

## Activity Report of the Language Laboratory of the University of Zurich

by Theodor Ebnetter

Translated by: Barry Thomas, Ohio University

The language laboratory of the University of Zurich is:

- (1) a service office,
- (2) a center for the development of language lab courses on the university level.
- (3) a center for research into contemporary oral colloquial French,
- (4) a part of the joint research area of applied linguistics,
- (5) a center for the development of a language lab grammar for Zurich-German.

As a service office (1) it serves the various language areas within the Arts Faculty in the teaching of language courses. Presently being taught are—in alphabetical order—Chinese, English, French, Dutch, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Swedish and Czechoslovakian. These courses provide elementary or advanced instruction.

Concerning (2) and (3): the register of individual languages taught today in the language lab is the usual normative register used in language instruction, the elevated variant of a language which can be used in written or spoken forms. The language generally taught in the classroom is an application of the normative system. But each direct contact with the members of a language group outside the school or academic situation shows that the colloquial register and the school register of a language do not correspond, but in fact show considerable divergence; and that each register possesses to some extent its own grammar, its own vocabulary, and its own semantics. It seemed an opportune time, therefore, to test the function of the language lab in the development of the colloquial index for languages, and to utilize this at the university level, where control of the standard variant can be assumed for the most part. To this end I had, in the Fall of 1971, the two French assistants, Paul Mauriac and Michel Gessner, make specific language recordings in France, and I was also able to obtain French radio material. On the basis of this material the team of Ebnetter-Muriac produced thematically and grammatically defined courses which we called *Cours de perfectionnement en français parlé courant* and which are intended to lead to 'Quasi-Native-Proficiency' in French. In 1972 we produced the series: *Commerce et ménage* (27 vols.); *Voyage et circulation* (21 vols.); *Jeunes et vieux* (20 vols.); *Professions masculines* (20 vols.).

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The first two series were tested during the Summer Semester 1972, the third series is being tested presently, and the fourth will be offered to students of Romance studies in the Summer Semester 1973 in the form of language lab courses, and tested in this manner. The material will be revised on the basis of any weaknesses discovered during the testing process.

As preparation for these demanding courses the team of Ebnetter-Gessner is establishing two additional, different language lab courses; the one conforms to the language lab concept presently used in the Gymnasium courses, the other applies the new concept of language lab work on a lower level of difficulty, which was tried in the *Cours de perfectionnement*.

The basis of colloquial speech is not the normative system of *bon usage*, but its own system (code, 'langue', authority). Since there is a lack of comprehensive descriptions of colloquial French it was decided to develop a grammar of spoken colloquial French according to sectors. Proceeding along onomasiological lines the team of Ebnetter-Gessner studied in the first sector the syntax of the adverb and the adverbial element on the basis of a selection (five hours of continuous speech) from the material collected in France and also recorded from the radio. The provisional result is now available in a dozen chapters and will be published next year as a structural grammar of the adverbial element in spoken French (AFPC). The result will serve as a basis for language lab courses.

Concerning (4): I understand Applied Linguistics to be an intersection between Theoretical or General Linguistics on the one hand, and Psychology, Sociology, Ethnology, Teaching, Media Science, etc. on the other. Previous studies elsewhere also show that a knowledge of the important schools of linguistics today is necessary to understand and work in these overlapping areas, especially in the direction of modern pedagogy. Also needed is a survey of the contemporary state of Applied Linguistics, which just held its third international congress. In preparation are: Th. Ebnetter, *Structuralism and Transformationalism*. With the availability of several general introductions to modern linguistics it seems necessary to introduce the student to the methodology of the individual schools of linguistics. The structuralist schools in the foreground today, and the transformationalist and the generative semantics schools are each described and the two camps compared. The book will appear in the linguistic paperback series of the List-Verlag in January, 1973.

Th. Ebnetter, *Applied Linguistics*. A survey of this new area of study. The book will be published at year's end, 1973, by the Fink-Verlag (Munich) in the series UTB.

Concerning (5): Together with the teachers of the group 'Zurich-Detsch' of the 'Schweizer-Deutsch' Association a language lab course for Zurich-German is being developed.