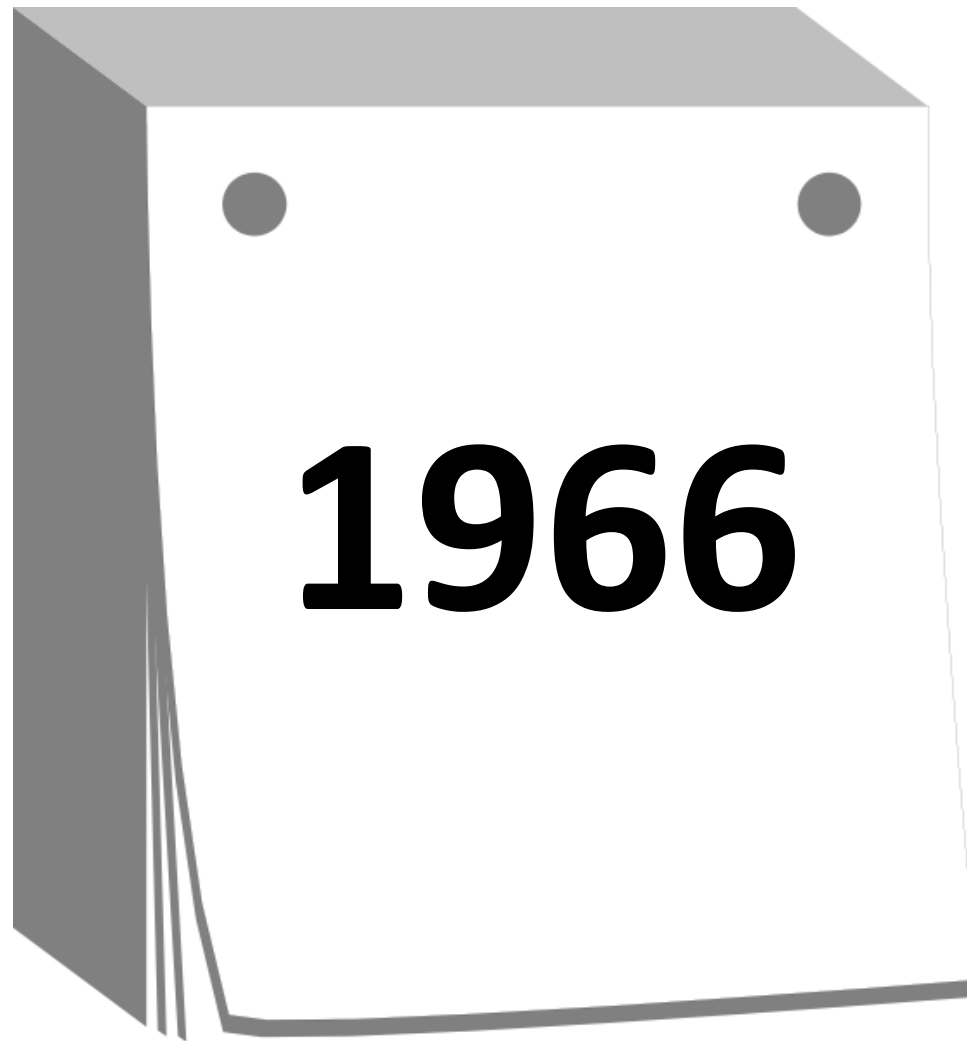


1966 and all that: A critical history of ELT

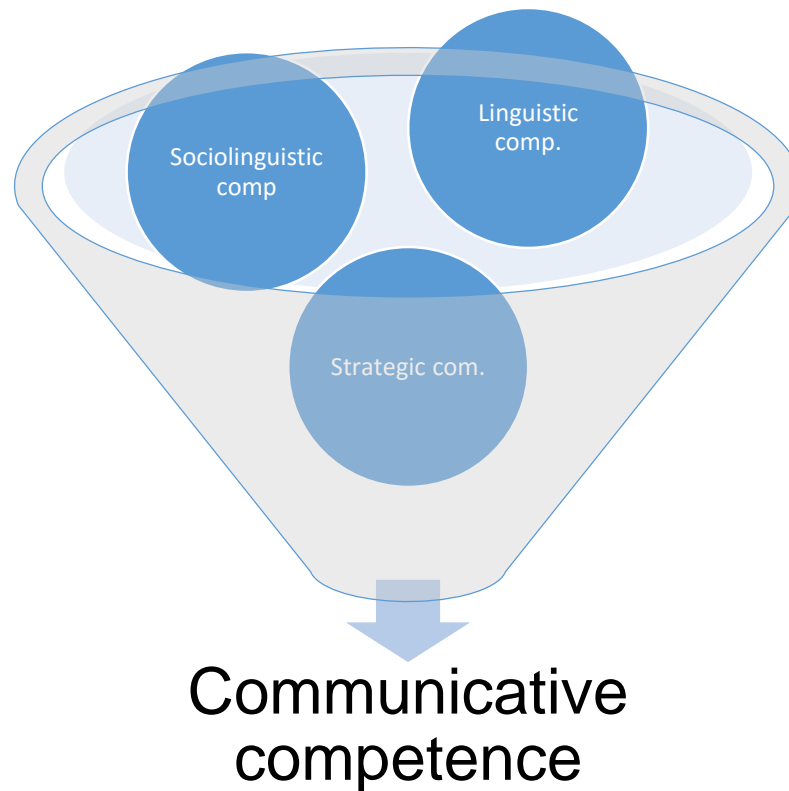
Scott Thornbury





- TESOL is founded
- Chomsky says: 'I am, frankly, rather sceptical about the significance, for the teaching of languages, of such insights and understanding as have been attained in linguistics and psychology.'

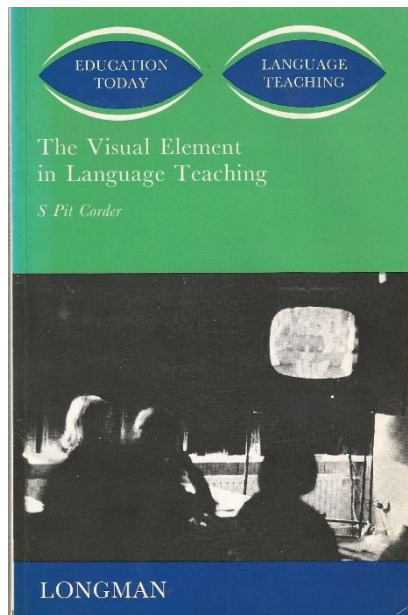
- Dell Hymes presents his paper 'On communicative competence' at Yeshiva University, NY.



Newmark, L. 'How not to interfere with language learning':

'An important test of our success as language teachers... is the ability of our students to choose to say what they want'.

- Pit Corder, *The Visual Element in Language Teaching*.

