New books

Short annotations of recent publications, which aim to be informative and objective but not critical, together with a list of books received. Textbooks are only occasionally annotated.

Abbott, Gerry and Wingard, Peter (eds.)

*The teaching of English as an international language: a practical guide.* Glasgow & London: Collins, 1981. 287 pp. £4.95.

The aim is to offer practical advice to trainee teachers, teachers and administrators concerned with the teaching of English as a foreign or second language. Individual chapters are the work of four authors -- Gerry Abbott, Peter Wingard, John Greenwood and Doug McKeating. The book has 12 chapters, and reflects current thinking at Manchester University, where all the authors teach or have taught. The introduction is entitled 'Who knows best?' and the chapter titles are: (1) An approach to English teaching; (2) Pronunciation - perception and production; (3) Comprehension and listening; (4) Comprehension and reading; (5) Oral fluency; (6) Writing; (7) Assessment; (8) Error analysis; (9) Remedy work; (10) Planning your teaching; (11) The teacher and his class; (12) Putting things in perspective. Each chapter is followed by annotated suggestions for further reading.

Atkinson, Martin

*Explanations in the study of child language development.* Cambridge: 1982 (Cambridge Studies in Linguistics, 35). viii + 289 pp. £22.50 (also pb).

Dr Atkinson's work has grown out of a deep dissatisfaction with the current state of theorising in child language development. Critical analysis of superficially attractive theories showed that they had no real explanatory power. Yet no coherent framework had been proposed for evaluating theorising in this area. A central tenet of this volume is that theories of language development should be relatable to some general view of human development and, on this basis, Dr Atkinson presents a number of conditions that any adequate theory of language development should satisfy. The major theories in most areas of language acquisition, in particular work in semantic, syntactic and functional development, are then systematically examined in the light of these conditions -- and found wanting. In a final chapter, the author relates his work to recent studies in the formal theory of learnability.

Brown, E. K. and Miller, J. E.

*Syntax: generative grammar.* London: Hutchinson, 1982. 240 pp. £15.00 (£7.95 pb).

This is the companion volume to *Syntax: a linguistic introduction to sentence structure* and focuses on problems of formalisation. In the first part, TG is presented as a device for the description of language (the framework used is that of the standard model, with variations). This section provides a rigorous treatment of PS and T rules, with a TG account of the passive, relative clauses, complements, interrogatives and sentence negation. All rules are stated explicitly to allow students to apply the model.

The second part discusses the inadequacies of the standard model, concentrating on the distinction between syntax and morphology, distribution, and the function of the lexicon. A non-transformational account of agreement, the passive, infinitives and gerunds is proposed. The authors also discuss the relationship between syntax and semantics. The third part examines how participant roles can be incorporated in formal grammars and demonstrates that attention to surface syntax and morphology is essential for semantic description. Illustrated with diagrams, and for every chapter in the first and second parts there are sets of exercises. The book is written for second- and third-year students, and for postgraduate students beginning linguistics.

Centre for Information of Language Teaching and Research (CILT)

*Issues in language education.* London: CILT, 1981. 192 pp. £5.00.

Working party papers discussed at the Second Assembly of the National Congress on Languages in Education (NCLE) held at Durham in 1980. Introduction by J. L. M. Trim and J. M. C. Davidson. The subjects covered are (1) the place
of language learning in the curriculum and its relationship to examinations at 16+, (2) language policies in schools with particular reference to cooperation between teachers of foreign languages and teachers of English, and (3) a comparative review of the different approaches (methodologies and materials) used in English mother-tongue teaching, foreign-language teaching, English as a second language, and English as a foreign language and their relevance to each other.

Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (CILT)

Teaching languages in today's schools. London: CILT, 1981. 136 pp. £4.50.

