Contents

Foreword ................................................................. 13

Introduction: A red card for the mother tongue? ................. 16
  0.1 Method and Madness in Foreign Language Teaching ......... 16
  0.2 Background ..................................................... 17
  0.3 Spoilsports: stubborn teachers ................................ 18
  0.4 Bilingual methods and language courses ...................... 19
  0.5 Spoilsports: teachers as learners ............................. 20
  0.6 Classroom research and the doggedness of dogma .......... 21
  0.7 A professional neurosis ....................................... 23
  0.8 The alternative: the mother tongue as a base for reference 24

Chapter 1: Teaching English through English -
  with the help of the mother tongue ............................. 26
  1.1 Message-orientation and mother tongue ...................... 26
  1.2 Immersion, the natural way .................................... 26
  1.3 Between the lexicon and grammar ............................ 28
  1.4 The critical mass hypothesis .................................. 29
  1.5 We cannot start small again .................................. 30
  1.6 Creating a foreign language atmosphere in the classroom 31
  1.7 The sandwich technique and its bilingual counterpart .... 33
  1.8 In praise of discipline and consistency ...................... 35
  1.9 Undesired side effects of stubborn monolingualism ......... 36
  1.10 The foreign language as a working language: a five-point programme 38
  1.11 Love or loathing at first sight ............................... 39
  1.12 Solidarity and good vibes .................................... 40
  1.13 Language as a sideline: learning other subjects in a foreign language 40
  1.14 Between medium-oriented and message-oriented communication 42
  1.15 A dual focus .................................................... 44
  1.16 Classroom reality: a content vacuum ....................... 46
  1.17 Conclusion ...................................................... 48
  1.18 Hints for student teachers .................................. 48
Study questions and tasks ............................................ 49

Chapter 2: How learners break into the speech code:
  the principle of dual comprehension ............................ 51
  2.1 Understanding what is meant ................................ 51
  2.2 Understanding what is literally said ......................... 51
  2.3 Children crack the code: evidence from mother tongue acquisition 54
Chapter 3: We only learn language once

3.1 Native language skills as a foundation for foreign language learning
3.2 Goodbye Berlitz: arguments and counterarguments
Study questions and tasks

Chapter 4: Communicative equivalence and cross-linguistic networks

4.1 Missing equivalence?
4.2 A pragmatic approach to meaning-conveyance
4.3 ‘Deforeignising’ the foreign
4.4 The principle of association: Cross-linguistic networks
4.5 Telling stories about words
Study questions and tasks

Chapter 5: The mother tongue as the magic key to foreign grammars

5.1 Grammar – the continuation of the lexicon by other means
5.2 Grammar – the pride and blight of the foreign language classroom
5.3 Grammar – comparative and crystal clear
5.3.1 Clarifying functions through idiomatic translations
5.3.2 Clarifying forms through mother tongue mirroring
5.3.3 Additional explanations and the technicalities of remote languages
5.3.4 Searching for analogies
5.3.5 Explaining linguistic terms via mother tongue examples
5.3.6 Underuse and overproduction of foreign language constructions
5.3.7 Where learners have been more harmed than helped
5.4 Conclusion
5.5 Hints for the student teacher
Study questions and tasks

Chapter 6: How to teach structures the bilingual way

6.1 The generative principle, or: playing on analogies
6.2 Evidence from natural language acquisition
6.3 To transfer or not to transfer
6.4 An innovation: semi-communicative drills
6.4.1 Objections overruled
6.4.2 Regular revision drills: immunization against common errors
Chapter 7: Dialogues, drama and declamation .................................................. 142
7.1 Give them a stage: role-taking and role-making ........................................ 142
7.2 Phase 1: Role-taking .................................................................................. 143
  7.2.1 Dialogue presentation and assimilation .................................................. 143
  7.2.2 The ear is the gateway to language: On pronunciation teaching .......... 145
  7.2.3 The printed text as a support rather than an interference factor .......... 149
  7.2.4 The oral translation ............................................................................. 152
  7.2.5 Pictures for support ........................................................................... 153
  7.2.6 Are we there yet? Further steps .......................................................... 153
  7.2.7 Acting out: 'The grand finale' .............................................................. 156
  7.2.8 Fast and slow learners ........................................................................ 157
7.3 Phase 2: Manipulation of structures ............................................................ 158
7.4 Phase 3: Role-making ................................................................................ 158
  7.4.1 Pupils' dialogues ................................................................................. 158
  7.4.2 Question time and improvisations ......................................................... 160
7.5 Review, recycle, reinforce ........................................................................... 162
7.6 Drama and declamation ............................................................................. 163
7.7 Hints for student teachers .......................................................................... 165
Study questions and tasks ............................................................................. 166

Chapter 8: Language learning as skill learning ............................................. 167
8.1 Mastery learning and skill theory ............................................................... 167
8.2 The rewards of mastery: a sense of competence and control .................... 171
8.3 The rewards of mastery: Release from shyness ....................................... 173
8.4 Applied behaviour analysis ..................................................................... 175
8.5 The naturalistic fallacy and task-based instruction .................................... 175
Study questions and tasks ............................................................................. 176

Chapter 9: Maximising high-quality input via the mother tongue ............... 178
9.1 Direct instruction vs. acquisition: in search of a compromise ................. 178
9.2 Good news for language teachers .............................................................. 179
  9.2.1 Teacher-talk ....................................................................................... 180
  9.2.2 Reading to the class and story-telling ................................................ 180
  9.2.3 Silent reading, and a reading corner .................................................... 183
  9.2.4 Bilingual readers ................................................................................ 184
  9.2.5 Re-translation .................................................................................... 186
  9.2.6 Language mix: outlandish proposals? ................................................. 188
Chapter 14: Directions for future work ........................................ 236
14.1 Continuity and change .................................................. 236
14.2 In the doing comes the understanding .............................. 236
14.3 Experimental comparisons ............................................ 237
14.4 Lesson analysis .......................................................... 238
14.5 A new generation of textbooks ....................................... 240
14.6 Europe-wide test of English as a foreign language .......... 240
14.7 ‘The hungry sheep look up and are not fed’ ..................... 240
14.8 Unheeded lessons of history ......................................... 241
Study questions and tasks .................................................. 242

Epilogue: Capitalising on a priceless legacy .......................... 243

Bibliography .................................................................. 244

Subject Index ................................................................. 257