IN THE NAME OF GOD THE COMPASSIONATE THE MERCIFUL

THE UNIVERSITY
of LIVERPOOL

THE RELATION

BETWEEN

LANGUAGE AWARENESS

AND

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

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BY

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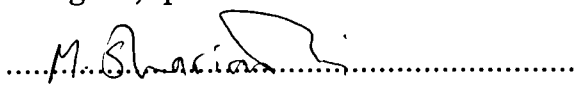
To

My Family

DECLARATION

This work is original and has not been submitted previously in support of a degree, qualification or other course.



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"He who does not appreciate the created does not appreciate the creator"
An Islamic point of view

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ABSTRACT

THE RELATION BETWEEN LANGUAGE AWARENESS AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Mohammad Shariati

Literature on the issue of language learning/acquisition reveals that the study of the issue has become an essential area of research over the last twenty five years or so. However, despite the large amount of theoretical hypotheses, the knowledge gained has not yet been put into much effect in the language classroom.

Within the main stream of concern, during 13 years of my teaching English to Iranian students at different educational levels I, like other colleagues, have found that Iranian students do not succeed in learning English as a foreign language well enough to use it effectively whenever and wherever it might be needed.

Having in mind that numerous factors (including poor awareness of language) may be involved in lack of language proficiency, I decided to investigate the relation between Language Awareness (LA) and Language Proficiency (LP). I have chosen this because one of the recent questions regarding ameliorating language learning has been whether language awareness on the part of the learners has any effect on their learning.

Therefore, to investigate the relations between Language Awareness and Language proficiency, three studies were carried out using Iranian subjects:

- a longitudinal exploratory study, to pilot the instruments for the other two main studies and to find about the types of awareness Iranians would develop in the UK. In this study, 4 research students and 5 children were involved.

- a cross-sectional study to examine the possibility of change of opinions about language learning by Iranian research students in the course of time they would stay in the UK. (i.e. LA development in terms of change in beliefs about language).

- a longitudinal study aiming to investigate further the relation between language awareness in general and language proficiency.

As a result of the exploratory pilot study, the instruments were finalised and three major types of language awareness were identified: sensitivity to the nature of language and language learning; sensitivity to learning and communicative strategies and sensitivity to one's shortcomings in language learning. Evidence of development of learning strategies in children, in association with their age, was found. It was concluded that

children lack metacognition as compared to Iranian adult research students.

The types of LA, developed by research students, identified in the first study, were examined in the second study through the five sections of the BALLI questionnair (Horwitz, 1987) viz. difficulty of language learning; language aptitude; nature of language learning; learning and communicative strategies; and motivations.

The results of the cross-sectional study did not show a clear cut one-to- one relation between time in the UK and beliefs about language learning. However, because of the likelihood of change in some beliefs found in the study they were called variety specific.

The longitudinal study ended in complex results allowing for different interpretations. There too, it is possible to attribute findings to variety specificity, suggesting that some varieties of language awareness could be associated with proficiency.

Nevertheless, no clear linkage was observed, generally, between language proficiency and language awareness.

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ABBREVIATIONS & SYMBOLS

BALLI	beliefs about language learning inventory
C	child; conversation
Ch	child; chapter
CP	communication problem
CPs	communication problems
DET	determiner
I	interviewer
immed	immediate
imp	importance
INF	inflection
initiat	initiating
INT	interview
L	longitudinal
LA	language awareness
Lang	language
LEX	lexical
LP	language proficiency
Max	maximum
Min	minimum
N	number
No.	number
P	probability
PRE	preposition
pref.	prferring
Q	question
Sensit.	sensitivity
SL	sensitivity to language
STR	structural
SV	subject-verb
X	cross; cross-sectional
[----]	deleted statements
[ ]	inaudible utterance

CHAPTER

I

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Contents:

1.1. Introduction

Literature on the issue of language learning/acquisition in general, reveals that the study has become an essential area of research over the last three decades. Many books and articles have been published and new textbooks have appeared continuously. In addition to the specific concern about second language acquisition in the natural environment, ample work has also been done on the formal classroom learning of an L2. (e.g. Pimsleur, 1971; Krashen, 1981; Lightbown, 1985; Fotos, 1993; Spolsky, 1989; Skehan, 1989; Ellis, 1989; 1990; Long, 1985; Cook, 1986, 1991). Moreover, it should be mentioned that research on second language acquisition has been concerned with both natural acquisition and learning supported by formal instruction. Ellis (1992) has set forth the possibility of identifying three broad trends in SLA research over the last 20 or so years: a general move from description to explanation of L2 acquisition; the widening of the frame of reference from the study of how learners acquire grammatical competence to how they acquire their knowledge of the pragmatic rules of an L2; and the establishment of SLA as a relatively autonomous subdiscipline of applied linguistics and a concurrent lessening of interest in its application to language teaching. Ellis (1992) has considered the issue of investigating the effect of formal instruction on L2 acquisition, as important for both general theories of L2 acquisition and for language pedagogy. With regard to language pedagogy, he stated the studies of formal instruction inform that the ongoing debate regarding the extent to

which teaching should try to intervene directly in the learning process or allow learners to develop naturally through participating in communicative activities.

On the whole, despite the large amount of theoretical hypotheses, the knowledge gained has not yet been able to affect language teaching profession sufficiently.

After 13 years of teaching English to Iranian students at different educational levels (i.e. high school, university and in-service courses) I, like other colleagues, have found that Iranian students do not succeed in learning English as a foreign language well enough to use it effectively when and where it might be needed. Iranian writers have reflected upon the problem for years whether in general or regarding English majors.

Safarzadeh (1983) has stated that Iranian high school graduates are basically poor in English, and that to study English literature at the universities they face an enormous problem. Mirhassani (1989) has also argued that teaching English has been dealt with for a long time in Iran and needs further studies. He has stated that Iranians have a lot of problems in learning English. Elyassi (1993) also, has pointed out that in Iran, in spite of spending hundreds of hours in the classroom for learning English, the students never reach desirable skills in speaking, writing, listening and comprehension.

One of the recent questions regarding ameliorating language learning is whether language awareness on part of the learners has any effect on their

learning.

Having in mind that numerous factors (including poor awareness of language) may be involved in lack of language proficiency, I decided to investigate the correlation between the two variables, i.e. Language Awareness (LA) and Language Proficiency (LP). I received inspiration specifically from the papers edited by James and Garrett (1992) in "Language Awareness in the Classroom" wherein a number of writers have mentioned the need for looking into the relation, if any, between LA and LP, i.e. the performance domain of LA. I was even more tempted by the following challenging statements from the general editor's preface:

> Translating concepts into action is probably the hardest task of all, and it is one which this volume has at its heart. How can one relate being aware about language to improvements in language performance? Is this indeed a viable question? How can one relate awareness about language to a greater understanding of the determining role of language in social life? Does being more aware about language translate into ameliorating many of the interpersonal conflicts that have language issues at their root? How can one relate the teaching about language awareness (if, again, *teaching* is what one does) to learning? What is the role of learning strategy to awareness gain? (Candlin, 1992: xii)

There is no doubt about the difficulty of translating concepts into action. Nevertheless, the questions concerning the relation between language awareness and language proficiency or learning strategies are considered in some of the papers (e.g. Wright, Donmall, 1992), and the need for

further research into this issue has been recalled again and again. So, in the present research it was considered that if it can be shown that language awareness is related to language proficiency, the results would have implications for language learning methodology.

The results could also be a starting point for later research into how much LA Iranians might have when they take courses in English or any other second or foreign language.

This chapter as an introduction to the study is, then, to clarify some points such as the reason and incentives behind the study. It also deals with a brief history of language awareness in the UK, i.e. the chronological developments regarding the issue so far. The latter part is because of the relative novelty of the issue which necessitates a brief introduction.

Therefore, the next thing addressed at this point is language awareness.

1.2. What is Language Awareness (LA) ?

1.2.1. Definition

Language Awareness is defined as:

> ...a persons' sensitivity to and conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in human life. (Donmall, 1985: 7)

LA as a developed perspective, as stated by Donmall (1985), involves both making explicit and conscious the knowledge and skills learners have

themselves built up in the course of their experience of language, and developing power of observation and purposeful analysis of language in their immediate environment and more widely in their world.

However, although the term is widely assigned by many theorists to a wide range of educational contexts, even its basic categories have not yet been fully explored and established. Therefore, the term is still fairly new in the area of second language learning and specifically regarding the type of subjects used in this study.

At this point it is shown how and when the term was developed in the following chart which was made according to information from Hawkins, (1987 & 1992). The details are given after the chart. The major developments are given in the first column and the simultaneous minor works are presented in the right hand column.

1.2.2. The schematic History of LA according to information from Hawkins (1987; 1992).

Major developments	**Minor developments**
Newbold Committee 1921(Reference not provided in Hawkins)	
Central Advisory Council for Education G. Crowther, 1959	
School Councils team, 1961 Doughty, Pearce, and Thornton; chaired by M. A. K. Halliday	
	B. N. Ball, 1967 "Linguistics for Secondary School"
Doughty *et. al.* 1971 "Language in Use"	
Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (*CILT*; a conference) 1973	
Perren, 1974 (The Space Between)	NFER Report *Brustall, et. al.* 1974 (Primary French in the Balance)
Bullock Committee Report, 1975 (A Language for Life)	ALPINE, 1975; A Language Project In Norfolk Education R. Whiley
NCLE, National Congress on Language in Education, 1976	
Assemblies: 1978; 1980; 1982; 1985 Donmall, 1985 (4th Assembly of NCLE)	
	Her Majesty's Inspectorate Reports: 1984; 1986
Kingman Report, 1988 Cox Report, 1989 M. Harris Rep., 1990	
International Conferences of the Association of Language Awareness: 1992: Bangor, UK.; 1994: Plymouth, UK; 1996: Dublin, Ireland	

1.2.3. Details of the chart

1.2.3.1. The first mention

The first time Awareness of Language in its current sense was used was in 1971 by Halliday.

> ...The national reports ...show a remarkable change in the climate of opinion in the twenty years since the first advocacy (in the UK) of 'awareness of language', that I have been able to trace, by professor Michael Halliday in 1971. (Hawkins, 1992)

Hawkins (1987) has reported that in 1921 the Newbold committee, and later on the Crowther committee, in 1959 called for "rethinking the basis of linguistics in schools". However no direct mention of awareness of language was reported up to that point. Later, in 1961, the Schools Council organized the team of Doughty, Pearce and Thornton chaired by professor M. A. K Halliday who published "Language in Use" in 1971. Therein, as stated above , the term 'awareness of language' was used for the first time in its current sense. This is mentioned in the following quotation:

> Halliday, in his introduction to *Language in Use*, came close to arguing for the kind of 'awareness of language' approach that we are advocating:
>
> Each one of us has this ability [to use language] and lives by it; but we do not always become aware of it or realize fully the breadth and depth of its possibilities... There is no place for language in the division of knowledge into arts and sciences- this is no doubt a principal reason for its neglect in our educational system, which depends on boundaries of this kind... There should, however, be some place for language in the working life of the secondary school pupil; and, it might be added, of the student in a College of Education. (Hawkins,

1987: 4).

An attempt by B. N. Ball, 1967 has also been reported in Hawkins. Ball's three volume text book *Basic Linguistics for Secondary Schools* described an imaginative programme, to cover the middle three years of the secondary course and one designed for average and less-than-average attainers.

Another project mentioned in this regard is ALPINE which stands for 'A Language Project in Norfolk Education' (Hawkins, 1987).

As reported in Hawkins, a working party of teacher trainers and teachers based in Norwich produced a set of teaching materials beginning in 1975. The materials have not been published nationally but were distributed within the LEA schools. This is said (ibid) to have been a reaction to the report by Burstall *et. al.* which was published in 1974 and aimed at rethinking the place of language education for the 10 -12 age group. Simultaneously, the Bullock Committee published their report 'A language for life' in 1975 which was commented on in the following.

> Among the good things in the Bullock report, later to prove highly relevant for the development of 'language awareness' as an element in the curriculum, were the two model syllabuses of 'language education' which Bullock proposed should be included in the training of *all* teachers. In other respects, however, Bullock proved a bitter disappointment, especially for those looking for a new approach to 'language' as a 'bridging subject' in the curriculum, and an approach which would recognize the important contribution of foreign language study to a fuller awareness of language. (Hawkins, 1992: 8)

Hawkins considered the debate by Halliday (1971) on the role of awareness in the curriculum as one that "*opened more vistas than the narrow Bullock concept*" (1992: 9) in which, in his words, there was no place for any contribution from foreign language teaching. So, being engaged in the wider debate some continued with their search for a common ground between English and foreign language teachers.

> It was such cooperation that had formed the theme of a conference organized by CILT in Manchester in November 1973 (two years before [the] Bullock report). Papers from the conference were published under the title: *The Space Between* (Perren, 1974). One of the papers argued for: '...A new subject called "the Study of Language" in the secondary school... pupils would examine the function of language... learn about language acquisition, as future parents... analyze linguistic prejudices... study by means of field work the effectiveness of language in a variety of contexts... " The programme would also include contrastive studies of L1 and L2.' (Hawkins: 1992: 9).

1.2.3.2. NCLE Assemblies

The National Council on Language Education (NCLE) was set up in 1976 (Hawkins, 1987) with the aim of filling a gap i.e. to establish a national forum for teachers researchers, examiners, publishers and anybody else interested in all aspects of language in education. By 1985, four assemblies and 2 conferences were completed.

In the process of development and based on the achievements prior to 1980 it was decided that the experimental designs should be initiated as stated in the following:

> The standing committee of NCLE set up in 1980 a small working group chaired by John Trim director of CILT, who was succeeded in the following year by professor John Sinclair of Birmingham University, to co-ordinate and monitor the pilot schemes in 'awareness of language' which by now were proliferating in schools. (Hawkins, 1987: 53)

By 1985, four assemblies and 2 conferences had been held. It was at the 4th assembly where the NCLE Working Party on Language Awareness agreed on the above mentioned definition of LA (cf. 1.2.1.)

LA programmes were thus, aimed at developing sensitivity and awareness within the following broad parameters: a cognitive parameter (e.g. developing awareness of pattern in language), an affective parameter (e.g. forming attitudes) and a social parameter (e.g. improving pupils' effectiveness as citizens or consumers) (ibid.).

1.2.3.3. International Conferences of the Association of Language Awareness.

Starting from 1992 an international conference has been held every two years. The first one was held in Bangor, Wales one year prior to the beginning of the present research.

The second one was held from 11-14 April 1994 at the College of St. Mark & St. John, Plymouth, where the researcher presented a paper on a pilot study of the development of language awareness in children.

The third was held in Dublin in July, 1996.

At the second conference, Frank Frankel (British Council, Cologne) was asked to sit in on as many papers as possible, ' to pick up themes and trends', and report them in a round up session which he did and which was published in Language Awareness journal, 1994 (the specific issue on selective papers from the conference) in the following statements:

- a concern with process not product;
- the role and value of translation as an aid to language learning, but with new dimensions, incorporating discourse, rhetoric etc.;
- increasing focus on the role of the *teacher* whether NEST or non-NEST;
- investigation of the focus of relationships between learning and thinking;
-methodology: ways of developing LAw[1] (language Awareness) in learners, e.g. through recourse to *metaphors*;
- focus on teacher-education as the baseline from which to disseminate LAw. (Frankel, 1994: 238)

Here again a reminder of the main question in this study, taken from Frankel's report, is given to close this point:

> A key question is whether or not heightened LAw necessarily leads to improved language proficiency. What are the links between awareness and proficiency? We need research studies. (Frankel, 1994: 237)

At the third conference, a total of 42 papers were presented most of which were on language awareness and language learning and some examples are:

- Language awareness and the model of the autonomous language learner (David Little)
- Designing and implementing a task-based approach to instruction: The - role of planning risk-taking, accuracy and fluency (Peter Skehan)

[1]LAw was used in this issue instead of LA which is most commonly used.

- Linguistic awareness and writing (Diana Masny)

It is worth mentioning that even at this stage and despite the great percentage of contributions devoted to the issue the main question on the relation between LA and LP has remained relevant. The following statements from Masny's paper presented in the third conference confirm the point.

> Despite the controversial nature regarding the construct, linguistic awareness, there is increasing evidence of the importance of linguistic awareness in second language learning. For example, many aspects of linguistic awareness have been known to play a significant role in reading in L2. More research is needed to broaden our knowledge about contribution of linguistic awareness to several areas in second language learning (1996: 13).

1.2.4. Summary

Despite the history and status of Language Awareness (LA), looking into the correlation, if any, between some of its aspects and Language Proficiency (LP), i.e. the performance domain of LA, as a major issue in this field, has been the main point of concern in this research as a necessary step towards improvement of teaching and learning language. This is also addressed by McCarthy (1994) who stated that one of the crucial questions in LA philosophy is whether or not a causal link exists between language awareness and language proficiency .

Apparently, Language Awareness has so far been mostly considered in its own right and research into the correlation between LA and LP has been

avoided as controversial :

> This connection between the development of children's explicit understanding of language as a system, and that of their practical language skills, is controversial and disputed in much contemporary writing by English mother tongue specialists ..., as well as among some second language acquisition researchers (e.g. Krashen, 1981). On the other hand, the Language Awareness movement in British schools has in the 1980's been promoting the development of children's explicit language knowledge on other, broader grounds, and asserts its value regardless of any direct impact on language skills (Mitchell and Hooper, 1992: 40)

1.3. The Structure of this Thesis

In chapter ii the issue of language awareness is addressed and analyzed in detail. Current theories and concerns about the issue of language awareness are discussed. Different types of references to the term are collected together and discussed in detail ending in the deffinition to be used in this study.

Chapter iii. provides a background to the studies and supplies some information about the subjects' educational background, and their native language (i.e. Persian) as compared to English regarding its place in the family of languages, and other differences.

Chapter iv. gives an overview of the studies and the exploratory pilot study. That is a longitudinal exploratory study, to pilot the instruments for the other two main studies and to find about the types of awareness Iranians would develop in the UK. In this study, 4 research students and

5 children were involved. As a result of the exploratory pilot study, the instruments were finalised and three major types of language awareness were identified: sensitivity to the nature of language and language learning; sensitivity to learning and communicative strategies and sensitivity to one's shortcomings in language learning. These were used as the basis for the investigations in the remainder of the study.

In Chapter v. the cross-sectional study is presented, the results of which are given in Chapter vi. The cross-sectional study was to examine the possibility of change of opinions about language learning by Iranian research students in the course of time they would stay in the UK. (i.e. LA development in terms of change in beliefs about language).

The types of LA identified in the first study, were examined in the second study through the five sections of the BALLI questionnaire (Horwitz, 1987) viz. difficulty of language learning; language aptitude; nature of language learning; learning and communicative strategies; and motivations.

Chapter vii. is a bridge between the cross-sectional study and the longitudinal study. Some data from the longitudinal study is used to support the assumptions developed in the cross-sectional study. In addition to showing part of the link between the two studies, it also provides some support for the assumptions developed in the pilot study.

Chapter viii. is on the longitudinal study, with results in chapter ix. The longitudinal study aimed to find about the relation between language awareness in general and language proficiency.

The longitudinal study ended in complex results allowing for different interpretations. Chapter x. provides discussions and conclusions of these results, chapter xi. presents general discussions and conclusions of the research, as well as suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER II

TOWARDS A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING OF LANGUAGE AWARENESS

Contents:

2.1. Language awareness

Language Awareness is a broad spectrum term. It is evaluated in terms of five interdependent domains (Garrett and James, 1992), namely: affective, social, power, cognitive and performance.

A survey of the literature on Language Awareness shows that a great majority of the writers have referred to it either in general statements or to some aspects of its vast scope (or rather one of several domains) ignoring the rest.

Different approaches could sometimes result in confusion for those who follow separate issues on the subject in isolation. It might even lead to misunderstanding of the beginners who can see only one side of the page or a small branch of the tree.

On the other hand, general reference to the term while in fact dealing with a few of the aspects of Language Awareness usually brings about the opportunity of free interpretation and the possibility of seeing a part as the whole.

Therefore, the reason for the apparent ambiguity and unclarity around the pivotal (or comprehensive) term awareness of language, in the literature, is because of the fact that being attracted to LA, while working each on a different domain, has made different writers look at it and describe it from different standpoints. As a result, some writers have added new references to it, and taking portions as the whole, they have employed general terms which necessitate explanation.

This vagueness has sometimes led to suggestions for redefinitions so that even the definition agreed upon by the NCLE working party was put under scrutiny (e.g. Stainton 1992) for the problem of generality of terminology. Therefore, the following is an attempt to look closely at some examples regarding the way different writers have approached the issue, leading to an overall definition of the term.

I have tried to clarify the broad-spectrum term by analysing different direct or indirect references to the term. For this, a collection of some of the references are given first and then some are discussed concluding that on the whole: awareness is seen as a dichotomous construct in Freudian sense rather than a multi layer one as in Kelly's view (1955); and in doing so, only explicit knowledge of language is considered as language awareness so that *consciousness raising* (the process) and *language awareness* (the product) are often used interchangeably; theories have dealt with different domains separately but occasionally referred to it in generic terms.

The definitions and references selected for the purpose are given below:

2.1.1. Table ii. 1. Some definitions of and references to Language Awareness

1)	Language Awareness is a person's sensitivity to and conscious awareness (perception) of the nature of language and its role in human life (Donmall, 1985: 7).
2)	it...involves both making explicit and conscious the knowledge and skills pupils have themselves built up in the course of their experience of language, and developing powers of observation of analysis of language... (Donmall, 1992: 108).
3)	... explicit insights into language for learning as well as language as the goal... (Donmall,1992: 118).
4)	The role of C-R (consciousness raising) is ... one in which data that are crucial for the learner's testing of hypotheses, and for his forming generalizations are made available to him in a somewhat controlled fashion (Rutherford, 1987: 18)
5)	... ensuring the students understand, with their hearts as well as their heads, why they are learning and practising the skills being taught, how they individually do so, and to what extent proposed strategies are effective, and what the reading process involves (Scott 1986: 2).
6)	It is an activity to make activities personal... encouraging the learner to contribute new things of personal relevance. (Frank & Rinvolucri, 1983: 78)
7)	An interpretation of Mason, 1986 : "... access to abstract and analytical language." The interpretation is in the following quotation : If lower-class children are disadvantaged through their restricted access to abstract and analytical language at home, it will be in LA work where compensatory 'headstart' education can be appropriately delivered (James & Garrett 1992a: 16)
8)	An important characteristic of LA is ... turning personal experience into metacognitive awareness (Clark & Ivanič, 1992: 179)
9)	Language Awareness as we conceive it, is in a pivotal position in the user/analyst/teacher framework, mediating between user competence and teacher competence (Wright, 1992: 63).

10)	Learners' perception about the process of language learning and their awareness of themselves in that process (James & Garrett 1992b: 98).
11)	The growth of language skills should go hand-in-hand with an awareness of the workings of language within us and in our environment (Tinkel, 1988: vii).
12)	The aims of LA... deepening understanding, fostering tolerance and increasing receptivity to new linguistic experience. (Anderson, 1992: 133).

At this point, the definition which was agreed upon during the 4th National Assembly by NCLE working party is considered in terms of analysis of the terminology. Here is the definition:

> Language Awareness is a person's sensitivity to and conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in human life (Donmall, 1985: 7).

Considering the somewhat abstract nature of the definition Caroline Stainton has quoted Candlin (1992) as stating:

> ...Although this is 'a preferred definition' it "clearly needs unpacking".(1992: 110)

And also James & Garrett, (1992a: 5) calling it *pleonastic* have reacted to it in the following quotation:

> Clearly then the range of the papers in this collection reflects the above-mentioned breadth of definition, and this is undoubtedly attributable in part to the imprecision inherent in the expression 'Language Awareness' itself. To begin with 'awareness' this is bound up with 'knowledge' of various

> types, and calls to mind immediately the competence/ performance dichotomy in, e.g. Chomsky (1968), recycled for 'applied' consumers in terms of learning and acquisition (e.g. Krashen, 1981).

2.1.2. Our analysis

Herein, the definition is analyzed closely, and extensively, i.e. the terminology is analyzed regarding the meaning and definition of each term. They are then discussed and expanded.

2.1.2.1. Sensitivity

Sensitivity is the learner's curiosity towards (or 'ability to detect' for Garrett: personal communication) how's and why's regarding language. In the case of children's acquisition of their mother tongue, it is perhaps a final counterpart of each bit of language being acquired. That is, a child who receives a bit of language uses it in a mimicking stage; then the child becomes sensitive (capable of registering small differences or changes in amounts, quality, etc.: Collins English dictionary, 1992); and realizing (implicitly) that it is rule governed (and perhaps that it has cultural bounds), tries to use the language independently. One may argue that, even in the sense that Krashen has put it in the following quotation, children's recognition of the correct and incorrect could be considered as their ability to detect or capability of registering some differences.

> The results of language acquisition, acquired linguistic competence, are also subconscious, we are not generally

> "aware" of the rules of language we have acquired. Instead, we have a "feel" for correctness: when we hear an error we may not know exactly what rule was involved, but somehow "know" that an error was committed. (Krashen & Terrell, 1983: 26; emphasis original)

An indicator of the child's sensitivity is in its stages of language acquisition: at a certain stage it will overgeneralize (e.g, the use of: *He go home.* instead of *He goes home.* or in the use of 'ed' *goed, buyed* etc.), which does not occur in the child's mimicking stage. This could also be seen as an example of learner's transitional competence (Corder, 1967; reported in: Sharwood Smith, 1994).

For second or foreign language learners, who already know that language is rule governed and who are aware of lexico-grammatical level of language organisation even in childhood (Nicholas, 1992), a relative degree of sensitivity might exist from the very beginning; and that could be a good reason why they are so anxious to know about the rules and sometimes about the facts (e.g. our informants mention how their hunger for learning the English language has been deadened by unprofessional teachers; also my own experience of being seriously questioned by an adult B.A. student regarding the reason why the language was needed; or even my child who during my pilot study of the development of awareness of language, after a month of immersion, asked me the same question of why he would need the language. Also sensitivity emerges in the form of *fall back* on L1 (the term was suggested by Newmark, reported in Krashen & Terrell, 1983: 41) as a substitute for L1 interference as a point of departure (beginning to

detect one's shortcomings; and to compensate for them), which may lead to knowing the similarities and differences of the two languages in the course of their language experience; and in conscious sensitivity to language rules and functions in general, e.g. the following example from the present research:

> *I try to follow their style, the style a teacher or a technician speaks an English [ ] [2]this style is a bit different from what we have already learned e.g. the simple words that we take for granted and skip they use the verbs that very easily convey the message without [ ] I try to follow this and this has caused -laughter- as we say like a crow who wants to walk like a [ ]; I used to use every verb for its first meaning e.g. get or take to which they add a series of prepositions and very nicely they convey the message they are comfortable I am trying to follow their style and I have become like a beginner*

Further examples of sensitivity come from systemic errors (Sharwood Smith, 1994) similar to children (*I quietly will go*; *I carefully will walk*) which are said to be reflecting the learner's attempt to make sense of the input, i.e. the onset of sensitivity or being critical. Furthermore, comparing children to adults' acquisition of a second language Sharwood Smith suggests that:

> what a child can grasp best intuitively may be attainable by the adult but in a very conscious way. And the use of that knowledge at a given time might be achieved efficiently either subconsciously by the younger learner or very deliberately and consciously by the adult. A case in point would be the written language where the adult might easily do better than

[2][ ] was used for inaudible and unintelligible parts

the young child.(ibid: 35)

Or one can cite the "regretful comments" from Modern Languages (MLs) teachers reported by Mitchell and Hooper who conducted a research project in Hampshire schools in Autumn 1988 to discover their views on the place of explicit knowledge about language in the school language curriculum.