An edited collection of papers which sets out to analyse the problems, suggest some answers, and offer practical ideas to teachers who find themselves teaching modern languages to a wider ability range than ever before. The editor, D. G. Smith, who is Principal Modern Languages Adviser for Leicestershire, and the other contributors have all been involved with teaching languages in comprehensive schools; the aim has been to make the contributions as practical as possible, several containing illustrations suitable for blackboard use, pairwork or overhead projector work.

Ten papers cover: the special needs and characteristics of slow learners; the setting of realistic short-term objectives for children of average ability; the organisation of syllabuses and materials within modern languages departments; practical suggestions contributed by practising teachers on methods of improving pupils' language skills; language work and 'A' level literature work in the sixth form.

Comrie, Bernard

Language universals and linguistic typography: syntax and morphology. Oxford: Blackwell, 1981. xi+252 pp. £14.00.

This book is concerned with the analysis, comparison and classification of the common features and forms of organisation of languages. Professor Comrie argues for the use of data from a wide range of languages, contesting the transformational view that language universals can be derived from the abstract analysis of a single language. He provides full critical discussion of those areas currently producing the most promising results, and is particularly concerned with syntactico-semantic universals, devoting chapters to word order, case marking, relative clauses, and causative constructions.

The book is informed throughout by the conviction that an explanatory account of universal properties of human language cannot restrict itself to purely formal aspects. It must also take account of language in use and relate formal properties to testable claims about cognition and cognitive development.

Corder, S. Pit

Error analysis and interlanguage. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981. 120 pp. £5.00.

This collection of papers is divided into two parts with six papers in each. The first deals with error analysis: the learner's systematic errors are significant because they reveal how far he has progressed and provide useful evidence of the processes by which a language is learnt. The second part of the book deals with interlanguage: the interlanguages of language learners have important features in common, which they share with other simplified systems such as mother talk, foreigner talk, and pidgins. This leads to the proposal that the starting point for all language learning is some basic, simple, possibly universal code and that the acquisition of a standard language develops out of this by a process of increasing elaboration.

Haugen, E. and others (eds.)

Minority languages today. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981. xii+250 pp. £10.00.

A minority language is broadly defined as one that is 'at risk' because of pressure from another language that is dominant culturally, socially and politically. Equally, a minority language may not be used by its speakers in all their activities. This book presents an edited selection of the contributions to the First International Conference on Minority Languages (Glasgow, 1980). It gives particular emphasis to the minority languages of Scandinavia, Benelux and the British Isles, including Faroese, Frisian, Irish and Scots Gaelic, Lowland Scots, Nynorsk and Welsh.

Most of the contributors agree that the crucial factors in the survival or renewal (or indeed the
discarding) of a minority language is the collective will of the community of speakers, catalysed through the agency of individual or group, either from inside or outside the community itself. Such an act of will naturally has political, economic and social dimensions.

Hornstein, Norbert and Lightfoot, David (eds.)

Explanation in linguistics: the logical problem of language acquisition. London: Longman, 1981 (Longman Linguistics Library). 288 pp. £12.00 (£5.95 pb).

A collection of seven papers which show how the problems of language acquisition shape explanations and dictate the general form of analyses in various domains of linguistics. All the authors work within the so-called 'Extended Standard Theory' of generative grammar. The first four papers cover the major components of that kind of grammar (syntax, phonology and semantics); the other three papers show what kinds of explanation can be achieved in the areas of language processing, historical change and real-time acquisition by young children (which are sometimes misleadingly called 'external' domains of data).

Johnson, Keith

Communicative syllabus design and methodology. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1982. x + 222 pp. £5.95.

A collection of 19 articles (10 published for the first time) with an annotated bibliography. Recent developments in communicative language teaching are traced and explained, both for the uninitiated teacher and for those already more informed. The section on syllabus design investigates the difficult area between the theory of the functional/notional approach and its actual implementation in syllabus and materials design. The final section looks at methodology and includes practical consideration of specific types of exercise.

Leech, Geoffrey N. and Short, Michael H.