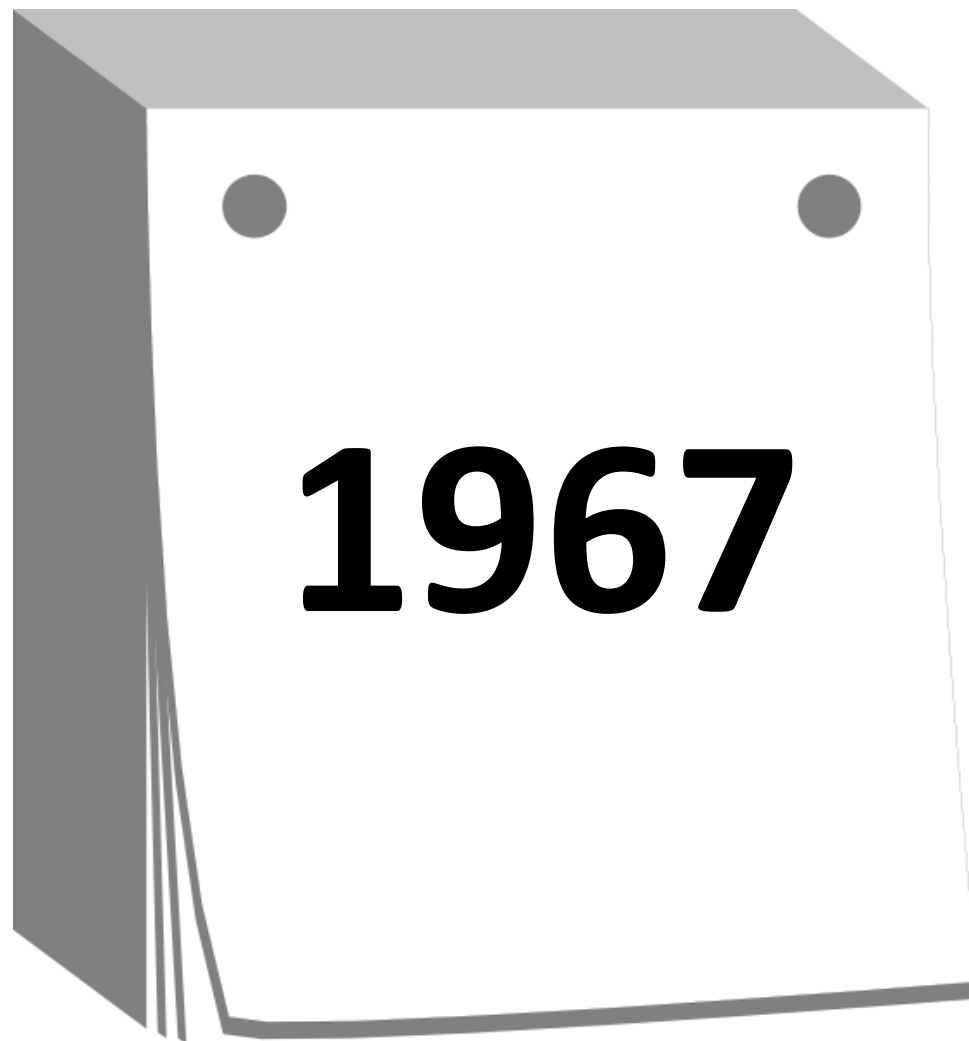


‘Language is not knowledge, but a set of skills. The teaching of it, therefore, must be different from the teaching of a ‘content’ subject like science.’ (p.5)

- Asher, J. 'The learning strategy of the total physical response: a review', *Modern Language Journal*.



FIG. 1. The boys and the adult model jumped when they heard the command, "Tobel"



- [I]ATEFL is founded. First conference is held in London.

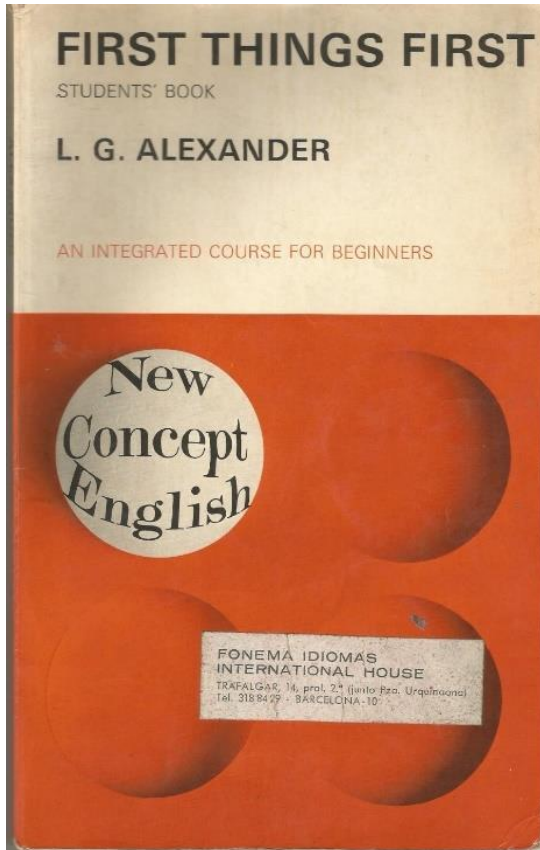
‘The much-publicised revolution is not a leap forward but a regression into routine and dullness.’

(Bruce Pattison, ATEFL President, opening plenary)

‘Linguistic method has surpassed religion in its capacity to arouse controversy and create feuds.’

Mackey, W. F. ‘The Meaning of Method’ in Lee, W.R. (ed.) *E.L.T. Selections* 2.

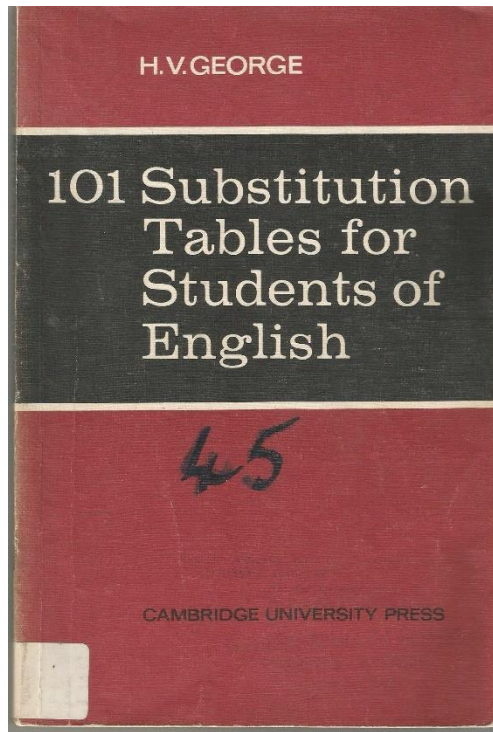
- Louis Alexander's *First Things First* is published.



“The student should be trained to learn by making as few mistakes as possible.”

Alexander, L. G. (1967) *First Things First (Teacher's Book)* p. xii.

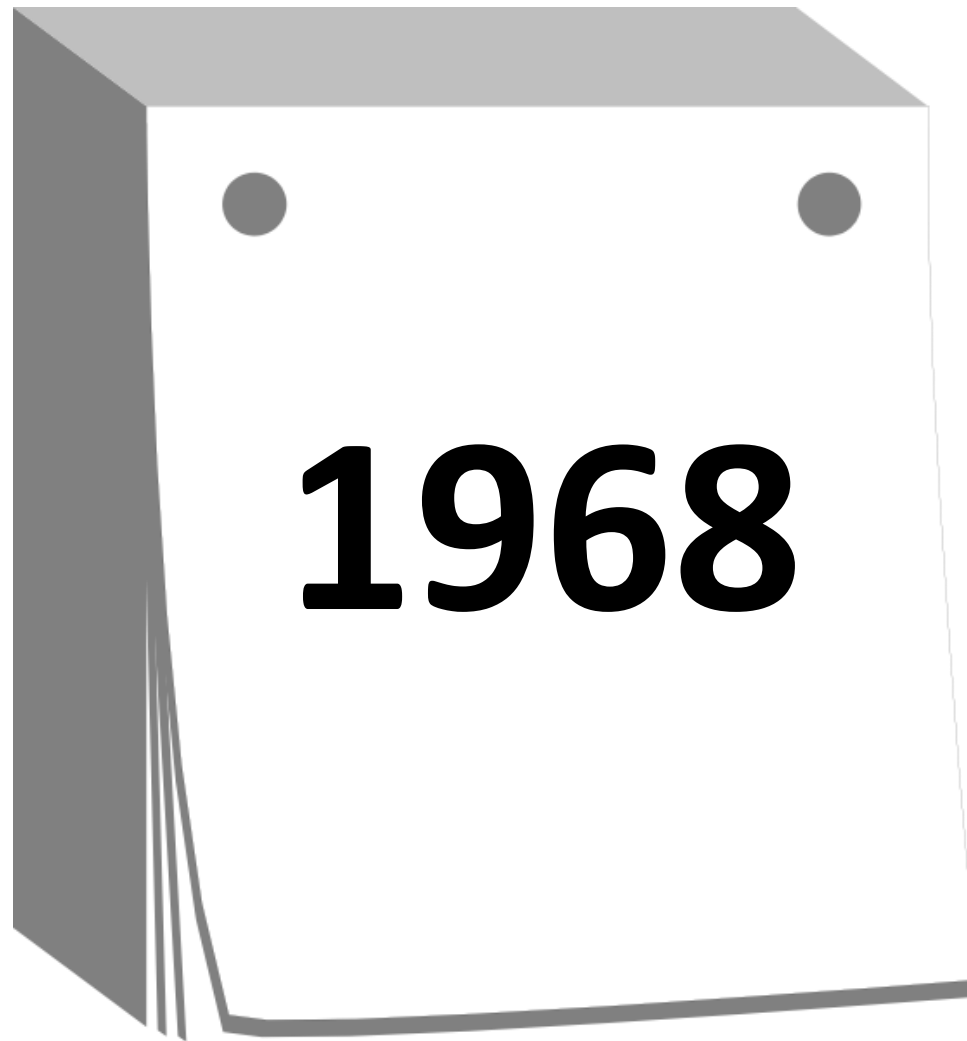
- H.V. George's *101 Substitution Tables for Students of English* is published.