> There were regretful comments from MLs teachers on the relative lack of challenge and stimulation to be found in 11/12-16 schools: 'Teaching 12-16 stultifies one's urge to know- it has stifled my natural curiosity', said one; 'You don't get too far, you don't get too high,' said another. The fact that questions probing the extent of teachers' own knowledge about language aroused a degree of suspicion and distrust perhaps itself suggests more regret than was overtly expressed, and some perceived need of further knowledge. (Mitchell and Hooper, 1992: 47)

Therefore, one who is sensitive to language is to some extent aware of it, or rather at an initial state of being an analyst. This awareness is at a stage when the learner thinks or is made to think (sensitized) about how language works in use and in relation to culture, also its further role in one's life. It is a starting point which may/may not lead to analysing the strategies and of language, and finally, to "feeling of the facts" (Scott, 1986) of language consciously, namely, understanding the "nature of language". Naturally, sensitivity drives one to react, but then whether it leads to reasonable awareness of language or not depends on the circumstances. It could be impaired for one reason or another (e.g. the example of inefficient teaching).

2.1.2.2. Awareness

The term 'awareness' also needs unpacking, because it is seen as dichotomous in that it calls to mind Chomsky's competence/ performance dichotomy (James & Garrett, 1992a).

Also, *conscious awareness* brings about the disagreement over the distinction of *conscious* and *unconscious* whereas Kelly (1955) has proposed a type of multi-layered cognitive awareness and instead of using a conscious versus unconscious dichotomy he prefers to talk of differing levels of cognitive awareness as in the following statements:

> Let us introduce a scalar type of interpretive or diagnostic construct ... . It should serve the purpose of identifying the direction of certain movements observed during the course of a psychotherapeutic interview or series of interviews. Let us call it the construct of level of cognitive awareness. The diagnostic constructs of preverbal constructs, submergence, and suspension all represent relatively low levels of cognitive awareness. (1955: 476)

An example of Kelly's proponents is Fransella (1981) who has stated that in studying the psychology of man-the-philosopher, we must take into account Kelly's subverbal patterns of representation and constructions.

Language awareness is defined as one's *conscious perception*, and perception is defined as: *consciousness or quick, acute and intuitive cognition,* (Webster's Collegiate dictionary, 1977); and intuitive, in turn, means *acquired.* Thus one can see the inexactness of the term consciousness: LA can be defined, accordingly, as *conscious acquired*

cognitive knowledge of language, a mental image (i.e. a personal construct) which can be either explicit or implicit. In other words, it could be a conscious, subconscious/subverbal, or probably even submerged construct of one's personality.

Therefore, one could argue that awareness of language is more inclusive than necessarily explicit knowledge about language; and consequently, these and other similar facts about the terminology have sometimes made some writers caution the readers and advise new suggestions. For example, VanPatten (1994) has mentioned the problematicity of the term "consciousness" and argued that we had better abandon it:

> No concept raises more hackles in second language acquisition (SLA) circles than "consciousness." Indeed, McLaughlin (1990) has suggested that we abandon the concept altogether and work with other more definable (and hence, operationalizable) constructs. (1994: 27)

On the other hand, some writers have taken a different position: for instance Van Lier (1994), who maintains that our inability to distinguish the various meanings of consciousness, awareness, intention, and so on, with sharp clarity, should not prevent us from involving a meaningful process.

Calling consciousness a complex phenomenon, Van Lier points out that:

> A natural-scientific or causal perspective may never get us closer to what consciousness really means in human terms. Instead, a phenomenological perspective may be necessary which regardless of what neutral or experimental evidence tells us, assigns a central place in our existence to

> consciousness. (1994: 72)

And he suggests that language learning must be studied from a perspective that conscious involvement is essential for language learning. However, he states that:

> This consciousness cannot be limited to explicit grammatical study, knowledge of rules, or attention to form (nor need it exclude such foci, of course). (1994: 72)

Nevertheless, because of the vast realm of the issue, the use of a general terminology seems inevitable. However, if *conscious awareness* were replaced by *perception*, or even a simple word like *understanding* then, the definition by NCLE working party might become less controversial. On the other hand, as the term language awareness and its five distinctive domains (i.e. affective, social, power, cognitive, and performance) have extensively been treated (in James & Garrett, 1992), it is therefore wise that no one should use language awareness monolithically to refer to one or a few of the aspects of the issue without clarifying the position of that aspect/s in relation to the general inclusive issue.

It is also worth mentioning that the very awareness of the potential problematicity of linguistic terms (regarding their multi-dimensionality and inherent multi purpose-ness) as knowledge of rhetoric or knowledge of the functions of words in different contexts is useful in its own right and so could be an example of awareness of one dimension of the nature of language.

Subsequently, the next references in table 1 are considered against the NCLE definition discussed above.

Donmall's reference to LA in the following statements is the next one considered:

> it...involves both making explicit and conscious the knowledge and skills pupils have themselves built up in the course of their experience of language, and developing powers of observation of analysis of language... (Donmall, 1992: 108).
>
> ... explicit insights into language for learning as well as language as the goal... (ibid, 1992: 118).

It is not clear whether 'explicit and conscious insights' is inclusive of both digested and superficial knowledge about language or it includes only those things which are stated explicitly, exclusive of implications of knowledge about language. The same argument is possible with regard to intentionality (Schmidt, 1994; Harley, 1994) which does not seem to be included. One can be aware of language implicitly without even expressing it in words. This is supported in the following statement:

> ... learners can be 'aware' of aspects of language without being able to explicitly articulate that awareness. (Nicholas, 1992: 78)

Then, one may consider implicit awareness the same as or basic to subconscious habits of communication, while the latter are considered as basic for communication as in:

> To be successful in communication, we must acquire the **subconscious habits** of communication of a given speech community. These include the way language is used in various situations, what is and can be assumed to be shared knowledge, what is regarded as polite, appropriate under different sets of circumstances, etc. (Paul, P. 1993: 17; emphasis added)

They can be considered as manifestations of *awareness of aspects of language without being able to explicitly articulate that awareness.* Apparently there should be no problem regarding what Nicholas has maintained.

One might argue that these are learned consciously first (declarative knowledge), and turned into subconscious skills (procedural knowledge) in a gradual process of habit formation. Then again, the debate is said (VanPatten, 1994) to have tended to revolve around the question "can explicit (read "conscious") knowledge become implicit (read "subconscious") knowledge?" or in other words "Can declarative knowledge become procedural knowledge?" This is the very essence of the question in the present research.

For the 2 year old child who used to react consciously to the abrupt switches (by her parents) between Persian and English (Cf. the pilot study: second type of sensitivity, examples: #7 & #8) some intentionality was apparent. She used to use the word *don't* as the parents switched into English. She obviously showed awareness of the existence of a new language (since she would never do this responding to Persian) while she

was not able to talk about it. It is difficult to put the line between subconscious and conscious here. Whether this a behaviourist 'trial and error' or it is procedural knowledge derived from declarative knowledge is debatable. The only apparent point is that there is some intentionality involved and awareness of the difference of circumstances and even of languages.

So, here again there is a problem of terminology as stated in the following quotation:

> The "problem of consciousness" (or better yet the "debate" on consciousness) in SLA is in part a problem of terminology--and a large part of the problem in terminology lies in the confusion between process, product, context and focus or purpose. (VanPatten, 1994: 27)

So once again, it should be noted that this debate over terminology can go on and on. Moreover, any new definition of this broad spectrum issue may face the same problem. Therefore, if we agree that 'conscious awareness' equates explicit reflection of knowledge whether in the form of verbal expression, intentions, or potential ability to express one's knowledge then it is reasonable (as suggested above) to hold on to the comprehensive definition of NCLE working party (mentioned before) as the basis, and other extensive references (e.g. the ones above by Donmall) as clarifying details. If so, the *"raised and "potential" consciousness* equal awareness, and perhaps this is the reason why consciousness-raising and language

awareness are often used as interchangeable terms (James and Garrett, 1992, eds.). Hence, in the case of Rutherford consciousness raising (C-R) is seen as guiding the learner's attention to particular aspects of language, thereby increasing the degree of explicitness. cf. the following which is the fourth quotation from table 1. above:

> The role of C-R (consciousness raising is ... one in which data that are crucial for the learner's testing of hypotheses, and for his forming generalizations are made available to him in a somewhat controlled fashion (Rutherford, 1987: 18).

This view is, again, somewhat domain-specific in the sense that it attracts the attention towards learning and the role of consciousness raising in that area.

Similarly, the following definition of C-R (or *conscientizačao*) from Scott (1986; 1992), in spite of presenting the heart of the matter regarding language learning, does not overlap perfectly what is meant by language awareness in the UK. Obviously, because it is dealing only with some aspects of LA (mostly the performance domain), regarding specifically one language skill i.e. reading:

> ... ensuring the students understand, with their **hearts** as well as their **heads**, why they are learning and practising the skills being taught, **how** they individually do so, and **to what extent** proposed strategies are effective, and **what** the reading process involves (Scott 1986: 3; 1992: 279; emphasis original)

On the other hand, there are, at least, two very useful and complementary

(to the NCLE definition) points in this definition: 1) the statements are so clear-cut as a model to be used easily by any teacher concerning any other language skill, and 2) rational understanding and feeling of the facts are distinguished as different layers of the same issue viz. consciousness, which means consciousness is not explicit knowledge about language 'only', but it involves a higher level as well. The level is what he calls *feeling of the facts* or feeling the *click of realization*. e.g. in his statement on strategies:

> Knowing about strategies is prior to feeling the 'click of realization', that they really work, ... (Scott, 1992: 280).

An example is my experience of using some strategies for teaching reading comprehension to university students who doubted whether the strategies would work; and their click of realization after one term of using them; also their verbalization of the effectiveness during the third term would be examples of this.

Now if we compare the following, which is considered as an example of the vast affective domain of language awareness, to the rather straightforward statements in Scott (1986) the level of abstractness in this one will stand out. While in Scott's statements the points are addressed clearly and specifically, in the following the terms are general and abstract.

> It (LA activity) is an activity to make language activities personal... encouraging the learner to contribute new things

> of personal relevance', which adds up to total involvement of the learner's whole person' . (Frank & Rinvolucri, 1983: 7; cited in: James & Garrett, 1992a: 13)

Considering these as 'somewhat grandiose claims', James and Garrett, 1992, state that the affective dimension is seen as being the most central. Therefore, there are two points to make here: 1) the definition does not help to unpack the one offered in the NCLE papers, but on the contrary adds some jargon to it; 2) it deals only with one domain of LA, i.e. the affective domain, while the reference is generic.

Also, in the following which is an indirect reference to LA in an interpretation of Mason (1986) it is seen as a medium through which "...access to abstract and analytical language" is made possible.

> If lower-class children are disadvantaged through their restricted access to abstract and analytical language at home, it will be in LA work where compensatory 'headstart' education can be appropriately delivered. (James and Garrett, 1992a: 16)

The phrase *access to abstract and analytical language* is a generic reference to consciousness-raising in terms of headstart education in LA work concerning access to analytical language, but again, only in a limited scope. And furthermore, they point out a type of language which is **abstract and analytical** which itself requires interpretation and necessitates explanation. So, it is limited; it does not help in unpacking the central definition by the NCLE working party, but it implies going from

one level i.e 'implicit' to another, i.e. explicit which means consciousness raising as another name for language awareness.

Designing teacher education programmes, Wright has stated that:

> Language Awareness as we conceive it, is in a pivotal position in the user/analyst/teacher framework, mediating between user competence and teacher competence (1992: 63).

This reference to language awareness also considers the performance domain of the issue where the position of the analyst, one who is critical about language, is defined in relation to his other character(s) as a teacher or user or both. The skills and expertise are considered as mutually supporting. Nevertheless, it is again another monolithic reference.

The next reference in the list above is from Clark & Ivanič who also have used the terms language awareness and consciousness-raising interchangeably. They have stated:

> At the first sight the consciousness-raising procedure we have described will seem very different from other activities which have been presented at this seminar under the label of Language Awareness. For example, the activities presented by Tinkel (paper 7) and Wright (paper 5) have very different aims and content from ours. Here we shall outline what we see as the advantages of our approach to Language Awareness, ... (Clark and Ivanič, 1992: 177)

Thus, the points to highlight in this reference are: 'different approaches', 'different activities', and 'different looks' which mean that depending on one's approach to language awareness the activities might differ and as a result different facets of consciousness-raising might arise which may

sometimes lead to ambiguities. Again the main point is that LA and consciousness-raising are seen as identical.

To conclude this section a summary is given first, and the conclusions are presented next.

2.1.3. Summary of the points

The points highlighted and discussed have been:

1) that language awareness is a broad spectrum term with several domains

2) the terminology could be questioned but any attempt to change the terms will end in a similar problem. Therefore, it seems best if we rely on the current definition by the NCLE working party.

3) some writers have not observed the multi-dimensionality of the issue in their approaches to language awareness and they have applied the term to only some or even one of its domains. This may lead into temporary ambiguity.

4) language awareness has often been used interchangeably with consciousness-raising.

5) raised-consciousness is a better equivalent to conscious awareness than consciousness raising as the latter deals with the process not the product. Furthermore, other writers have referred directly to aims and areas of language awareness implying its real vast scope as in the following examples from James & Garrett; and Anderson respectively:

> A somewhat different area of LA concerns the language learners' awareness of how they can best master a second language. Here LA is not concerned with explicit knowledge about language, or about languages, but with learners' perceptions about the process of language learning and their awareness of themselves in that process, ... (James & Garrett, 1992b: 98).
>
> Language Awareness if it is to come near to achieving those aims which it is commonly held to pursue - i.e. deepening understanding, fostering tolerance and increasing receptivity to new linguistic experience- must begin by seeking to provide a broad context for language learning ... (Anderson, 1992:133).

On the whole, we have seen in the above analysis how the writers have tried to get the learners involved in thinking about how's and why's of their learning a language. In making one's implicit knowledge explicit, in giving the learner some new insight into the facts of language, or in doing both. Also that it is consciousness raising which is the main concern. We have realized that almost all of the definitions have some shortcoming in either being too generic in employing the terms, or in concentrating on one or more aspects so that they are not inclusive.

In addition, it was suggested, in this analysis, that we should hold on to the definition by NCLE working party to prevent confusion.

2.1.4. Conclusion

Having considered some definitions, we may conclude that language awareness is a cumulative body of knowledge which consists of: knowledge about language and about one's knowledge of language and of one's shortcomings in this regard; relative understanding of how language works

in use, and of how the strategies work in the process of learning and communication.

Language learners may obtain a body of knowledge about language as a result of undertaking the following steps from intuitive learning to analytical and natural stages.

1) Acquiring the use of language to some extent in a communicative approach using the situation provided by the instructors or by the community where they live. In this respect, we may refer to a quotation from Hawkins:

> The Bullock committee welcomed the team's approach, for keeping language study rooted in 'language in use' and for recognizing the need to start from the stage reached by the pupil (1987: 33).

Or to the following from Haastrup.

> ...Consciousness raising based on learners performance and experience is a fruitful way of procedural knowledge (1991: 131)

Or again, to this from 'Language Awareness Newsletter':

> The teaching of Language Awareness makes explicit and conscious the knowledge and skills that pupils have built up themselves in the course of their experience of language; develops their power of observation and purposeful analysis of language both in their immediate and wider environments. (Series 2 : 25)

2) Thinking (or being made to think/sensitized) about what one knows and what s/he does not know; to sort out what is known from what is not

known (to one's self); and to think about what one needs the language for. The following quotation is given in this regard:

> Pupils need to be able to characterize objectively and analytically their own choices of language forms and functions, the language of those around them, and the potential of language to reflect variety. They need to be able to describe and assess their own speech and writing as a basis for self criticism, ...(James & Garrett, 1992a: 12)

3) Being provided with some data (e.g. language learning strategies; and strategies for appreciating language).

> ...one can work to heighten metalinguistic awareness of relevant input without appealing to systematized metalinguistic knowledge. This kind of minimal consciousness-raising one might term 'input salience enhancement' (Sharwood Smith, 1994: 179)

4) Trying to feel the results of the application of the strategies (viz. appreciation), so that the learner may become "aware of language". This might be exemplified in their curiosity about topics.

> There will obviously be a degree of information-giving in answering the questions that pupils will ask when their curiosity is aroused about topics they may not have thought about before; questions about language origins language change, dialects, borrowing etc. (Hawkins, 1987: 5)

So, language awareness as a cumulative body of knowledge may start with language learning and be developed through critical/analytical learning encouraged by input salience enhancement. Aspects of language awareness

will then be established through feeling of the facts about language and how it works. This is possible either through purposeful undertaking of some steps like the ones suggested above, or undergoing similar stages inadvertently in a natural acquisitional environment.

Finally based on the above discussions, one can interpret language awareness as: the ability to detect something about language and to reflect upon such knowledge about language explicitly. This means language awareness is the procedural knowledge of language which is made declarative; existent consciousness which is raised rather than consciousness-raising. It is also received consciousness simultaneous/immediately followed by feeling of the facts.

So, language awareness as used in this research underlies 'conscious awareness' of language (its nature and its role in life; nature of language learning; learning and communicative strategies, shortcomings and abilities) as equal to explicit reflection of knowledge about language whether in the form of verbal expression, intentions, or potential ability to express one's knowledge about language.

Therefore, for the present purposes, one may be considered language aware if one is able to talk about the nature of language and its role in life (when and if asked); about language learning in general, about learning and/or communicative strategies; about one's abilities and/or shortcomings regarding language learning; about how successfully one takes part in communication events such as conversations.

Accordingly, to investigate awareness of language the subjects can be questioned directly in interviews and observed in their daily communications with other people. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that one might be aware but not talk about it regardless of how one is prompted or questioned.

CHAPTER

III

RELATED STUDIES

Contents:

3.1. Introduction

Although the practitioners and theorists have spent a reasonable amount of time discussing language awareness and the need for it on the part of both teachers and learners (e.g. James and Garrett 1992a; Hawkins 1984; Donmall 1985; Fairclough 1992; and others) the question about the correlation between language awareness and language proficiency has still remained relevant to the extent that in the recent review of the Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée, AILA, the issue is the first of a series dealt with; and reads as follows:

> **Question** 1. *Can the theoretical concepts relevant to understanding issues concerning the role of consciousness in L2 learning be standardized so that researchers in the field are speaking from a common understanding*? (Hulstijn and Schmidt, 1994: 6)

In this chapter, some of the similar and related studies are introduced followed by the subjects' native language as opposed to English, for an insight into the distance of the two languages. Language awareness within the current methodology in Iran, a background of the issue regarding the subjects, is also covered.

3.2. Studies

To begin with, it is worth mentioning that in 1971, research was carried out based on a minimal theory of language acquisition. The study was, as reported by Newmark (1971), carried out at the University of California in

San Diego hoping to achieve a substantive theory of language development which would integrate semantic and pragmatic and also intonational and paralinguistic components into a general linguistic theory that would account for syntactic and phonological well-formation as well. In doing so, the researchers hoped they would, as a result, be able to derive more efficient language teaching strategies. The programme was designed so as to enable *any* student to carry on ordinary conversation, and to do everyday non-professional reading in the language. The subsidiary requirement in the program was that it should contribute to the general education of the university students as stated in the following quotation:

> ... we also imposed on ourselves the requirement that our course should contribute directly to the liberal education of the university students; for example we would consider it insufficient result if our students could converse, however well in the language but be improperly prepared to take courses in the literature of the language, and insufficient also if he had learned to use a language but had learned nothing *about* that language and about the nature of language in general. (Newmark, 1971: 12; italics original)

So, ample importance was given to providing the students with knowledge about language in the sense that from 12 hours of weekly courses three hours were allocated to it; that is, a two-hour conference with a graduate assistant in linguistics whose duties were, mostly, to discuss language and language acquisition in general; and a one hour session in general linguistics or in the history of civilization associated with the language under study.

Nevertheless, all the emphasis on knowing about language was necessarily in relation to ameliorating the general education of the subjects and had nothing to do with encouraging the development of language proficiency. On the whole, while the relation between literacy and general education might not be new, research into the relation between language awareness and language proficiency is at its threshold and in need of support. Consequently, with the start of The language awareness movement in the UK, and in the course of discussing the issue, research into the performance domain of language awareness (i.e. the impact of LA on performance) has been recommended by different writers as in the following:

> it is clear that consciousness raising about aspects of language has some place in most classrooms, though perhaps in differing degrees for different pupils. Just how this talk about language works out in practice, and how it impinges on the developing models of language held by pupils, cannot be known until documented through further studies involving the longitudinal observation of classroom interaction. (Mitchell and Hooper, 1992: 50)

and in:

> ... further research into the possibilities for beneficial association of Language Awareness with foreign language learning would be valuable and should be carried out soon. (Donmall, 1992: 122)

Zhou Yan-Ping (1992) did an experimental study using a control and an experimental group. She provided them each with a different input aiming

at investigating the role of formal instruction in second language acquisition. The effects of explicit formal instruction and implicit formal instruction were compared in her study, while the terms (formal instruction, explicit and implicit formal instruction) were defined as:

> ... formal instruction denotes the kind of instruction that draws learners' attention to the formal characteristics of the grammatical features. Explicit formal instruction ... as the method in which learners are required to work out and articulate the grammatical properties and rules if they can. ... Implicit formal instruction refers to the method whereby the learners are guided to make generalisations on their own. (Zhou, 1992: 256)

The two methods (i.e. explicit & implicit formal instruction) were compared against the subjects' acquisition of three areas of grammar viz. simple past tense, present perfect and passive construction.

The second aim of her study was to see if there was an interface between explicit and implicit knowledge. One of her hypotheses was that: "*formal instruction in general is conducive to the success of SLA.*"; "*there is an interface between explicit and implicit knowledge*", and that "*through formal and functional practice, explicit knowledge can be converted into implicit knowledge*" (ibid: 257).

Zhou obtained positive findings that showed classroom instruction is conducive to the success of SLA and that both groups made marked progress in terms of overall performance. Zhou found that each method in itself gave the students the opportunity to improve on language proficiency.

Also, a significant difference was found between the performance of the group with explicit instruction and the one with implicit instruction which supported the possibility of transfer of linguistic knowledge into the learners competence.

Zhou concluded that: explicit instruction is effective with simple but not complex rules; also she found the results in favour of the interface position but not sufficiently representative to make conclusions about the existence of the interface. Therefore, she recommended that more empirical studies should be done in this regard.

Nicholas (1992) has reported on the case studies of the process of second language development of three children under age 5, which aimed at describing those aspects of language awareness which influence their second language development and vice versa.

From this study, it is concluded that different aspects of awareness of language can account for different dimensions of second language development; and that language awareness can be used to differentiate between second language development in different age groups. Nicholas states that:

> All second language development is united by the awareness of the lexico-grammatical level of language organisation. However, younger and older (adult?) second language development are distinguished by the additional presence in older learners of pragma-linguistic awareness, the awareness of (i) how language form is related to the projection of social identity and (ii) how discourse and contextual factors can relate to morpho-syntactic features. (1992: 94)

In another study, Masny (1992) looked for specific aspects of language competence that might be related to Linguistic Awareness; and aimed at establishing the strength of that relationship and also the conditions in which such a relationship might hold. The study focused specifically on role of language knowledge in making judgements of accessibility at various levels of language proficiency.

Masny found that "*as learners become proficient in the second language they draw on different language abilities in making judgements of accessibility*." (1992: 302) She concluded that increasing linguistic awareness is important in second language development and that it is significantly related to different aspects of second language competence which provides the learners with the ability to gain control over language to meet their communicative needs.

So when the present study started, few practical studies had been done regarding the relation between the two variables, but no study was carried out on the issue in adult learners, not to mention adult research students. Simultaneously, with the present research, other researchers like Christele Nagy of France have investigated the issue. Nagy was working on school children whom she taught. another work was completed in the department of psychology of the University of Liverpool, on language awareness and phonology, also another one in the department of Education, University of Liverpool.

Nagy, to the best of my knowledge, was working on developing LA

activities in a primary school in a suburban area in France. The activities aimed at increasing the pupils' sensitivity and knowledge about functions of language, their mother tongue and some foreign languages (German, Bambara, or Aztec). The approach was mainly inductive in the sense that the teacher would guide the children in discovering of language. The hypothesis was that this work might have increased their capacity of reasoning, giving them a different outlook on their first language; it might also have developed their curiosity and their tolerance regarding FL and by extension, FL speakers.

Some other related studies are as follows:

Fotos (1993) examined the role of *noticing* the target language in communicative input subsequent to formal instruction as an important factor in raising consciousness of grammatical structures.

She has reported on a study into the amount of learners' noticing produced by two types of grammar consciousness-raising treatments. The treatments were designed to develop formal knowledge of problematical grammar structures: teacher fronted grammar lessons and interactive grammar problem solving tasks.

She compared the frequencies of noticing the target structure in communicative input (one and two weeks after the grammar consciousness raising treatments) with those of a control group. The results indicated that task performance was as effective as formal instruction in promotion of subsequent significant amounts of noticing, as compared with the

noticing produced by the control group. Consequently, she found that a number of learners who developed knowledge about grammar structures went on to notice those structures in communicative input after their consciousness had been raised.

In another paper, titled "Can language acquisition be altered by instruction", Lightbown (1985) has reported on conclusions drawn from her research, that much language teaching is ineffective or even counter productive, actually frustrating the process of language acquisition rather than serving it.

She has reported observing adolescent learners whose principal exposure to L2 was in the classrooms where they were taught English as a second language for 30 to 60 minutes per day. In the classes the learners heard and practised certain language forms -correct grammatical forms of course- dozens or even hundreds of times.

In class and, for a period of time, outside of class, they appeared to "know" the forms in the sense that they used them correctly in appropriate contexts. Later however, some of these correct forms disappeared from the learners' language and were replaced by simple or developmentally "earlier" forms. After a period the correct use of the specific forms increased slowly, coming eventually close to the earlier levels of accuracy. As a result, it was hypothesized that if the learners had been exposed to English in an environment where there was a variety of language forms in the input and where there was less pressure to practise correct forms the

learners would have used the base forms (uninflected verbs) in their earliest utterances, adding the grammatical inflections at later develop mental stage. Thus. Lightbown decided that it could be argued that their development had been slowed down by the too-early insistence on correct production of certain language forms, which would be expected to come later in a natural stage.

Steel and Alderson (1994), have reported on a study into the levels of knowledge about language in incoming university students of French and relating this to their language proficiency. One of the findings reported is that whilst knowledge about language may be worthwhile for language learners in its own right, there is no evidence from the study to justify the teaching of metalinguistic knowledge as a means of improving linguistic proficiency. Comparing the results with those of a pilot study they have stated that students vary greatly in their metalinguistic knowledge. They also examined possible changes in the correlation between measures of metalinguistic ability and language proficiency over time. They found that when the students reach their maximum language proficiency and metalinguistic knowledge the correlation between the two drops instead of increasing. They also found that the correlation between improvements in metalinguistic scores and improvements in proficiency was not significant. So, they concluded there was no relation between high levels of metalinguistic knowledge and language proficiency.

