
[98] ***'The only modern Grammarian worth reading': Louis Chambaud's reliance on Abbé Girard***

Thomas Godard (University of Nottingham).

Recent research in the history of foreign language teaching in Britain has highlighted the significance of Louis Chambaud's work in the emergence of modern methods in the eighteenth-century. McLelland identifies him as a milestone in the development of the 'practical grammar' and targeted exercises (2017: 95-99), while Cohen claims that 'the conceptual basis for his method became the rationale for French instruction in the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth' (2003: 109). The popularity of Chambaud's work among teachers and learners of French is evidenced by the numerous reprints and new editions it enjoyed on both sides of the Atlantic for more than a century after its publication in the 1750s. Yet, despite such legacy, little is known about Chambaud himself, his background, his training, and his intellectual development.

This paper aims to fill this gap in the literature by exploring the influence of Abbé Girard, whom Chambaud described as 'the only modern Grammarian worth reading' (1750: 195), on the views developed in the 'Essay on the Proper Method for Teaching and Learning that Language' which forms the preface of Chambaud's *Grammar of the French Tongue* (1750). I first examine the connections between 'the conceptual basis' of Chambaud's method and Girard's views on grammar and grammar teaching. In particular, I show how Girard's views on usage theories helped Chambaud move away from 'learning by practice' to advocate 'learning grammatically'. I then concentrate on Girard's distinction between the genius and the idiom of the language to show how Chambaud appropriated it to advocate deductive methods of learning.

References Chambaud, Lewis. 1750. *A Grammar of the French Tongue. With a Prefatory Discourse, Containing an Essay on the Proper Method for Teaching and Learning that Language*. London: A. Millar. Cohen, Michèle. 2003. 'French Conversation or "Glittering Gibberish"? Learning French in Eighteenth-Century England', in Glaisyer, Natasha and Sara Pennell (eds.) *Didactic Literature in England 1500–1800. Expertise Constructed*, Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, pp. 99-117. Girard, Abbé Gabriel. 1747. *Vrais Principes de la langue françoise ou, La Parole réduite en méthode, conformément aux loix de l'usage : en seize discours*. Paris: Le Breton. McLelland, Nicola. 2017. *Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages: A History of Language Education, Assessment and Policy in Britain*. London: Routledge.