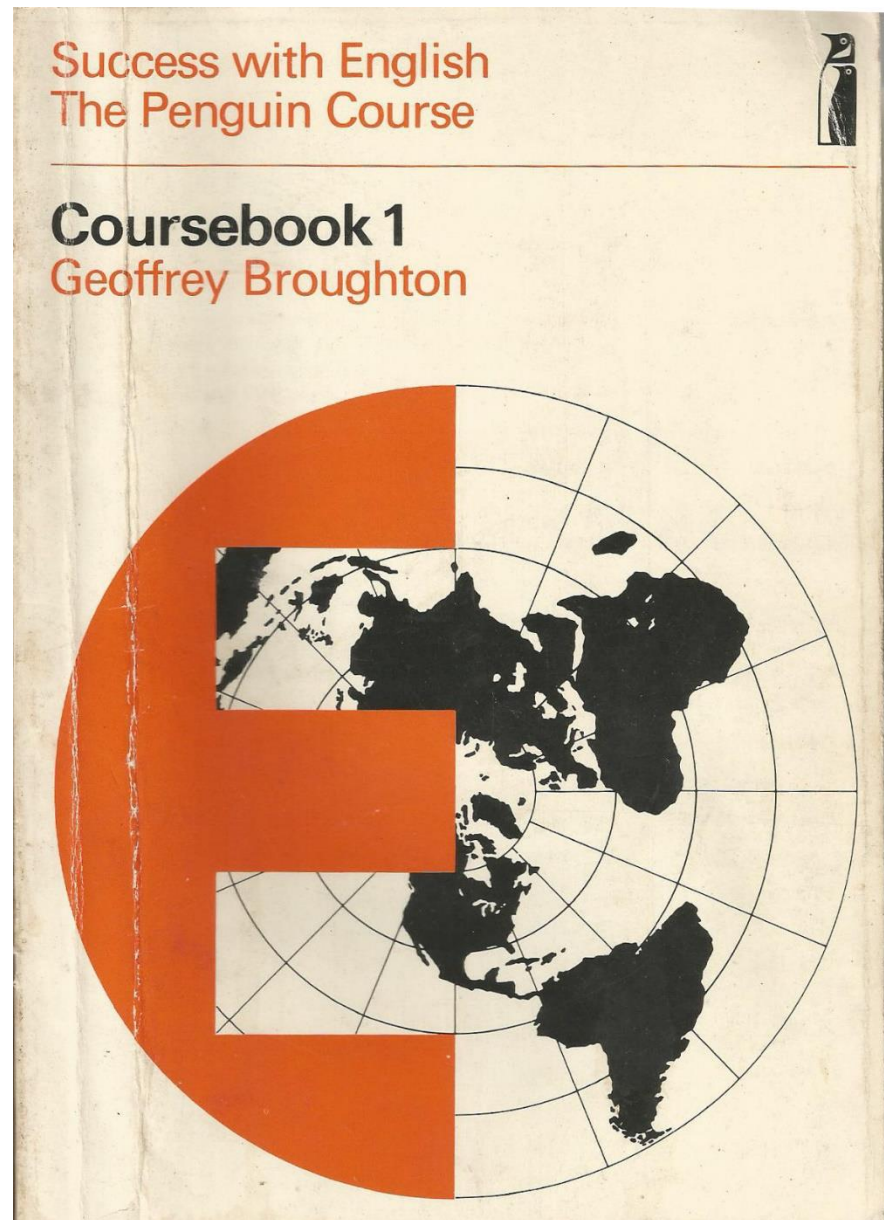
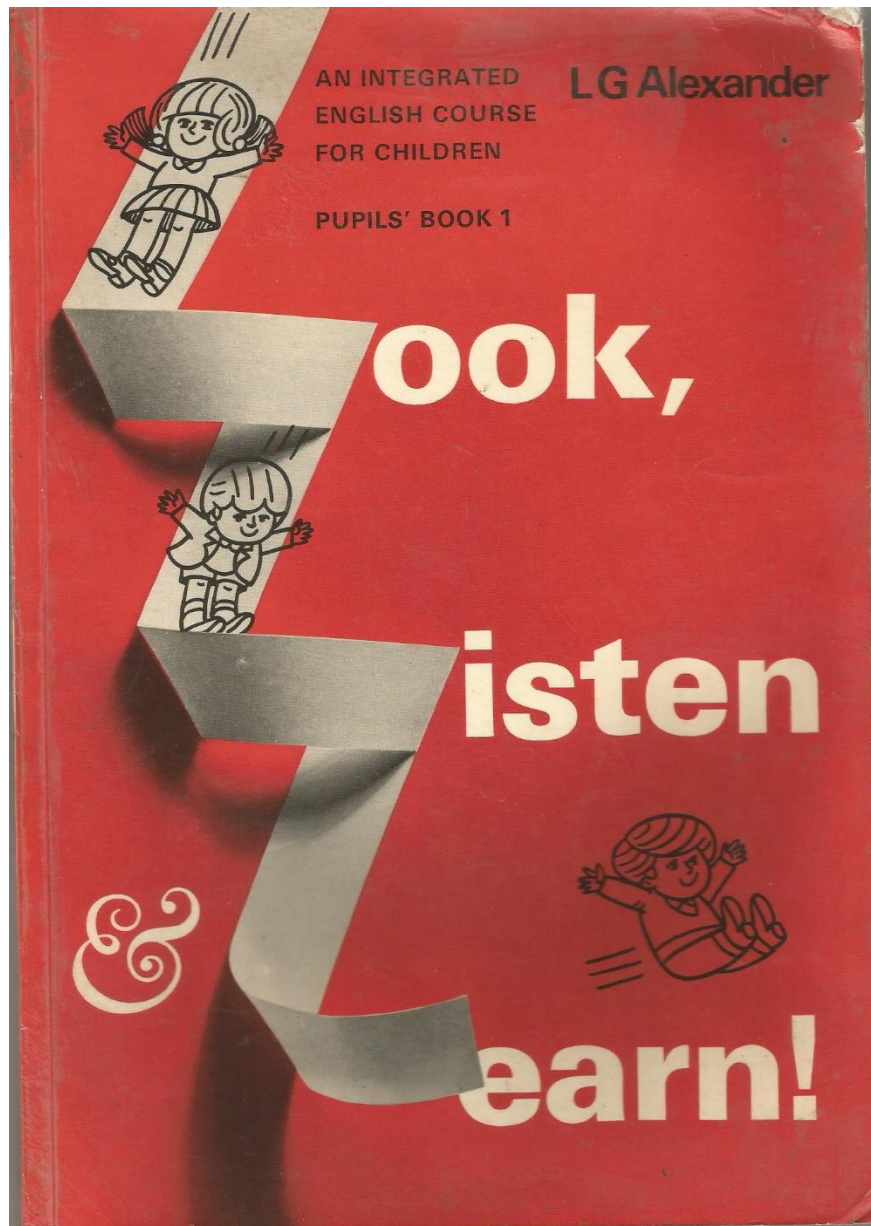