From among the studies carried out later or the works in progress presented in the third international conference in Dublin, July 1996 some are introduced below:

Schweers reported that he had completed two studies which "strongly suggest that there is a positive correlation between metalinguistic awareness (MA) and the frequency of the use of lexical forms influenced by L1 knowledge" (1996: 19). The studies concerned metalinguistic awareness and transfer.

In another paper on 'Dimensions of pragmatic competence and cross-cultural awareness' Schneider (1996:18) stated that "At present there is little known about the acquisition of pragmatic competence, about pragmatic transfer and cross-cultural interference, but the evidence suggests that unless learners pay conscious attention to the relevant dimensions, they are likely to lapse automatically into the norms of their native language and may thereby cause unintended offence."

Ridley, reporting on a paper called 'Low achievers, self-awareness and linguistic problem solving', stated that "the paper concludes that learner with low self efficacy expectations with regard to their ability to perform difficult tasks can be helped to become more autonomous in their learning by noticing for themselves the advantages of metacognitive control in L2 performance" (1996: 17).

So, there are a number of writers who have either attempted and/or

recommended the need for looking into the possible associations between language awareness and language proficiency.

***

Language distance or the perception of the distance (conscious awareness of the distance) is said to be a crucial factor in learning a second/foreign language. Accordingly, in the next section some background knowledge of the subjects and their L1 is given for the readers to have some view about them prior to the studies. Some explanations are provided regarding the question whether Iranians might have any perception of distance towards English language.

3.3. Iranian students and their native language as compared to English

Iranians start English as a foreign language from the second year of their middle school (age: 13), when it is included in the curriculum as a subject. This means between three to four hours a week depending on the level of education. This continues for six years during middle and high school education and again in the form of a core course in the higher education curriculum continued for two semesters followed by some semi-specialized and specialized courses of English.

The official native language is Persian. It is an Indo-Iranian language which, in turn, is a branch of Indo-European. Its alphabets have been adopted from an Afro-Asiatic language, i.e. Arabic, to which four symbols have been added. (28 letters from Arabic plus 4 more symbols representing additional Persian sounds i.e. /p/; /ĉ/; /ž/ and /g/).

One (and probably the only) thing that the Iranians' language might have in common with the English language is that they both are Indo-European languages.

> This branch of Indo-European Languages (Indo-Iranian) comprises two large groups, known as Indo Aryan (or Indic) and Iranian. (Crystal, 1992: 301)

The following figure shows a similar view of the fact.

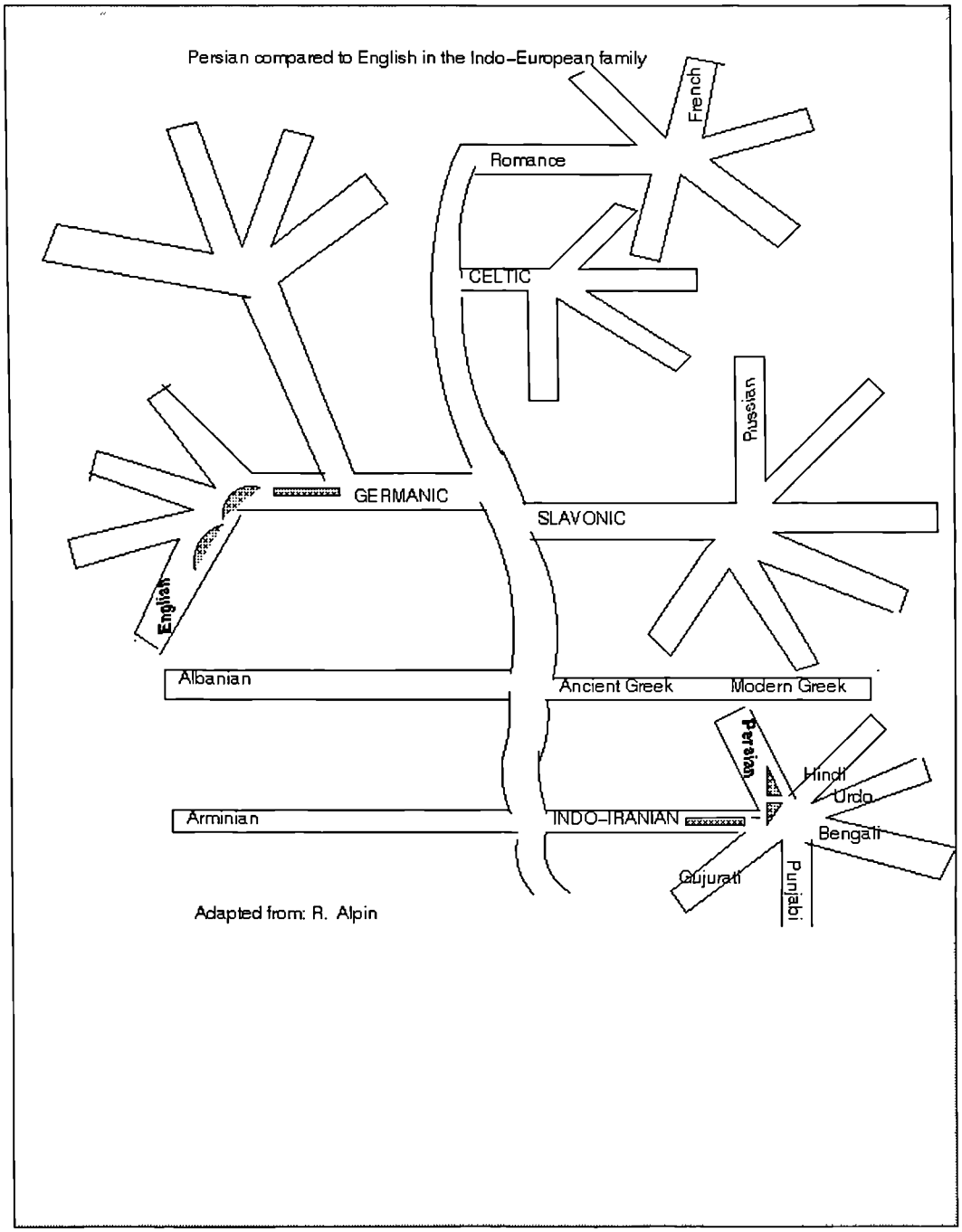


Figure 1 -iv: The position of Persian among Indo-European languages

On the other hand, there are many differences between the two languages an example of which is mentioned indirectly in the following quotation:

> ...Accent in such cases is synonymous with 'stress'. In Czech or Finnish, for example, the main accent generally falls on the first syllable of the word; in Persian or Turkish, on the last; ...English and Russian are different again; in these languages, the accentual pattern of any given word is fixed but there is no single pattern used throughout the language. (Crystal, 1992: 172)

Some other differences are dealt with in the next section regarding language awareness in Iran.

So, English as a completely different language from Persian tends to be problematic naturally, as compared to, for instance, Urdu for Iranians or probably German for the British.

Nevertheless, insufficient results in proportion to the length of time which is given to the English language in Iran during the course of education has brought about the present research.

3.4. Language Awareness within the current methodology in Iran

The following is a glimpse of the type and extent of language awareness that Iranian students receive, how much they actually become aware; and comparing their development of language awareness against our proposed procedures, the problem of language transfer as a possible side effect is also considered.

Seeing Language Awareness as 'a cumulative body of knowledge' which

consists of: knowledge about language and about one's knowledge of language, ... etc. (cf. chapter ii.), and regarding appreciation of the nature of language and in turn the nature of language learning, I believe that language learners in Iran are misled psychologically, probably, by poor teaching styles and methodologies and by lack of an organized curriculum. Thus, they may learn ineffectively for 7 -8 years. Although some of them may realize, at a time which is very late, that they have gained almost nothing, there seems to be a gradual development of misunderstanding regarding the why's and how's of language learning. As a result the learners may become tired of even memorizing the forms necessary to pass the tests.

With the above assumption, there will be a suitable ground for intervening factors (in the learners' personal struggle to learn the language the way they do) such as first language resulting in language transfer, fossilization, or fall back/gap filling. Therefore, I shall, first, introduce the type of language awareness provided in Iranian schools and environment and then argue on language transfer and fall back as by products of lack of awareness of language. It is worth mentioning that cross-linguistic influence in second language acquisition has been a matter of concern for about 20 years, (e.g. Gass, 1979; 1984; Kellerman *et.al.*,1986; Odlin, 1989). In Kellerman (1995), it is suggested that the literature on language transfer is fairly consistent in its answer to the ways in which first languages (L1s) influence the learning & use of second languages (L2s).

One important breakthrough is said to be that the closer the resemblance between L1 & L2, the greater the possibility for L1 interference.

As there are a diversity of different patois and even distinct languages in Iran, for years politics has affected language tolerance. That is politicians have used the diversity as a means of segregation so that the funniest jokes and comics have been created based on patois.

After the revolution because of the religious nature of the government, ample effort has been put into desegregation, for which the removal of language discrimination from comedies has been one means. Nevertheless, the jokes are deeply *rooted in the culture*.

Also, the official language, Persian, has suffered a number of political influences such as the influence of Arabic as the language of Islam. With this regard, the need for raising some kind of consciousness about language is shown through a move for purification based on Arabic; the influence of French and English; and recently, again purification and introduction of the language.

However, this has been taken for granted in school so that, in spite of the existence of a rich literature, and in spite of Persian being taught as a subject split into different courses, LA is not appreciated by the learners, not even at the higher education level except by a few literature majors and poets.

As for how the English language is dealt with, it should be mentioned that grammar translation has been the dominant methodology. So, the students

are provided with some linguistic knowledge about grammar rules (KAL) from the very beginning of their language learning process and are tested on them, three times a year.

On the whole, there seems to have been no control (by the authorities) on how KAL is presented in different classrooms by teachers with different or little experience in the field. Further, there is a tendency (on part of the teachers) towards finishing the text books by having the learners do the exercises at home and get ready to present a solid correct answer to any question being asked in the classroom. Exercises include comprehension questions based on passages from the text books, filling in the blanks (grammar and/or vocabulary), and identifying synonyms for some words or phrases.

Considering the fact that FL learners may have developed a relative amount of sensitivity to language at preliminary stages, it seems that they lose the right path and gradually develop misconceptions about what it means to learn a language.

So, they start as sensitive and motivated to learn the language, but being provided with wrong (or rather insufficient) strategies or no strategies; they are usually led to misunderstanding of the goals. Further, they tend to overgeneralize the given instructions and stick to the knowledge about forms.

Regarding the first procedure in obtaining language awareness (i.e. developing language awareness in language use; (cf. the conclusion to

chapter ii.) they do not seem to be practising the use of the target language, but it is passing the tests which is the learners' main concern. Therefore, their overgeneralization of the use of formulas could be being encouraged by examinations. Besides, passing each language course necessitates having memorized a set of formulas. (e.g. knowing how to change a statement in 'direct speech' into 'reported speech'). The National Universities Entrance Exam, (viz. Conquer) too, includes a language test on knowledge about forms. Preparatory practice tests also may help develop overgeneralization.

At school, teachers prepare their students (by any possible means) to pass the final routine tests. In private institutes the learners are usually provided with *Conquer tests* (meaning sample tests for the university entrance exam). These are sample tests for different courses, including language, (especially English). There are also guaranteed courses for which the tuition cheque is made payable on the condition that the learner passes a certain test or obtains a certain grade in a final exam.

Considering whether they realize their misconception at any stage, it should be mentioned that they do (based on my personal experience), at a stage when it is very late. Once they face a situation when they actually need to use the language, they usually show sensitivity to the fact that there should be more to learning a language, and to the role of language in one's life. So, if they have to meet native speakers they seek the help of private institutes or private tutors. Usually, the educated businessmen,

engineers, physicians who want to go abroad or who are to work with foreigners seek the help of private tutors or go to private institutions. On the other hand, if they have to take an established language test (e.g. TOEFL, IELTS, etc.) again they turn to private institutes and tutors. The research students usually do this before going abroad. Once they are given preparatory courses about how to take the test, they may take a reverse position. That is, they ask for courses on language skills not on practising how to take a test. This case happened when a professional American tutor was asked, based on a written contract, to make the provisional testees ready to take the test successfully in a limited amount of time (Department of Foreign Languages Shaheed Bahonar University, Kerman Iran, 1992).

One reason why they take a reverse position might be the fact that they really feel their weakness. Another reason could be their inability to distinguish preparatory courses for taking tests, from courses on learning language skills. Otherwise, there might be a kind of realization regarding the priority of learning the skills to how to take tests.

So, there seems to be a psychological misconception about the nature of language, growing in the process of learning English as an international language. If so, I would consider language transfer as an example of a side effect of a lack of clear language awareness, because negative transfer viz. interference (or rather fall back: Krashen and Terrell, 1983) is said to be

the result of shortcoming regarding the choices in the target language. Therefore, it seems necessary to look also for the areas, if any, where Iranian learners transfer native language rules to English.

Regarding the possibility of transfer or specifically interference of pronunciation, there are some differences which make it probable (in spite of the fact that *resemblance* is usually considered as the cause).

Consonant clusters, are not as common in Persian as in English. Initial consonant clusters for instance, do not occur in Persian. (e.g. the English word 'class' is pronounced /kala:s/ in Persian). In some dialects, consonant clusters are not common even in final position. (e.g. the word 'dast' = hand is for some 'daset', similarly it is possible that they might pronounce a word like must as /muset/; a research student from North-East of Iran actually does this).

Syllabic consonants in final position of some English words such as: communism: /kɒmjʊnizəm/, Capitalism: /kæpɪtəlɪzəm/, etc. may also cause difficulty for Persian students in that they may pronounce them exactly like in Persian and without any vowels in between. (i.e. /~zm/ instead of /~zəm/). In Persian, short vowels which are to be used as suprasegmental symbols, are only pronounced but not shown in normal writing. There is not such a way of symbolizing the vowels in English. For example, if the symbols for /k/, / l/, /a:/, and /s/ are put together they make 'klas' which is actually pronounced (in Persian) /kala:s/ because an invisible short vowel is understood between the first two consonants. So,

when Iranians read the word *class* in English they tend to pronounce a short vowel between the first two consonants (i.e. c and l) and also they sometimes pronounce another short vowel between the units of the last doubled consonant; and consider the second consonant a plural ending; thus they pronounce it as /z/ and the whole word class is pronounced as /kala:sez/ or sometimes as /klasez/ as in plural.

Semi-rounded /r/ in English (medial or final position is simply a tap /r/ in Persian and English dark /l/ does not exist in Persian. So, final dark /l/, in a word like *file*, if pronounced by a native speaker, may be interpreted by Persian listeners as consisting of a light /l/ preceded by the short (not reduced) vowel /e/. That is, one additional syllable is heard by Persians.

Further, the position of stress on words with the same number of syllables seems to be different in the two languages. Matching the following lists show how they differ:

English	Persian
‘jacket	Jha‘kat
‘cupboard	Co‘mod(‘med)
‘rabbit	Khar‘goush
‘Pencil	Me‘dad
‘Council	Con‘soul
‘Radio	Ra‘dio
‘Garage	Ga‘rajh
‘Yesterday	Dee‘rouz
to‘morrow	Far‘da

Concerning transfer of grammar rules, there is also the probability because the word order of the two languages differ in the following ways:

in sentences English is SVO and rigid while Persian is SOV and rigid. (Persian does use SV+O, but only as a bound morpheme); in phrases- English uses article (definite / indefinite)+ adj+ N and Persian uses:

| Zero article+ N+ (a final /e/ sound) + Adj
Indef article + N (+a final /e/ sound) + | Adj; or N(+ a final /e:/ sound) + Adj

There are other differences concerning relative clauses such as: 1) resumptive pronouns, common in Persian, do not occur in English. For example for a relative clause like: *He is the man whom I* saw, a Persian learner of English might say: *He is the man whom I saw* ***him,*** which is common in Persian. This is also confirmed by Schachter, *et.al.,* (1975) who maintains that Persian and Arab students transfer their native relative clause patterns to English (cf. also Odlin 1987); 2) different forms of relative adverbs and relative pronouns do not exist in Persian (i.e. there is a single form for all of the cases).

Also, there are differences regarding prepositions (vocabulary/semantics). Some verbs followed by prepositions (i.e. two-word verbs), in Persian, [e.g. p´rhiz az = avoid (of); t´akeed b´r = emphasise (on)] do not take prepositions in English, while some of the two-word verbs common in English do not occur in the same way in Persian. (e.g. 'fill out' = por-kardan, i.e. to do fill).

Regarding question forms: in Persian conversation, statements are used for asking questions and this seems to be specific to spoken language and not

necessarily a case of informal language; in writing and extremely formal speeches the auxiliary "A:ya:" is added to the beginning of the statement without any other change in the order of words. e.g.

ou: f'rda: meea:yad. (statement)
s/he tomorrow comes
a:ya: ou: f'rda: meea:yad? (question)
do s/he tomorrow comes

Besides, in Persian, questions end in a rising tone while in English they may have either falling or rising tones.

For negation, in Persian, verbs are changed to negative form simply by adding n' (i.e. [n] with a superimposed short vowel symbol (equivalent for / /) somewhat similar to 'stress' in English phonetics; the vowel is not usually shown in writing but it is understood and the whole chunk is pronounced /na/). Forms of *be* take an initial change of vowel sounds and symbols. (e.g. h'st'm = I am; nist'm = I am not. In English on the other hand, verbs other than *be* need auxiliaries plus *not* (Do not, will not/don't won't, etc.*); forms of be* add *not* i; *have* may take *not* or a negative auxiliary.

In writing also, the two languages have two quite different systems. Persian is right to left using Arabic alphabet while English left to right using Roman alphabet.

Sometimes language learners take advantage of using the systems of writing in translation of the noun phrases e.g.

the funny	little	dog =	¬
↓	↓	↓	↓
moz-hek	kouchlouy-e	sag	<—┘

Sometimes, however, the difference might be problematic in that they may tend to translate or comprehend the words one by one because the word by word interpretation of a Persian noun phrase like "dog little funny" seems much more intuitively right than that of an English noun phrase like "the funny little dog".

Finally, considering non-structural factors involved in this regard, it is worth mentioning that Iranians usually feel downgraded in knowing (having) less than their peers so they are cautious in taking any action that shows the deficiency. There is a proverb in Persian saying: 'A man is not known unless he speaks out'. So, this may result in a feeling of failure or fear of loss of face which in turn may result in reluctance to speak aloud in class or in public and thus in lack of oral practice.

Bearing in mind all the above assumptions (based on years of teaching experience), it seems worthwhile to examine the following assumption that language awareness might compensate for at least one's perception of the distance, which might in turn lead to reduction of transfer.

> Studies of trilingualism indicate that the more similar linguistic structures in two languages are, the greater the likelihood of transfer. However, studies of language

> awareness indicate that the importance of language distance depends very much on the *perceptions* of that distance by the learners. (Odlin, 1989: 141; emphasis original)

Is there any case of "perception of distance" on the part of Iranian learners that might result in language transfer? Regarding the apparent differences like alphabets, word order, direction of writing and pronunciation the student feels the distance from the very beginning. On the other hand, in the case of the range of vowels in English words "set, sit, seat" of which the middle one does not occur in Persian; and in the case of double consonants without any vowel among them, similar to Persian in appearance (while in Persian writing short vowels are not usually written but understood and pronounced), Persians may have a wrong perception of a kind of similarity resulting in transfer. This is probable with any consonant cluster in final position. There is also the possibility of adding to the number of syllables, or changing the position of syllable division (e.g. cripples : crip.ples /kri:-p'lz/----/kri:p-les/). (cf. Shariati, 1992).

Another example is the case of resumptive pronouns, (cf. Odlin, 1989) mentioned above (page 61). Also there is the case of the pronoun for the third person singular for which the English language has gender distinction while in Persian there is only one form for both masculine and feminine. The latter was actually mentioned by one of the research students in the longitudinal study. Still another example where the difference is transparent and the distance is usually made clear, is in the

word order of the two languages regarding for instance adjective phrases. The order is reversed in Persian. With regard to word order, I believe perception of distance is inevitable because the learners are explicitly informed of the existence of the difference.

There are still many other points which might be worth including in the discussion. However, this is an issue the details of which should be dealt with elsewhere. On the whole, as Odlin (1989) has stated, the subjective judgements of language distance by learners can matter considerably.

So, lack of a clear awareness of language in terms of an intuitive impression of language distance can be taken as a reasonable factor for lack of proficiency of English by Iranian students. Intuition suggests that a clear awareness of language in terms of objective judgements of language distance can help the learners improve their proficiency. This is to be considered in the studies presented in the following 8 chapters.

CHAPTER

IV

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDIES AND RESEARCH TYPE

4.1. Studies

4.1.1. Introduction

To examine the possibility of some links between language awareness and language proficiency for my subjects, a clear idea of the types of awareness of language that Iranians in general and Iranian research students specifically, would develop in the UK was needed. Afterwards, I would need to investigate the extent of development of LA and LP so that I would be able to compare the two variables. In addition, I intended to find if there would be any indication of the role of noticing of the existent input in the subjects' proficiency.

For this, two longitudinal studies were needed: one to identify the types of LA, and another to investigate the extent of LA and LP in the course of time. As a complement to this, it was decided that a general view about the relation between LA in terms of beliefs about language and language learning and the time of exposure to the communicative use of language might help. It should be noted that children were included only in the exploratory pilot study to find about the types of LA in Iranians in general. They were not considered in the other studies.

Accordingly, the following research questions were designed.

4.1.2. Research questions

The research questions to be answered by the studies were:

1. What indications are there of language awareness in Iranian students in the UK?
2. To what extent does LA develop as subjects live and work in the UK?

3. How does Language Proficiency develop as subjects live and work in the UK?
4. How does the Language Awareness variable relate to the Language Proficiency variable?
5. Does noticing of input play an interface role in the subjects' development of language proficiency?

To find an answer to the first question, i.e. Iranians' types of language awareness, a pilot study was carried out longitudinally. The indications of LA were to be monitored in addition to piloting the instruments for the next two studies. Piloting in itself would not need a long time.

With questions 2 and 3 two purposes were to be achieved. The first was to obtain an overall view of the process of development of language awareness in the course of time the subjects would spend in the UK. A second aim was then to investigate the development of subjects' language proficiency.

To discover answers to questions 2 and 3, two studies were carried out in the research: a cross-sectional one, using a questionnaire, and a longitudinal one using recorded conversations, tests, and interviews and questionnaire.

The development of language awareness and language proficiency were to be compared to examine the possibility of association between the two variables, i.e. to attempt to find the answer to question 4. In addition, the interface role of *noticing*, between *input* and *intake* of metalinguistic knowledge (question 5), was to be investigated as well.

4.1.3. Hypothesis

It was expected that the subjects' language proficiency and language awareness would improve. Also, it was hoped that some association between the two variables would be found.

The subjects were chosen from among *Iranians*, because the research is to be continued and the findings to be applied in Iran. Research students and not other students or children, were chosen because research students are representative of the Iranians who have already completed formal EFL instruction in Iran and will need the language more than anybody else in their country. They should have, theoretically, been at the 'noticing' stage (Fotos, 1993) and the stage of 'click of realization' (Scott, 1992) and were considered suitable subjects for examining the following assumption.

> Noticing has thus been suggested to perform an interfacing function between the development of explicit knowledge of a feature through formal instruction and the eventual acquisition of the feature-... (Fotos, 1993: 387)

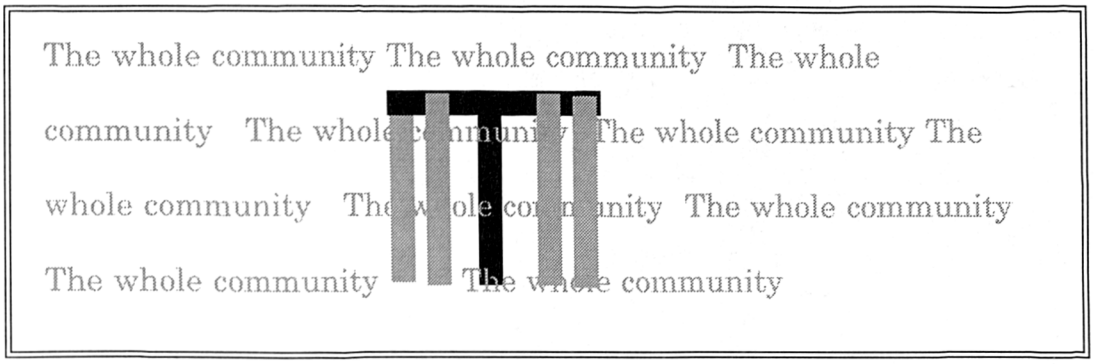
Therefore, it was assumed that these subjects, who had already had some input in formal instruction (before coming to the UK.), were likely to digest the input as they were being exposed to the communicative use of language and subsequently would establish their metalinguistic knowledge.

4.1.4. The samples

For the first study, choosing a reasonable sample of the community of

Iranian research students in the UK was much less difficult than for the longitudinal one. Questionnaires were sent to accessible groups in different cities and a reasonable number were returned as explained in chapter v. For the second study, on the other hand, it was not possible to work with the whole sample, because a longitudinal study would need close access to all the members and commitment on their part. Also, because recording the conversations and doing interviews with a large number of subjects simultaneously and for a long time (even if they were accessible) would need a team of researchers and consequently a long time to transcribe the data which was not available to the researcher. So, a smaller sample of the first sample (those in access) were selected hoping that they would be typical of the first group who in turn would be representative of the whole community of Iranian research students in the UK. That is, the longitudinal group was taken as a sample of the cross-sectional group and the cross-sectional group was, in turn, taken as a sample of the community.

Therefore, in the following diagram, T-bar 1 (iv) , the horizontal black line shows the first sample within the whole community and it includes the smaller sample (top tip of the vertical black line) who were later studied longitudinally as typical of the first group. The grey lines show similar possible studies which could have been carried out longitudinally with some other samples from among the cross-sectional group.



T-bar iv. 1: The position of the smal sample within the larger sample and of both within the whole community of Iranian research students in the UK.

There are about 1000 Iranian research students at any given time in the UK, and the cross-sectional study was done with a sample of 163 students (out of 300 distributed questionnaires), representing the community.

For the cross-sectional study a number of relevant questions were chosen from the BALLI questionnaire (Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory; Horwitz, 1987). Then they were translated into Persian to reduce the risk of misunderstandings due to lack of competence in English language. The questionnaire was piloted with other Iranian research students in Liverpool, to make sure of the validity.

As the longitudinal study was designed to look deeper into both their development of language awareness and improvement in the language, it was decided that their use of language in natural interactions should be monitored. In addition, they were to be interviewed regularly in order that their awareness of language could be observed.

Since the students were most often busy with laboratory work, observing their use of written language would be unrealistic. So, the study focused

on their oral communication.

Because they would interact with academics only occasionally in supervision, common rooms, or in seminars, they were given the choice of recording their conversations on any topic in any situation so that their network of social interactions would be as extensive as possible.

For the longitudinal study also, the interviews, as well as the recording of the conversations, were piloted.

Before going into the details of the studies separately, a general discussion of research procedures is provided first.

4.2. Type of the research

Since measuring language awareness and language proficiency necessitates considering some abstract psychological flows of mind of the subjects, the longitudinal research is basically of a 'qualitative type' which would naturally lead up to a quantitative analysis. The cross-sectional study is a quantitative one in which two variables, one interval and one ordinal, have been compared. Also the tests were treated quantitatively.

