



# Language Teaching: Learning from the Past

Prof. Nicola McLelland — Dr Simon Coffey — Dr Lina Fisher



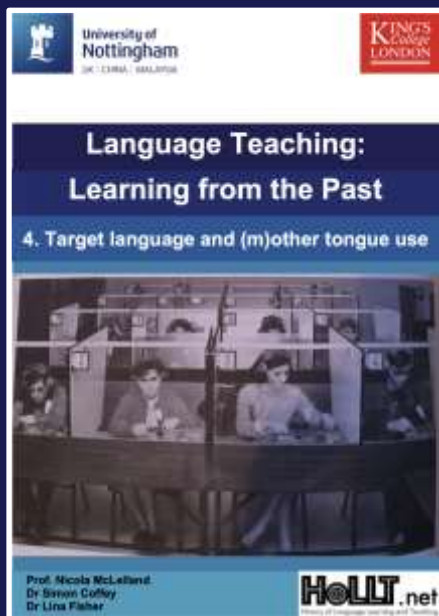
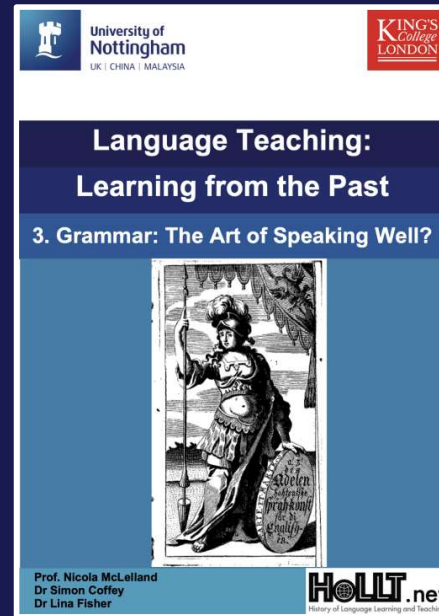
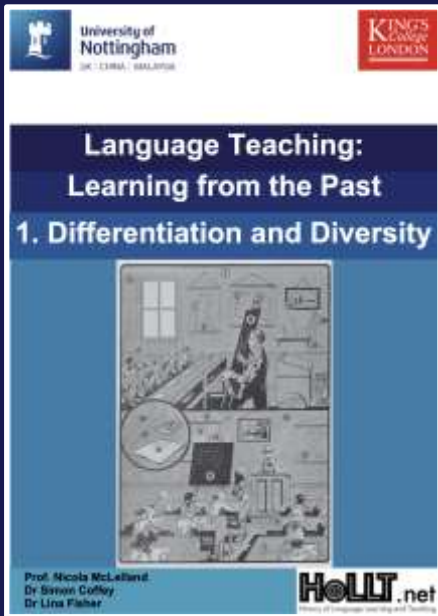
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Each unit  
comprises a  
video, a  
participant  
handbook and  
an instructor  
handbook

# The History of Language Learning and Teaching: Lessons from the Past

## 1. Differentiation and diversity

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# The History of Language Learning and Teaching: Lessons from the Past

## 2. What does it mean to teach culture?

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# 1. Differentiation and Diversity

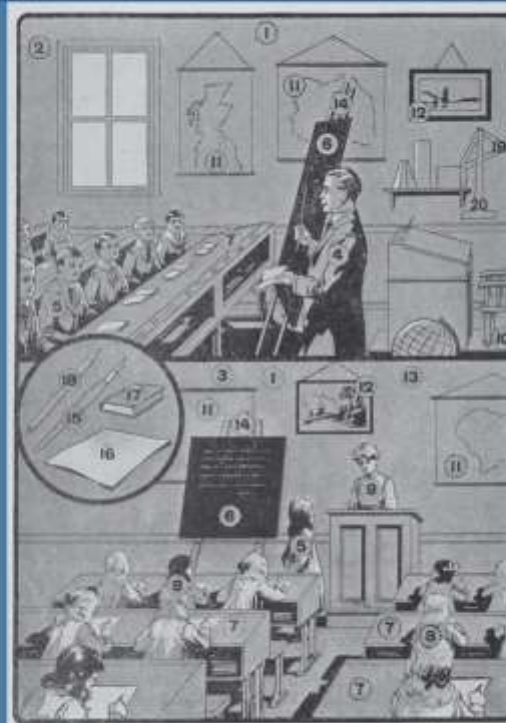


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## Language Teaching: Learning from the Past

### 1. Differentiation and Diversity



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### Aims

The theme of this unit is Differentiation and Diversity. The objectives are:

1. To identify the ways in which differentiation is shaped by teachers' and learners' social, cultural and political contexts
2. To broaden practitioners' understanding by examining how differentiation has been interpreted historically
3. To encourage seeing differentiated pedagogy within a wider framework of student motivation
4. To share and compare different pedagogical approaches to meet learners' differentiated needs.