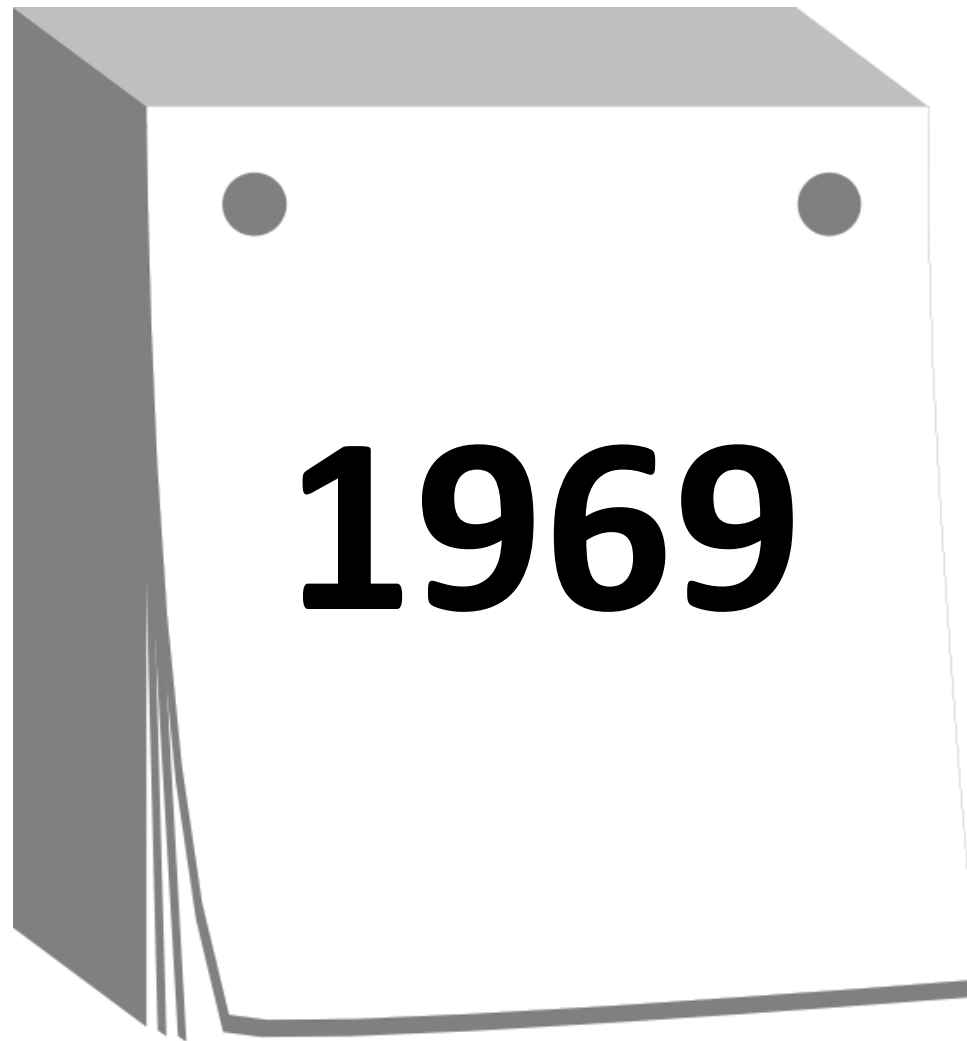
‘With these Substitution Tables you can speak and write many thousands of English sentences, *without making a single mistake.*’

- Pit Corder's 'The significance of learners' errors':

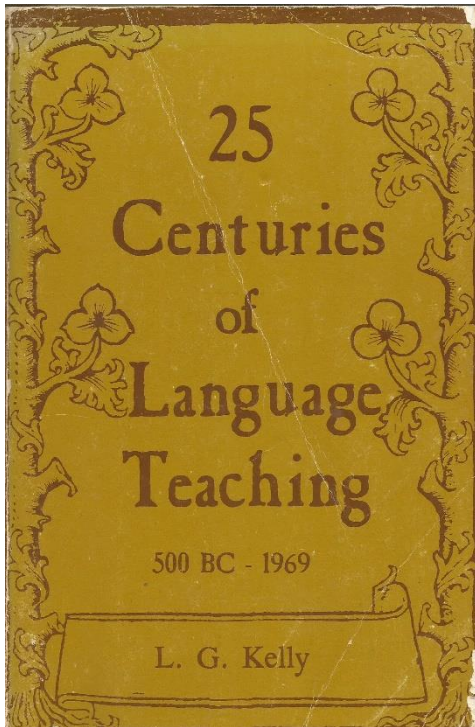
The 'built in syllabus'





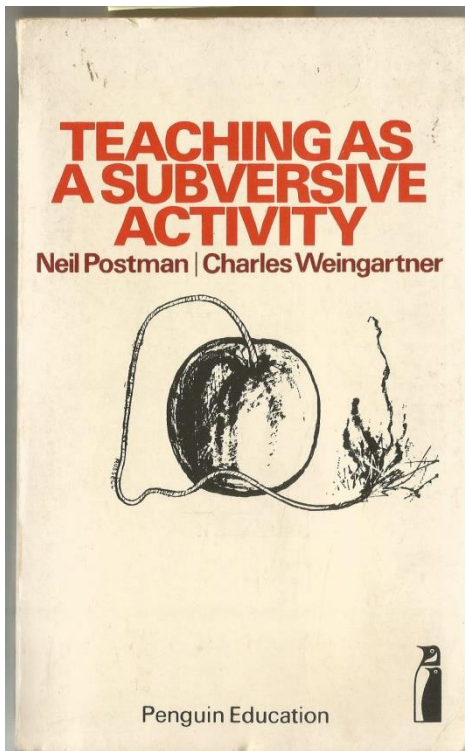


- Kelly, L.G. *25 Centuries of Language Teaching: 500BC – 1969.*

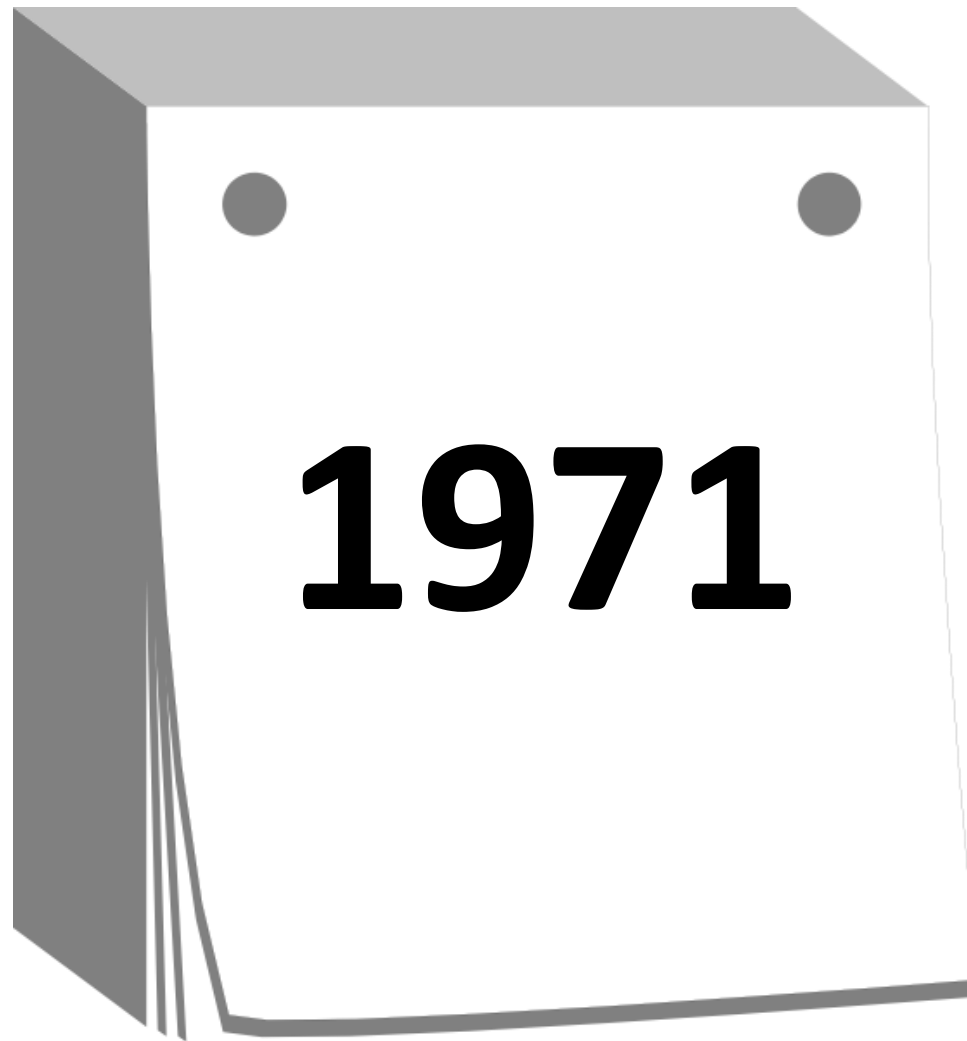


“Methods are of little interest”.