Quantitative research using statistics is used more commonly than qualitative research, so at this point a brief consideration of qualitative research is given first and then a short account of quantitative research is presented.

4.2.1. Qualitative research

4.2.1.a. Definition

Before defining qualitative *research*, an interpretation of qualitative *data* is given below:

> Qualitative data for better or worse, now means any data that are not quantitative. (Tesch, 1990: 3)

Also in:

> Whereas quantitative data deals with numbers, qualitative data deals with meanings. Meanings are mediated through language and action. (Dey, 1993: 10)

So, data which do not appear in quantities are considered qualitative. This is explained more specifically in the following statements, which in addition to describing the type of data, illustrate the definition of *qualitative research* but only in terms of how it is done.

> ... in qualitative research the data concerned appear in *words rather than numbers* (our italics). They may have been collected in a variety of ways (observation, interviews, extracts from documents, tape recordings) and usually processed somewhat before they are ready for use (via dictation, typing up, editing, or transcription) but they remain words usually organized into extended text. (Miles and Huberman, 1985: 21)

Tesch's view about how to do qualitative research, and how to define it is shown in the following statements. She confirms the points made above:

> ...one hallmark of qualitative research is the creative involvement of the individual researcher. There is 'no fixed formula'. (1990: 96)

> ... When we talk, therefore, about the analysis of qualitative data, we are not dealing with a monolithic concept like 'statistic'. no one has codified the procedures for qualitative analysis, and it is unlikely that anyone ever will. ..., the notion of qualitative research is fluid and defies definition. (Tesch, 1990: 4)

Also, in terms of application and to justify the reason for doing it, qualitative research is referred to in the following way:

> ...not many phenomena in the human world come naturally in quantities .... to understand more about human phenomena [of this kind], two ingenious sleights of mind were needed: first, one had to create concepts or 'psychological constructs' such as, motivation, conformity, etc., and second, one had to invent a way of measuring a concept, i.e. a way of making assertions about its quality or intensity (Tesch, 1990: 1)

Therefore, as research can be defined as *a studious investigation aimed at the discovery of facts* and regarding the above statements about qualitative data, one may conclude that qualitative research is:

> a studious investigation aimed at the discovery of facts about the kinds of concepts which do not come, naturally, in quantities; and a way of measuring such type of concepts, the formula of which is derived from the data themselves by the creative researcher.

Finally, because the longitudinal study is initially a piece of qualitative research, the process of qualitative research is explained below so that the reader can see how the actual processing compares with the explanations.

4.2.1.b. The process of qualitative analysis

In Miles and Huberman the expression 'data reduction' is used as the next step after data collection with the following definition:

> ... the process of selecting focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the "raw" data that appear in written-up field notes. (1985: 21)

On the other hand, Tesch (1990), prefers the terms 'data condensation', or 'data distillation' over data reduction in the sense that the term reduction can be misunderstood, as it sounds like signifying a decrease in the amount of material with which the researcher works. This is explained in the following quotation:

> ...some novice analysts picture the process of data reduction as one of gradually carving down a large mountain of raw data to a few characteristic rocks. That notion is, unhappily, misleading. The first step in the analysis process is re-arrangement, or re-organization of the data. *Quite opposite to reduction, this step is likely to increase the amount of the material to be handled. Increase happens wherever data segments have relevance to more than one category....* Of course there is always material in the original data that is irrelevant to the research purpose,.....and therefore reduces the data mass. (1990: 139; italics added).

In the continuation of the same argument it is mentioned that data becomes manageable only because it is organized, not because there is less to deal with. This is similar to the belief in the use of data display in Miles & Huberman (1985), where data display, as the second step in the study, is defined as:

> an organized assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action taking. (1985: 21)

Miles and Huberman consider narrative text as the most frequent form of display in the past adding that:

> ...the cognitive tendency is to reduce complex information into selective and simplified Gestalts or easily understood configurations. (1985: 21)

To justify the use of data display, Miles & Huberman come to a similar position to that of Tesch in considering analysis as the process of making sense of narrative data.

Matrices of many types, graphs, networks, and charts are included in Miles & Huberman's list of displays and are said to have been designed to assemble organized information in an immediately accessible compact form.

What things mean, regularities among data, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, casual flow and propositions are mentioned as being considered from the very beginning by the analyst, maintaining openness and scepticism, of course. The validity of the conclusion is tested and verified afterwards.

The fact that organizing data and handling them are interrelated is also implied in Tesch. She has argued that data distillation is brought about as a result of interpretation. That is, to organize data one should do some interpretation; on the other hand, as stated before and quoted below, data

are said to be manageable only when they are organized:

> ...Data don't become manageable because there is less to deal with; they become manageable because they are organized (Tesch, 1990: 139)

So, as with the interactive model in Miles and Huberman, drawing conclusions (interpretation) and categorization are considered to be closely interwoven; and presented side by side from the beginning. Tesch has stated that classification systems can be either the result of an analysis, or they can be a tool; *they can also be something in between or both in the same study*. Examples are given in the *following quotation:*

> In the structural types of analysis the establishment of categories is an important outcome; in interpretive/ descriptive analysis, categories are used as an organizing tool; and in theory building analysis, categories start out as tools and become part of the outcome. (Tesch, 1990: 139)

To develop an organizing system for unstructured qualitative data, Tesch has suggested some steps, a summary of which is given below:

1) Deriving a sense of the whole, beginning with the first data document and continuing with the rest as they come in.

2) Choosing a data document; making a distinction between content and topic.

3) Making a list of topics, one column per data document.

4) Abbreviating the topics as codes; examining the use of the topics in the first (and second) column/s as a preliminary organizing system, while going

back over the data.

5) Refining the organizing system.

6) Making a final decision on the abbreviation for each category name.

7) Assembling the data material belonging to each category in one place to perform a preliminary analysis.

8) Recording the existing data; the result of analysis so far may be used as a guide in the next round of data collection.

4.2.2. Quantitative Study

Obviously in quantitative research one deals with quantities, that is numbers *rather than concepts such as words. In* quantitative research, it is *product data* which is considered compared to *process data* for qualitative research

Since product comes as a result of some process, the two approaches are complementary and not exclusive; and in the search for common laws, principles and norms (as of the stable world of truth in the quantitative approach), any qualitative research may normally end in some quantitative analysis. In the same way as statistics are needed for quantitative research, they are not only applicable but also necessary in qualitative methodology. Quantitative method is needed to control the phenomena the characteristics of which are identified in qualitative research; and to make generalisations about the outcome of the research.

The processes again include data collection and data description (display,

reduction, classification), data analysis, and conclusions. To describe and analyze the data statistics are needed.

Therefore the differences between quantitative and qualitative approaches are: "*located in form, focus, and emphasis of the study*" (Kelliny, 1994: 71). Quantitative data are considered "*more useful when compared with content analysis*" (ibid). Quantitative research is concerned with objective realities and the appropriate approach to discover the realities is said to be discovering them through their parts. So, "*knowledge of the whole can be accumulated through the knowledge of the parts*, while in qualitative approach "*the whole is greater than the sum of the parts*". (*ibid*: 72). Kelliny has stated that uniqueness is the strength of the truth in qualitative research in the sense that it is found in changing patterns; and that generalisablity is the strength of the truth in quantitative research in that it is provided by common laws, principles and norms. Nevertheless, as qualitative data can be analyzed quantitatively, in other words qualitative research and quantitative analysis are used as a continuum, the outcome of qualitative research can be generalisable and representative in the same way as that of quantitative research.

At this point, a pilot study is presented leading to some insights about the types of awareness of language Iranians develop when residing in the UK.

4.3. The eploratory pilot study

Prior to the two studies a study was done to examine the development of

language awareness in Iranians moved temporarily into the UK, comparing children with adult research students. Moreover, establishing the instruments to be used in the present research was also in mind.

As a result of the pilot study, three major types of awareness were identified which were specified to be investigated in the main studies. Also, some additional interpretations were drawn regarding the comparison between children and adults. In addition, the instruments were finalised. A brief report on the study is given below:

4.3.1. Method

The samples used in this study consisted of five children and four Iranian research students.

The children (aged 2-12) were all mine and therefore the most accessible group of children and, relatively, the easiest to watch closely and constantly. The research students were chosen for comparability with a similar group for the further studies.

The children were observed everywhere and directly (for a period of almost a year) and notes were taken whenever interesting data emerged. In addition, they were asked once in a while (but not on a regular basis, as a precaution in order not to make them suspicious) to join a family talk and to practise our English in front of a tape recorder; and during the chat some questions would be put to them, examples of which are given below.

The research students were also observed directly but not as frequently, for at least 6 months each. They were chosen among the researcher's close friends who would meet very often in their houses or in their regular weekly meetings. This gave the researcher the opportunity to take enough notes for later analysis. Moreover, they were asked to record their conversations with their supervisors (for a period of about two months); and also to join in friendly conversations: 1) about language in Persian, their L1, or 2) in English as a means of practising speaking in L2. This means that sometimes they did not know they were being observed and sometimes they did. In addition, an interview questionnaire adapted from BALLI (Horwitz, 1987) was also given to the research students, to be tested and finalised for the final research.

An abridged form of the Cambridge First Certificate test of English (1992) was also administered, to be confirmed as a pre-test for the final research. (Appendix No. 2)

4.3.2. Results

The study resulted in identification of about 100 examples of sensitivity which were grouped under 46 headings (subtypes) which, in turn, were classified into the following three major types.

a. Sensitivity to the nature of language and of language learning. (Donmall, 1985)

b. Sensitivity to learning & communicative strategies.

c. Sensitivity to one's shortcomings regarding language learning.

The indications of LA by the subjects, i.e. the frequency of the subtypes indicted by the subjects within each of the three major types, are illustrated in table iv. 1:

Table iv. 1: The frequency of indications of LA by the subjects under the 3 major types

Informants	Sensit.to nature of lang. & lang. learning	Sensit.to learning & communicative strategies	Sensit.to one's shortcomings (Metacognition Nisbet & Shucksmith, 1986)
students			
R_1	6	4	4
R_2	4	3	8
R_3	3	3	4
R_4	3	5	4
children			
C_1		2	
C_2	4	4	
C_3	7	6	
C_4	4	7	
C_5	6	8	

The first important inference from the above table (iv. 1.) was that the third column (i.e. sensitivity to one's shortcomings) was specific to adults and there was no sign whatsoever of it in the children. In other words, these children did not appear to worry explicitly about their deficiencies.

In order to illustrate the assessment, a list of the subtypes is given first, which is then followed by examples. The other types are dealt with in the same way afterwards. Finally, *types* and *subtypes* are presented in tables in appendices, to show them in relation to the persons who provided the examples.

First Type; Sensitivity to the nature of language and of language learning
(cf. table 2. Appendix 3)

1) Importance of practice
2) Formal/informal use of language
3) Needs analysis regarding why and how and also what to learn
4) Motivation; on the part of teacher/or learner, the explicit mention of its role.
5) Seeking Media; asking for means of learning
6) Advice
7) Preference; natives over non-natives
8) Effectiveness of Suprasegmentals
9) Language varieties
10) Intake
11) Effect of emotions
12) Knowledge recognition; knowledge about one's achievements
13) Curiosity
14) Sensitivity to the relations between spelling and pronunciation
15) Surprise at how language works
16) Goal justification
17) Writing as the criterion for accuracy
18) Name/Nature of lang
19) Contrastive analysis; fall back
20) Analogy; L2-to-L3 &/or L1
21) Importance of the role of teacher

Examples:

1. Sensitivity to the **importance of practice** is detected both in research students and children. It is interesting how children from the very

preliminary stages of learning show sensitivity. Some examples are:[1]

> *Father: How do you learn the words in English?*
> *C2: I listen to my friends then I say them until I learn them.*
> *C4: I don't learn them for the first time; I listen to the new words in my class; I ask my friends to tell me what was said, because I need them, I also listen to television and gradually learn them.*
> *C5:...I do that by reading story books, erm... I practise the words in stories.*

2. Sensitivity to **Formal/informal contexts**, at the explicit level, was exhibited only by older subjects. The example in this study is that of R1 who explained how he referred to the Chinese language to look for formal forms; and also explained why a Chinese used *cook* for boil, falling back on informal use in Chinese (cf. No. 19, under Contrastive analysis).

3. **Needs analysis** (Maley, 1982; Gilfillan, 1991) is done by both children and research students.

R2 spoke about his and other Iranian students' needs in EAP courses and gave suggestions about how to analyze the need. The following is an example of the 6-year old child's sensitivity to and analysis of the need:

> *Father: Why do you learn English?*
> *C2: Because I am in England If I was in an Arab country I would learn Arabic.*

Obviously *the need for language*, in relation to the specific community one

[1] Most of the quotes from the subjects are translated from Persian

lives in, is clear to the child who at the beginning had answered the same question in two different ways at two different stages. Compare the following dialogues:

(after one month of going to an English school)

C2: Why should I learn English?
Father: You'll need it later on

(after a few months)

Father: Why do you learn English?
Child: Because I want to tell the plane that I have learned it. So it would take me to Kerman. (Kerman is his home town)

This, at the same time, is considered as *justification* of one's *goal.*

4. **Explicit mention of the role of motivation** is the second subtype which has been identified only in adults and not in children; and the example is that of R2 who rationalized insufficient proficiency among Iranians as a result of lack of motivation (learned motivation not intrinsic) which in his opinion should be promoted by the teacher. In the same argument he showed his strong belief in the *role of the teacher* in learning a language (specifically English).

5. **Medium seeking** is also specific to adults, and the example chosen is when R3 wondered and asked if there was any reference where one could find the origins of words and also find out if a word is borrowed or original. Giving examples of some words which he did not know where they originated (e.g, Kindergarten: French or German!), he asked:

"Is there any way or book that helps find out where the words originate?"

6. Both children and research students gave interesting pieces of **advice;** R3 advised the researcher that he, as a linguist should learn a bit of different languages to the extent that he would be able to, at least, distinguish the language of any expression he is exposed to; C3, the 7 year old once advised her mother as follows:

Mum (Who was usually worried that she may not ever learn the language): I never learn English.
Ch: If you say I learn then you will learn.

Looking at the above from a psychological point of view, one may decide that this is also an instance of sensitivity to the relation between emotions and learning, i.e. to the fact that one who is not pessimistic or afraid of losing face will be more successful than the a learner who is.

7. The fourth area which children show no sensitivity to and which is specific to adults is **preference of native speaker models over non-natives**. This was expressed by R2 in his argument about the reasons why Iranians are not as good at English as they might have been 15 years ago. He stated that the presence of native Americans and British people in Iran at that time had been an important factor. R4 showed his concern in a meeting where a group of Iranian research students had gathered to discuss the possibility of opening an Iranian school where Iranian children could receive Persian education, which meant little opportunity for them

to continue attending local English schools. R3 was trying hard to convince everybody about the high priority of the Iranian school, while R4 argued for the need to take advantage of English schools as they would not have the opportunity of learning from native speaker teachers back at home. The next day, the researcher met R3, who said:

> *I thought about what was said last night and I think I was over-reacting. If I was in Iran and had the opportunity to choose between a native speaker and one of our best non-native teachers like you to teach English to my children, I would surely choose the native speaker.*

8. Obviously it is unrealistic to think of children as being explicitly sensitive to abstract linguistic notions like **suprasegmentals**; and the findings in this paper show only one case which was expressed by R4 in the following dialogue:

> *Researcher: Why do you say /im'mature/ rather than /imma'ture/*
> *R4: Well, you know. erm... 'stress' changes position in different situations*

Having received the **input** without a real **'intake'**, (Ellis, 1985) i.e. without feeling the fact (Scott, 1992) or perhaps due to fossilisation, he refused to correct himself both at the time of dialogue when he was practising a presentation and later on when he spoke to the real audience. It is worth mentioning that in usual communication this subject has shown that whenever he gets a clue he does correct himself, i.e. he is not resistant to what he **'notices'** (cf. Schmidt, 1992).

9. R1 and R4 gave examples of their sensitivity to **language varieties**:

> *R1: I did not do as well as I expected. erm...I don't know may be it is because the test is a British one but I am familiar with American.*
>
> *R4: My supervisor advised me to stick to only one variety of English. I said O.K. I stick to British English because it is the original variety.*

10. Awareness on **intake as opposed to 'input'** (Ellis, 1985), was shown by both children and research students. For instance, R1 who believes practice makes perfect has usually been trying to find ways of practising. *Initiating switch into English* while having a friendly chat, *readiness to take tests* no matter what the outcome might be (a great majority of Iranian research students are cautious about taking tests given by friends because they want to avoid embarrassment), *spending money on language* books like the dictionaries of English Usage, etymology etc.; and on magazines which claim to be beneficial for improving one's language. Similarly C5, the 12 year old, frequently initiated a switch into English in daily conversations such as:

> *C5: Let's talk English.*
> *...Don't talk Farsi !*

She also explained how she would practise English vocabulary in the following:

> *...I do that by reading story books, erm I practice the words in*

stories.

11. The effect of emotions (non-cognitive factors) on oral production was expressed directly by R4 who stated:

> *...I was cross at my landlord. He said... . I said... . You know when I am angry I make less mistakes, I speak fast.*

Apparently, he meant more fluently rather than accurately but nevertheless he showed that he believed in a relation between anger and performance. While this type of explicit sensitivity to the role of emotions was not shown by children, an example among the pieces of advice given by C2, the six year old boy showing a similar sensitivity, is:

> *C2: Daddy when you are cross at somebody don't speak in English.*
> *Father (after calming down): Why did you tell me that I shouldn't speak in English when I was angry?*
> *C2: Because when you are angry, if you speak in English, you speak fast and so, you are likely to make mistakes.*

In the first example, R4 expresses what he has experienced without thinking or stating the reason for the link, but in the second example, C2 holds an analytical stand, and goes beyond the stage of merely being sensitive to the result, but he justifies the link between the **emotion and performance** through the sequence of *emotion — speed — performance* (specifically, accuracy).

12. **Knowledge recognition** generally, includes all types of sensitivity but here it specifically refers to the cases where children expressed their

knowledge of language by showing off. C3, the seven year old, has usually been stating I know this or that. For example:

...I know yellow green, yellow, pink, ..., etc.

This was usually followed by showing off by C2, the six year old boy. C5, the 12 year old also provided many instances of showing off such as the following:

C5: Daddy do you know what 'bilateral' means?
.. No, Could you tell me, please?
C5: 'bi' stands for two; 'bilateral' means having two letters.

Or like this:

C5: Daddy, I taught you this word. You didn't know that.
... I can speak three languages; I can write China (Chinese)

Research students did not show off in the same way, but they sometimes do comment or give advice as in the following:

R4: I recognized Mr... as an Iranian, when he had just arrived and was talking to secretary at the accommodation office. You know, one can distinguish an Iranian from his foreigner talk.

13. **Curiosity** was expressed by C2, after he had attended the local English school (infant department) for about one month, asking why he should learn English; and by C3 in different forms like:

Daddy, how come you know English but Mum doesn't?

14. **Sensitivity to the relations between spelling and pronunciation** was shown by C3, the 8 year old. Hearing the word "issue" as pronounced by her father as /i:ŝju:/ and comparing it to the spelling of the word she asked:

Why there is no [h] after [s] for the sound /ŝ/?

and some time later again arguing on the same problem when she was told that sometimes /s/ followed by /ju:/ tends to combine into /Ŝ/, she stated:

... But there is [h] in the word 'tissue'.
Father: No there isn't.
C3: (surprised): Isn't there an [h]?
Father: No.

15. An example of '**surprise**' by research students was by R2, who once asked:

...How come our English doesn't improve after about six months that we have been here? I was told that if one lives in England for six months he will improve his English fairly well.

C3 was surprised at how *the order of adjective and noun* in a phrase like 'good girl' differed from her mother tongue, i.e. Persian. This is how she expressed her feeling:

C3: ...Isn't it interesting; they (i.e. English people) say. 'good girl' we (i.e. Persians) say 'girl good'.

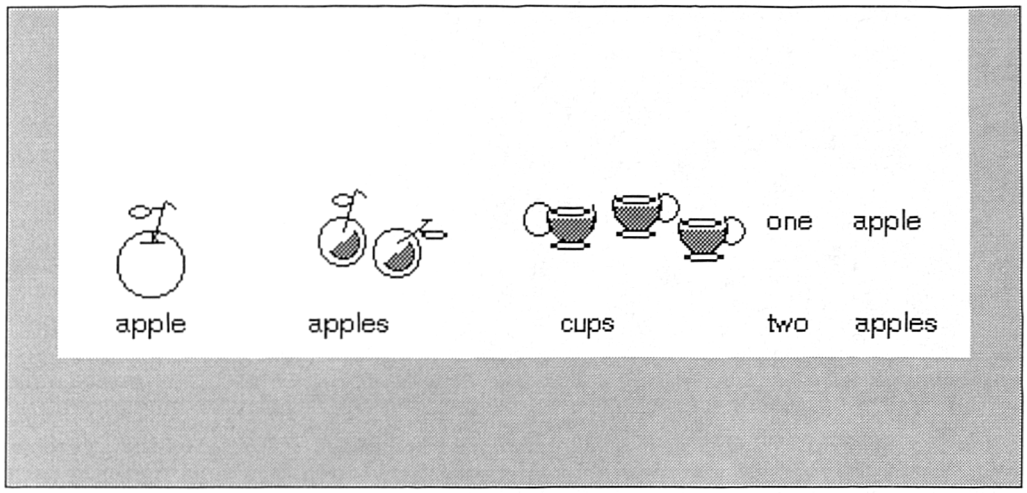


Figure 2-iv: An example

Or in the following regarding figure 2 (above) which could be an example of surprise and/or curiosity about how language works:

C3: Daddy why two and not three?

She reacts to the way plurality is exemplified and looks for some justification for why three cups, as illustrated visually, does not exist in the final set of noun phrases. The point is that she is sensitive to what she feels not what she is told, and to the difference.

16. The examples of **goal justification** by C2 were dealt with in relation to 'needs analysis'. C4 also expressed this both indirectly in his explanation about how he would practise improving his English by asking his peers as he felt he needed the language; and directly in the following example:

Interlocutor: Why do you think you should learn English?
C4:... Because I need it when I am 15.

To him the age of 15 meant the time he would enter university in Iran where he would need the language.

C5, was asked about her goal, and this is how she reacted:

> *C5:...to talk to English people; to talk about ourselves, so that they know we are not bad people...*

17. Writing was considered to be the criterion for accuracy by C3 in her debate on the correct pronunciation of the word 'Batman' as follows:

> *C3: ...It is Ba?man.*
> *C5: No. It is Batman.*
> *C3: I know it is Ba?man.*
> *C5: No, it isn't.*
> *C3: Yes, it is. Why you don't ask daddy?*
> *C3: What is it daddy?*
> *Father: It is Batman.*
> *C3: No. It isn't. Because it is written the way I say it.*
> *Father: So do you mean that the correct form of a word is its written form?*
> *C3: Yes.*

18. Explicit sensitivity to the distinction between **knowing a language** (nature of language and **knowing the name of that language**, was elicited from an example by C4 in the following:

> *Father: How many languages do you know?*
> *C4: Erm...you want the name(s)?*

19. **Contrastive analysis** (Foreign language interaction: Hufeisen, 1993) was inferred from the following comment by R1 after taking a test given by the researcher. The test included some written part:

> *...In writing these types of text, I am more comfortable, as compared to writing a letter. for which I have to use a dictionary; to find formal words or expressions, I usually refer to Chinese and compare formal and informal words in that language; then I look for the equivalent form in English.*

This research student has Chinese as his L3 because he did his MSc. in China. Another example by him is in the following:

> *A Chinese lady: I used your kettle to cook water.*

Some time later when the lady had left:

> *Researcher: Why do you think she uses 'cook' and not 'boil'?*
> *R1: Because in Chinese the equivalent word for cook is used in informal usage and there is an equivalent for boil which is used in formal usage.*

20. Children 3 & 5 **analogised** languages mostly because C3 has started her English and Persian Education at about the same time; and similarly C5 started learning Arabic after about one year from when she started going to English school. For example:

> *C3: How do you say this word?*
> *C5: /ha:t/ (heart).*
> *C3: but it is not 'written' the way you 'say' it.*
> *C5: Some words are not pronounced as they are written.*
> *C3: Oh, I see. It is like your name which (in Farsi) we write* ***Hodi*** *but we read* ***/hoda:/***

Another example by the same child could be the case of her reaction to the order of words in the noun phrase 'good girl'. And an example by C5 was

elicited in the following:

Father: In Arabic you should use plural suffixes in agreement with numeral determiners.
C5: I see. It is like English but different from Farsi.

21. Importance of **the role of teacher** (Corder, 1985) regarding second language learning is shown in this example by R2 in his argument with

R2: How do you expect one whose field of study is put to him randomly to have the motive to learn and to teach.
Interlocutor... Well I think it is not only the teacher, but it is the goal which is not clarified.
R2: Alright, again you see it is the teacher who does not clarify the objectives.

and this one by C4:

Father: How do you compare your English with that of...?
C4: I am better.
Father: How come; isn't he older than you?
C4: Yes, he is. but my teacher is tough. so we learn better.

Second Type; Sensitivity to language learning and communicative strategies

(cf. table 3. Appendix 4.)

Being sensitive to the strategies of language learning in using them effectively and intentionally, and more specifically being able to talk about them, is surely a type of language awareness which is worth looking into. The list below shows the sub-types identified in this study. The elements

are classified into those which are merely personal and those which call for others' cooperation. Therefore the following two groups are obtained:

Merely personal

1) Self-correction
2) Asking native peers
3) Reading texts
4) Listening to natives
5) Looking for immediate feedback
6) Using sign language
7) Random choice of words
8) Modelling L2 on L1
9) Contrastive analogies
10) Copying texts
11) Stuttering to look for words
12) Implying strategies in form of giving advice
13) Falling back on similar concepts (Krashen and Terrell, 1983)
14) Analogising from L2 to L3
15) A unique way of using a dictionary

Those which call for others' cooperation

16) Initiating teaching strategies for better learning
17) Relying on teachers
18) Initiating switch to L2

Most (but not all) of the elements in the above list match with those in Nisbet and Shucksmith (1986); and/or in Skehan (1989).

Examples

1. Some transcribed data from R1 showed that he **corrected himself** more than 20 times in every 15 minutes; one example among the

many is:

...may be there is...erm there was some mistake.

or this:

...but about coup, coup, a couple of days ago, ...

C5 also used self correction strategy for words and specially to enssure the appropriateness of verb forms regarding tense, as in:

...I tell,..erm I told, I told them a story

2. Some examples of noticing the need to use the strategy of **asking native peers** were elicited as follows:

Father: How do you practice learning words?
C4: I ask my friends. If I have difficulty in understanding something in my class, I ask about it from my friend during the break time.

3. **Reading** to improve one's language is a strategy which is used by both children and research students. But among four research students observed in this study only R1 expressed it explicitly in the following dialogue:

Researcher: Do you know where I may find the form for subscription to Newsweek'?
R1: Yes. .... It is a good magazine. I have subscribed to 'Times', and if you get Newsweek then we can read both together. They are good to improve one's language.

C3 usually enjoys sitting somewhere to read any text that she finds and asks questions.

C5 usually reads story books for other children.

4. **Listening to natives**: (for examples by C2 & C4 see. No.1, p: 82; under 'practice').