### Gender



"I know nothing – nothing in the world – I assure you; except that I play and dance beautifully, – and French and German of course I know, to speak; but I can't read or write them very well. Do you know they wanted me to translate a page of an easy German book into English the other day, and I couldn't do it."

(Seventeen-year old Ginevra Fanshawe in Charlotte Brontë: *Villette*, 1853)

1. Do you think boys and girls learn languages differently?  
Is it fair to teach them differently?
2. Is there such a thing as 'boy-friendly' teaching approaches?  
Why are these thought to be boy-friendly?
3. Identify some of the current social trends that might influence girls' and boys' choices with regard to learning languages.

### Language Teaching: Learning from the Past – Differentiation

#### Differentiation – 9.1 Gender in the classroom



Pause the video after "History shows, then, that gender differences in language aptitude are not a given and the assumptions people have made about girls' preference for or abilities in languages are a relatively recent trend."

The aim of this section is to show how assumptions with regard to girls' and boys' language abilities have changed over time, often in response to socio-political developments. It is important to remember that the validity of such assumptions is not borne out by research.



## Differentiation – 10. Gendered teaching materials

## Differentiation – 10.1 Gendered teaching materials

This is additional material not shown in the video.

Books specifically for girls or boys were published because girls tended not to learn Latin whereas boys did. In addition to learning different content, the assumed purpose of their language learning also differed: grammar and translation were taught to encourage boys to engage in rigorous and disciplined thinking, whereas girls were expected to be able to make conversation.

The Taunton Commission, which examined secondary education in 782 grammar schools and some private schools in the 1860s, found that girls “knew French better than boys, had “a correct ear”, “quicker perception”, and “greater aptitude”. These observations explained away girls’ higher achievements in spoken French compared to boys. Measured against what it was assumed really mattered, the criteria of mental discipline and grammatical knowledge (the goals in boys’ schools), girls did poorly, and so their attainment was judged overall to be poor. However, language teaching reformers of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century drew on the methods used in girls’ schools to achieve fluency in reading, speaking and writing (see McLelland 2017: 60-61).

Have girls been taught differently because:

1. Their background knowledge is different (they don't know Latin)?
2. Because we think they learn in a different way?
3. We have different expectations of them (to be able to make polite conversation)?

Do girls now count as more successful because we value communication skills more than in the 19th century, when writing and speaking in the language was not valued?

## S M A L L T A L K

FOR THE USE OF

Y O U N G L A D I E S

THAT WISH TO LEARN

THE COLLOQUIAL PART

OF THE

I T A L I A N L A N G U A G E.

By J O S E P H B A R E T T I

SECRETARY for Foreign Correspondence to the ROYAL  
ACADEMY of PAINTING, SCULPTURE,  
and ARCHITECTURE.

L O N D O N,

Printed for G. ROBINSON, in Pater-noster Row.

MDCCLXXV.

Book cover

Joseph Baretti: *Small Talk for the Use of Young Ladies That Wish to Learn the Colloquial Part of the Italian Language* (1775)



Social class  
and ability




George Cruikshank's  
British Beehive (1867)

Research has found that students from a middle-class background tend to ask for help and receive it more often than their working-class peers.

In a language-learning context, how might our impression of students' social backgrounds influence the tasks we give them, the expectations we have of them, and the help we provide?

Differentiation – 11.1 Social class and ability



Pause the video after "Hierarchical systems of education made perfect sense within a society structured as a divinely ordained hierarchy."

It might be useful to consider the following as part of the discussion:

- What is cultural capital?
- How is cultural capital acquired?
- What is the role of cultural capital in language learning?

A 1916 textbook for advanced learners of German stated as its aim to cover only "what a German of a good average education must know and indeed does know" (Kron 1916: 3).

**A**

1.—LA FAMILLE DANS LE SALON.



1. Le tableau. 2. Le grand-père. 3. La grand-mère. 4. Le père.  
5. La mère. 6. Le fils, le frère. 7. La fille, la sœur. 8. Le balai.  
9. Le fauteuil. 10. La poupée. 11. Le livre. 12. La balle.  
13. La tige. 14. Le piano. 15. La brosse. 16. La poupée.

'The family in the living room', P.E.E. Barbier: *The Pictorial French Course*, 1901

**B**

### A German Living Room?

Carl Teufel published a grammar for Chinese learners of German (1906-8). For Teufel's learners, the piano is a curiosity, to be seen only in the teacher's room.

The living room described by Teufel is a room used for work as well as relaxation — it may be warm or cold, dry or damp, healthy or unhealthy; there are sewing materials, an embroidery frame, and a spinning wheel.

The broom, brush and duster are also all kept in the living room; for children who misbehave, there is a rod in the corner.

1. What does the picture (A) tell learners about French people and how they live?
2. Compare Teufel's description of a German living room (B) with the picture. What differences do you notice?
3. Not all French families live in the manner suggested by the picture (A), and not all German families have living rooms like the one described by Teufel (B). Why might the living rooms be depicted/described in these ways?