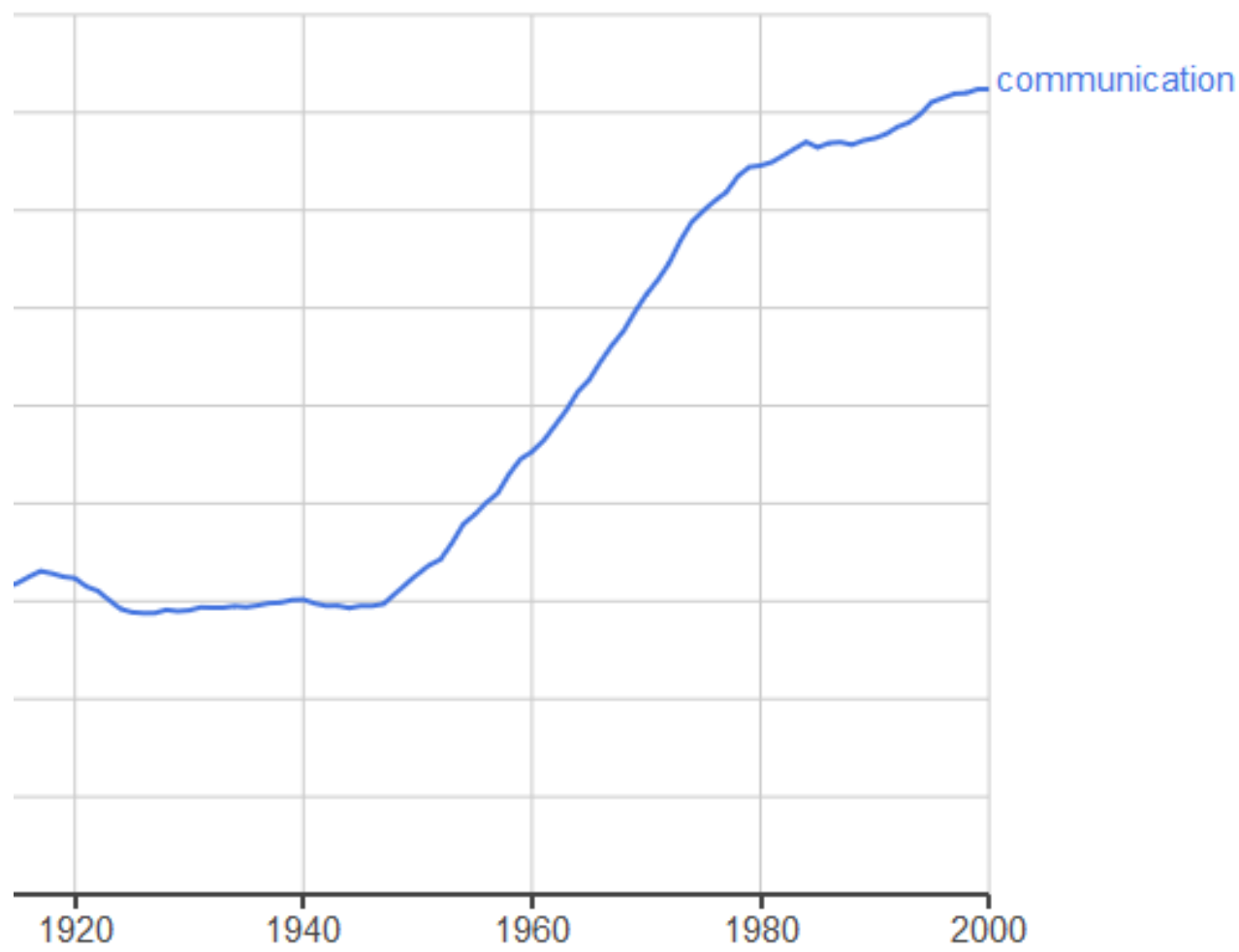
- Postman & Weingartner *Teaching as a Subversive Activity*.

