and that his writing is read where it has special relevance. The fact is that this argument is not about literary meaning but about literary and

cultural identity, and Sanders should make this clear. It is the old négritude argument handed on to the anglophone about loss of identity, always, as in Césaire an issue in the West Indies.

Richard Coates' chapter has the title 'How Standard is Standard?'. Coates makes the excellent point that standardisation has an inevitability and that 'it symbolises integrative aspiration towards the social group whose norm is represented by certain distributions of SPPs' (p.41). SPPs are Standard Pronunciation Features. 'For those involved in education' he says 'standardisation can be seen as a litmus paper for a pupil's self-identification with the demands of school and a willingness to meet them practically, even at the possible cost of distancing him or herself from the (language of the) peer group' (p.41). He then helpfully distinguishes features 'for which there is no shift within a given community from those for which certain individuals display shift' (p.41). This is a most helpful approach. 'My plea is,' he says 'that thought should be given before a linguistic feature is condemned or corrected' (p.47). Exactly! And as a coda 'One may applaud or regret the impact of standard accents as one's conscience dictates; acknowledging that it is there, we should evaluate in an understanding way the linguistic tensions that it gives rise to in real people' (p.47). Amen to that!

The final chapter, on 'Current Developments in Foreign Language Teaching' is by Carol Sanders again. She makes useful comments on the problems of communicative language teaching and notably on the difficulty of testing communicative competence. What is interesting in her chapter is the link she makes among those theoretical areas that have informed language teaching, a link that brings together ideas on communicative competence, language functions and interlanguage. Sanders remarks that second language acquisition has both a practical and a theoretical orientation. I think she is correct about its theoretical value but we have still to see what value it has of a practical kind. Here remains a major difference between Applied Linguistics in North America and in Britain. In North America second language acquisition gives respectability to Applied Linguistics because SLA is thought to be theoretical. Here, Applied Linguistics, as Sanders says, has grown up differently. Applied Linguistics in Britain needs more SLA but it would be a sad day if SLA were to take up the whole space of applied linguistic concerns, as it has more or less in the USA. We do well to value and protect our pragmatic and eclectic traditions in Applied Linguistics as elsewhere.

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Alan Davies

S. WILLES, Mary Children into Pupils. (1963, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul). 202 pages.

Reviewed by Pam CZERNIEWSKA

If language is the major means of communication used by teachers then, as so many have argued, teachers need to know about it. They need to reflect on what it is they do. This is not a new message but the way it is sent by Mary Willes in her book Children into Pupils offers much more than mere advocacy of a linguistic approach. Her main aim is to provide a sociolinguistic framework for looking at the "second stage of the process of acquiring language", the stage that takes place when "learning goes on in interaction with a teacher and with other children of the same age".

This sociolinguistic framework derives chiefly from the discourse analysis developed by John Sinclair and Malcolm Coulthard. Taking their model of discourse structure (originally developed for describing secondary classroom interaction) and applying it to her recordings of urban nursery schools, Mary Willes was able to ask what children needed to learn about language in order to become pupils.

Teacher: Now, are you ready to answer to your names? (murmur of assent). Yes, good. And we only answer to our own names, don't we? We don't say 'yes' in response to anybody else's. (there was, within moments, a 'yes' in response to the enquiry "Catherine" . . .)

Teacher: Who's answering? Neil? I think I'll call you 'Catherine', for the rest of the day. Shall I now? (pp.69-70)

Discourse analysis provided a means of classifying classroom conversations and for identifying discourse structures such as the well known Initiation - Response - Feedback.

T: What were they doing?
P: Riding on it.
T: Is he all ready to fall off?
P: Is he a bit wobbly?
T: They were riding on it, weren't they? (p.131)

Of particular interest were the instances where the pupils' contributions did not parallel the structures identified in discourse analysis, and instances where one could see how classroom discourse might prevent confusions being sorted out.

T: Where's your Humpty Dumpty, sitting on a wall?

T: Is he all ready to fall off?
P: I got two Humpty Dumplings.
T: Oh, you can't have two Humpty Dumplings!
He has to sit on a wall! (p.132)

The pupil's "I got two Humpty Dumpty's" has many possible origins but the child's train of thinking is not easily explored in this teacher-dominated form of communication. Examples like this are many and lead to many thoughts (most beyond the scope of the book) about the nature and functions of classroom language.

For me, the most interesting use of the sociolinguistic framework was in Mary Willes' study of the development of classroom discourse. Here there is promise not only of a model for use in reflecting the type of language that most children are going to meet, but also of some use for evaluating when and how they acquire such discourse. This promise, should it be fulfilled, seems to have far-reaching implications about the 'diagnoses' and 'prescriptions' for children who do not seem to be 'settling down at school'. Such a very tentative study can of course only point to worthwhile lines of enquiry. In the study Mary Willes prepared a small booklet of familiar classroom scenes (e.g. a teacher holding up a card with 'dog' on it) and asked children (4/5 year olds and 7 year olds) to provide possible scripts for the teacher and pupils. The results were interesting (and worth reading), though one could question the emphasis placed on the school as the introducer of certain forms of discourse. I imagine that the home also plays a part, for, as many studies have shown, parents will often use a pedagogic-type question and answer format from a very early age. The formats recorded by Bruner before children had begun talking demonstrate remarkably stable IRF type structures.