# Differentiation – 14. Notions of ability

A

"[T]here are a certain number of children, more often boys, who are non-linguistic, and the poorer the neighbourhood, the more numerous they are – first, because they come from non-cultural homes, and secondly because literary English is largely a foreign language to them, which by the way, always seemed to me a conclusive reason for abolishing French in the elementary schools at least in the poorer neighbourhoods in which the King's English is really a foreign tongue."

(Cloudesley Brereton, British educationalist and writer, 1930)

B

"Teaching grammar to moderate-ability classes is largely a waste of time. [...] Their limited capacity for conceptual thought does not allow them to use what they have learned in order to understand or compose meaningful utterances in German."

(Report: *German in the United Kingdom: Problems and Prospects*, 1976)

- 1. Is there such a thing as 'language intelligence'?
- 2. Is there such a thing as a 'non-linguistic child'?
- 3. What assumptions is Brereton making here? Is his statement about ability or social class?
- 4. Today, we might speak about educational or cultural capital. How does this notion influence the way we teach languages?
- 5. How much do we link pupils' learning to their existing frames of reference?

## Differentiation – 14.1 Notions of ability



Pause the video after "It is clear that disadvantage is equated here with a lack of ability."

Consider both statements shown here. Example A is the quotation shown in the video (it has been extracted her for greater clarity).

Elicit responses linked to

- Parental support for languages
- The limiting perception of languages for work-place skills only

Some research evidence suggests that teachers' questioning strategies have a determining effect on pupil participation. For instance, pupils respond more positively when invited to draw on their own experience rather than with reference to an abstracted reality. This is true of pupils in general, but has been shown to be especially effective in increasing participation of disaffected, low-achieving boys. According to research, this group was three times more likely to refer to personal, out-of-school experiences.



## Differentiation – 15. Reflection on historical and current practices



Working individually, note down some responses to the following questions and then discuss them with a partner.

1. List three things you have learnt about historical approaches to differentiation.
2. What insights have you gained with regard to your own approach to teaching different groups of learners by looking at historical attitudes and methods?
3. What type(s) of differentiation would you like to see in an ideal education system?
4. Is differentiation – catering to learners of all abilities and ages – desirable, or might we ever (as in most of history) go back to a time when not everyone has the opportunity to learn languages?  
What would be the advantages and disadvantages of that?

# 2. Culture



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### 2. What does it mean to teach culture?



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## Culture – 5. Definitions of Culture



**What does it mean to teach culture?**



### Culture – 5.1 Definitions of Culture



- Pause the video after "The extent to which the teaching of language involves, or should involve, culture, has been debated for a long time."

- Invite participants to draw on their own experiences and their knowledge of language learning materials and conventions.
- Organise points raised by participants into salient themes if these arise
- Summarise the discussion and paraphrase important points

Some researchers distinguish between 'capital C' Culture (high culture, e.g. literature, art) and 'small c' culture (everyday culture, e.g. everyday habits and interactions between people).

1. With a partner or group, brainstorm definitions of culture.
2. What kinds of cultural knowledge or representations do we find in our materials at school?
3. What kinds of cultural knowledge or representations are taught at university?



## Culture – 10. High Culture as Cultural Capital

### High culture as cultural capital



François Fénelon: Les aventures de Télémaque, fils d'Ulysse, 1699

“The guiding principle was only to discuss what a German of a good, average education must know and indeed does know.”

Richard Kron:  
*The small German: a Handbook for learning the refined Modes of Expression of the German colloquial Language which sets out the Customs, Habits and Institutions, cultural Relationships etc. in the German Realms* (1916)



“I think it will be obvious to every reader, that an acquaintance with the German language must be of great utility; in order to peruse the works of German writers in the original; to have, as it were, free and unconstrained access to the treasures of knowledge, which the industry of the German has successfully been accumulating for a considerable time.”

- William Rander, private teacher of school-age children and German language teacher at the University of Cambridge, 1799.

“Your first object is to discipline the mind; your second to give a knowledge of French or German.”

- Henry Weston Eve, Headmaster of University College School, 1879

Learning German provides “the key to a vast treasure-house with many beautiful and precious things which great and good men and women have been gathering for hundreds of years, that each of us may take thereof as much as he pleases, and rejoice.”

- Walter Rippmann, teacher and lecturer in German at the University of Cambridge; author of several language learning books, 1917. This extract is taken from the preface to one of his books in which he addresses his readers.

The Leathes Committee considered “[...] the requirements of a liberal education, including an appreciation of the history, literature and civilization of other countries, and [...] the interests of commerce and public service.”

- The Leathes report on the Position of Modern Languages in the Educational System of Great Britain, 1918

1. To what extent do you share the views expressed in these quotations?
2. How much do students need to know compared to inhabitants of the target language country/countries?