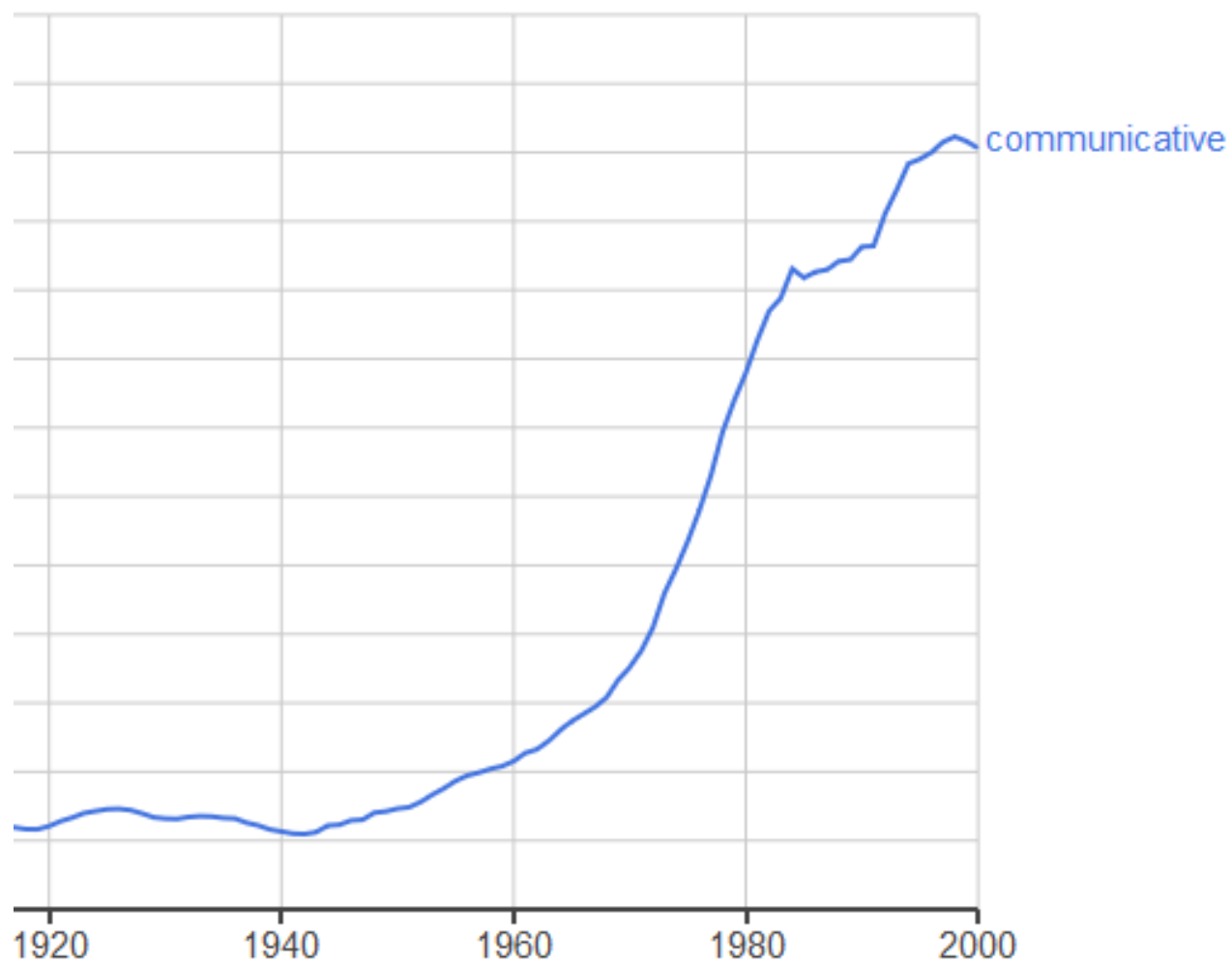


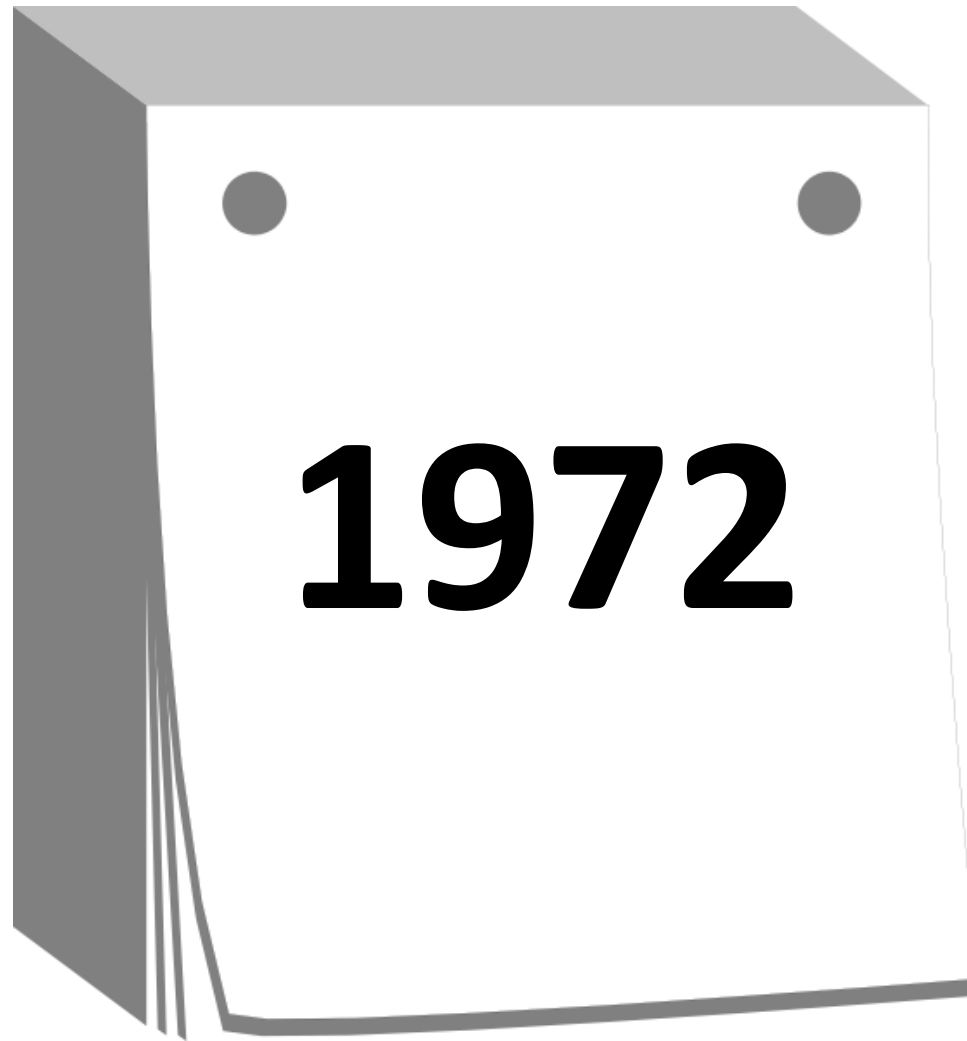
“Suppose all the syllabi and curricula and textbooks in the schools disappeared... Then suppose that you decided to turn this “catastrophe” into an opportunity ... What would you do?”



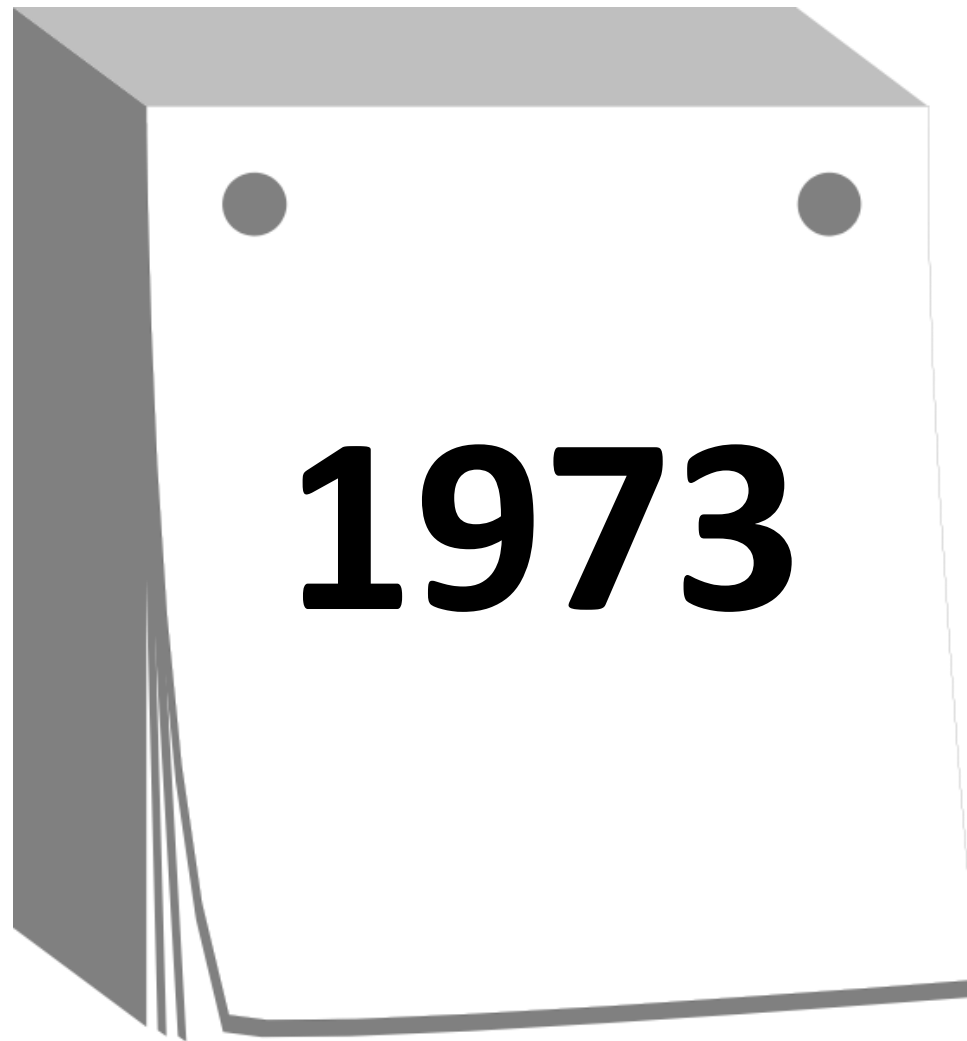
- Council of Europe Symposium at Rüschlikon, Switzerland.
- Chris Candlin presents a paper called 'Sociolinguistics and communicative language teaching' at IATEFL Conference.





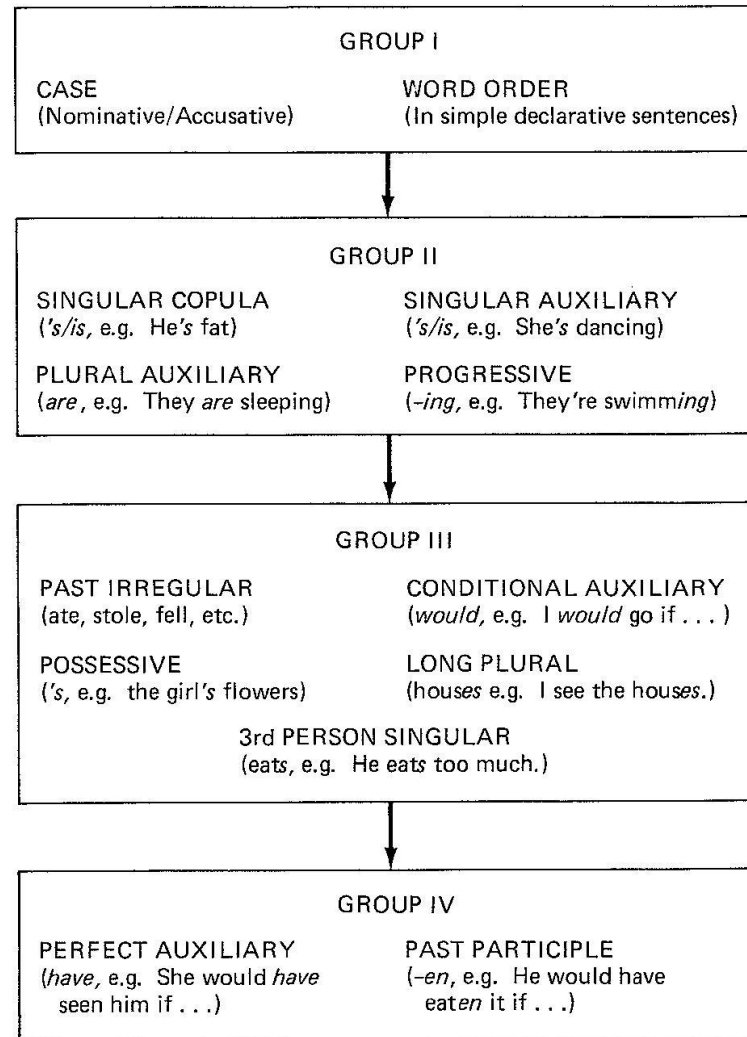


- Savignon: 'Communicative competence: an experiment in foreign language teaching';
- Widdowson 'The teaching of English as communication.' (*ELT Journal*)

