

https://dspace.org/

[Four book reviews]

Rose, Brian Waldron

1966
Johannesburg College of Education
https://hdl.handle.net/10539/27440
Rose, B.W. (1966). [Four book reviews]. Symposium: A Journal of Education for Southern Africa, pp. 104-105.

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

BOOK REVIEWS

BOOKS RECEIVED

ADAMSON: *English Education* 1789–1902, Cambridge University Press.

ATKINS: *From Utrecht to Waterloo*, Methuen.

BRETT: *An Introduction to English Studies*, Arnold.

BUCHANAN: *A Programmed Introduction to Linguistics* Heath.

DE PAREDES: *Audio Spanish Part I*, Cassell.

GARLICK: *News*, Longmans.

GENTLE: *Advanced English Practice*, Methuen.

GROVES & STRATTA: Tempo Books. No. 2. *The Big Drop*, Longmans

HANCOCK: *Advertising*, Longmans.

HERITAGE: *Learning Mathematics* Book One and Two (The Shropshire Mathematics Experiment), Penguin.

HOOPER, PETHICK & POMEROY: *Numasets* Book 1, Methuen.

HORNBY: *A Guide to Patterns and Usage in English*, Oxford University Press.

LEE: *Language Teaching Games and Contests*, Oxford University Press.

LITTLE: *Communication in Business*, Longmans.

MACCARTHY: *A Practice Book of English Speech*, Oxford University Press.

MCMANNERS & CRAWFORD *The Future of the Humanities in Australian Universities*, Melbourne

ROBSON: *English as a University Subject*, Cambridge University Press.

SWANN: *Simple Tests in English*, Methuen.

SYMONDS: *Let's Speak French*, Book 1 and 2. Oxford University Press.

VALDMAN: *Applied Linguistics: French*, Heath.

WHITTAKER: *Mathematics Through Discovery*. Books 1, 2 and 3 and Teacher's Book. Harrap.

American Poetry, Stratford-Upon-Avon Studies No. 7 Arnold.

Longmans Structural Readers, Stages 1, 2 and 3. Longmans.

My First Number Book; My Second Number Book, Longmans.

The appearance of titles in this list does not preclude their not being reviewed in future issues.

Simultaneous Equations *by Austwick*

Logarithms *by Hartley.*

Kinematics *by Unwin*

A Programmed German Grammar, Parts I and II *by Tyrer.*

The Waterloo Campaign *by Thornhill.*

THE House of Methuen are fast establishing themselves as the leaders in the field of programmed texts. Their Clearway Series are models of linear programming, and furthermore most of the authors of this series are doyens in the theory and practice of programmed learning. The name of Professor Kenneth Austwick needs no introduction to English readers — he can be said, without fear of contradiction, to be the pioneer of the technique in England. *Simultaneous Equations* is suitable for self-instruction in the first year of high school and concentrates on teaching the algebraic solution of simultaneous equations without diverging into graphical or other methods. The book is divided into eight sections, each one admirably brief but long enough to handle the topic thoroughly. Each section deals with some aspect of the solution of simultaneous equations — subtracting one equation, negative quantities, adding two equations, multiplying both equations and summary and revision. The use of colour in various frames to highlight the key sentence or as prompts should be examined carefully by tyro programmers.

Derek Unwin is Vice-Chairman of the Association for Programmed Learning and Conference Chairman of the National Programmed Learning Conference held at Loughborough in April 1966. Like Austwick, he is no new-comer to the art and science of programming. This is shown in this volume, which covers velocity and acceleration up to 0-level standard. It includes 330 frames, 8 graphs and 5 panels, with a total working time of from 5 to 10 hours. The two sections "Graphs" and "Problems" are applications of what has been learned in the first five sections.