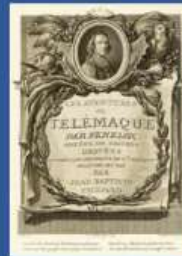
## Culture – 10.1 High Culture as Cultural Capital



- Pause the video after “It was still assumed that teaching should cover the cultural knowledge that a “well-educated” native speaker would have.”

The screen should show the following images:

### High culture as cultural capital



François Fénelon: Les aventures de Télémaque, fils d'Ulysse, 1699

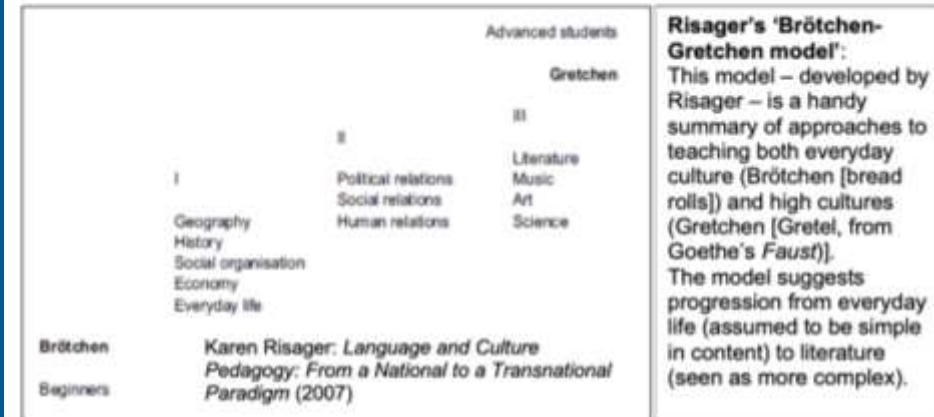
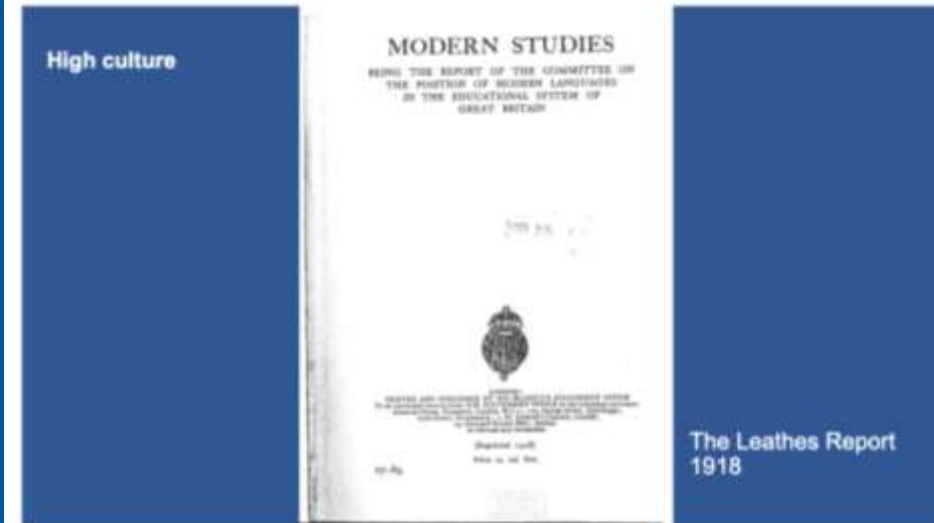
“The guiding principle was only to discuss what a German of a good, average education must know and indeed does know.”

Richard Kron:  
*The small German: a Handbook for learning the refined Modes of Expression of the German colloquial Language which sets out the Customs, Habits and Institutions, cultural Relationships etc. in the German Realms* (1916)



Richard Kron's book was republished into the 1930s.

## Culture – 11. High Culture



**Risager's 'Brötchen-Gretchen model':**  
This model – developed by Risager – is a handy summary of approaches to teaching both everyday culture (Brötchen [bread rolls]) and high cultures (Gretchen [Gretel, from Goethe's *Faust*]). The model suggests progression from everyday life (assumed to be simple in content) to literature (seen as more complex).

"The highest purpose in the teaching of languages may perhaps be said to be the access to the best thoughts and institutions of a foreign nation, its literature, culture – in short, the spirit of the nation in the widest sense of the word. But at the same time we must remember that we cannot reach the goal with one bound, and that there are many other things on the way which are also worth taking in. We do not learn our native tongue merely so as to be able to read Shakespeare and Browning, and neither do we learn it for the sake of giving orders to the shoemaker or making out the washerwoman's bill."  
(O. Jespersen, 1904: 9, Danish original edition 1901)

1. Does the treatment of culture in the materials you use suggest a hierarchy?
2. What is the reason for a hierarchy of 'high' and 'low' culture?
3. Whose culture is considered to confer cultural capital now?