5. Looking for **immediate feedback**:

....When your daddy doesn't ask right away then you forget.

The above statement was made by C4 in response to his father's reaction on why he had forgotten something which he had been taught.

6. C1, the 2 year old, was asked something in Persian within the range of her language competence. She responded correctly using both **sign language** and words; then she was asked a similar but not the same question in English. This time the answer was correct but only through the medium of gestures. Later on, this was repeated occasionally with abrupt switching from one language to the other, and most often the responses were similar to the first one.

There have also been instances when C2 used the same strategy due to his limited range of vocabulary.

7. C1 used another strategy and that was her **random choice of words** when she was exposed to second language. This was inferred from examples of the following type:

Father: What did you have in the nursery?
C1: (laughing) Nop!
Father : Did you have chocolate?
C1: I'ss mine.

This also was examined in different situations.

The same strategy was used by R4 who used irrelevant words to fill in the blanks of his shortcomings in conversation (Words like: **anyway, you know, etc.**). Of course the fillers were used differently from the way a native speaker might use these as discourse markers.

8. C2, C3, and C4 **used their knowledge of the first language** in **asking about English**. The following is an example of Using **L1 as a model for L2.**

C3: Daddy.
Father: Yes.
C3: 'Has' means da:rad. What means da:rand? (plural form in Persian for own; possess)
Father: 'Have' means darand

The reverse was also true, i.e. they asked occasionally for Persian equivalents of English expressions, rules, etc. (e.g, What is this word in Farsi; how do you say this in Farsi).

9. **Contrastive analogies**

Once children or adults become sensitive to the fact that in some areas different languages might be analogous, they tend to use that knowledge in learning. In other words, because of close relation between sensitivity to and use of analogies the examples mentioned before (cf. no.20 of the first

type) can count as strategies as well.

10. **Copying texts** is a strategy that was found to be used by both children and research students but with slightly different objectives. R4, for example, took a report draft to be checked by the researcher. While the researcher was correcting the text, occasionally R4 would stop him and say:

> *... there is no need to worry about this part this is copied from another text. I usually use the format of a previous paper, and insert my findings.*

Although this may end in some type of empirical learning of writing papers, it is very different from the way children use the strategy, as C2 and C3 used to sit down and copy from books, magazines, etc.

11. **Stuttering,** which is not a common or accepted strategy in Persian, was used by R4 who imitated native speakers, taking time to look for words, as in:

> *I would like to...to...to organize the...the...the varieties...*

12. R3 & R4 advised the researcher how to do research into language:

> *....You could take your note book and go to the city centre; you could listen to the T.V, etc. and do your research; Language is everywhere. You should go for it.*

Also C3's **advice** for her mother, mentioned before, (cf. No. 6, p: 85) is of

the same type.

13. An example of **initiation of teaching strategies** by R2 is in what he said regarding EAP courses:

> *Wouldn't it be better if the teachers would distribute a questionnaire that the students could fill in, so that they could evaluate their job for later improvement?*

14. **Relying on teacher** by R2 & C4 is implied in the examples regarding sensitivity to the role of teacher (no. 21 above). The case of C4 was similar in his Persian education, where he relies mostly on somebody in his studies.

15. **Falling back on similar concepts** is exemplified, for both R2 & C5, in that they usually add a preposition to words like; avoid, use, defend, etc. (avoid of, use from, defend of), because in Persian to convey the same semantic items one should and would use a verb and a preposition.

16. **Analogising from L2 to L3** are the cases of R1 & C5 who analogise from English to Chinese and from Arabic to English (L3 to L2?[2]) respectively.

17. **Initiating switch to** L2 is the strategy that R1 and C5 used; and similarly C2, the 6 year old boy, sometimes switched to L1, possibly because he is still very much in need of practising his mother tongue.

18. **Using a dictionary** which is a common strategy, was taken by R1 in

[2]The distinction between L2 and L3 is sometimes difficult

a unique way:

> *In writing formal texts like letters I use a dictionary, but not when I, for example, write a composition.*

C4 & C5 also mentioned using a dictionary at school, and they sometimes take a bilingual dictionary to school.

Third type; Sensitivity to one's shortcomings in language learning (cf. table. 4, Appendix 5)

For language learners and specifically learners of a second or foreign language, knowing about what they do not know about language or about language learning (i.e. metacognition) can be taken asi awareness of language in the sense that one must be analytical about something, and aware of the nature of that thing to be able to identify one's deficiencies. The following list gives a list of the sub-types of sensitivity to one's shortcomings identified in this study.

1) Dissatisfaction with results
2) Asking for help
3) Dissatisfaction with overall progress of Iranians regarding learning English
4) Implying one's fear of speaking out in L2
5) Comprehension ability
6) Iranians' Foreigner talk

Examples

1. R1 expressed his **dissatisfaction with the results** of a test given by

the researcher. The example was given in relation to *language varieties* (cf. first type #9). R2 showed his dissatisfaction with his poor progress in learning English in England. This was also dealt with previously in relation to '*surprise*' (first type no.15).

2. All four research students showed sensitivity to their shortcomings in **asking** for the researcher's **help**. R1, for instance, did it in the following conversation:

> *R1: Shall we go to the meat market tomorrow?*
> *Researcher: Yes, I need some meat.*
> *R1: Alright, this is the man's telephone number and I think If you give him a ring and ask the man about the kind of meat, prices, and how late they are open it will help. I suggest that you should do it because you know better how to ask and understand better what he says.*

R2, expressed his weakness in asking, again and again, about the best approach for language proficiency. The last time he did was at a conference involving Iranian research students working in different fields. He asked a linguist:

> *...Excuse me Mr..., what do you, as a specialist, think is the best method to learn English?*

R3 and R4 brought their reports and/ or papers to the researcher to check and to explain their mistakes before handing them to their supervisors. The last one by R4 was a form that he took to the researcher and said:

> *...Would you please write the answer to the last part. You*

know better how to write. Then I can copy them.

3. R2 showed his concern about Iranians' **inaptitude regarding English language** on different occasions like:

> *...In your absence we were talking about your topic and that it is the very real problem in our country. We were thinking why should all overseas people like Indians, Pakistanis, ... leave us behind regarding English language proficiency. While we were far better before the Revolution.*

4. R2 was speaking to another research student about the EAP course that he had just finished:

> *Researcher: How was your English course?*
> *R2: Well I think the course is good, because it helps you overcome the **fear** you may have **in speaking out.***
> *Researcher: Yeah, I guess you are right.*

5. Regarding **comprehension** (reading and listening), R3 expressed his deficiency in comprehending unfamiliar contexts. The following example was picked up when I gave him a poem describing a farmer and asked his opinion as a specialist in agriculture. He had a look and stated:

> *...I understand this, because you wrote Iranian. (the description, culturally, fitted an Iranian farmer)*
> *You know., I understand my supervisor when he talks to me, but I don't understand the fellow who is working there (in the same lab where R3 worked). I am not familiar with his work.*

6. Concerning Iranians' deficiency in accent or pronunciation, R4 stated that:

You know, one can distinguish an Iranian from his **foreigner talk**.

4.3.3. Conclusion

Three major types of language awareness were identified, viz. *sensitivity to the nature of language and language learning*; *sensitivity to language learning strategies*; and *sensitivity to one's shortcomings in language learning*. Sensitivity to one's shortcomings was specific to adults and not shown by the children. This lack of metacognitive awareness (as opposed to metalinguistic awareness; Sharwood Smith, 1994) in young children supports what is reported by Nisbet and Shucksmith (1986) that older children have a clearer and more accurate conception of their own cognitive abilities and limitations than do younger children. It, of course, needs mentioning that even older children could be more aware of their abilities than their shortcomings. In addition, it may be hypothesised to be an advantage for children over the research students. This is because the first reaction of the adults to their knowledge about their deficiencies could be fear of "loss of face" as a negative reinforcement, so that they might refuse to use the language which might, in turn, result in more shortcomings unless some kind of strong reinforcement (e.g. knowledge about goals as an instrumental motivation) changes the situation. In other words, metacognition may result in metacognitive learning strategies to improve performance. The following figure (figure 3.iv) shows the resulting hypothesis as described in this conclusion.

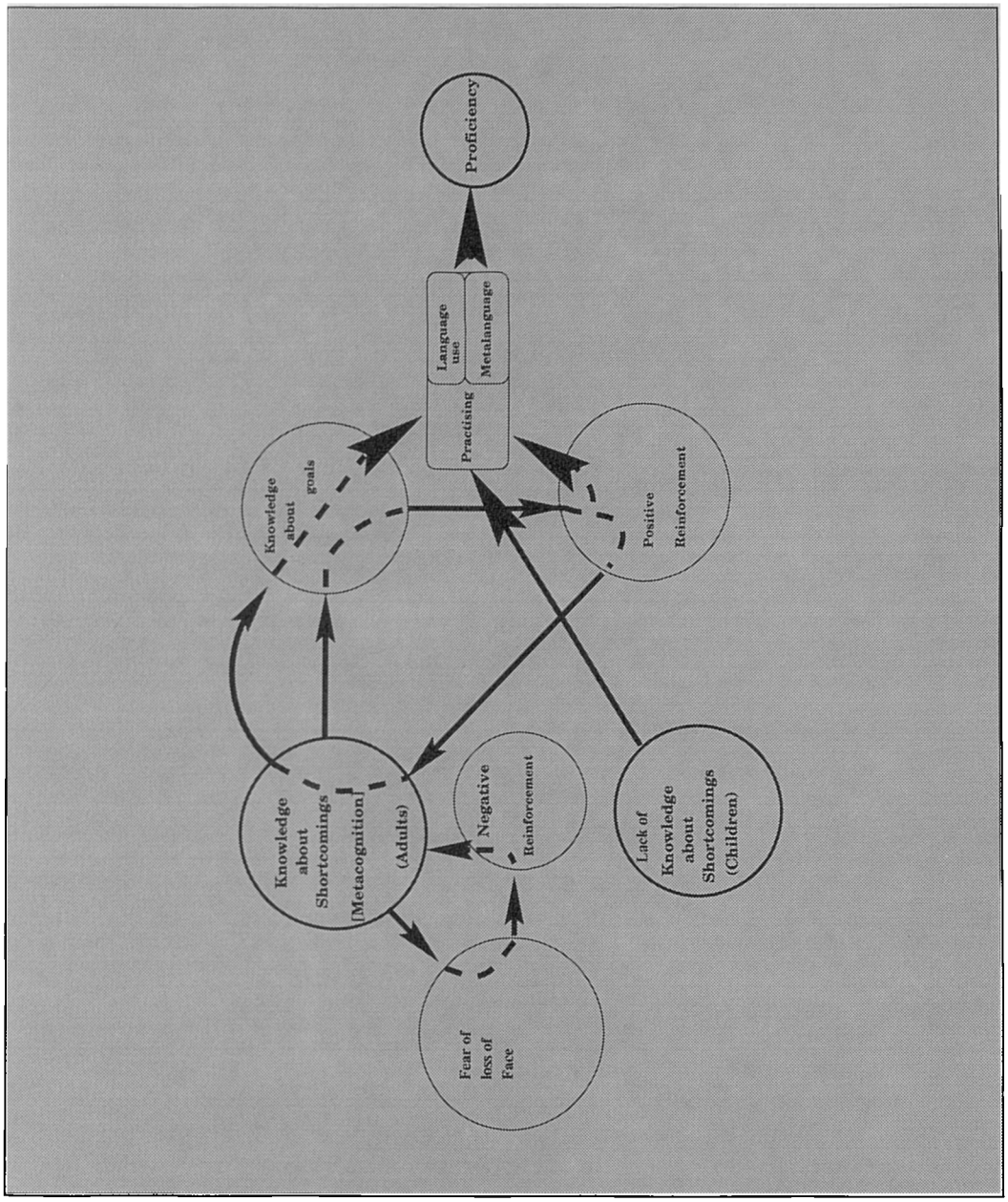


Figure 3-iv: Metacognition and language proficiency in adults and children

As found from the study, children do not, usually, show sensitivity to their shortcomings in language learning. Therefore, they seem to practise the

use of language without being afraid of loss of face. If so, they may consequently develop language proficiency. This is shown in figure 3.iv starting from knowledge about shortcomings in the circle at the bottom left corner and leading along the arrow to the circle before the last one at the right hand and finally to language proficiency.

On the other hand, adults may face a negative reinforcement in finding out their deficiencies and they might refrain from practising the use of language because of *fear of loss of face.* or they might receive some type of positive reinforcement boosting their attention towards practising the use of language in different ways.

In figure 3.iv, metacognition in adults is shown in the circle at the top left corner, where it might result in a *negative reinforcement* (the circle below it to the right) through *fear of loss of face* (the circle at the far left centre); and probably adds to or establishes the knowledge about shortcomings.

Meanwhile, if their metacognition is followed by some information about language such as why they might need the language, i.e. knowledge about goals, it could act in two ways: 1) to establish knowledge about shortcomings and 2) to become a positive reinforcement (circle at bottom right) which again may lead to practise and proficiency and also to more establishment of metacognition and more appreciation of goals; and thereafter to practise and proficiency.

Here, knowledge about goals is used as an example of positive reinforcement. For instance, with many an Iranian research student who

had been cautious in speaking English in front of their colleagues in Iran, once they found they would need to use the language to do research abroad, they started both *practising the use of language* and *learning more about language.*

As mentioned before, a positive reinforcement may act in different ways like adding to and establishing their knowledge about language (and in turn backing up knowledge about goals); and leading the learner straight to the practising of the use of language. Again development of proficiency is expected as a result of practising the use of language as well as gaining linguistic knowledge.

Secondly, the number of strategies for children shows a constant increase in relation to their age. This confirms what is reported by Nisbet and Shucksmith (1986) that most studies indicate that as children grow older, there is an improvement in both the range and sophistication of strategies which they can describe.

Such a relation was not considered in adults in this study. Nevertheless, some correlation between their background and the number of strategies has been identified.

The figure overleaf (4-iv) shows the relation between age and number of strategies as found in this case study. It also illustrates the period of time each child was observed (width of bars). So the thickness of each bar represents the period of time for one child (e.g. for the first one the period begins from one year and about three months, and ends in two years and

about three months i.e. a period of about one year). Therefore, two types of strategies were used by the first child in a period of one year.

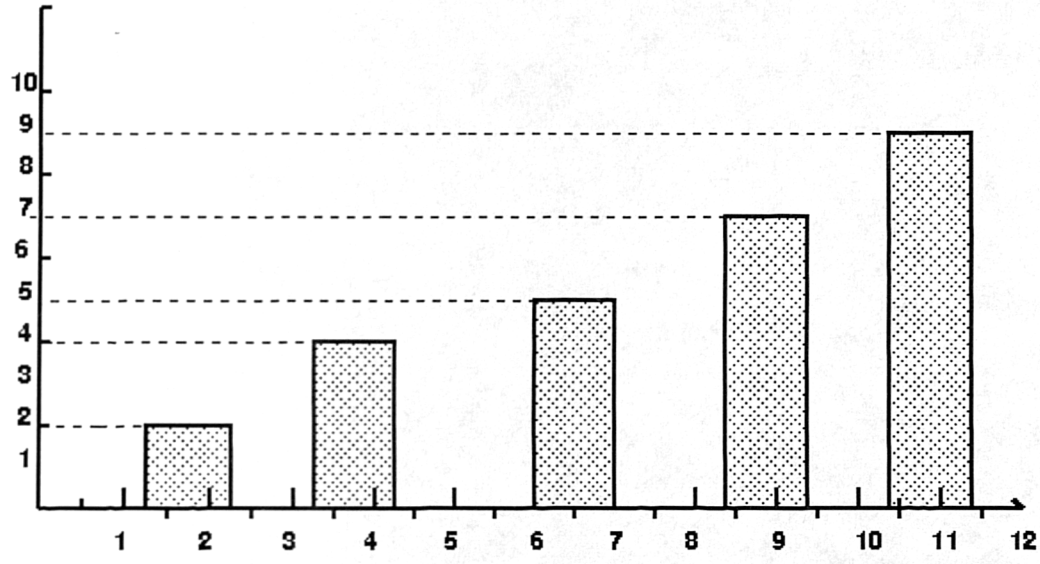


Figure 4: The relation between Age and No. of Strategies in children

Figure 4-iv: The relation between Age and No. of strategies in children
Y axis = No. of strategies
X axis = Age of children and the period of time of study (width of each bar)

Thus in this exploratory study, different types of LA as developed in Iranians, both adult research students and children, were identified. Additional interpretations were also done by comparing children's types of awareness with that of adults and by comparing children of different ages to each other.

For the present study however, only the insight gained into the types of LA developed by research students was used as the basis for the types of LA tokens to be investigated and so for the type of instruments to be prepared.

Since sensitivity to the nature of language and to the nature of language learning develops over a rather long time, especially for this type of subjects who are not concerned necessarily with language and language learning, and as the pilot study showed, this type of development needed a longitudinal study.

The types of awareness of language identified in the pilot study (i.e. *sensitivity to the nature of language and language learning*, *sensitivity to language learning strategies*, and *sensitivity to one's shortcomings*) were consequently, taken as the main areas of concern in the present research into the relation between language awareness and language proficiency.

Prior to the longitudinal study, the outcomes of a cross-sectional study are presented. The cross-sectional study was carried out as a support to the longitudinal study.

The Main Studies:

1) The cross-sectional study

2) The longitudinal study

CHAPTER

V

THE CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

Contents:

5.1. The organization of this chapter

In this chapter the cross-sectional study is dealt with, different parts of which are discussed in the following order:

The aim of the study is discussed first, followed by the methods section describing the subjects, how and why they were chosen; and the instruments and how they were developed. Finally, the procedures of analysis are described, leading to the next chapter on the results of the study.

5.2. Aim of the study

This study aimed at examining the subjects' language awareness (in terms of conscious beliefs about language learning) against the length of time they had spent in the UK as an English speaking country.

It has been suggested that learners' perceived beliefs about language learning would be likely to affect their choice of the way they use learning strategies and learn a second language. Therefore, this study was carried out as a support to the longitudinal study of the relation between Language Awareness and Language Proficiency. As a general rule of thumb, the more one resides in an English speaking community the more one learns the language of that community and probably about the language. Although this is not always so, and although the relation between exposure to language use and knowledge about language and, in turn, proficiency is not uncontroversial, a simple calculation can be used

to illustrate a general claim.

Iranian students receive 1,080 hours (4 hours per week of English instruction during a period of 7 school years from middle school to university. Living in the UK, at a rough estimate of 10 hours of exposure to English per day, a mere three months and 18 days would equate to 1,080 hours.

However, this is a conservative estimate, because in practice in Iran, both L1 and L2 are used in English classes which reduces still further the amount of time needed for equal exposure in the UK.

It should be mentioned that, on the one hand, the relation between the length of time of exposure to a foreign language and language awareness/language proficiency has remained controversial. Some writers believe that it is unlikely that mere exposure to the language can be taken as a causal factor for knowledge about language . This is exemplified in the following:

> Learning a language involves understanding something of that language. It is unlikely that such understanding can be developed by naturalistic exposure. It has to be quite explicitly taught. (Carter, 1991: 148)

On the other hand, beliefs about language learning are said to have an effect on language learning and they are influenced by students' previous experience (Horwitz: 1987). Also, metalinguistic input (regardless of the amount) received in formal instruction is said to be maintained and established by exposure to communicative use (Fotos, 1993). .

For the type of learners in this study, who have already had, at least, some formal instruction, living in an English speaking country was expected to be beneficial in establishing their metalanguage and could be effective in change of their beliefs about language learning.

This study is, therefore, to give an overall view of the probable natural development of language awareness in terms of change in beliefs about language learning, in Iranian research students as a result of exposure to communicative use of language.

5.3. Method and Materials

5.3.1. Subjects

Subjects were chosen from among Iranian research students, as explained in the last chapter. In terms of practicality they were considered more accessible than others.

Moreover, adult Iranian research students were chosen to increase the *internal validity* (Hatch and Farhady, 1982) against the intervention of such factors as maturation and history. The relatively small variation in the age of the subjects was disregarded and mere adulthood was taken as equal to maturity.

Iranian research students involved in this study (except for 5% who had been in the UK for a long time) come from a similar educational background. This assumption is based on the information from the bio-data collected with the questionnaire and also the fact that in Iran schools and

universities are run by the government and they (the state schools and universities) have been the only option for these subjects especially at *their* time of education.

For presentational purposes the subjects were divided into three groups based on the number of years of stay in the UK. The details are given in the section on procedures.

5.3.2. Instruments:

5.3.2.a. Type

A short questionnaire was the main instrument for the study. The questionnaire comprised twenty questions (appendix ii) about language and was adapted from BALLI (Horwitz, 1987).

BALLI (Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory) was designed originally to assess students' opinions on a variety of issues related to language learning. It consists of 34 items developed for both research and training purposes.

Of course, there is not a right or wrong answer for each item in the BALLI to be considered as LA or lack of LA. However, it should be mentioned that because beliefs about language learning are influenced by the learners' experience in the course of language learning (Horwitz, 1987), any change in beliefs can be taken as an intentional and conscious choice. Moreover, change of beliefs about language learning can be considered as indications or bases of change in learning strategies.

Horwitz classifies the items (in the BALLI inventory) under the following subgroups:

-Difficulty of Language Learning
-Language Aptitude
-Nature of Language Learning
-Learning and Communicative Strategies
-Motivations

The following chart shows the distribution of the 20 items used in this study based on the BALLI classification.

Table v.1: The distribution of questions

Difficulty of Language Learning	Language Aptitude	Nature of Language Learning	Learning and Communicative Strategies	Motivations
3 and 19	1,5,8,17,18,20	2,6,9,12,14,15	4,7,10,11	13 and 16

5.3.2.b. Layout

There were five options for each item in the questionnaire. The options were defined as:

SA= Strongly Agree **A**= Agree **N**= Neither agree nor disagree

D= Disagree **SD** = Strongly disagree.

and the format was as follows:

1. Some people have a special ability for learning a foreign language.

SA ( ) **A** ( ) **N** ( ) **D** ( ) **SD** ( )

It should be mentioned that the questionnaire was anonymous and that the options were later reduced (after data collection) to three values: agree, disagree and neutral, where agree means both "strongly agree" and "agree", neutral is equal to no answer, and disagree means both "disagree" and "strongly disagree". In other words, the dependent variable was changed from an ordinal series into a nominal one, with two values to be considered in the analysis.

5.3.3. Procedures

5.3.3.a. Data collection

300 questionnaires were distributed among Iranian research students in Liverpool, Nottingham, Leeds, Manchester, Glasgow; 163 were returned. As the number of Iranian research students in the UK at any one time is about 1,000 this is felt to be reasonably representative of the community at around 16% of the population.

The only outstanding problem in this study regarding data collection was that some subjects (N = 22) failed to state their date of arrival in the UK, and their level of education.

Iranian research students, usually, have a time limit of 3 years. So, the subjects were grouped according to the number of years they had spent in the UK by the time they were interviewed. However, there were some (N=12) who had apparently spent many years (between 43 - 228 months) in the UK, before they started their research. Their number according to

the time is as follows:

Months	Frequency
43	= 1
60	= 2
73	= 1
80	= 1
117	= 1
120	= 1
136	= 1
180	= 1
183	= 1
221	= 1
228	= 1

Considering the research students living in the UK up to 60 months (i.e. 5 years) as having a similar background to those with less time in the UK, 9 subjects, i.e. 5% of the total, were eliminated from the analysis as they do not represent typical Iranian research students.

As mentioned before, the subjects were divided into three groups. That is, 1 to 12 months; 13 to 24 months and 25 to 60 months. The following chart shows the frequencies according to the period of time the subjects had been in the UK:

Table v.2: Number of subjects according to the time period of their stay in UK.

Months	Frequency	Percent
1-12	48	36.36%
13-24	48	36.36%
25-60	36	27.27%

5.3.3.b. Analysis

The analysis was done in two main stages: 1) organising the data and

creating the data file, 2) carrying out statistical tests using SPSS.

The data were first processed to obtain overall percentage findings (as shown in the Appendix); then breakdowns were compared using the grouped variables relating to time in the UK as just described.

To disprove the null hypothesis of lack of association between language awareness and the amount of time the subjects spend in an English speaking country, a chi-square test and an analysis of variance were carried out.

To do a chi-square test one requirement is that no more than 20% of the expected frequencies should be below 5. Otherwise, the test tends to disprove the null hypothesis too easily (cf. Bland, 1995). There are five cases which include too many (more than 20%) cells with expected frequencies below 5. That is, items 1, 3, 5, 10, and 18.

Moreover, as the variables in each test consisted of one nominal dependent variable (after merging the options and reducing them to two values: agree/disagree) and one interval independent with numerous levels, running a chi-squared test would result in losing information because of grouping time variables into a few categories. So, analysis of variance (ANOVA)[1] was selected as a more appropriate measure of significance.

Results are presented in the next chapter.

It should be mentioned that because the study was cross-sectional, and the

[1] ANOVA (Analysis Of Variances) is a strong test used to compare the means of two variables (or two sets of variables): a dependent (in this case 'beliefs') and an independent (in this case 'time'). It shows whether variance in the means of the independent variable affects the means of the dependent variable or not. The data used is of a nominal type.

three groups were, in practice, different groups with different length of time of exposure to language use (as opposed to one group examined in different years), inclusion of neutral answers would not be of any more value than the missing ones. So, to have a nominal data they were discarded.

CHAPTER

VI

RESULTS OF THE CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

Contents:

6.1. Descriptives and Discussion

6.1.1. Descriptives

For ease of interpretation, the following tables show grouped data (as if a chi-square analysis had been used) but an ANOVA computation of significance.

Table vi.1: Cross-tabulations and ANOVA P-values.

Q1. Some people have a special ability for learning a foreign language				P-value based on ANOVA
Answer	1-12 months	13-24 months	25-60 months	
Disagree	3 7.5%	4 9.1%	5 15.2%	0.3381
Agree	37 92.5%	40 90.9%	28 84.8%	
Q2. It is necessary to know about English speaking cultures in order to speak English.				0.1770
Disagree	13 39.4%	20 60.6%	15 57.7%	
Agree	20 60.6%	13 39.4%	11 42.3%	
Q3. I believe that I will learn to speak English very well				0.6249
Disagree	1 2.4%	3 7.0%	1 3.0%	
Agree	40 97.6%	40 93.0%	32 97.%	
Q4. You shouldn't say anything in English until you can say it properly.				0.8965
Disagree	32 76.2%	36 85.7%	24 75.0%	
Agree	10 23.8%	6 14.3%	8 25.0%	
Q5. People who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning a foreign language.				0.2704
Disagree	31 88.6%	42 95.5%	28 93.3%	
Agree	4 11.4%	2 4.5%	2 6.7%	

Table vi.2: Continuation of table 1.

Q6. It is best to learn English in an English speaking country.				P-value based on ANOVA
Answer	1-12 months	13-24 months	25-60 months	
Disagree	2 5.3%	4 9.3%	10 33.3%	0.0002
Agree	36 94.7%	39 90.7%	20 66.7%	
Q7. It is Ok. to guess if you don't know a word in English				0.4184
Disagree	5 11.9%	4 9.8%	5 16.1%	
Agree	37 88.1%	37 90.2%	26 83.9%	
Q8. I have a special ability for learning foreign languages.				0.5441
Disagree	7 35.0%	8 42.1%	3 25.0%	
Agree	13 65.0%	11 57.9%	9 75.0%	
Q9. The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning the vocabulary words.				0.1418
Disagree	11 28.9%	11 32.4%	11 44.0%	
Agree	27 71.1%	23 67.6%	14 56.0%	
Q10. It is important to repeat and practise a lot.				0.7284
Disagree	1 2.1%	2 4.2%	1 2.9%	
Agree	47 97.9%	46 95.8%	33 97.1%	

Table vi.3: Continuation of table 2.

