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French-speaking learners of French is a milestone in the history of language teaching. This book is an exhaustive and well-documented study of how the authors arrived at a list of 1,400 vocabulary items based on range and frequency which would serve as a basis for a beginning French course. The authors, who give a comprehensive survey of various vocabulary counts for French, insist that Le Français Fondamental is not the French equivalent of Ogden and Richards' Basic English but a first stage in the learning of French and one that is complete in itself.

A total of 301 informants, representing a wide variety in terms of profession, rank, and geography, provided 163 tape recordings of conversations. These were transcribed verbatim, producing a total of 312,000 words which were then analysed and provided 8,000 separate words. This list of 8,000 was arranged in order of decreasing frequency with the verb *être* coming first with a frequency of 14,083 down to words occurring only once, of which there were some 2,700. All words with a frequency lower than 20 were eliminated. The next task was to determine the distribution. An examination of the frequency list showed that by the 38th word 50 per cent of the total frequencies had been covered, and these were grammatical words and certain auxiliary verbs. The first noun appeared at number 82 with a frequency of 545 and a distribution of 117. Very few concrete nouns appeared in the list as they have a low frequency and irregular distribution. Yet these words are essential in a beginning course, especially those that can be demonstrated or acted out in the classroom.

So the next stage of the inquiry was undertaken. To provide the concrete nouns that the first part of the enquiry failed to provide surveys were carried out amongst school children in different parts of France. Some 903 children were asked to write down what they considered to be the nouns most useful in connection with 16 different "*centres d'intérêt*": clothing, parts of the body, the home, furniture, food and drink, objects used at table, the kitchen, school, heating and lighting, the town, the country, transport, agriculture, animals, games and trades. These lists were again analysed in terms of frequency and distribution, and the final list of 1,400 basic words arrived at.

Of this important piece of linguistic research, Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens have this to say in their "*The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*": "'Le Français Fondamental' and the research work that led up to it, are great pioneering efforts which have helped to bring about and accelerate modern developments in the application of linguistics to language teaching". No greater recommendation of this book could be given.

A Linguistic Theory of Translation *by J. C. Catford.*

Papers in Language and Language Teaching *by P. D. Strevens.*

Studies in Phonetics and Linguistics *by D. Abercrombie.*

Five Inaugural Lectures — *Ed. Strevens.*

Oxford University Press have performed another valuable service to teachers of English as well as to students of linguistics by the publication of four further titles in their "Language and Language Learning" series. For those readers like this reviewer who had not the good fortune to have been disciplined in their university days by linguistics (the subject being not quite the thing, especially at Oxbridge), these works in the tradition of the British school of linguists inaugurated by Firth and maintained and strengthened by academics such as Strevens, Catford, Abercrombie, Halliday and McIntosh are of immense importance.

Mr. Catford's book is a highly technical treatment of a highly technical subject — translation (and as such should be read by all modern language teachers, including Mr. Tyrer). It is concerned with "the analysis of what translation *is*. It proposes general categories to which we can assign our observations of particular instances of translation, and it shows how these categories relate to one another". The author has some important things to say about the part played by translation in language teaching, an activity which is far more complicated than is generally realised.

Professor Abercrombie's book is a collection of broadcasts and contributions to various learned journals covering a span of 28 years and devoted mainly to phonetic studies. The chapter on conversation and spoken prose, in which Professor Abercrombie suggests three categories — reading aloud, monologue and conversation — and that on R.P. and local accent should be of interest to all English teachers, especially in South Africa, who at some time or other in their career are plagued by the question "What English shall we teach?" Professor Abercrombie explores some interesting by-ways — paths along which even the professional linguistician hardly ever ventures: a phonetician's view of verse structure, and some forgotten phoneticians, for example.