Mary Brebner, a graduate of the Cambridge Training College for Women Teachers, observed the use of realia in language teaching in Germany in 1897: "On another occasion he [the teacher] showed the class different English coins, asking various questions about their value, appearance, etc. The difference between the old and new "pennies" led to the description of Britannia and the Union Jack, and the different flags that had been united to form the latter. Questions were asked, in this connection, about the dates of the union of England with Ireland and Scotland respectively. [...] The students were interested and animated throughout." (M. Brebner 1898: 35)

"Pity the antisocial, unsporty child, I always think, as I flick through *Tricolore*. The characters are forever going to the cinéma, the discothèque, the piscine, the club des jeunes, or for a promenade with their copains. Things are sympa, super, OK or nul. They keep asking each other which sport they enjoy most (jouer au foot, faire la natation, faire du ski or going out on their vélo tout terrain). It's exhausting." (Y. Maxtone-Graham, *The Spectator* 11 October 2011)

1. What do you identify as culture-specific in the materials you use?
2. Focus on the materials you use to teach a specific grammatical point (e.g. reflexive verbs, the language of debate/contestation): what do students learn about the target culture as a result of the depiction of the topic (e.g. images)?

### Culture – 12.1 Realia in Language Teaching



- Pause the video after "The distinction between language skills and the cultural canon remains visible in the disciplinary distinctions made between languages for communication and languages as a humanities subject."

The screen should show the following image:



Communicative language teaching is rooted in students' realities, and using 'realia', authentic resources, has been popular since the late 19th century. Illustrations began to become affordable at this time, and teachers began to use pictures and everyday objects to help learners connect words in the language they were learning with the objects they represented.

Using realia enabled pupils to become more aware of the language as a living language – whether by talking about real objects in the classroom, or by learning about the culture of those who spoke the target language.

Although realia are useful, they can, on occasion, impart only very superficial and fragmentary cultural knowledge.

It might be useful to consider both the portrayal of the target culture (how accurate or complete is it?) and how inclusive this approach is: the "unsporty antisocial child" described by Maxtone-Graham might have fared better with the 19<sup>th</sup>-century reading of set books.

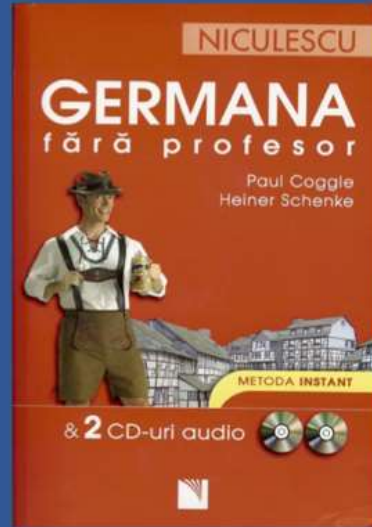
It might be useful to encourage discussion between participants from different schools and/or languages.



### The Hidden Curriculum



Coggle & Schenke (2003)



Romanian version of the same textbook  
Coggle & Schenke, transl. Dumitru (2009)

A focus on national characteristics has been constant throughout different approaches to teaching culture. Students might already enter the classroom with stereotypical views of other cultures.

1. What are 'typical' behaviours, foods, celebrations, customs?
2. What are teachers privileging as most important?
3. How can we challenge or question stereotypical views in our attempt to teach the most salient aspects of another culture? How can we show the dangers of stereotypes?

### Culture – 13.1 The Hidden Curriculum



- Pause the video after "These two front covers are for the English and Romanian versions of the same German textbook, *Teach Yourself German*. They send quite different signals about what Germany is like, though."

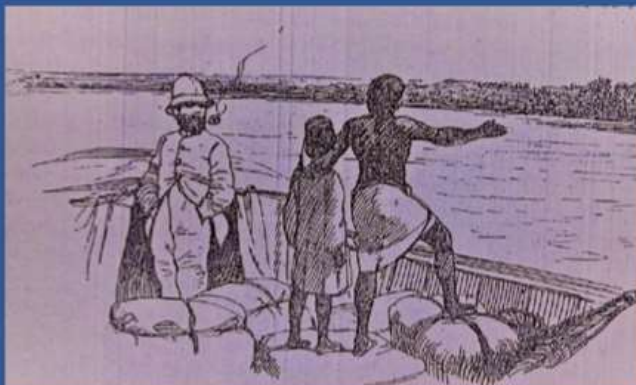
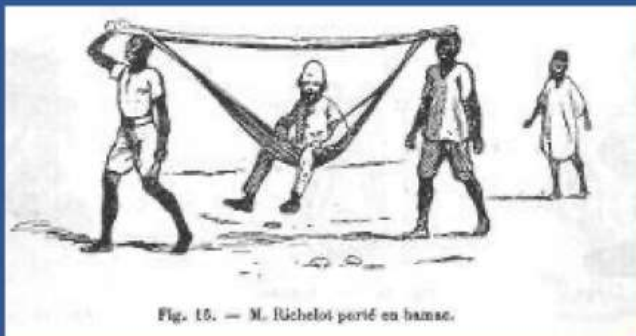
The book cover on the left shows the German *Reichstag* (central government building). The 1884 building fell into disrepair after the Second World War and was restored by Norman Foster. The transparent dome, above the debating chamber and open to the public, can be seen to symbolise transparent democracy.