Q11. I feel timid speaking English with other people.				P-value based on ANOVA
Answer	1-12 months	13-24 months	25-60 months	
Disagree	27 73.0%	27 71.1%	25 83.3%	0.2938
Agree	10 27.0%	11 28.9%	5 16.7%	
Q12. The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning the grammar.				0.5599
Disagree	16 53.3%	16 53.3%	7 38.9%	
Agree	14 46.7%	14 46.7%	11 61.1%	
Q13. I would like to learn English so that I can get to know British/American people better.				0.1228
Disagree	27 75.0%	33 82.5%	14 56.0%	
Agree	9 25.0%	7 17.5%	11 44.0%	
Q14. Learning a foreign language is different from learning other academic subjects.				0.3337
Disagree	12 36.4%	15 35.7%	6 20.7%	
Agree	21 63.6%	27 64.3%	23 79.3%	
Q15. The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning how to translate from my native language.				0.5635
Disagree	27 77.1%	29 82.9%	20 71.4%	
Agree	8 22.9%	6 17.1%	8 28.6%	

Table vi.4: Continuation of table 3.

Q16. If I learn English very well, I will have better opportunities in my life.				P-value based on ANOVA
Answer	1-12 months	13-24 months	25-60 months	0.4453
Disagree	8 21.1%	8 20.0%	4 14.8%	
Agree	30 78.9%	32 80.0%	23 85.2%	
Q17. People who speak more than one language are very intelligent.				0.4879
Disagree	13 52.0%	14 40.0%	12 57.1%	
Agree	12 48.0%	21 60.0%	9 42.9%	
Q18. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.				0.1015
Disagree	8 18.6%	3 7.1%	2 6.3%	
Agree	35 81.4%	39 92.9%	30 93.8%	
Q19. It is easier to read and write than to speak and understand.				0.1194
Disagree	17 44.7%	11 31.4%	17 70.8%	
Agree	21 55.3%	24 68.6%	7 29.2%	
Q20. It is easier for someone who already knows a foreign language to learn another one.				0.8599
Disagree	7 17.1%	7 21.9%	4 16.0%	
Agree	34 82.9%	25 78.1%	21 84.0%	

6.1.1.a Overall observations

Considering tables vi.1-4, it is clear that some items tended to arouse very little disagreement in the respondents. Thus, in Q1, Q3, Q6, Q10, and Q18 a great majority of respondents were on the side of agreement. In Q4, Q5, Q11, Q13, and Q15, they were overwhelmingly in disagreement.

A second general observation is that there is only one item (i.e. no.6) where a significant difference was found in relation to time in the UK. In most cases, the percentages in the three columns are fairly similar and there does not seem to be a detectable trend.

For the first of Horwitz's categories, Difficulty of Language Learning, items 3 and 19 appear to suggest a positive belief with the great majority optimistic about their ability to learn to speak English, even though speaking does not appear to be considered a relatively easy skill.

For the second category, Language Aptitude, items 1 and 8 show that most of the subjects had a positive belief about the relation between special abilities and learning a foreign language. They also considered themselves as having the ability to learn a foreign language.

Item 17 suggests that they were not sure about any relation between intelligence and foreign language. On the other hand, the ability to learn a foreign language (item 18) and that knowing one foreign language helps learning another one (item 20) were taken for granted by these subjects.

On the whole, subjects viewed foreign language learning optimistically.

For the third category, Nature of Language Learning, the role of environment, the importance of vocabulary and the difference between foreign language learning and learning other subjects (items 6, 9, and 14) are viewed positively. Item 2 shows some fluctuation suggesting uncertainty regarding the importance of grammar in learning a foreign language. Item 15 suggests that subjects had a negative view about any role of translating from one's native language.

On the whole, environment and vocabulary are considered important, and foreign language learning is seen as different from learning other subjects.

For category 4, Learning and Communicative Strategies, items 4 and 11 were viewed negatively, suggesting that the subjects believed one should not sacrifice fluency for accuracy and that one should not fear loss of face. They supported this view by reacting positively to item 7 about guessing as a good strategy. Item 10 on the importance of practice was seen very positively, much as one would have expected.

On the whole, communicative strategies like guessing and learning strategies like practising were considered important.

For the fifth category, item 13 on integrative motivation, showed the negative view of a great majority of the subjects. That is, they were not for the idea of using a foreign language as a means of integration. Item 16, on the other hand, suggests a strong optimism about the use of foreign language as an instrument for better opportunities in one's life.

6.1.2. Discussion

Returning to the descriptive statistics presented in tables 1-4 (vi), we could not draw conclusions on only one item where a significant difference was found, because 1/20th of the items is 5% which is the significance level being used. Therefore, the results suggest that there is little relation between the time of exposure to language and change in the subjects' beliefs about language learning, at least in the areas examined in this study. This, to some extent, confirms Carter's argument mentioned in the last chapter.

Considering the items one by one based on the cross-tabulations and in relation to their respective subgroups, the following arguments are possible. It should be added that in the following analysis the pattern of change in the weight of answers among the three groups is considered. That is, the development of percentage of agreements compared to that of disagreements over time is examined. It should also be noted that this comparison is only for additional information about the suitability of the items used in this study and is not essential to the present research.

6.1.2.a. Difficulty of Language Learning

For item 3, *I believe that I will learn to speak English very well*, in spite of the small fall and the following return to the same level of agreement the weight is always heavily on agreement.

Item 19, *it is easier to read and write than to speak and understand*, with

the weight changing from 55% agreement to 68.6% and then 29.2%, shows a clear rise followed by a noticeable fall towards agreement.

Horwitz (1987) found that ESL learners overwhelmingly believe (79% according to my calculations[1]) that English is of average difficulty. This suggests that they take it for granted that they can learn the language. The results of this study (no.3) also support her findings in that the responses are similar (in this study 96.06% on average).

The first item of this subgroup (item no.3) does not seem to have been a suitable one for checking the possibility of change of opinions. However, for checking merely their beliefs (as opposed to *change* in beliefs) this seems to be a good one, because the results showed an overwhelming *agreement* with the statement (97.6% in the first place and 96.06% on average) as they did for Horwitz.

For the relative difficulty of different language skills, there is no specific reference to the outcomes of item 19 by Horwitz. My calculations of her showed 76% agreement compared to my own results with an average of 96%. However, the pattern[2] of change of opinions for the subjects of the present study can be explained in that their initial judgements about the relative difficulty of speaking and understanding could be based on previous experience. Before they arrived in UK, they had been able to read and write or at least they would think they could, based on their

1 In order to have comparable figures, I used the figures by Horwitz (1988) and calculated the percentage of agreements for all items leaving out the neutrals.

2 Pattern here refers to development of percentage of agreements in relation to time.

system of education. Being faced primarily (when arriving in the UK) with the difficulty of oral communication could have encouraged this view (that oral skills are harder than the written skills) in them. Later on, in the third year, when they usually start writing (either papers or thesis), they might have felt the fact of their shortcoming in skills other than oral communication which by this time may have been, more or less, stabilised. If so, they would have reflected upon their experience, and changed their views. This was confirmed later in the longitudinal study as the subjects mentioned it in different stages of interviews. Also, in a personal communication with one of these research student, he stated that their problems show up in 'turn' in the following statement.

> It is like noticing the difficulty of learning to 'run' after you have mastered walking.

Another time prior to the above statement he mentioned his shortcoming regarding writing and asked for advice on how to improve his writing.

6.1.2.b. Language Aptitude

Item 1, concerning people's special ability for learning a foreign language, shows a gradual change of balance from agreement towards disagreement. The weight is always strongly on agreement (89% on average).

This item supports Horwitz's findings in that the ESL (here EFL) students generally endorse the concept of foreign language aptitude (70%). On the other hand, the gradual change of opinion regarding one's special ability could be interpreted to be based on the subjects' sensitivity to

shortcomings regarding language learning. It is possible that they blame their shortcomings on lack of personal abilities and gradually they change their mind.

For item 5, *people who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning a foreign language*, the pattern is not as consistent as for item 1. The main difference here is in the weight of the balance which is heavily on disagreement from the very beginning Agree = 7.5% on average).

The results of item 5 support what was found by Horwitz who stated: *no one* (8.5%) *endorsed the statement that* ... . In this study also, a great majority disagreed with the statement and this gradually changed towards more disagreement.

For item 8, which is on one's belief/confidence in his/her special ability for learning foreign languages, the change shows random fluctuation.

According to Horwitz's figures, 60% of her subjects said that they themselves possessed a special ability for foreign language learning (item 8). Similarly in this study, an average of 65% agreed that they themselves had special abilities for foreign language learning. Nevertheless, the changes are neither consistent, nor outstanding enough to make generalisations.

Item 17, *people who speak more than one language are very intelligent*, shows random fluctuation of agreement. However, the weight of the balance on agreement is not very different from disagreement.

In this case again, The results are close. That is 48% of agreements by

Horwitz's subjects is similar to an average of 50% by the subjects of this research.

Item 18, shows a gradual rise of agreements (81.4%; 92.9%; 93.8%) and the weight of balance is always heavily towards agreement. The results support Horwitz's findings who reported a majority of agreements on the statement (87% my calculations). The present results show an average of 88% agreement. Although the difference is not statistically noticeable, the apparent change towards more agreement might be taken as a sign of a long term process of change of opinion.

For item 20, *it is easier for someone who already knows a foreign language to learn another one*, the pattern is very similar to number 17 in that there is some fluctuation.

This item (no.20) was not discussed specifically by Horwitz. However, the present results again support her overall evaluation of the results of the subgroup. She stated that the students involved in her study generally endorsed the concept of foreign language aptitude or special abilities for language learning. Also my calculation of her figures resulted in 83% agreement which is similar to the results of the present study, with about 82% ageement on average.

6.1.2.c. Nature of language learning

For item 2, *it is necessary to know about English speaking cultures in order to speak English*, the pattern shows a complete reverse from agreement

towards disagreement in the second year then again changes towards agreement but the change is not noticeable. On average there is a fall of agreements to about 2/3 of the first position (60.6%; 39.4%; 42.3%).

63% of Horwitz's subjects felt that it is necessary to know about English speaking countries. The present results support her findings, in the first place, in that 60.6% of the subjects agreed with the statement. On the other hand, these results show changes which might be because of the difference between the sample of this study and hers regarding cultural backgrounds and in turn expectations. That is, there is a gap between Iranian Islamic culture and the western culture which did not exist for German, Spanish or French students used by Horwitz. Moreover, the main difference here is (for all items) that we have examined the development of beliefs during a period of time while Horwitz used a specific point of time.

Item 6, *it is best to learn English in an English speaking country*, shows a gradual though significant rise towards disagreement while the weight is always heavily on agreement (94.7%; 90.7%; 66.7%). One might also attribute the sudden change in group 3 to the feeling of the facts, as was speculated in relation to item 19.

Horwitz has reported that her subjects viewed cultural knowledge and a second language environment as highly facilitative of language learning. Her subjects felt very strongly (94%) that it is best to learn English in an English-speaking country (item no.6). She interpreted this as consistent

with their decision to study in the United States.

In the present study, 94.7% agreed with the statement in the first place. While there is a constant gradual change in the opinions, the average agreement (84.03%) confirms Horwitz's finding.

For item 9, *the most important part of learning a foreign language is learning the vocabulary words*, the balance is similar to number 6 (71.1%; 67.6%; 56.0%). A gradual change towards disagreement is shown.

In item 12, *The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning the grammar*, the change is from disagreement towards agreement. Here the balance is constant for a period and suddenly changes towards agreement (46.7%; 46.7%; 61.1%). This also, could be based on facing new facts and feeling such facts though again there was no direct evidence of this.

Horwitz figures show that 42% of the students endorsed the item that the most important part of learning a language is learning vocabulary words (no.9), and 47% agreedr with the styatement about grammar rules (no.12). In the current study, over half of the students (71.1% in the first place and on average 65%) agreed with the importance of vocabulary (item 9). For the importance of grammar, the present study found an average of 54% of agreement, though in the first year the figures are below half the number of the population.

It is difficult to draw conclusions on the change of opinions. On the whole, it seems that there is probably a negative correlation between beliefs about

the importance of learning vocabulary words and grammar rules.

Item 14, *learning a foreign language is different from learning other academic subjects*, shows a similar pattern to number 12 in that there is a sudden change shown by the third group, but the weight is always on agreement (63.6%; 64.3%; 79.3%).

89% of Horwitz's subjects agreed that learning a language differs from learning other school subjects. The subjects of this study also endorsed the statement (63.6% in the first place and 67.6% on average). The results show a gradual change of opinions towards more agreement in the course of time.

For item 15, *the most important part of learning a foreign language is learning how to translate from my native language*, the pattern shows random fluctuation. The weight is always heavily on disagreement.

For Horwitz only 33% of the students rejected the idea that learning English is mainly a matter of learning to translate from their native languages. The respondents in this study on the other hand, disagreed with the statement generally (77.1% in the first place and 77.5% on average).

6.1.2.d. Learning and Communicative Strategies

Item 4, *you shouldn't say anything in English until you can say it properly*, Although there is fluctuation, the weight is always on disagreement (disagree = 76.2%; 85.7%; 75.0%).

Horwitz results show that 11% of her subjects endorsed the statement. The present results also show some small figures for agreement (23.8% in the first place and 20.8% on average). So, the suitability of the item for identification of student beliefs is supported, but no significant change of opinions can be inferred.

For item 7, *it is o.k. to guess if you don't know a word in English*, the pattern shows a little rise of agreements in the middle but again falls lower than the first position (88.1%; 90.2%; 83.9%). So, there is no clear pattern in change of opinions to make generalisations. However, the weight is always heavily on agreement.

An average of 85% of agreements in the present results supports 68% ageement by Horwitz's subjects. It also supports the results of item 4.

Item 10, *it is important to repeat and practise a lot*, the balance is more or less constant and the weight is again, always heavily on agreement.

In the survey by Horwitz the students are reported to have overwhelmingly (over 99%) agreed with the statement. These respondents also, agreed with the statement similarly (97.9% in the first place and 97.1% on average). As one would have expected, there is almost no change in the opinions over time on the importance of practice.

Item 11, *I feel timid speaking English with other people*, the pattern is almost constant to the middle (with a very small rise; 27.0%; 28.9%) then it falls to 16.7%. The weight is always heavily on disagreement. One might consider this as similar to no. 14 and attribute the likelihood of the final

sudden change to the feeling of the facts. Nevertheless, the fluctuation is not statistically significant.

For Horwitz 52% stated that they felt timid when speaking English with other people. The present results show a positive feeling in that a lower average of about 24% agreed. The percentage falls in the 3rd year. However, conclusions cannot be drawn about the change of opinions based on these results, since for all items except one (tables vi 1-4) the significance is well above 5%.

6.1.2.e. Motivations

For item 16, *If I learn English very well, I will have better opportunities in my life*, the balance is almost constant with a gradual rise in agreements, and also the weight is on agreement.

In Horwitz's study 35% of the subjects associated the ability to speak English with better job opportunities. In the present study the statement was modified and asked about better opportunities in one's life, and the results are different (78.9% in the first place and 79% on average). The reason for changing the statement was because the subjects already had their jobs. In addition, as state employees they would not change their jobs anyway.

Item 13, *I would like to learn English so that I can get to know British/American people better*, shows fluctuation while the weight is always on disagreement (25.0%; 17.5%; 44.0%).

According to Horwitz over half of her subjects (75% my calculations) said that they would like to learn English so that they can get to know Americans better. In the present study, the respondents viewed the statement differently. An average of 27.7% (25% in the first place) agreed with the statement. This can be attributed to the fact that the item was modified in this study by adding the word British (British/American) instead of changing American to British. This probably made it inconsistent with their decision to study in England and more difficult to decide.

It is quite clear that the findings of the present study are different from those of Horwitz here. Item 16 shows that my subjects had a strong instrumental motivation; item 13 reinforces this, suggesting low integrative motivation.

6.2. Summary of findings

* There was only one item (no.6) which reached statistical significance. That is, only 5%.

* Regarding the weight of balance, 45% (i.e. 9 out of twenty) of the items seemed to show some change in beliefs (either gradual or sudden). In other words, in 9 cases, the percentages of answers showed some change in the course of time: 1 out of 4 items about learning and communication strategies, 1 out of 2 items on motivations (i.e. instrumental), 4 out of 6 items on Nature of Language Learning and 3 out of 6 items on Language

Aptitude.

6.3. Conclusion

Horwitz (1987 &1988) states that BALLI has proven very successful in the identification of many student beliefs about language learning. The results of the items used in the present study, in general, support value of the questionnaire. However, some of them, due to their nature, might have not been suitable for detecting changes in beliefs in the course of time. Thus, *for example, beliefs about the importance of practice* are perhaps unlikely to change over time.

Regarding the research question, it is difficult to draw general conclusions based on only one significant case. However, based on the changes in the weight of percentages over time, one might argue that change of opinions about language and language learning is somewhat variety-specific. That is, the development of beliefs could probably be dependent on their types. Some beliefs seem less likely to change once they are established. Others might change over time based on learners' experience and their circumstances. For some beliefs to change or rather give way to new ones, learners might need to master some prerequisite skills and/or face new facts. Provided that the new facts are felt, the beliefs about them are likely to change. Subsequently, a 'click of realisation' (Scott, 1992) about the facts of language learning would presumably operate. Accordingly, educational and cultural backgrounds are important in the development of beliefs

about language and language learning.

Comparing the results of ANOVA with the pattern of development of beliefs in some of the cases, although statistics showed little significance, it seems that some beliefs about language learning might change over a longer period than the amount available to this research.

Nevertheless, any change in the opinions over time cannot be attributed directly and necessarily to time. There seems to be other necessary conditions which in turn necessitate some time *of being involved in* language use.

To investigate this assumption, one of the factors mentioned above i.e. 'feeling of the facts' is considered in the next chapter using some quotations by the subjects involved in both this study and the longitudinal study. Quotations are taken from the interviews used in the longitudinal study.

CHAPTER

VII

FEELING OF THE FACTS AND CHANGE OF OPINIONS

Contents:

7.1. Introduction

As mentioned before, the cross-sectional study was carried out as a support to and linked with the longitudinal study presented in the next three chapters. This section acts as a bridge, showing one aspect of the link prior to dealing with the details of the longitudinal study.

For this, some quotes from the interviews used in the longitudinal study are given. They are used to show how beliefs about language learning developed in the course of time. The quotes also suggest that the change could take place only when the learners are faced with new facts about language in the course of language learning. It should also be mentioned that the change or development of beliefs may happen only when the facts are felt, that is when the 'click of realisation' (Scott, 1992) occurs.

Prior to dealing with the role of feeling of the facts in change of beliefs, some examples of feeling of the facts are chosen and categorised as follows:

7.2. General examples of feeling of facts about language:

7.2.1. L1 and L2

One of the areas the subjects showed interest in talking about was the English language as compared to Persian. The following quotations are examples of their concern.

R2: English is ... somehow in English the statements are stated so shortly and they state them symmetrically, they don't say them the way they are.

R2: For example 'on your bike' this is something that if translated into

Persian it means go and sit on your bike, while it is not so it means go away. Well this differs from what we have learned.

R2: The sales woman was calling out 'next please', at the beginning of my arrival when she came to me and said 'next luv' later I found that it was 'next love' I got annoyed but later I found that it had been even more polite, well these are expressions that we should learn.

R2: This type of division into branches and being torn apart for example in a country like America although it is younger than England language is not very much diversified. It is not diversified so that each city can have a special accent but the majority of them speak like each other, but (here) you find each city with their own expressions...

R2: It is the same in Iran. For example, when they speak Gilaki we do not understand the dialect of Mazandaran it is not comprehensible for us at all or Azari dialect I think it is the same here. In fact I have learned English not Scouse. One should see the difference.

On the whole, the subject showed that he had felt many facts about the

difference between the two languages.

Next subject

R3: Unfortunately this is one of the biggest problems we have that is, being weak at Persian language, this is a fact, those not in humanities have this problem but many have put effort into it for the entrance exam but this was not the case in our time. I don't know about the current situation but we are not so good at language as we should be. Sometimes (one thinks) one's English grammar is much better than his Persian and this is important.

R3: You might remember once you asked me, 'don't you think one who is good at language he can express his ideas much better even in Persian' now I have come to this conclusion that it is so. Language is very important I might say everywhere it comes first either Persian or English.

R3: I think I may have lots of scientific information but if I'm not good at Persian language I may not be able to express myself clearly. Language is very important I think 90%... that is very important even if I have a very high level of scientific information but my Persian is not good I'll face problems in transferring information.

The subject felt a great role for language in his life and specifically in his

work.

Next subject
(In this quote the subject has given an example of the structures which are identical in both languages, L1 and L2, and which, nevertheless, need practising in the foreign language to become automated.)

R8: For example, tag questions which we usually try to ask direct questions not [inaudible] in Persian we use them a lot like you went to Tehran, didn't you? I know how but I don't have confidence, I think if I say it, it becomes funny but if I say it once or twice then it gets easier and now I say it some of the times.

The subject has argued two points: that practice in English is needed whether the structures are similar to L1 or not, and that he found practice helpful for overcoming fear of failure.

Next subject
R10: Sometimes when I want to translate some words into Persian I cannot. I know exactly what they mean in English. For example the word prostrate is used for plants in contrast with 'erect' and it refers to the type of plants that grow very close to the ground, now what do you think is its Persian equivalent. I have looked up all of the definitions for the word in a dictionary. I am afraid I cannot choose among them.

R10: In silent reading I am slow not only in English but also in Persian. One thing that I do and I know this is a problem is that I say to myself let's read it and proceed even if I don't understand some of it.

R10: To tell you the truth I can't say which one (is difficult) at this point, but one thing that I know, even in Persian, is that one states something which might be correct, but if he wants to think of the rules to see if it was stated correctly or not then one gets stuck.

R10: Sometimes I think about whether my statement is stated correctly or not in this case again [ ] in Persian we are less often faced with this than in English, I don't know, regarding tenses, English has more tenses than us.

R10: When one is speaking he has either a cultural or subject background. For example if you translate a Persian joke into English it might not be funny but for you who are Persian if the same joke is told in English you will laugh, because you have a cultural background because of this, conversation.

The subject has showed feeling many facts about language in general and L1 /L2 specifically.

Next subject
(Here the subject expresses his impression of the etymological influence of Persian language on English language. He suggests that an investigation of the roots of some English words might reveal part of the influence)

R6: Persian language has certainly a great influence, by the way, why do you not work on 'roots'. For example keng (one's bottom in Mazandaran Iran) and king who sits on a seat called throne; ling/leng in Mazandarani = leg in English. etc.

Summary of the points as perceived by the subjects

1) English is different from Persian.

2) There are varieties in a language.

3) Standard English is different from non-standard.

4) Language is important whether English or Persian.

5) One needs to practise to get used to even the structures which might be identical in the two languages.

6) There is more to translation than merely knowing the meaning of something.

7) Deficiencies might be general and identical in both languages.

8) Shared Knowledge is important and the things understood in one language might not be so in another.

9) Languages are interrelated and some words in one language might originate in another language.

On the whole, many different facts about language and languages (specifically English compared to Persian) were reported by the subjects,

points like similarities and differences among the two languages; how they might influence language use; and varieties in one language compared to those in the other one.

7.2.2. Shortcomings and avoidance

R10: Recently I feel I have problem and I think I speak incorrectly so sometimes I avoid speaking, in spite of the fact that people tell me that I am confident in speaking and am talkative. I used to have this feeling. Recently, sometimes I get cautious, in presence of some English people I do not try to get involved.

The subject revealed how he became obsessed with accuracy and how his obsession made him avoid using the language.

Next subject
R6: This happened many times during the first days. when I could not express something I would remain silent. Sometimes I would speak while the guy would not understand. Now this situation has improved and I deal with it more confidently.

This subject found that he had gone through different stages: speaking even though others might not understand, remaining silent because of realising the problem and finally becoming interactive more confidently.

Next subject
R2: Because of being afraid of the fact that others may not understand what we say we do not speak very much. Fear of speaking, I told you, is a basic problem. This is essential and we are afraid.

R2: For example you're an Englishman, I am talking to you once I was lost in fact I was asking for the way out and for the 'intrance' door and they would not understand me I should have said 'entrance' you see, then I said front door then he said oh! You see, when we do not pronounce sentences correctly our audience cannot get it and gradually we feel that our language is getting weak. So, I don't use it (the language) any more.

R2: I get frightened I get scared sometimes I ask a question and he says what? and I say it again and again and finally he may say oh! ... I think to myself where was I wrong. Then I find it is my pronunciation which has been incorrect. So, I get scared of speaking this makes me avoid speaking. If we correct our pronunciation they will understand us and we can speak better.

This subject reported how his feeling of the fact about his shortcoming regarding pronunciation made him avoid the use of the language.

Summary of points

1) Becoming obsessed with accuracy can lead to avoidance.

2) Inability to express something can lead to avoidance.

3) Knowing about shortcomings e.g. bad pronunciation can lead to avoidance.

4) Knowledge about shortcomings can make the subjects think about solving the problem.

On the whole, knowing about shortcomings seems to be a matter of concern for the subjects. It leads, initially, to avoidance and at the same time makes the subjects think about overcoming the problem. This supports the hypothesis introduced in the conclusion part of the pilot study. The hypothesis assumes that adult learners faced with knowledge about shortcomings refrain from practising the use of language, but if they become motivated by another factor then they do practise the use of language.

7.2.3. Beliefs in action (Strategies)

Another area of concern by the subjects was the issue of language learning strategies. The examples are:

R2: The best thing for improving our language is that we should watch television, especially the news and pay attention to standard talks

Researcher: Do you do this?
R2: I try to do this and this really is effective and only if there is any improvement it might be because of this, because immediately after this I repeat what I've heard several times and then use them.

Researcher: Do you use them in your working environment?
R2: At work I use them. For example some time ago I heard somebody say 'May I enjoy your help?'. The other day I used the expression with the technician here to see how it goes. I said, 'May I enjoy your help? and she said,'What!' I was surprised and scared. I thought maybe it was not so common an expression.

R2: One way that I myself used well, especially in vocabulary, was that I would try to learn words which were similar for example, revolve evolve devolve... If I would learn one word, I would look at two on either side to see what would those other words mean, so I would not forget them, this was one of my strategies in language.

This subject showed that he believed in the usefulness of some learning strategies by reporting on how he himself used them.

Next subject
R7: In my opinion it is better (in reading) not to utter the words.

R7: I do not move my lips but it is somehow difficult from just looking [ ] if it is important to me so that I want to understand the details then ... you might not call it articulation but reading with more concentration, I do not say the words.

R7: This (saying the words) reduces speed.

R7: In my own experience sometimes when I read the sentence and guess the meaning and then look up the words and compare I find that perhaps 10 to 20 percent differs from what I had guessed. There I conclude that if

I had not done that it wouldn't matter but when I do not do it then I get obsessed that it might have been different had I looked it up.