But it is to Professor Streven's book that most language teachers will turn. Here again the work is composed of various articles and papers from Professor Strevens' outstanding career (which incidentally, as the author himself admits, shows "the kind of development and change that is undergone both by the individual writer and by his chosen discipline"). The main thesis of these papers is the part that linguistics can play in

language teaching. The various types of English (Englishes) and the division of language into four main categories — medium, dialect, style and register — problems of language teaching in Africa, testing, all these are carefully examined by Professor Strevens. Perhaps the most important chapter for the language teacher is that on "Linguistic Research and Language Teaching", first presented as a paper for the Council for Cultural Co-Operation, Council of Europe, 1963.

In his introduction, Professor Strevens presents an apologia for presenting material that, for various reasons, he would have preferred to rewrite or suppress: "There is something to be said for demonstrating the kind of development and change that is undergone both by the individual writer and by his chosen discipline". The work of Professor Strevens needs no defence. This particular volume shows how he has gone from good to better.

Professor Strevens has also edited *Five Inaugural Lectures* by the occupants of five chairs at Universities that have demonstrated by inaugurating chairs of Phonetics, Comparative Philology or Contemporary English, the importance of linguistics as an academic discipline in its own right. Although these five lectures all bear the individual stamp of the personality and viewpoint of the lecturers, they show the range and advances in linguistics that have been made since the days of Daniel Jones and Firth.

Reading and Talking in Engish *by A. Wise* (Harrap).

Examining Oral English in Schools *by P. J. Hitchman* (Methuen)

First literacy, then numeracy. Now oralcy. Some teachers may feel that their charges need no help or encouragement in the act of spoken communication, and that they would like to support the plea of a certain cafe for sixpennyworth of silence from the juke box.

The oral aspect of English teaching as distinct from speech training (and it is interesting to trace the change from 'elocution' to speech training to oralcy over the decades) has always been a dicy business. The structuring of oral work within a meaningful and natural context has been more of a task in home language teaching than in foreign language teaching.

Mr. Wise, who is lecturer in speech education at the University of Leeds, and whose name has come to the fore recently in the educational press by virtue of his sound views on the teaching and testing of oralcy, has recorded permanently in book form the results of his experience of this aspect of English teaching. The work is designed for class use to give "experience in three speech situations: (i) reading aloud from printed material; (ii) talking in association with other people; (iii) talking to other people". It is purely and simply a text-book that could be put to use by a non-specialist. The problem of a passive class has been partly solved by Mr. Wise's suggestion that the rest of the class should be asked to give an assessment of the speech of a particular pupil so that the speaker will have an idea of the effect of his speech on listeners and the class will listen critically to human speech.

Changes are being made in the system of examining oral work in home and foreign languages. Greater effectiveness and objectivity are being aimed at. Mr. Ritchman's provocative book, which is not a text-book, as Mr. Wise's is, but a method book for the teacher, will certainly give impetus to the changes that are taking place. Part I gives the background — the need for articulacy, more reliable techniques of testing it, Part II is a sound analysis of the types of objective testing and the methods of designing tests. Sample passages and tests, and rating scales are included in the appendixes.

But these books should be studied together by any teacher who wishes to implement the suggestions of the linguisticians that speech and writing are separate and different activities and skills. With the adoption of a linguistic approach to language teaching and the implementation of the ideas in these two books, the evolution of English teaching will be well-nigh complete.

An Introduction to the History of the Christian Church *by W. W. Brigg* (Arnold).

This is a survey of the history of the Christian Church from New Testament times to the founding of the World Council of Churches in 1948. Naturally in a work of this size and scope the author cannot avoid a certain superficiality of treatment. Nevertheless it is a useful reference book for teachers and a lucid introduction for serious students of the subject.

A Guide to Correct English *by L. A. Hill* (O.U.P.).

Mr. Hill has shown considerable energy and ingenuity in collecting and listing examples of typical errors in English usage made by overseas students. Alongside the errors are the correct versions, followed by substitution tables for practising the correct version. This book is presumably intended for second language learners, and one looks in vain for reference to areas of interference between English and a specific language. A useful reference book for all second language learners.