The book on the right is the Romanian translation of the book on the left.

There is always a risk of reducing representations of culture to stereotypes. The hidden curriculum – and wider social assumptions – can perpetuate stereotypes. After World War II, the value of language learning was in part in contributing to intercultural understanding, and so, ultimately, promoting peace. There was more focus on actually being able to communicate with speakers of other languages and to be sensitive to cultural differences.

# Culture – 15. Empire, Colonialism and Power Relationships

## Empire, Colonialism and Power Relationships



*Moussa et Gi-gla: Histoire  
de deux petits Noirs, 1916*

## Culture – 15.1 Empire, Colonialism and Power Relationships



- Pause the video after "Critical reflection on power relationships was absent."

These images were shown in textbooks in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. They are shocking. Discuss with participants why they are shocking to us now.

- These images were shown in textbooks in the early 20th century, but they are shocking to us now. What makes these images shocking?
- How are different power relationships represented in modern textbooks and language learning materials?
- Think of different ways in which you can integrate analysis of power relationships into your teaching of different age groups.



## Shared social challenges: Migration



J. McNeill et al.:  
*Neue Aussichten  
Etappen (2000) –  
'Germany – a  
multicultural country'*

### A: Germany – a multicultural country

Question: Which of these people and scenes are typically German?

Answer: All of them!

Top left to right:

A Greek wedding; The school day is about to start; Turkish specialties are popular, Berlin-Kreuzberg

Bottom left to right:

A Turkish band in Hamburg-Altona; Fun at the Oktoberfest, Munich; Golf production at VW, Dresden

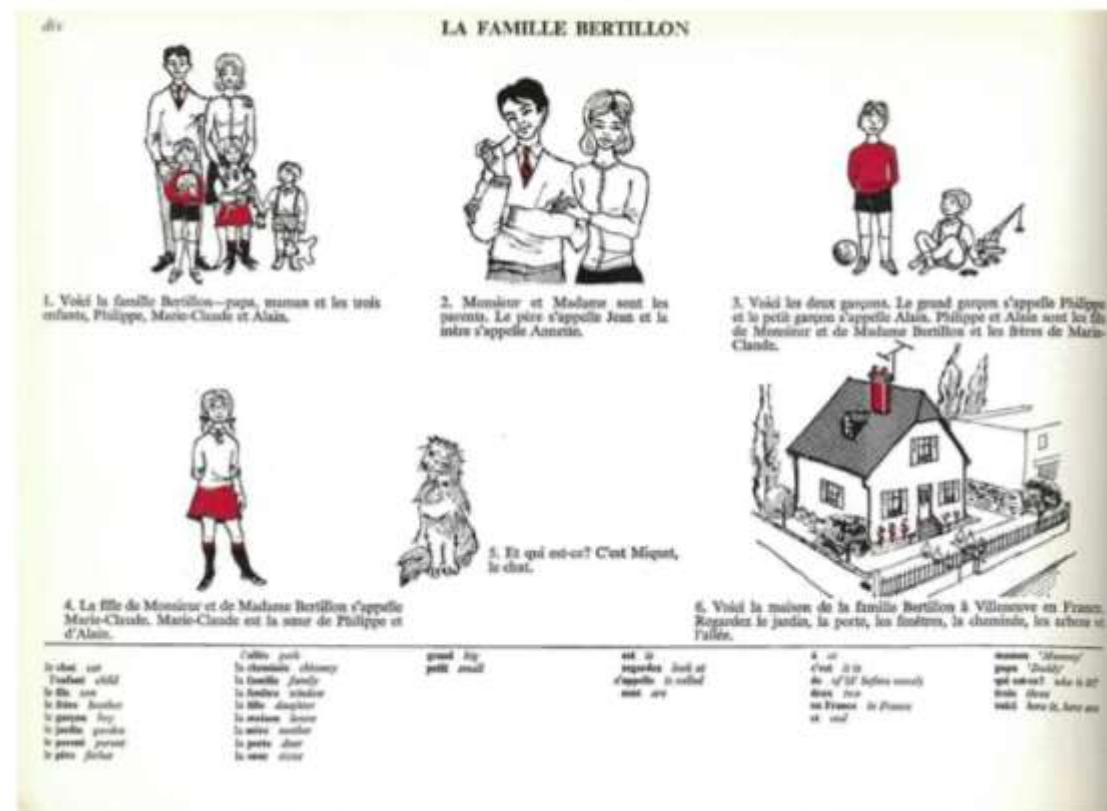
### B: What is your occupation?

Veterinarian, Police Officer, Businessman, Nurse, Lorry Driver, Doctor, Mechanic, Engineer, Lawyer, Teacher

Please also refer to example C on the next page.