R7: Sometimes I get a sentence with three words that I don't know I look them up then I find that it doesn't make sense then I try to fit it into what I had guessed many a time not even the meaning of the word does not help but it makes it more difficult to understand, but when I look the word up still I try to rely on my own understanding and to find a similar definition for it.

R7: In speaking, I try to follow their style. The style a teacher or a technician speaks in English [ ] this style is a bit different from what we have already learned. For example, the simple words that we take for granted and skip, they use the verbs that very easily convey the message without [ ] I try to follow this and this has caused, as we say like a crow who wants to walk like a partridge; I used to use every verb for its first meaning for example 'get' or 'take' to which they add a series of prepositions and very nicely they convey the message they are comfortable. I am trying to follow their style and I have become like a beginner.

This subject believed in silent reading and guessing meaning from context and he also believed in the usefulness of imitating natives in speaking. He showed his belief in reporting on himself using these strategies.

Summary of the points as perceived by the subjects

1) Imitating native speakers is a useful strategy.

2) Some words can be learned in connection with related vocabulary.

3) Guessing is useful and sometimes better than using a dictionary.

4) The above are examples of what the subjects do in practice.

The above examples show the type of strategies that the subjects considered useful and have been using. These are examples of the language

awareness which is felt and put into effect.

7.3. Feeling of the facts as an effective factor in change of beliefs

To consider the relation between feeling of the facts and change of beliefs, let us return to the first category in Horwitz's classification of items, Difficulty of Language Learning, (in the cross-sectional study) and specifically to item 19 regarding language skills. There, it was assumed that the decline in agreements over time could have been due to facing the facts. It was argued that at the beginning Iranians could *have taken for* granted the easiness of reading and writing compared to speaking and understanding. They may have changed their opinion when they actually started writing.

To support the assumption, two series of quotations are chosen from the sample involved in the longitudinal study. The first series of quotes comes from one subject (R18) and they suggest that mere knowledge about language is not enough to cause a change of opinion. The second series is from different subjects suggesting that beliefs might change when learners have *felt* new facts about language.

The quotations are given in the chronological order in which they occurred in a series of interviews. They concern the most difficult skill to learn and what was recommended by the subjects to be considered in Iran in this regard. The first series is as follows:

R18: For me conversation is more difficult.

R18: In Iran two skills should be strengthened: conversation and reading... we need reading it should be somehow that along with reading and writing conversation also gets improved.

R18: If the situation is like ours in Iran, at this stage conversation is the most difficult to us. Speaking is more difficult than reading, grammar, writing ... because from the beginning we have mostly learned grammar and writing and reading but we have been weak at conversation.

Researcher: Have you started writing up?
R18: No. Not as such. Writing, ...
Researcher: Writing articles and things like that you probably have?
[----]
R18: Seeing it from this view point and making comparison I can say writing is more difficult.

R18: What is obvious among the English people speaking is the easiest of all.

R18: Speaking is very easy among the group. Writing is more difficult.

R18: In Iran speaking is more difficult.

R18: Well for me as I have already said, reading we've done from high school and grammar specifically we have learned in Iran in my opinion still I should say it is conversation which is the most difficult.

Researcher: About writing, have you done anything so far?
R18: Not much and the few pages that I have written up to now, we have, in fact, compiled, or the results of some calculations, nothing from myself.

R18: Writing we have not written much and the few pages we have, in the form of report, mostly we have been compiling rather than writing, we have collected from other articles, journals and put together... .

Researcher: Do you think this will do for your writing up?

R18: No I must write by myself, some of it will be from others I probably will have problems.

Summary of the points

The following points were perceived by the subject:

1) Speaking is difficult.

2) The difficulty is based on one's background.

3) Iranians' background in respect of reading and grammar is better than in respect of speaking.

4) Generally, learning to speak in an English-speaking country is easier than learning to write. In Iran, speaking English is difficult.

5) The subject had not started writing at the time.

6) When he was made to think about writing he considered it as more difficult.

7) He knew that he would probably have problems in writing.

The sequence of the above points suggests that the subject considered himself to have enough reading and writing skills based on his previous education. Thus, he thought speaking was the most difficult skill for him at the beginning. and this belief remained unchanged to the end of the interviews. Nevertheless, he was aware that, in practice, when he reached writing up he would have problems.

In this period of six months this subject, unfortunately, did not start writing and so had no chance to 'feel the facts' in this regard and possibly change his belief.

Thus for this subject we have an example of knowledge about language which has not yet led to feeling of the facts or a change in beliefs.

The following series of quotes, on the other hand, is of examples of facing the situation and feeling the facts about it regarding the writing skill.

R3: I think it is grammar that we ... not much... in spite of knowing some of it, in grammar... we cannot use it in speaking.

R3: In writing, I think there is a basic problem and I guess it is the most difficult but since we are not still involved it is felt less often. Later it will be felt. When we start we will find how weak we are, how problematic it will be for us, or we will have little progress since we have not done so. Presently, in the stage of listening and speaking and so on mostly it is in grammar that we make mistakes.

R3: in my opinion it depends. Texts are difficult to learn but the most difficult to learn is writing. In spite of the practice that is done, for example speaking or especially listening seems now the easiest, then speaking, then understanding the texts (reading comprehension) and in the end the most difficult is writing in my opinion.

Researcher: Is this a personal problem or do you see it in general?
R3: What I see now especially in kids who can be a good symbol for me... my son, your children who understand pretty well, speak pretty well, and they are good at listening as well. However, we see that they are not good at writing. I find that everybody is like that in writing. Everybody is lame in one leg ... .

Summary of the points as perceived by the subject

1) Writing is difficult.

2) This difficulty is felt when one starts to write.

3) The difficulty is experienced in children as well as in adults.

Next subject
R2: It is understanding of course, to some extent I can speak but the main problem is mainly in comprehension and that is because of the special accent here ... here my biggest problem is that I don't see what they say.

R2: In writing to some extent I have improvement.

later on,

Researcher: What about other skills?
R2: For example the other skills like writing. Look, speaking to some extent requires understanding. If you understand well you can speak.

R2: Writing for us, now we are not involved very much at this stage we just need to speak about things and see what they say, to tell you the truth I have not been concerned with it.

Researcher: As a member of the committee deciding about what skills are important to make sure Ph.D. applicants achieve before coming to England what would you recommend.
R2: Not writing. It is assumed that because one will have to write a thesis, one will learn it gradually, as long as one can communicate, it's enough.

R2: As I had not yet started writing I embarked on it and faced the facts that I had not faced before. In my opinion, writing, now it seems to me is one of the most essential and most important things in the relation to our work. and I am thinking of how much the writing of thesis will be problematic [---] we try to translate sentences from Persian and transfer them into English, though this is wrong.

R2: The problem of writing in my view is a vital problem

Summary of the points

1) At the beginning, writing was not taken seriously.

2) Writing was not practised at the beginning; the subject was not involved.

3) The subject did not recommend that Iranian Ph.D students concentrate on writing before they start writing their thesis.

4) At the end the subject starts writing and faces the facts. He takes writing very seriously and considers it a vital problem.

Next subject
R19: Regarding difficulty, in my opinion writing is more difficult than speaking.

R19: In this environment writing, considering writing with the observation of rules and grammar, some times I want to mail, e-mail to you. I don't take it very seriously but when I want to write something for a seminar that is very much more difficult in my opinion it requires more delicacy.

R19: Before I thought in speaking I would have very many problems. I thought speaking would be more difficult than writing. In high school also I thought of speaking as the problem, because there it was (we had) grammar and writing, a composition for example.

R19: The main problem in language from the beginning has been vocabulary. I feel in speaking listening or even in academic writing I have no problem as such, because in academic writing, which is selecting from different texts and connecting them to each other regarding the research work. So, even in academic writing I have not much difficulty and neither speaking, listening, the main problem that I have had and it is still there is the problem of vocabulary.

Researcher: Now that you have started writing do you see any difference in your viewpoint about writing regarding being easy or difficult as compared to before (staring writing).
R19: Then I would not think it would be this difficult. I see it as much more difficult than what I would think previously. That is because I cannot put on paper what I have in mind.

R19: Environmental factors have had more effect on speaking but writing no. The problem I am faced with is there and I did not think of it before.

R19: If I am in Iran I say the most difficult part of it is writing.

R19: As I have occasionally been writing some pieces it really is difficult it is very difficult

R19: I see writing as the main problem

R19: I have reached a point that I see writing is difficult for me and when I asked other fellows I see that all of them have this problem.

Summary of the points

1) Writing is seen as difficult from the very beginning.

2) Formal and informal writing are distinguished.

3) In the middle, writing is seen as easier because it is equated with collecting pieces and putting them together.

4) Finally writing is seen as very difficult after the subject attempts it.

On the whole, the second series of quotations suggest that the click of realisation has been responsible for change of the subjects' beliefs about the writing skill.

7.4. Conclusion

Comparing the points found in the two series of quotations and also those in the second series to one another, it is found that unless the facts are felt, the beliefs are unlikely to change. Once the subjects reach the click of realisation they change their beliefs. This supports Scott's view that awareness is not just rational understanding ..., but it involves feeling of the facts.

Development of beliefs about language and language learning is partly dependent on facing the facts in practice. In the same way that knowing about strategies is prior to a feeling of the click of realisation (Scott 1992), knowing about the relative difficulty of language skills is prior to actual feeling of the difference which could lead to a change or modification of beliefs in that regard.

Further, the assumption that Iranian research students' first reaction to the statement (item 19; table vi-4) about language skills is based on their misapprehension regarding their background knowledge is confirmed. In this regard, it seems that 'time' is a necessary but not sufficient condition for change of beliefs about language learning. It is necessary for other factors like feeling of the facts to become effective.

CHAPTER

VIII

THE LONGITUDINAL STUDY

CONTENTS:

8.1. The organization of this chapter

Following a similar format to that of the first study, the discussion of the longitudinal study starts with the aim of the study, followed by the design options divided into two parts: Other studies and the current research. Under the design of the current study, subjects and the rationale behind the selection of the sample, instruments and equipment (considered one by one), methods and problems, and finally the analysis procedures are dealt with.

8.2. Aim of the study

Similar to the first study, this one was designed to investigate a possible relationship between the language awareness and the language proficiency of the students during a period of at least six continuous months. Considering the time needed to collect, transcribe and analyze the recorded data, a period of six months was the most that could be spent on data collection.

Generally, longitudinal studies are not as common in studies of L2 learners as they are with L1 learners nor are they as usual with adults as with children.

Therefore, most of the studies which have used this problematic method have benefited from one or some of the following options which they have used as solutions. The list of design options given below, illustrates the limitations and constraints of my study.

8.3. Design options:

8.3.1. Other studies

a) Some researchers (e.g. Lennon, 1989; Badian, 1990; Paul, R. 1993) have studied children, infants or even toddlers, who are more accessible compared to our type of subjects.

b) Some involved a small number of subjects (e.g. Freeman, 1993: one student; Skehan, 1986: one student; Lennon, 1989: four students).

c) Some others have used adults in classrooms where they are a 'captive audience'. (e.g. Tarone, 1988; Schwarte, 1982; Weltens *et. al.*, 1989: Lennon, 1989).

d) Some (like Badian, 1990; Schwarte, 1982) used instruments other than recorded conversations, which are time consuming in longitudinal studies.

e) Some studies have been administered by institutions rather than individual researchers, where the large number of subjects make the research much easier in the sense that, practically, the assistance on part of the members of staff makes it team work, although officially one person is responsible for it.

f) Some used disabled/deficit subjects under full control, subjects unlikely to object to or even notice the research (e.g. Scarborough, 1990).

g) Some analyzed skills other than spoken language (e.g. Schwarte, 1982; Weltens *et. al.*, 1989).

h) Some chose to work with native speakers as subjects, (e.g. Schwarte, 1982; Healy *et.al*, 1982). Non-natives usually have more fear of loss

of face than natives who are confident in using their language; and therefore, obtaining their permission is not as easy as with natives, although obtaining permission is a common problem both regarding natives and non-natives. In my case, it was much more difficult in that the subjects were Ph. D. students from abroad with a limited amount of time.

i) Most of the above used second language learners rather than foreign language learners, as compared with my subjects, for whom English is a foreign language.

So, the present study was done in a different manner from all the above list of longitudinal studies.

8.3.2. The Design for the Present Study; Methods and Materials

8.3.2.1. Subjects

The study comprised 9 subjects out of an initial number of 12 students. The students were selected randomly, from among the Iranian research students doing research in different fields in John Moores and Liverpool University, UK. They were divided into three groups called high-input, low-input and control (cf. 8.3.2.3: procedures).

Studying adults longitudinally necessitates a rather long term commitment on the part of the subjects. So, obtaining the consent of a group of research students busy with their own work is not as easy as asking people to answer some questions in a questionnaire once and for all. Furthermore, handling recorded data (i.e. collection, transcription, and analysis) is time

consuming. Therefore, this study cannot be compared, quantitatively, in terms of the number of the subjects, to the cross-sectional study. So, for practical reasons, 12 was considered the highest number of research students that one researcher could handle.

On the other hand, because the subjects were to be divided into three groups (viz. high-input, low-input and control), the above number was chosen to make sure that, if for one reason or another some of them quit, there would be more than one subject in each group.

To deal with the problem of number of subjects, a chi-square test was done to see if this sample would be typical of the larger sample in the cross-sectional study who were *taken as representative of the whole* community of Iranian research students in the UK. (cf. diagram; ch. iv. overview of the studies)

As mentioned elsewhere about 1,000 Iranian research students do research in the UK at any given time, and the sample in the cross-sectional study (163 subjects) represents about one sixth of them. The final small sample in the longitudinal study (N = 9) was about 6% of the sample for the cross-sectional study. Therefore, logically if the small sample proved typical of the larger sample then they could be taken as representative of the whole community of Iranian research students in the UK.

The following table shows the results of the test:

Table viii. 1: The results of a chi-square test for examining the typicality of the sample

Response	X-sectional		Longitudinal		P-value
Q1 Some people have a special ability for learning a foreign language					
Disagree	16	11.6%	--		.30743
Agree	122	88.4%	8	100%	
Q2 It is necessary to know about English speaking cultures in order to speak English					.00458
Disagree	57	55.3%	--		
Agree	46	44.7%	7	100%	
Q3 I believe that I will learn to speak English very well					.58238
Disagree	5	3.6%	-		
Agree	132	96.4%	8	100	
Q4 You *shouldn't say anything in English until* you can say it properly					.18308
Disagree	107	77%	6	100%	
Agree	32	23%	--		
Q5 People who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning a foreign language					.03109
Disagree	121	94.5%	6	75%	
agree	7	5.5%	2	25%	
Q6 It is best to learn *English in an English speaking country*					*.97385*
Disagree	18	13.8%	1	14.3%	
Agree	112	86.2%	6	85.7%	
Q7 It is Ok. to guess if you don't know a word in English					.22108
Disagree	21	15.9%	--		
Agree	111	84.1%	8	100%	
Q8 I have a special ability for learning foreign languages					.25956
Disagree	24	39.3%	--		
Agree	37	60.7%	2	100%	
Q9 The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning the vocabulary words					.02452
Disagree	33	30.3%	5	71.4%	
Agree	76	69.7%	2	28.6%	
Q10 It is important to repeat and practise a lot					.62214
Disagree	4	2.6%	--		
Agree	148	97.4%	9	100%	

Table viii. 2: The results of a chi-square test for examining the typicality of the sample

Response	X-sectional		Longitudinal		P-value
Q11 I feel timid speaking English with other people					
Disagree	96	78 %	4	57.1%	.20161
Agree	27	22%	3	42.9%	
Q12 The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning the grammar					.53427
Disagree	47	48.5%	2	66.7%	
Agree	50	51.5%	1	33.3%	
Q13 I would like to learn English so that I can get to know British/American people better					.47912
Disagree	84	73.7%	6	85.7	
Agree	30	26.3%	1	14.3%	
Q14 Learning a foreign language is different from learning other academic subjects					.62717
Disagree	39	33.3%	2	25%	
Agree	78	*66.7%*	*6*	*75%*	
Q15 The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning how to translate from my native language					.64012
Disagree	90	78.3%	6	85.7%	
Agree	25	21.7%	1	14.3%	
Q16 If I learn English very well, I will have better opportunities in my life.					.11879
Disagree	27	23.7	--		
Agree	87	76.3%	8	100%	
Q17 People who speak more than one language are very intelligent.					.15483
Disagree	45	47.4%	4	80%	
Agree	50	52.6%	1	20%	
Q18 Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language					.89174
Disagree	15	10.9%	1	12.5%	
Agree	122	89.1%	7	87.5%	
Q19 It is easier to read and write than to speak and understand					.66427
Disagree	56	48.7%	4	57.1%	
Agree	59	51.3%	3	42.9%	
i**Q20** It is easier for someone who already knows a foreign language to learn another one					.15610
Disagree	19	17.3%	3	37.5%	
Agree	91	82.7%	5	62.5%	

First, it should be mentioned that because of the missing points in the range of answers (i.e.. no answer or neutral answer) in many of the cases the total number of agree and disagree answers do not add up to 9. Also, to decide about the results of the test on the typicality of the sample presented in the above tables (viii.1-4), the following points should be remembered regarding the use and validity of chi-square test:

1) it can be quite difficult to measure the strength of the association between two qualitative variables, but it is easy to test the null hypothesis that there is no association between the two variables. (cf. goodness of fit; Bland, 1995)

2) the criterion for the test to be valid (usually attributed to the statistician W.G. Cochran; cf. Bland, 1995) is: *the chi-square test is valid if at least 80% of the expected frequencies exceed 5 and all the expected frequencies exceed 1.* This point recognises that in cases with expected frequencies below 5 the test is unreliable and tends to disfavour the null hypothesis.

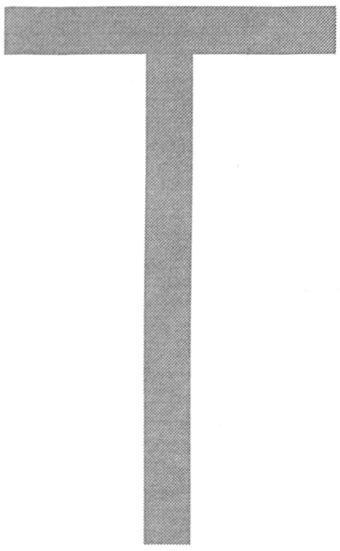
Considering the results presented above it should be mentioned that most of the cases have expected frequencies of below 5. In this special examination the aim is reversed so that the null hypothesis is that there *is* an association. The test employed is thus operating conservatively. It is likely that the small subset of 9 is representative of the wider community of Iranian students in the UK, in all cases except for three, namely question 2, 5, and 9. That is in 85% of the cases no significant difference

was detected. Thus, the longitudinal sample is likely to be typical of the cross-sectional which in turn is probably representative of the Iranian research community in UK.

The following T-bar is to visualise schematically the design of the number of times of investigation for the subjects in the two studies.

T-bar viii. 1: The Frequency of cross-sectional and the longitudinal studies

Cross-Sectional (163 subjects; 1 data collection)



Longitudinal (9 subjects; 14 data collection)

Finally, the reason why *Iranians* were chosen was, as mentioned before, because the research is to be continued and the findings to be applied in Iran. Research students, and not other students or children, were chosen because research students are representative of the Iranians who have already completed formal EFL instruction in Iran and will need the language more than anybody else in their country. Moreover, as mentioned

before, they should, theoretically, be at the 'noticing' stage (Fotos, 1993) and the stage of 'click of realization' (Scott, 1992).

As to how the subset of 9 was chosen, it should be mentioned that because of practical reasons of accessibility, the subjects were chosen from among the Iranian research students in Liverpool only.

At the time, there were only 24 students in Liverpool, some of whom were commuting between Liverpool and Manchester. So, because of this and because of the constraints of longitudinal studies explained above, and more specifically based on the fact of obtaining permission of cooperation, 12 of them agreed to work with the project.

More details are provided later under *problems* regarding the subjects and how they ended in the final subset of 9.

8.3.2.2. Instruments and equipment

A pre-test, a post-test, a questionnaire and an interview were used as the instruments of the study.

The equipment used in this study was: a total of 12 small tape recorders and a big one; a cassette duplicating machine; a transcriber; a battery charger and a total of 24 rechargeable batteries, 200 cassettes and also an external microphone.

To introduce the instruments in detail, they are considered below one by one starting with the questionnaire.

Questionnaire

As the results of the cross-sectional study were to be related to those of the second, the same questionnaire was used in both studies. (cf. appendix. 2)

Pre-test (Appendix.1)

This was adapted from the Cambridge First Certificate Test of English, 1992. It consisted of three parts: reading comprehension, use of language and listening comprehension.

My study, as a part of oral production and therefore more relevant to the spoken corpus, was administered completely and without any change. The other two parts, however, were reduced into ¼ of the original test because practically it was not possible to have every subject spend 5 constant hours of their research time on taking a test for my study.

Conversations

Conversations were to be recorded by the subjects anywhere in the UK: in laboratories, on buses, at surgeries, when talking on the phone, in common rooms, etc.

Interviews

The interview questions were prepared in advance in Persian. They were designed by the researcher based on the theories of discourse patterns and with my goals in mind. The topics comprised 5 specific divisions plus one

general section as follows:

Shortcomings

To see if the subjects would explicitly be aware of their shortcomings (i.e. knowledge about what they would not know) regarding language learning, questions 1, 2 and 3 were designed to ask about the most difficult aspect of language for them to learn and the reason behind it; whether they would think in the same way back at home; whether they had been anxious when they had arrived in UK (concerning their language). The questions are:

1. *What aspect / aspects of language do you find most difficult to learn?*
2. *Why?*
3. *Did it ever occur to you before you arrived in England? i.e.. did you ever think about this aspect in a similar way in Iran?*
4. *Were you anxious about your language when you arrived in England?*
5. *Please give examples of the structures, if any, that you already know but have difficulty with in actual language use.*

Strategies in general

In a second series of questions, the subjects were asked to comment generally on any type of language learning strategies they might have been advised to use already and if so whether they had used them or not, whether they would think of them as being worth using or not; also the strategies they might have designed by themselves. These were again designed to make them express whether they were aware of strategies and how they would feel about them.

6. *Are there any strategies that you were told would be good for your*

language learning but you never have used ?
6.a. *Are there any strategies that you think are not worth using and so you would not recommend others to use?*
7. *Are there any strategies that you were taught and which you have been using effectively?*
7.a. *Are there any strategies that you would recommend others to use?*
8. *Are there any strategies that you have developed yourself?*

Reading strategies

The third series of questions was about the subjects' reading habits and their comments on them. In this series the points included reading aloud (viz. vocalisation) vs. silent reading; reading speed, peripheral vision, reading comprehension, word by word reading, etc. (cf. Yorkey, 1983), and the questions are:

9. *When you read an article*:
a. do you find it more convenient to read aloud (vocalise or do you prefer silent reading?
b. do you try to understand every single sentence or does understanding of the main ideas suffice?
c. do you usually look up every word that you do not understand in a dictionary?
d. do you find the meaning of words in any way other than looking them up in a dictionary?
e. where do you usually start, at the beginning, middle or end?
f. what difference/s do you see between essays, reports and narratives?
g. do you read articles sequentially?

'e' & 'f' were designed to see: how much (if at all) the subjects were familiar with the structure and thought pattern of a text, and (also with scanning skimming, surveying, etc.); and 'g' was designed to probe the extent to which subjects attended to the rational chronological coherence between pieces of information which helps ease comprehension.

Writing habits

The fourth series was on writing habits. To find out whether the subjects would know about activities one can engage in prior to writing, during writing and after writing in order to compose a good piece, the following questions were designed.

10. *How do you perform when writing a text?*
a. Do you make any notes prior to your actual writing?
b. Do you organise your notes before you start writing?
c. Do you plan the organisation of your writing in advance?

Speaking habits

The next series was focused on speaking habits and opening conversations, managing conversations (including turn-taking) and closing conversations. Similarly there were questions on handling telephone calls as compared to direct conversations. Again the main goal was to make the subjects talk about the pragmatics of speaking and none of the specified points (e.g. turn taking) were to be considered separately.

As they were to make recordings of both direct (in person) conversations and phone conversations, a similar series of questions were designed for the purpose.

Direct conversations

11. *How do you take part in a conversation?*
a. How do you usually initiate a conversation?

b. How do you usually take turns?
1. If you find it necessary to interrupt, how do you do it?
2. If your interlocutor tries to interrupt you when you don't want him / her to, then how do you react?
3. How would you show that you don't mind being interrupted?

8.3.2.2.d.5.b. On the phone

12. *How do usually talk on phone?*
a. Do you get to the main point right away?
b. Do you have a special way of opening a telephone call?
c. Do you have difficulty in beginning the phone call ?
d. Do you have difficulty in closing the call?
e. Do you have a special way for closing the call?

General topics on language and language learning

The last series of questions was not pre-specified, but essentially consisted of general questions that would naturally arise in the course of this kind of the interview.

In this series the subjects' opinion was asked about different points like the nature of language, its role in one's life and specifically in one's academic work. In this regard the role of one's first language, and of the English language were discussed.

They were asked about whether they had realised any difference (regarding fluency or accuracy in speaking) between talking about topics they knew more about than the interlocutors and the ones they had little knowledge about.

They were asked to comment on other points as well and the main points in this series were:

13. *The effect of language deficiencies on academic work.*

14. *Status recognition and its role in fluency and accuracy.*
15. *Strategies for learning vocabulary*
16. *The nature of language (is it knowledge, science, systematic?)*
17. *The role of language in one's life*
18. *The extent to which one needs language in academic work. Is there any correlation between the extent you know language and your success in academic work*
19. *Which one would be better: to translate scientific books for the students in Iran or to teach them English to be able to read for themselves?*
20. *One's evaluation of one's learning of English in England.*

On the whole, the interview topics were designed so as to cover many different areas on which the subjects would have the opportunity to comment and to show how much they knew about language and language learning, as well as how aware they were of their deficiencies.

It was a semi-structured interview in that the topics, on paper were used as a basis for discussion but they were not the only topics as the discussions were open to new topics and subject to change by the outcome of the discussions.

Post-test

The post-test was adapted from the Cambridge First Certificate: 1993. It consisted of three parts with identical format to those of the pre-test i.e. reading comprehension, use of language and listening comprehension.

8.3.2.3. Procedures

The subjects were supposed to record their conversations in natural situations whether with their supervisors, fellow researchers or anybody

else. This was to be done at least once every fortnight. In addition, they were to be interviewed in Persian, the subjects' native language, on a similar timing basis. Three groups were to be distinguished based on the amount of LA input given in the interviews. In other words, the intention was to raise consciousness in the experimental groups and the input was to be of minimal salience enhancement (cf. 2.1.4, no 3).

In spite of the small number of the subjects, it was decided that the sample should be divided into three groups. The reason for this was that we needed a control group, a high-input group and a low-input group to examine the differences, if any, for final conclusions.

During the interview with the control group no clue would be given by the researcher to make sure that LA was not developed in them by virtue of the interviews. The researcher would initiate the topic in the form of questions and then would act merely as a listener.

In conducting the interviews with the low input group the researcher would give some input with the intention of provoking discussion of LA with the subjects. However, other topics were also to be developed.

With the third group, that is the high-input group, the interviews would be conducted in some form of a debate over language matters.

The interviews were designed as the main instrument for Language Awareness raising and for monitoring their LA development.