The precise areas of learning that can be satisfactorily handled by programmed learning have been debated hotly by those familiar with the art as well as by the antis. Can a subject like history be programmed? Can only the factual part of history be programmed? What part do mere facts play, anyhow, in history teaching? Patrick Thornhill's *The Waterloo Campaign* is a partial answer to all these questions. It is an intriguing

little work, and unique in that it is the first of the Clearway series to appear in branching form. The author justifies the branching format in the Preface: "The aim of this venture into branching programming is not so much to teach the facts of history as to induce a special kind of understanding from it. The person who is studying history normally does so with an implicit hindsight . . . and this may lend to historical events an illusory air of inevitability.

"One way of showing this up is to take one's stand at a point in the past and try to see the choices and alternatives offered in a particular chain of events as it developes (sic); and because in war the alternatives are limited and simplified, a military campaign serves the purpose well, and the branching type of programming lends itself effectively to this treatment." The programme makes the student take decisions that had to be taken by commanders in the field in 1815 and these are the bases of the multiple choice answers to the various frames. This little book should be in the hands of every matriculation history student and is the answer to those who maintain that programmed learning can only be applied to factual material.

James Hartley's *Logarithms* is a more ambitious book, consisting of more than 800 frames in horizontal format. One wonders why the previous titles are in vertical format. Have the authors any statistical evidence for preferring one to the other, or is it a matter of individual preference? *Logarithms* has been designed to "teach the simpler parts of the theory of logarithms and the use of logarithm tables to solve complex problems" and is designed for students "down to the age of twelve, of average intelligence (I.Q. 100)." It is a comprehensive treatment of the topic. Mr. Hartley gives a more detailed account of the way in which the programme was tested and validated than do the previous authors. Publishers with the reputation and standing of Methuen should insist that, in programmes intended for general consumption, such as the Clearway series, a complete and comprehensive account of validation procedures and target population be given.

One wonders what part programmes presented in visual form can play in language learning. Are they restricted to reading and writing skills? Are spoken skills not in fact the province of the language laboratory (which should involve the principles of programmed learning)? Mastery of a language implies mastery of the sound system and the ability to reproduce that sound system, as well as mastery of the printed work. Mr. Tyrer in his introduction to his *Programmed German Grammar* states that this course is intended for "all who wish to obtain mastery of the German language for which a correct knowledge of the grammar is the prime essential". However much mastery of the techniques of programming Mr. Tyrer shows in this work (and as such, it is a good example of "easily assimilated fragments carefully arranged in sequence" and of precisely stated terminal behaviour) the author has ignored two cardinal principles in language learning: that talking about the language is not synonymous with talking the language, and that mastery of the language implies automatic manipulation of the spoken as well as the written structures of the language as a result of conditioning in a realistic or simulated stimulus-response situation, such as can be provided in the language laboratory for closed-ended situations. The author of this book, let us be quite frank, has attempted the impossible. He sets about the task of describing in six pages of print German pronunciation and spelling. (Incidentally some of this description is linguistically unsound: his assertion that "kam" is like the English "calm" and "kommen" is like the English "common" ignores allophonic differences.) He then expects the student to transfer this Palmerian "studial" knowledge to the printed symbols in the frames of the text. Fourteen frames, for example, are deemed to be sufficient to condition the student to differentiate between "sein" and "haben" verbs in the perfect tense. The ratio between the amount of German used and the amount of English used is heavily in favour of English. Contrast this with (unprogrammed) course books such as Pamela Symonds' "Let's Speak French" and de Paredes' "Audio-Spanish Course" where the use of English is reduced to an absolute minimum — in fact in Miss Symonds' book the only English to be found is in the vocabulary and the summary of grammar at the end of the book. Still, it is a good thing that editor Patrick Thornhill has allowed this unsuccessful attempt to be made — to this reviewer it provides the answer to the questions raised at the beginning of this notice. The most charitable verdict on this book can only be "Old wine in new bottles."

L'Elaboration Du Français Fondamental
by Gougenheim, Rivenc, Michea and Sauvageot
(Didier, Paris)

THE year 1956 saw the appearance of L' Elaboration du Français Elémentaire written by these four authors. The present volume is an augmented and revised edition of this epoch-making study of vocabulary frequency and selection in French.

The acronym CREDIF is now a by-word amongst language teachers. The scientific research and presentation of language material for non-