Where are we now? How are minorities represented in your language teaching materials?

C



P.J.Downes et al.: *Le français d'aujourd'hui*, 1966

### C: The Bertillon family

- Here is the Bertillon family: daddy, mummy and the three children, Philippe, Marie-Claude and Alain.
- Monsieur* and *Madame* are the parents. The father is called Jean and the mother is called Annette.
- Here are the two boys. The big boy is called Philippe and the little boy is called Alain. Philippe and Alain are the sons of Mr and Mrs Bertillon and the brothers of Marie-Claude.
- The daughter of Mr and Mrs Bertillon is called Marie-Claude. Marie-Claude is the sister of Philippe and Alain.
- And who is this? This is Miguel, the cat.
- Here is the house of the Bertillon family in Villeneuve in France. Look at the garden, the door, the windows, the chimney, the trees and the path.



## Culture – 18.1 Diversity



- Pause the video after “One way of doing this, at higher levels at least ... problems in the developing world.”

**Example C is not shown in the video and is additional material for discussion.**

Draw attention to

- The family: have participants encountered language learning materials that diverge from heteronormative representations?
- The house: this is a generic house, not necessarily one that is representative of many French people’s dwellings.

Consider

- what students learn from this example about French families
- what type of learner is addressed by examples such as this one
- how the same linguistic content could be taught through different illustrations

## Culture – 21. Reflection on historical and current practices



- **List three things you have learnt about historical approaches to culture.**
- **In what way do socio-political developments influence approaches to language teaching?**
- **What can we learn from historical approaches to evaluate our own approach and to plan future practice?**

# 3. Grammar



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## Language Teaching: Learning from the Past

### 3. Grammar: The Art of Speaking Well?



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# Aims

The theme of this unit is Grammar. The objectives are:

1. To develop an understanding of how the teaching of grammatical concepts and descriptive terms has developed over time
2. To examine different ways of talking about the rules of language in different settings
3. To consider the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to grammar in language teaching
4. To evaluate current notions of 'good practice' in grammar teaching within a context of longstanding debates

## 'Practical' grammars

N. Wanostrocht:  
A Practical Grammar  
of the French  
Language, 1780



J. V. Meidinger:  
Practical French  
Grammar through  
which one may learn  
the language  
thoroughly in a new  
and easy manner,  
1783

### EXERCISES on the two AUXILIARY VERBS. GENERAL OBSERVATION.

Every verb must agree with its nominative case in person and number; but after collective nouns, such as *army, flock, regiment, company, &c.* followed by a gerundive, the verb must agree with that gerundive in number; as:

*Le régiment de son oncle étoit* Most of his friends have died.

In order to ease the learner, the different simple tenses are marked in the following exercises as far as the irregular verbs, when it is hoped every difficulty will be removed by practice and attention. The second person singular, being seldom or never used in conversation, has been omitted throughout the exercises on the verbs.

#### Imperative Mood.

*Peux.* I have a book. ... I am happy. ... He has a hat which is new. *big.* ... We have an army. ... We are not ambitious. ... You have a sword. ... You are very proud. ... These girls are modest. ... They are virtuous.

*maison.* ... *maison.* ... *maison.* ... *maison.* ... *maison.* ... *maison.* ... *maison.* ... *maison.* ... *maison.* ... *maison.* ...

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### University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, 1858

These examinations tested pupils' metalinguistic knowledge of the grammatical forms and of the language used to describe them.

### Higher tier German paper for Senior (under 18) candidates

"What cases are respectively governed by the following verbs: *reuen, ärgern, träumen, pflegen, zahlen, bezahlen, lehren*? And what by the following prepositions: *um, mit, nach, ohne, nebst, zu, in, auf, halben, wegen*?"

### Lower tier French paper for Senior candidates

"*ne trouve rien*. When does *rien* not require *ne* before the verb?"

"*dans*. What distinction is made in the use of the prepositions *en* and *dans*?"

## Grammar – 14.1 'Practical' grammars



Pause the video after "From the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century ... Nicolas Wanostrocht in his *Practical Grammar of the French Language* in 1780."

The 18<sup>th</sup> century saw a greater emphasis on the role of writing in language learning. There was also a growing belief among teachers that learners needed to practise the rules that they were presented with. The first grammar exercises emerged. This kind of "practical" grammar was especially used in teaching boys, who followed a more classical model of education, where grammar was central. For girls, conversation skills were an important social grace – though boys too were expected to be able to speak the language, as preparation for a Grand Tour of Europe.

Wanostrocht's 1780 grammar of the French language was one of the most successful pedagogical grammars of its time, appearing in revised forms for almost a century. There was a huge increase in the production of school grammars from the 1780s onwards, as more schools offered languages. Many already conform to the basic template of what would later become known as the 'grammar-translation' method, typical of many language schoolbooks throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beyond. That is, pupils learned grammar in great detail, and were expected to show their understanding by translating from English to the target language and in reverse.