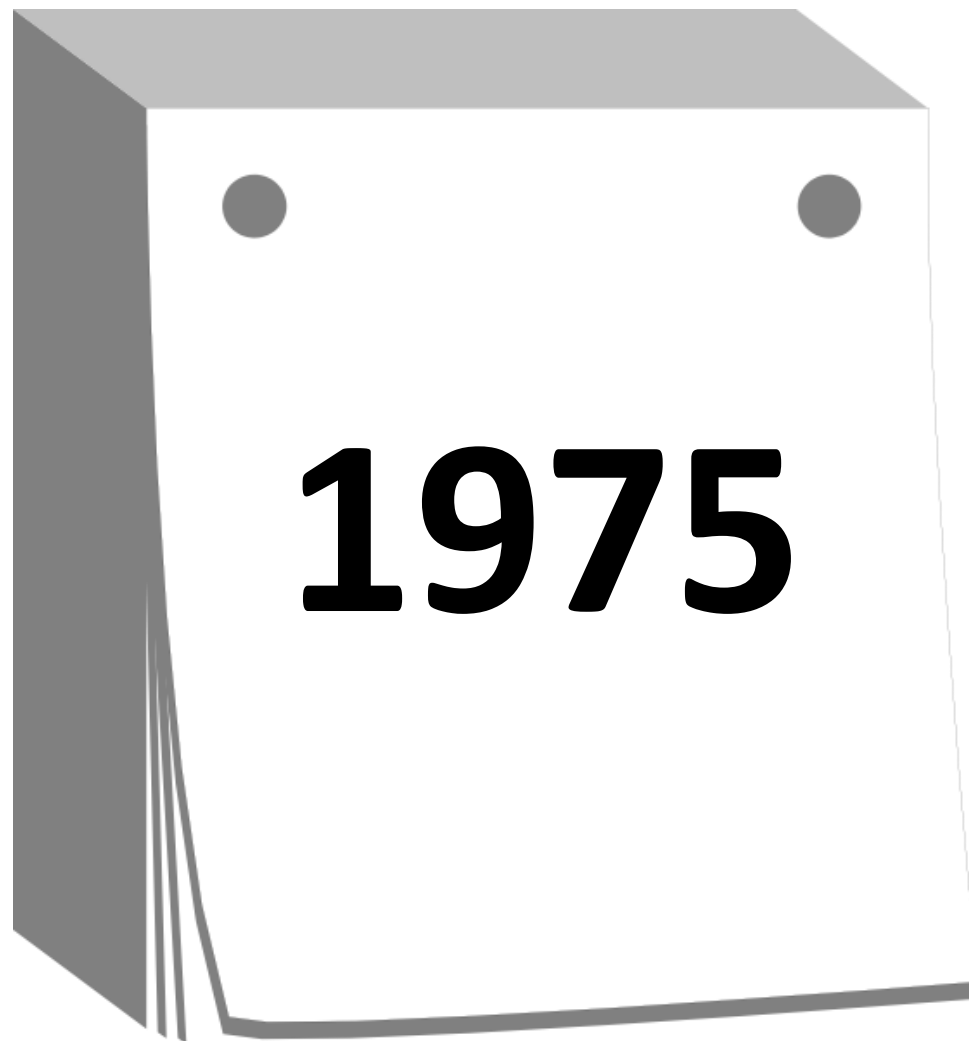


- Conference on 'The Communicative Teaching of English' at University of Lancaster.
- The first 'morpheme studies' (Dulay and Burt: 'Should we teach children syntax?').

FIGURE 2-A L₂ Acquisition Hierarchy for 13 English Grammatical Structures*



*Heidi C. Dulay and Marina K. Burt. 1975. A new approach to discovering universal strategies of child second language acquisition. In: *Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics 1975*. Edited by Daniel P. Dato. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press. Copyright © 1975 by Georgetown University, pp. 209-233.



- Jan van Ek's *Threshold Level* English syllabus is published;
- Abbs, Ayton & Freebairn publish *Strategies*.



Students' Book

Contents

UNIT 1:

Saturday

Set 1 Identification

Set 2 Invitations

Set 3 Likes and dislikes (1)

UNIT 2:

Peter

Set 1 Description: People

Set 2 Description: Places

UNIT 3:

Peter went away

Set 1 Impatience

Set 2 Not knowing

Set 3 The past (1)

Set 4 Surprise and disbelief

UNIT 4:

Looking for Peter

Set 1 Plans

Set 2 The past (2)

UNIT 5:

Tottenham Motors Limited

Set 1 Ability

Set 2 Polite requests

Set 3 Telephoning

Set 4 Instructions



Students' Book

“From the work of David Wilkins we took as our starting point this quotation:

What people want to do through language is more important than the mastery of language as an unapplied system.”

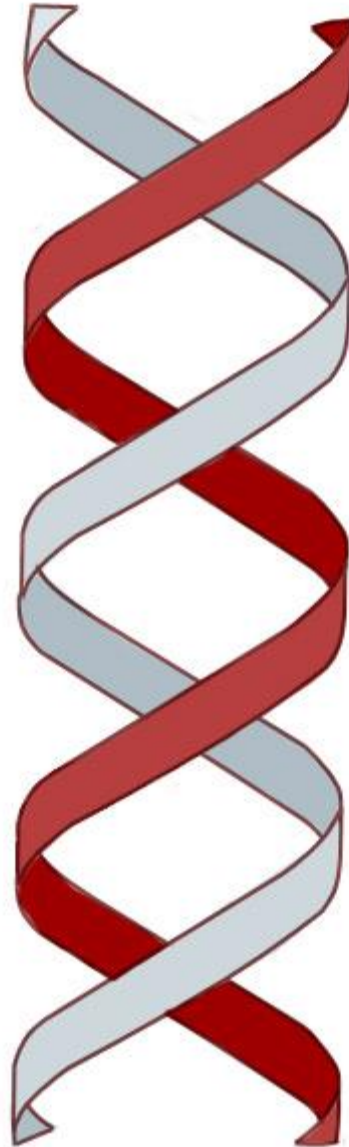
cognitive

'grammar
mcnuggets'

atomistic

accuracy first

NS-like
proficiency



social

communicative
routines

holistic

fluency first

communicative
competence

1968
'Our approach to language teaching... is structural.
The words we choose to present for use in the
structures are of only secondary importance.....'

(Barnett, Broughton, & Greenwood 1968. *Success with English: Teachers' Handbook 1*, p.14.)

2016
i) Grammar has a core place in language teaching
and learning

https://elt.oup.com/catalogue/items/global/adult_courses/new_headway/

1968
‘[*Success with English*] has been planned as an integrated audio-visual course in which the learner gains mastery of the basic skills of English by actually practising them’

2016
ii) A wide variety of practice tasks in all the four skills are essential to language learning.

Human conversation is full of questions and answers, of agreement or denial, but these are not readily practised by the written word. For this reason we have included in *Coursebook 1* many exercises... where these features of conversation are practised.

iii) Everyday expressions, particularly of spoken English, also need a place in the syllabus. These can be functional, social, situational or idiomatic.

“Practitioners in language teaching and learning... are still very much held to a structuralist approach to teaching languages, if only through the pressure to test students’ knowledge of linguistic or discourse structures.”

(Kramsch, C. 2015. *Applied Linguistics* 36/4: 462.)

So, why does the grammatical syllabus persist? Why are general English coursebooks almost all organized around a grammatical syllabus? Why do the curricula of language teaching institutions almost all follow a grammatical syllabus?

To what do you attribute the persistence of the grammar syllabus?