Style in fiction: a linguistic introduction to English fictional prose. London: Longman, 1981. xiii + 402 pp. £6.95.

A companion volume to Leech's earlier guide to poetic style, A linguistic guide to English poetry. The aim is to show how linguistic analysis and literary appreciation can be interrelated and illuminated through the linguistic study of literary style. The book is, therefore, an introduction to prose stylistics, with the emphasis on prose fiction of the last 150 years, and on the practical analysis of prose texts and extracts as a means to a deeper understanding of techniques of literary expression. Sample passages, with suggestions for discussion and analysis, are included.

MacKinnon, G. E. and Walker, T. Gary (eds.)

Reading research: advances in theory and practice. Vol. 2. New York & London: Academic Press, 1981. x + 233 pp. £14.60.

The book brings together the work of researchers in education, psychology, and linguistics with that of professionals involved in the teaching of reading and in the assessment and remediation of reading difficulty. The second volume in the series focuses on the question, 'what does a child learn when he learns to read, and how can the learning be facilitated?' Within this framework, the contributors consider current educational practices and materials for the beginning reader. Starting with an analysis of writing systems and their influence on learning to read, the book goes on to evaluate several practices and programmes employed to instruct novice readers in learning the print-to-speech code, in developing decoding automaticity, and in comprehending what they read. Final chapters analyse the content of a number of widely used readers and propose a framework for designing and evaluating effective reading programmes.

Mercer, Neil (ed.)

Language in school and community. London: Edward Arnold, 1981 vii + 248 pp. £5.75.

The theme of this book is the relation between children's language experience in and out of school and the implications this has for educational policy and classroom practice. It will bridge the gap in the literature between the findings of researchers and the practical needs of teachers. It consists of 11 chapters by authors who are all involved in research into language and education, most of whom have been directly involved in teaching
and/or the development of courses and materials on language for teachers. They share a belief that a better understanding of language and education will only emerge from a critical examination of school language in its broader social context and not from a continued narrow emphasis on the disabilities of deprivations of particular children, as individuals or as members of social groups.

Read, John A. S. (ed.)

Directions in language testing. Singapore: Singapore University Press for SEAMEO Regional Language Centre, 1981 xvii + 305 pp. £6.00.

Fifteen selected papers from the RELC seminar on 'Evaluation and measurement of language competence and performance' held in Singapore in 1980. Sections cover the validation of language tests, the assessment of oral proficiency, the measurement of communicative competence, close procedure, self-assessment, and the interaction of teaching and testing.

Reid, Margaret I. and others

Mixed ability teaching; problems and possibility. Windsor, Berks: NFER – Nelson Publishing Co. Ltd, 1981. 178 pp. £8.95.

This report presents the findings of the first phase of the NFER's three-year 'Mixed-Ability Teaching Project' (1975–8), a stage which was devoted to examining objectives, and establishing benefits and problems. The study found that the main reasons cited for introducing mixed-ability grouping were the 'fresh start' and the difficulties of streaming. Methods used to introduce mixed-ability grouping can be classified as 'directive' with the head as initiator and no consideration or discussion with staff or parents. In many cases, the far reaching changes in methods and attitudes required by this approach had not occurred. School advisers and staff training were found wanting. Advantages and disadvantages of this type of work are discussed, and factors associated with its effective implementation are identified. Consultation and adequate preparations and planning are essential.

Romaine, Suzanne

Socio-historical linguistics: its status and methodology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982. xi + 315 pp. £22.00.

Synchronic sociolinguistics has been particularly convincing in its use of quantitative models to demonstrate how 'the present might explain the past'. However, the relevance of sociolinguistics to historical linguistics, 'using the past to explain the present', has been largely ignored. In this volume Dr Romaine lays the foundation for a new field of research, encompassing both historical linguistics and sociolinguistics, which aims to investigate and account for language variation within a particular speech community over time. The socio-historical approach is illustrated here by a detailed analysis of the development of relative clause formation strategies in Middle Scots. This case study raises fundamental questions about the epistemological status of sociolinguistic theory and in particular its claims to an empirical foundation.