1. What does 'practical grammar' mean to you? What is 'practice'? Practising what exactly?

2. Do learners need to have the explicit metalinguistic knowledge? Is it worth testing? Is it actually better for learning?



## Grammar – 17. Inductive and deductive approaches

### A: Inductive approach

W. Ripman: *Dent's New First German Book*, 1917

### B: Deductive approach

J.V. Meidinger: *Grammaire allemande pratique*, 1836

#### Erster Teil: 2, 3

5

Die Knaben arbeiten auch nicht. Die Mädchen spielen.

Hier sind zwei Väter und zwei Mütter.

Gretchen und Liese, seid ihr Mädchen! Ja, wir sind Mädchen.

Auch Marie und Anna sind Mädchen.

[Öffne das Buch! Öffnet die Bücher! Schliesse das Buch! Schliesst die Bücher!]

#### der Plural

erste Person	zweite Person	dritte Person
wir	ihr	sie
sind	seid	sind
arbeiten	arbeitet	arbeiten
spielen	spielt	spielen
tun	tut	tun

Schreibt die Substantive in das Heft: I auf Seite 2, I U auf Seite 3, II auf Seite 4, III auf Seite 5, IV A auf Seite 7, IV B auf Seite 8, IV C auf Seite 9.

I		I U	
Sing. der Artikel	das Mädchen	der Vater	die Mutter
Plur. die Artikel	die Mädchen	die Väter	die Mütter
II			
S. das Beispiel	das Heft	der Plural	das Substantiv
P. die Beispiele	die Hefte	die Plurale	die Substantive
III		IV A	IV B
Sing. das Buch	der Mann	das Verb	der Knabe
Plur. die Bücher	die Männer	die Verben	die Knaben
IV C			
Sing. die Antwort	die Aufgabe	die Frage	die Frau
Plur. die Antworten	die Aufgaben	die Fragen	die Frauen
Sing. die Nummer	die Person	die Seite	
Plur. die Nummern	die Personen	die Seiten	

### Degrees of comparison

The comparative is formed by adding the suffix *-er* to the positive, and the superlative by adding *-ste*, while changing the vowels *a, o, u* to *ä, ö, ü*. For example:

Meidinger goes on to list adjectives whose vowels stay the same, as well as irregular forms (e.g. *gut* (good); *besser*, *am besten*).

My grapes are good, but yours are even better; and those over here are the best of all the grapes.

(Example translated from French)

## Grammar – 17.1 Inductive and deductive approaches



Pause the video after "Some also advocated teaching grammar implicitly."

This page relates to the following slide (examples are shown in a different format in the handbook to allow enlargement):

**Inductive and deductive approaches**

Pupils notice the sentences contain plural nouns

Explanation about plural verb forms

Examples for pupils to copy into their books

Example A in the handbook is the example shown in the video.

Check participants' understanding of inductive and deductive approaches to teaching grammar.

Both with regard to the classics and to the newly codified modern languages, the primary debate in language teaching through the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries was between those who thought languages should be learnt by the teaching of rules and those who thought actual language 'use', based on authentic sources, should be the model for practice, through memorising dialogues and phrases, what we might call today 'chunk' learning.

The so-called *Grammar War* of 1519-1521 refers to a particularly fiery exchange between Latinists who favoured presenting rules first and those who believed that examples should be seen before the rules.

We can see that inductive approaches to teaching grammar had been advocated for a long time (since the so-called 'Grammar War' of 1519 to 1521) but teachers were slow to put them into practice in the classroom.

The inductive-deductive distinction is probably more helpfully thought of as a continuum, because most learners still need to have structured input to be 'guided' to inductive grammatical reasoning.

1. Compare the grammar teaching examples shown above: what are the advantages and disadvantages of each?
2. In a language you teach, think of how you can take an inductive approach, using examples or a short text to guide students to formulate a rule.



### Spoken grammar

#### Le pongo aquí

[Confusion between direct and indirect object pronouns]

#### Me se ha caído

[Wrong position of indirect object pronoun when combined with reflexive 'se']

#### Si lo sabría, te lo diría

[Use of conditional tense instead of imperfect subjunctive]

### Non-standard Language



"He should of seen it coming."



"Less people go to church now than twenty years ago."



1. How much do we still maintain the idea of 'correct grammar' as a system of rules that only some have access to?
2. Does this confer on grammar a certain prestige?
3. How does technology affect language use?
4. To what extent do we include discussions of correctness, register and prestige varieties in our classrooms?
5. What are some useful approaches to improving grammatical fluency?

## Grammar – 25. Reflection on historical and current practices



Working individually, note down some responses to the following questions and then discuss them with a partner.

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of inductive and deductive approaches to teaching grammar?
2. Should function always be the primary consideration in language teaching or is there a place for a focus on form?
3. Are grammar drills effective?
4. What needs to be considered in decisions about sequencing of grammar teaching?

## Differentiation



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