Mother: Look! (Attentional Vocative)	Bruner, 1984 p.78)
Child: (Touches pictures)	
Mother: What are those? (Query)	
Child: (Vocalises a babble string and smiles)	
Mother: Yes, they are rabbits (Feedback and Label)	
Child: (Vocalises, smiles and looks up at mother)	
Mother: (Laughs). Yes, rabbit (Feedback and Label)	
Child: (Vocalises, smiles)	
Mother: Yes (laughs) (Feedback)	

Mother: (Touches pictures)

Mother: What are those? (Query)

Child: (Vocalises a babble string and smiles)

Mother: Yes, they are rabbits (Feedback and Label)

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Child: (Vocalises, smiles)

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Child: (Vocalises, smiles and looks up at mother)

Mother: (Laughs). Yes, rabbit (Feedback and Label)

Child: (Vocalises, smiles)

Mother: Yes (laughs) (Feedback)

The teacher may be using 'scraftolding' for the new concepts being taught, which match those already familiar from discourse formats used at home and thus ease the learning process.

There is also the general methodological question, touched on but never fully explored, about the appropriateness of taking a method of analysis designed for one kind of research and applying it to another.

There have been a number of research tools and analytical frameworks developed by linguists, psychologists and educationalists which have been transported from their original research into practical areas such as teacher-training, in-service and direct classroom teaching. (Britton's tripartite model of writing --expressive, transactional and poetic-- springs to mind as

an example.) The motivation for transferring research findings to the classroom is often very high, particularly in those "fashionable" areas where teachers are hungry for support.

Discourse Analysis was developed for a particular purpose, to study the discourse structure of English. The choice of secondary classrooms for the development of this discourse model was not motivated by a desire to inform teachers or to answer educational chestnuts like "what type of talk promotes effective learning". Any offshoot from the research towards such ends would be nice but incidental. This is clear from the design of the Sinclair and Coulthard research. There is no attempt to look at variables such as the pupil/teacher ratio, age, ability, sex of pupils, or the characteristics of the teacher or the nature of the topic being talked about. All such variables were (virtually) ignored. This contrasts with an educationally motivated research programme which would be interested in examining those variables: which might, for example, compare educational outcomes (however defined) with different styles of interaction controlling, of course, for differences in pupil characteristics and in curriculum.

Taking a model developed for one purpose and using it for another can produce some very interesting results. Like the 'film of the book', a new synthesis can illuminate areas previously given little attention. But caution is also needed, for, as Mary Willes says, (thinking particularly of Bernstein) "once orthodoxies are established they have a vigorous life of their own, are held with conviction, and inform decision, policies and expectations". Discourse analysis seems to run the risk of becoming such an orthodoxy. It is easy to follow a description of IRF structures (teacher asks, pupil responds, teacher comments) with statements about classroom language as a limited and inflexible medium for learning. This may be so, but IRF could also, without changing the data, be seen as a very efficient and effective means of passing on information in a limited period of time.

Mary Willes' use of discourse structure is highly informative and innovative. She is, I feel, very aware of the limitations of the research tool and the problems of deriving educational statements from linguistically motivated research. However, it seemed at times that the research tool might become a limited and inflexible medium for looking at classroom language. Discourse analysis applied to nursery schools revealed many of the routines which children will find throughout their schooling (and which will be familiar to many through their interactions at home, e.g. Maclure and French, 1983). But it failed to fully capture the great range of interaction found in most nursery classes, both verbal and non-verbal, and it cannot begin to explore the interdependencies of context, language and thinking (e.g. Mulkern, 1982). While, as Willes notes, unguarded observation is to be cautioned against --"this can at worst be trivial, anecdotal, self-indulgent and unrepresentative"-- similar caution seems appropriate for overextending the use of one research tool and thereby possibly

either narrowing the focus, or, more disturbingly, using it to justify particular teaching practices.

While I have concentrated on the central theme of the book --the description and development of nursery language-- the book has more of interest to offer in addition. There is an opening chapter charting the 'changing landscape' of early language studies taking us from Verbal Behaviour to LAD, from pivot/open to Mommy Sock and from communicative competence to joint action formats. The history is difficult to collapse into twenty-two pages but it serves as a useful preface, if only to show why after two decades of studying early language development, so little has been asked about the interaction between adults and children in their shared social contexts. There is also a chapter on studies of classroom language such as those of Barnes et al., Bernstein and Tough. It is a frank account distinguishing the education-driven studies of school language from the linguistic-driven ones and showing, if not in so many words, how research orthodoxies do not develop in a social vacuum, rather they are likely to be influenced by the prevailing attitudes and policies. And there is a chapter on multilingual classrooms, which takes on board some of the approaches to multilingual teaching (e.g. SCOPE) questioning their assumptions about the nature and development of language.

Both the central theme of the book and the supporting material are full of insights. It may not be wholly accessible for a novitiate to educational linguistics. Quite a lot seems to be assumed, particularly about the analytical methods and it is never quite clear whether the book is intended to teach how to analyse classroom language, or merely aims to promote serious study of classroom interaction in initial and in-service training. But it is a convincing account and one that should encourage educators to agree that:

"an understanding of linguistic organisation of the interaction between teacher and taught makes available to the teacher an explicit recognition of what she does and what they do, indicates a need for alternative strategies and the limits within which these are practicable, and makes possible a critical evaluation of her own work and of the external trends, influences and pressures that bear upon it" (p.178)

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