Ur, Penny

Discussions that work. Task-centred frequency practice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981 (Cambridge Handbooks for Language Teachers). 122 pp. £2.95.

The books sets out to answer such questions as how a discussion can be made to work, what kinds of activities will produce genuine and enthusiastic exchanges of ideas, and how such exercises can be quickly and easily prepared. The first part provides some general guidelines on the organisation of successful task-centred activities. The second part consists of practical examples which have been found effective in the classroom. They range from simple to complex and can thus be used with a wide range of learners in secondary and adult education. Examples are drawn mainly from the field of English as a foreign language, but can be adapted to the teaching of other languages.

Willis, Jane

Teaching English through English: a course in classroom language and techniques. Harlow: Longman, 1981 (Longman Handbooks for Language Teachers). xvi + 192 pp. £4.20.

A practical training course for teachers or intending teachers of English as a second or foreign
language, designed to give them practice in effective use of classroom English and to extend their language teaching skills and techniques, with the aim of helping their students learn how to communicate successfully in English. It can be used on teacher training courses and as a reference book for teachers to use on their own, both for native-and non-native-speaking teachers.

The first part of the course covers the use of social, personal and organisational language in typical classroom situations, and helps teachers to see how these situations can be used for presenting, practising and reinforcing target language, while the second part deals with the main areas of methodology, and the language and teaching skills needed for each. [Notes for teachers on how to use the course to the best advantage, and glossary of more specialised ELT terms and other practical information. Cassette available for non-native speakers who wish to concentrate on improving their language.]

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**Books received**

**Language learning and teaching**

*The logical problem of language acquisition*. Ed. by C. L. Baker and J. J. McCarthy. MIT Press, 1982. £19.25.

*Communication starters: techniques for the language classroom*. J. E. Winn-Bell Olsen. Pergamon Press, 1981. £3.25. First published in the USA. Techniques are applicable to other languages.

**Language**

*Relative junctions in written American English*. A. Olofsson. Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1981. Sw.Cr. 80.

*Old and Middle English words for 'disgrace' and 'dishonour'.* I. Lohmander. Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1981. Sw.Cr. 80.

**Materials**

*Imaginary crimes: materials for simulation and role-playing*. R. Clark and J. McDonough. Pergamon Press, 1981. £2.50. Also *Teacher's notes*.

*Factions and fictions: exercises for role-play*. M. Lamb. Pergamon Press, 1981. £4.95. Suitable for advanced EFL students. Also *Teacher's book*.

*Restaurant English. Communicating with the international traveller*. P. Binham and others. Pergamon Press, 1981. £2.50. For travellers and those in the catering trade. For class or home use. Also cassettes.

*Hotel English*. P. Binham and others. Pergamon Press, 1981. £2.50. For those in the hotel and tourist trade.

**Readers**

*A Dutch reader*. J. K. Williams. Stanley Thornes Ltd, 1981. £3.75. Graded reader for use at all levels.

**Courses**

*English for international conferences*. A language course for those working in the fields of science, economics, politics and administration. A. Fitzpatrick. Pergamon Press, 1981. £2.50.

**Academic writing**

*A manual for writers of research papers, theses and dissertations*. K. L. Turabian (British edition prepared by J. E. Spink). Heinemann, 1982. £3.95. Guide to the preparation of academic work for institutions of higher learning or to the presentation of papers for publication in periodicals.

**Examinations**

*GCE model answers: German 'O' level*. J. E. Campbell. Artemis Press, 1982. £1.45.

**Periodicals**

*Estudios de Linguistica Applicada*, Mexico. Vol. 1, no. 1 (1981). Centro de Enseñanza de Lenguas Extranjeras, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de