1	Students expect it.	497 / 49%
2	ELT publishers are unwilling to take risks with alternative ways of organizing cours...	483 / 48%
3	Most examinations test grammar, so a grammar syllabus is the best preparation.	437 / 43%
4	Teachers prefer it.	385 / 38%
5	The SLA researchers are wrong: grammar is the basis of fluency, like it or not.	105 / 10%
6	The alternatives (e.g. a task-based syllabus) are unworkable.	99 / 10%
7	other	69 / 7%

How many years have you been teaching?

999 out of 1042 people answered this question



Who do you teach?

1010 out of 1042 people answered this question



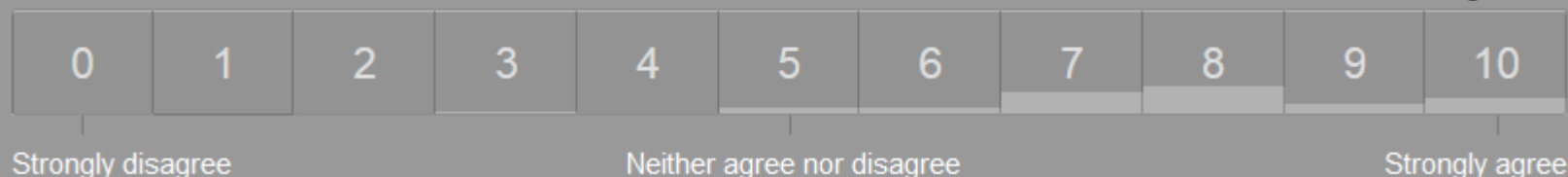
‘Since teachers *thought* that students *thought* that grammar was important, this is what they gave them.’

Canagarajah, A.S. 1999. *Resisting linguistic imperialism in English teaching*. Oxford University Press, p. 116.

Students expect to be taught grammar because that's what they've always done at school.

249 out of 250 people answered this question

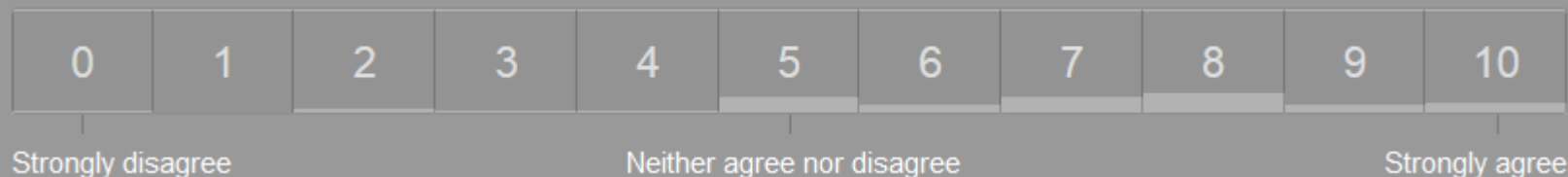
NPS: 5, Average: 7.42



Many teachers are ill prepared to teach anything other than a grammar syllabus.

247 out of 250 people answered this question

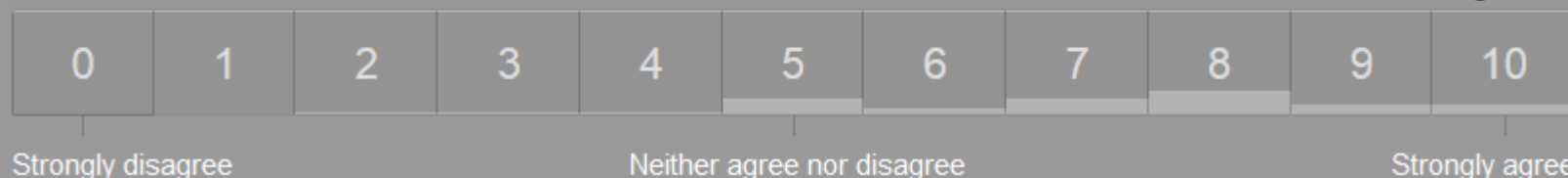
NPS: -21, Average: 6.55



Grammar-based books are easier to write and easier to sell.

245 out of 250 people answered this question

NPS: -12, Average: 6.89



‘The solution ... is to forge a new field, *educational linguistics*, and this would finally allow SLA to cure its classic schizophrenia’.

Van Lier, L. (1994) ‘Forks and hope: pursuing understanding in different ways’. *Applied Linguistics*, 15/3:341.

“Language teaching is increasingly prepackaged and delivered as if it were a standardised, marketable product...”

Lin, A. 2013. Toward paradigmatic change in TESOL methodologies: building plurilingual pedagogies from the ground up, *TESOL Quarterly*, 47/3.

“Terms such as ‘outcomes’, ‘value added’, ‘knowledge transfer’, ‘the knowledge economy’ and above all ‘accountability’ have become part of the day-to-day vocabulary of education.”

Gray, J. and Block, D. 2012, ‘The marketisation of language teacher education and neoliberalism: characteristics, consequences and future prospects’, in Block, D., Gray, J. & Holborrow, M. (eds.) *Neoliberalism and Applied Linguistics*, London: Routledge.

“Publishers need to be looking at producing *granular* content. ... no longer in the form of a big-package textbook, but broken down into small chunks...”.

<https://www.knewton.com/resources/blog/education-videos/knerds-board-evolution-content/>



“Learning linguistic items is not a linear process - learners do not master one item and then move on to another...”

Larsen-Freeman, D. 1997.
Chaos/Complexity science and second
language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics*
18.

3 endings?

1.The pragmatic route

2.The dogmatic route

3.The dialectic route

Ultimate Objectives

1. Ability to read the foreign language with moderate ease and with enjoyment for recreative and for vocational purposes.

Coleman A. 1930. The Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages in the United States. NY: Macmillan, p. 107.

3 endings?

1.The pragmatic route

2.The dogmatic route

3.The dialectic route

“The greatest sign of success for a teacher
.... is to be able to say, ‘The children are now
working as if I did not exist.’”

Maria Montessori (1949)

(As attributed in *Winning Strategies for Classroom Management* (2000), p.
2.)

3 endings?

1.The pragmatic route

2.The dogmatic route

3.The dialectic route

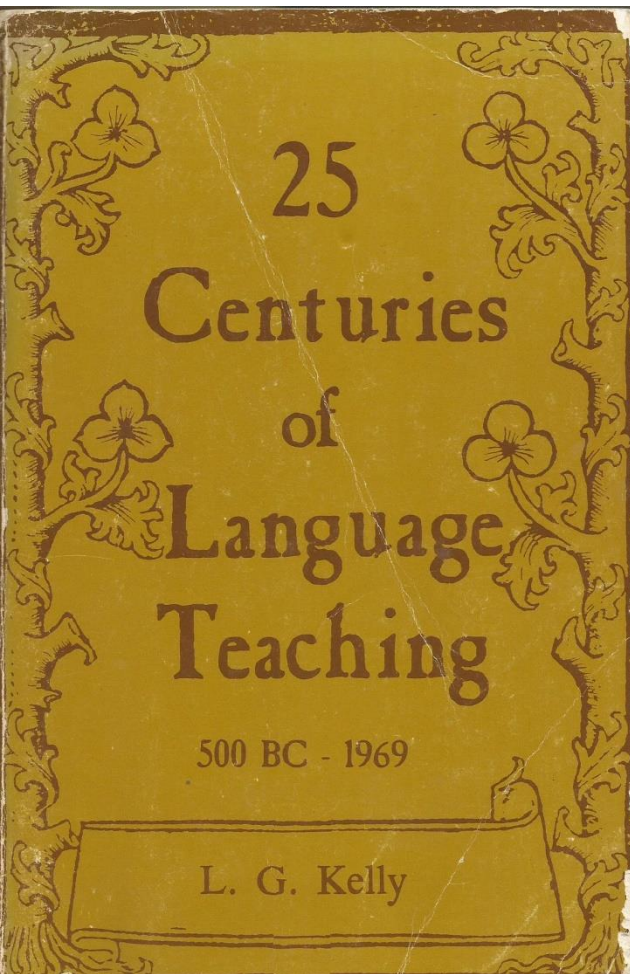


<http://languagelearninginthewild.com/>



<http://handsupproject.org/>





“The place of grammar in the learning process has never been really clear, for even when the tide has been running in a certain direction, some teachers have always tried the opposite.”

Kelly, L. G. (1969) *25 centuries of language teaching*. Rowley MA: Newbury House. p.222.