A pre-test and a post-test were to be given to the subjects to evaluate their proficiency. This was to support the results of the analysis of the recorded

data.

Therefore, every subject was given a test individually and also a questionnaire to fill in immediately after the test; then he/she was provided with a tape recorder, 2 batteries, and a cassette. The cassette was to be kept for a period of two weeks, after which it was to be changed for a new one. The batteries were checked regularly and recharged whenever necessary. An interview was done during the period of two weeks at a time convenient to the subjects.

8.3.2.4. Problems:

In this study some problems were experienced. First, regarding the equipment, a relatively long time was spent on obtaining the right type of tape recorders, cassettes, and other equipment.

Then, regarding the subjects, it proved to be difficult for them to record their conversations and to do the interviews regularly and at exact time intervals. So, after organizing the data and choosing an equal number of conversations and interviews for all the members of the sample, I ended up with 8 conversations and five interviews (i.e.. for each subject) suitable for analysis.

Furthermore, at the very beginning one of the 12 subjects left the country for a visit to Iran. So, the rest were grouped randomly into two groups: experimental (N=6) and control (N=5) and then the first group was divided into two groups: high input and low input. Meanwhile, two other subjects

were tested.

Another subject quit because he did not have a safe place in his office to keep the tape recorder.

Another left Liverpool and settled elsewhere. Another changed her research design, which led to little spoken interaction with others. So she did not continue.

At this point the third group had lost one member and also the first substitute. The number of subjects in each group, at this stage, was as in the following table:

Table viii. 3: The number of subjects.

High-input	Low-input	Control
3	3	4

Later, another subject left for a visit to Iran after doing 3 recordings. So, two others were tested and provided with recorders. But they also gave up after two weeks because there were all Iranians in their laboratory and they could not find anybody to talk to in English. Then, a newly arrived Iranian was tested. In the meantime, as one member of the third group was putting off the recordings and had to be left out, he was replaced by the new subject, who worked for a while and then gave up. Then, a total of four more students were tested, with whom the work was started from the beginning.

The following chart shows the groups at this final stage:

Table viii. 4: The number of subjects.

High-input	Low-input	Control
3	**3**	**3** (+3)

So, actually a number of 21 Iranian research students (from John Moores University and the University of Liverpool) have been involved in this research, 9 of whom finished the work to the end.

To sum up, in this chapter the limitations and constraints of the present longitudinal study were compared to some other studies regarding the number of subjects and how other studies were carried out. Methods, instruments and subjects were considered; and procedures and problems were discussed.

The results are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER

IX

RESULTS OF THE LONGITUDINAL STUDY

Contents:

9.1. Language proficiency in Conversations and Tests

9.1.1. Language proficiency in conversations

9.1.1.1. Procedures of analysis

To analyze the level of the students' proficiency it was originally decided that the most reasonable procedure would be to count the different types of problems in the conversations, such as use of articles, lexical problems (LEX), interference (INT), prepositions (PRE), Subject verb agreement (SV), and other structural problems (STR), like those related to the incomplete application of rules. Then the number of words (uttered by the subjects) in each conversation were to be counted and the percentages (of errors in words) were to be calculated. The percentage from each conversation should then be compared sequentially with the next and in turn with the next and so on to the end, to see if and how they would show a decrease in occurrence. The next stage would be to calculate an average of the percentages to measure the results in each group.

Doing all these calculations for many types of problems in different conversations and for each individual might seem precise but was problematic for various reasons.

Firstly, this study has not been concerned with the types of errors as in error analysis but with the accurate use of language in the actual environment, viz. sociolinguistic competence (Ellis and Roberts, 1987). Therefore, no distinction has been observed between errors and mistakes as they both may indicate lack of proficiency (for ESL/EFL learners), and again because the study has been concerned merely with language

problems not with specific types.

A second problem was the difficulty of deciding about the types either due to the overlap of the categories or difficulty in fitting mistakes into any known category.

Examples of overlap

1) pray for prayer in: " ... sentences which we read for pray".

This could be because of negative interference of first language in the sense that if the subject takes *pray* as a noun instead of prayer, then it will be reasonable to see the problem as one of interference. In Persian the equivalent for the verb 'pray' is the compound verb; "namaz khandan" (doing prayer) and the equivalent for the noun 'prayer' is "namaz". Most of the time the short form 'namaz' is used for pray, which is then the same word for prayer. As in Persian one word can be used interchangeably for both grammatical constructions, then this could be an example of L1 interference. At the same time this can be considered as a problem of lexical deficiency. The subject might be aware of the fact that *pray* is not a noun but uses it all the same because he does not know the noun form. This would be a case of sticking to the only option he knows to convey the message (cf. Krashen and Terrell, 1983). It can also be interpreted as an incomplete application of rules regarding construction of a sentence.

In the following example there are also a number of possibilities.

2) Sudan for Sudanese in: "... Asian Sudan Somali are Muslim".

The possibilities are:

STR? incorrect application of rules?
LEX? deficient lexicon?

That is, the subject might have difficulty with application of the rules regarding the inaccuracy of equating words denoting nationality with names of countries. It can also indicate a deficient lexicon and gap filling (e.g. 'Sudan' for 'Sudanese' as an equivalent for Asian) where the speaker might be aware of the difference and yet use the forms available in his/her lexicon.

Number 3 below is also of the same type while the overlap could be between "ignorance of rules for application of prepositions" or "interference" It could be either one because: in Persian it is common to say 'from computer'; it is also possible that the subject doesn't know the rule.

3) I searched it from computer

Preposition? (PRE)
INT?

Examples of unnamed errors

The following are the examples of the cases when it is difficult to decide about the types, because the problem does not fit into any known category.

1) Sudan is Arab

Is it "*Sudan is an Arab country*" in which case it is an incomplete sentence (STR). It certainly is not a translation from the first language. Then is it a problem of restricted lexicon. It is difficult to decide.

2) ... "some word is the same" (comparing two languages i.e. Arabic and Persian)

INF?
STR?
INF & INT?

In the above example (No. 2), the structure is confused. It cannot be considered as problematic with regard to inflections (i.e. some word for some words) because even if the subject had used the plural form (words) then the problem of subject verb agreement would arise. This brings about the confusion between interference from Persian and ignorance of restriction of the rule for subject verb agreement. In colloquial Persian it is acceptable to say "some words *is* the same or some of them *is* the same."

Thirdly, due to the variety of topics discussed in different conversations resulting from some constraints in the design, specified error types proved to have occurred inconsistently in the series of conversations.

An attempt was made to overcome the first of the above mentioned constraints by going one step down the ladder of abstraction, i.e. grouping some of the types under bigger categories (e.g. articles, demonstrative

adjectives,... as determiners: DET). But still the majority of problems remained. Also, because of the fact that in this study language progress in general was to be examined, the calculations would have to end up with an average based on each single conversation. So, it seemed more reasonable to merge all the types from the beginning under a single name, communication problems (CP) for which considering the percentages and averaging would give a similar result avoiding problematic labelling. So, the descriptive statistics presented in the following table ix-1 show the percentages of the subjects' communication problems (CPs) in relation to the number of words spoken in each and every single conversation, and also the average for the total communication problems of all the subjects in each conversation during the period of six months.

It should be mentioned that in practice most of the subjects failed to record data every fortnight (cf. 8.3.2.4. problems). While some of them recorded more than one conversation every fortnight, others either could not do it some of the times or their recordings were unintelligible. So, I took the one with the lowest number of reliable conversations and reduced the others to the same amount. This was done by considering similar time intervals and cutting out extra ones. For instance, in the following example the first subject provided 15 conversations over a period of six months while the second subject recorded only 8 conversations during the same span of time. From among the first series, those that did not match the conversations in the second series chronologically were disregarded, thus reducing the data

to 8 evenly-spaced conversations. The table below (ix.1) gives an example.

Table ix.1: An example of data organisation.

R18	c1	c2	c3	c4	c5	c6	c7	c8	c9	c10	c11	c12	c13	c14	c15
R19	c1		c2		c3		c4		c5		c6		c7		c8

The conversations were analyzed using WordSmith Tools (Scott, 1996) to single out the words uttered by the subject (ignoring those by interlocutors) in each conversation after the data had been tagged for communication problems.

Then the number of the words in each conversation and the number of communication problems (CPs) were transferred onto a spreadsheet to calculate percentages. A percentage here then means the number of CPs per 100 words uttered by the informant.Here are two samples of parts of conversations which were tagged for both **CPs** and LA tokens. (TT = taking time; SC = self correction as two examples of consciously used strategies or LA tokens):

}R: Today is the 20th of October 94 (stating the date of the conversation) erm ... sorry today when you talked with Dennis {*I: Yeah*} he, he **TT** was interested **CP** to to **TT** have some comparison between the industry in your country and UK.

{I: No no because we discussed that last time I spoke to him
}R: Really

{I: Yeah they give me some possible [ ] to read *}R: Oh, oh*{ Mine's**CP** project and [ ] 's project? Because the last time he said that erm... it's better for me until this time he emphasized again that it's better for me to have some comparison between the industrial companies in Iran and in UK and erm... a as **TT** I said **CP**him it's **CP**erm... take **CP** long time and I'm not sure that I can make **CP** some data collection in the right

way.

{I: But you, you have been working before.
}R: No erm... as I told you I think I was work erm... working **SC** in the ministry of industry in I ran.

***

}R: Erm... I can find the [ ]? **CP**

{I: Yeah,... So, erm... the [ ] is 89 [(some calculation)
}R: It should be[ ]? **CP** Because you, we **SC** have to have this [gradient]
and then add distilled water to reach one litter

{I: Yes
}R: Yeah?

{I: Yeah
}R: It's not one litter in ... **CP**

{I: Well [ ] you make [ ] I mean
}R: Yeah, yeah

{I: I could have [ ]
}R: Yes

{I: So, if you make that and, I'll get this photocopy; and...
}R: Is anything else? **CP** Should [ ]?

{I: Don't think so
}R: We have that sca, sca**CP**

{I: Scab?
}R: Scab for cutting [ ]

{I: Ah we've got erm... sterile [ ], scab blades, [ ]
to use. So, if we use, we'll use 1.8 [ ]
}R: So for the first [ ] or this after that it should be [ ] ? **CP**

The braceright "{" marks the starting point of the text to be excluded from calculation and the braceleft shows the end of the excluded part. That is

the text between the two symbols { } was excluded because it was by an interlocutor not the subject.

Table ix.2 : CPs per 100 words in different conversations (C1 to C8)

High - input								
Subjects	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**C6**	**C7**	**C8**
R6	7.65	6.21	6.46	6.32	5.32	5.45	5.54	4.04
R2	3.70	1.09	4.17	3.64	0.80	2.61	1.97	2.94
R10	2.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	1.00
Sub total mean	**4.45**	**4.10**	**4.88**	**4.99**	**3.37**	**3.35**	**3.17**	**2.66**
Low - input								
Subjects	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**C6**	**C7**	**C8**
R13	8.08	3.94	5.20	6.82	6.82	5.91	3.73	5.57
R3	6.70	6.99	3.30	6.90	4.41	4.49	1.15	1.82
R7	9.41	6.90	1.67	1.32	3.44	5.26	3.25	5.06
Sub total mean	**8.06**	**5.94**	**3.39**	**5.01**	**4.89**	**5.22**	**2.71**	**4.15**
Control								
Subjects	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**C6**	**C7**	**C8**
R8	6.34	6.31	3.66	5.42	4.60	4.69	1.83	4.41
R18	8.84	7.69	4.05	1.47	2.50	3.89	4.57	5.06
R19	2.45	10.26	4.67	3.68	3.62	4.45	3.21	0.26
Sub total mean	**5.88**	**8.09**	**4.13**	**3.52**	**3.57**	**4.34**	**3.20**	**3.24**
Overall mean	**6.13**	**6.04**	**4.13**	**4.51**	**3.95**	**4.31**	**3.03**	**3.35**

The overall means show the averages of different conversations for all the subjects. Thus, they start from 6.13% of the words the subjects used in their conversations at the beginning and end at 3.35%.

The outstanding point here is that a considerable amount of reduction is evident in the number of language problems of all groups whether taken in groups or individually. To see the development more clearly, a graph was drawn for the whole sample, and also one for each of the three groups based on the respective calculations.

Therefore, first, the total number of the subjects were considered for whom the calculations are given above.

Below, in Table ix-3 the ranges of percentages of CPs in different conversations (for the whole sample) are presented, based on which the following graph is drawn, Figure ix-1.

Table ix.3: CPs per 100 words in different conversations (C1 to C8)
The whole sample

Ranges

Subjects	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8
Maximum	9.41	10.26	6.46	6.90	6.82	5.91	5.54	5.57
Mean	**6.13**	**6.04**	**4.13**	**4.51**	**3.95**	**4.31**	**3.03**	**3.35**
Minimum	2.00	1.09	1.67	1.32	0.80	2.00	1.15	0.26

Starting from 6.13 and ending in 3.35 we thus have about 50% reduction of the problems in oral communication of the subjects during the period of the study. This decrease is evident in the following graph overleaf as well. Data from one individual conversation (or interview), even if averaged over 9 subjects, may present a considerable difference from data from another one in the series of conversations, and different factors like the topic of conversation would be likely to affect both CP and LA scores. For that reason, it was decided to compare the development of proficiency and language awareness by grouping the data into triplets for conversations (and pairs for interviews).

According to the above assumption, the mean of the first three means with that of three from the end (triplets), were compared as in the following calculation.

Comparison of triplets: **5.43-3.56 = 1.87 i.e. 34.43%**

The comparison shows a 34.43% decrease in the problems. That is, the subjects have shown that they have overcome over 1/3 of their problem during the course of the study.

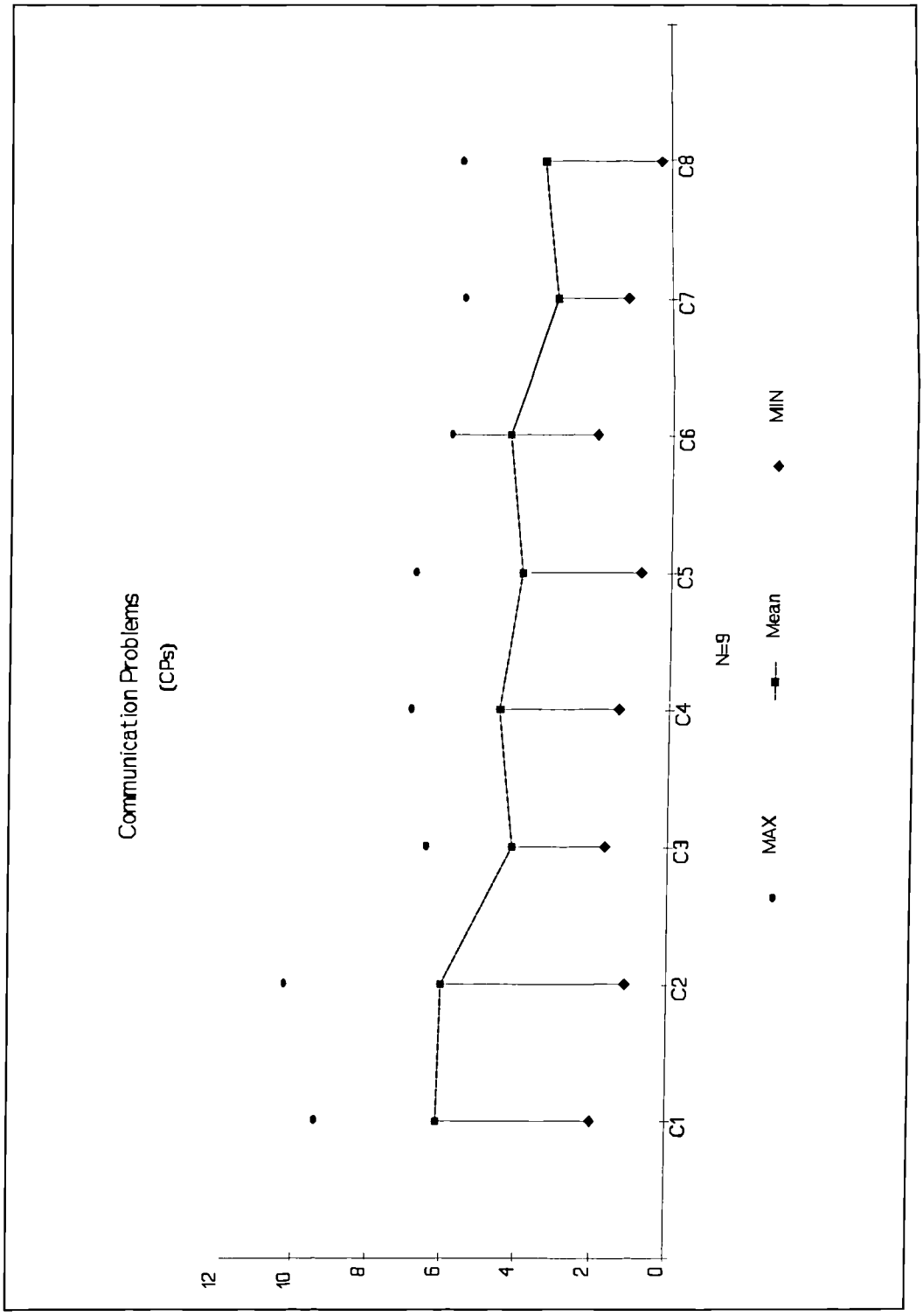


Figure 1-ix: Change of the number of communication problems in all of the subjects in 8 conversations during six months.

The control group was the second one considered to be compared with the two experimental groups. Here are the calculations followed by a graph:

Table ix. 4: CPs per 100 words in different conversations (C1 to C8)

Control group

Ranges

Subjects	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8
Maximum	8.84	10.26	4.67	5.42	4.60	4.69	4.57	5.06
Mean	**5.88**	**8.09**	**4.13**	**3.52**	**3.57**	**4.34**	**3.20**	**3.24**
Minimum	2.45	6.31	3.66	1.47	2.50	3.89	1.83	0.26

The graph is given overleaf.

Comparing three means from the beginning with three from the end we obtained:

Comparison of triplets: 6.03-3.59= 2.44 i.e. 40.46%

The difference between 6.03 and 3.59 is 2.44 or 40.46% which is almost half of the problems. This means the reduction is strongly confirmed.

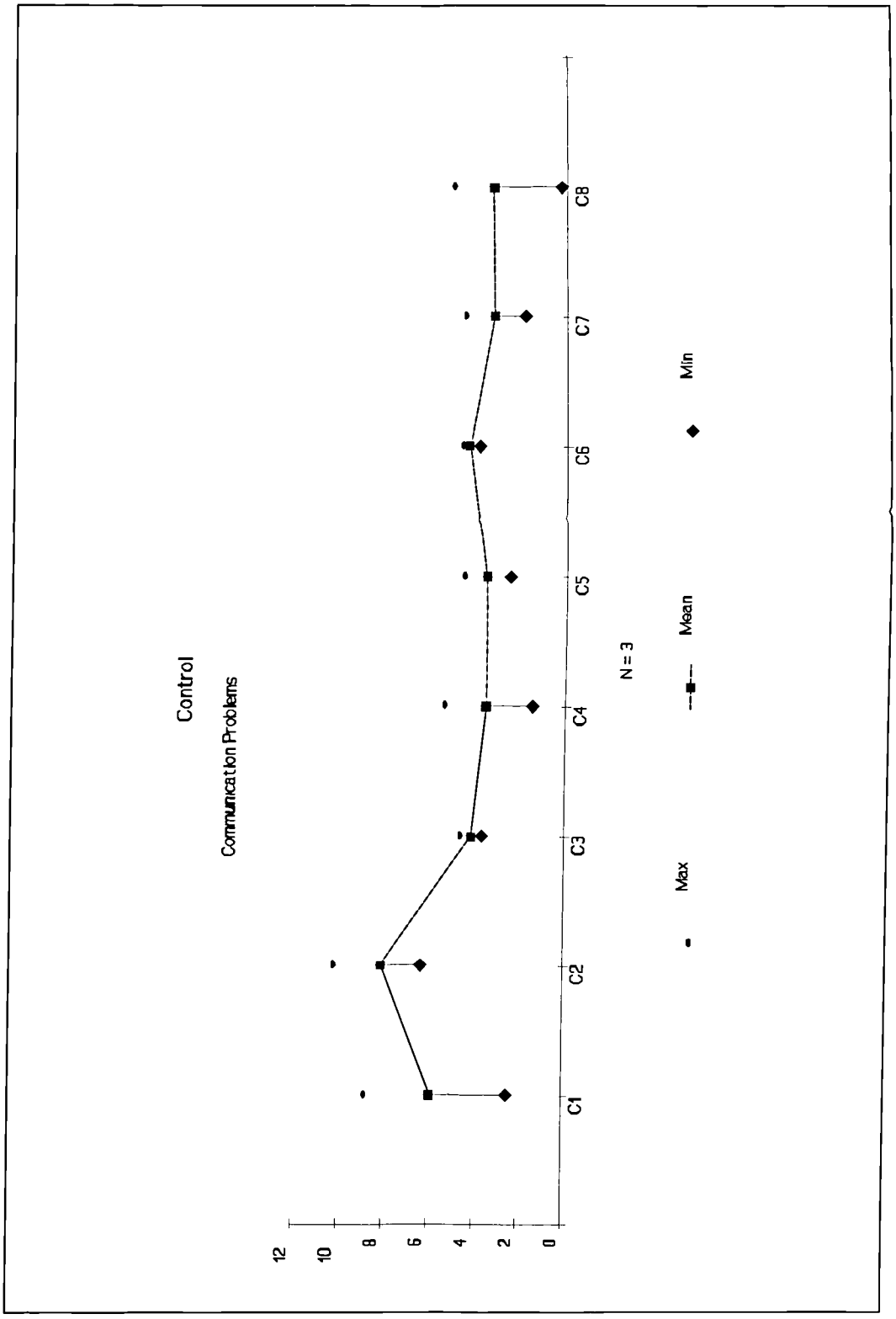


Figure 2.-ix:Change of the number of communication problems in the control group in 8 conversations during six months.

In the same way, the high input group was considered. The calculations are given prior to the graph (overleaf):

Table ix.5 : CPs per 100 words in different conversations (C1 to C8)

High-input

Ranges

Subjects	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**C6**	**C7**	**C8**
Maximum	7.65	6.21	6.46	6.32	5.32	5.45	5.54	4.04
Mean	**4.45**	**4.10**	**4.88**	**4.99**	**3.37**	**3.35**	**3.17**	**2.66**
Minimum	2.00	1.09	4.00	3.64	0.80	2.00	1.97	1.00

4.45 - 2.66 equals 1.79 which is 40% improvement (or reduction of problems). So here again the development is almost the same. Also after comparing the means of three conversation from the beginning to those of three from the following result was obtained:

Comparison of triplets: **4.47-3.06 = 1.41 i.e. 31.54%**

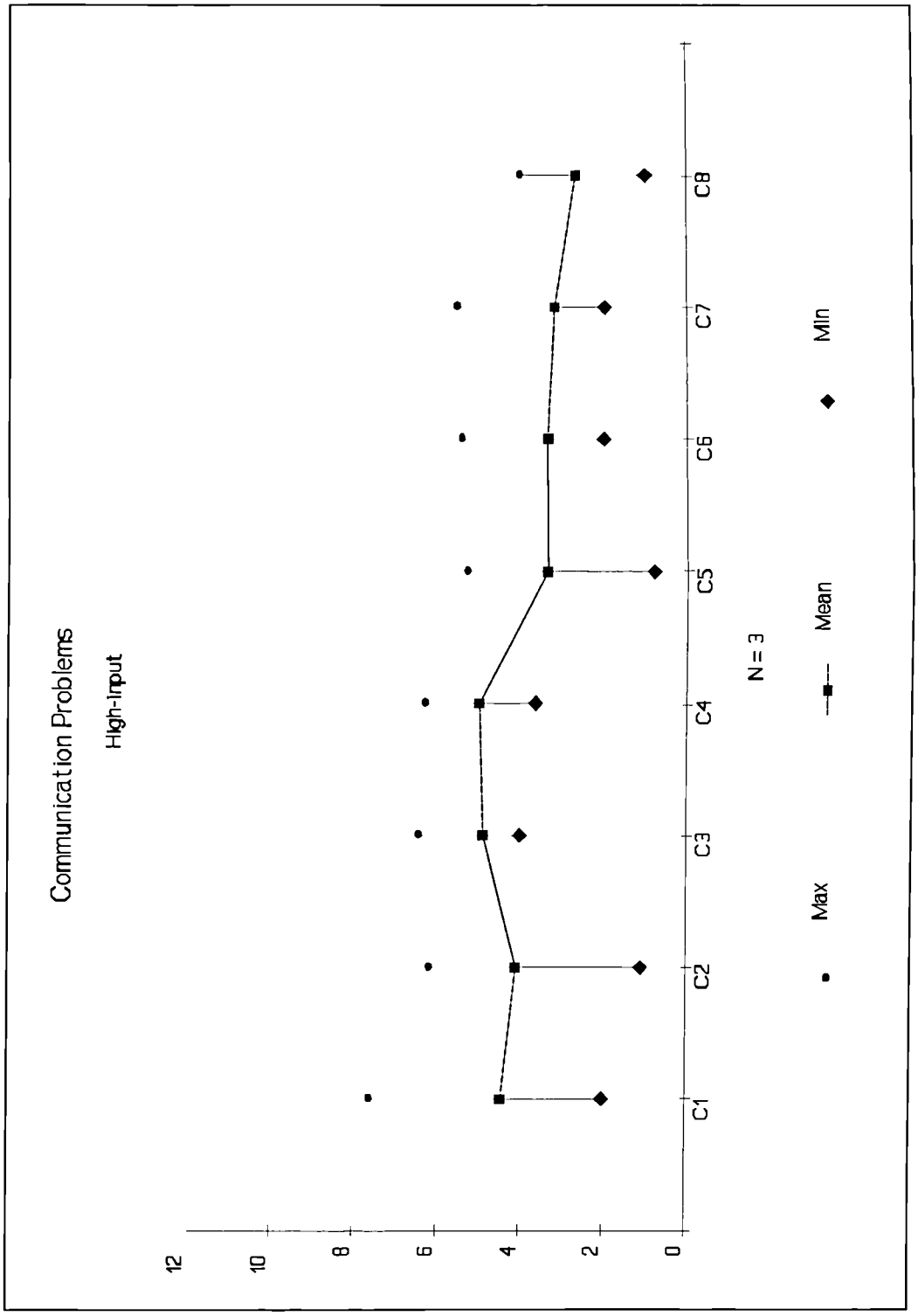


Figure 3-ix: Change of the number of communication problems in the High-input group in 8 conversations during six months.

The last series of calculations and the related graph are those of the low input group:

Table ix.6 : CPs per 100 words in different conversations (C1 to C8)

Low-input

Ranges

Subjects	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**C6**	**C7**	**C8**
Maximum	9.41	6.99	5.20	6.90	6.82	5.91	3.73	5.57
Mean	**8.06**	**5.94**	**3.39**	**5.01**	**4.89**	**5.22**	**2.71**	**4.15**
Minimum	6.70	3.94	1.67	1.32	3.44	4.49	1.15	1.82

Here again the decrease is evident. However, as for the previous groups, three means from the beginning were compared with three from the end and the results are:

Comparison of triplets: 5.79-4.02=1.77 i.e. 30.56%

In this case also, the decrease is confirmed, as evident in the following graph.

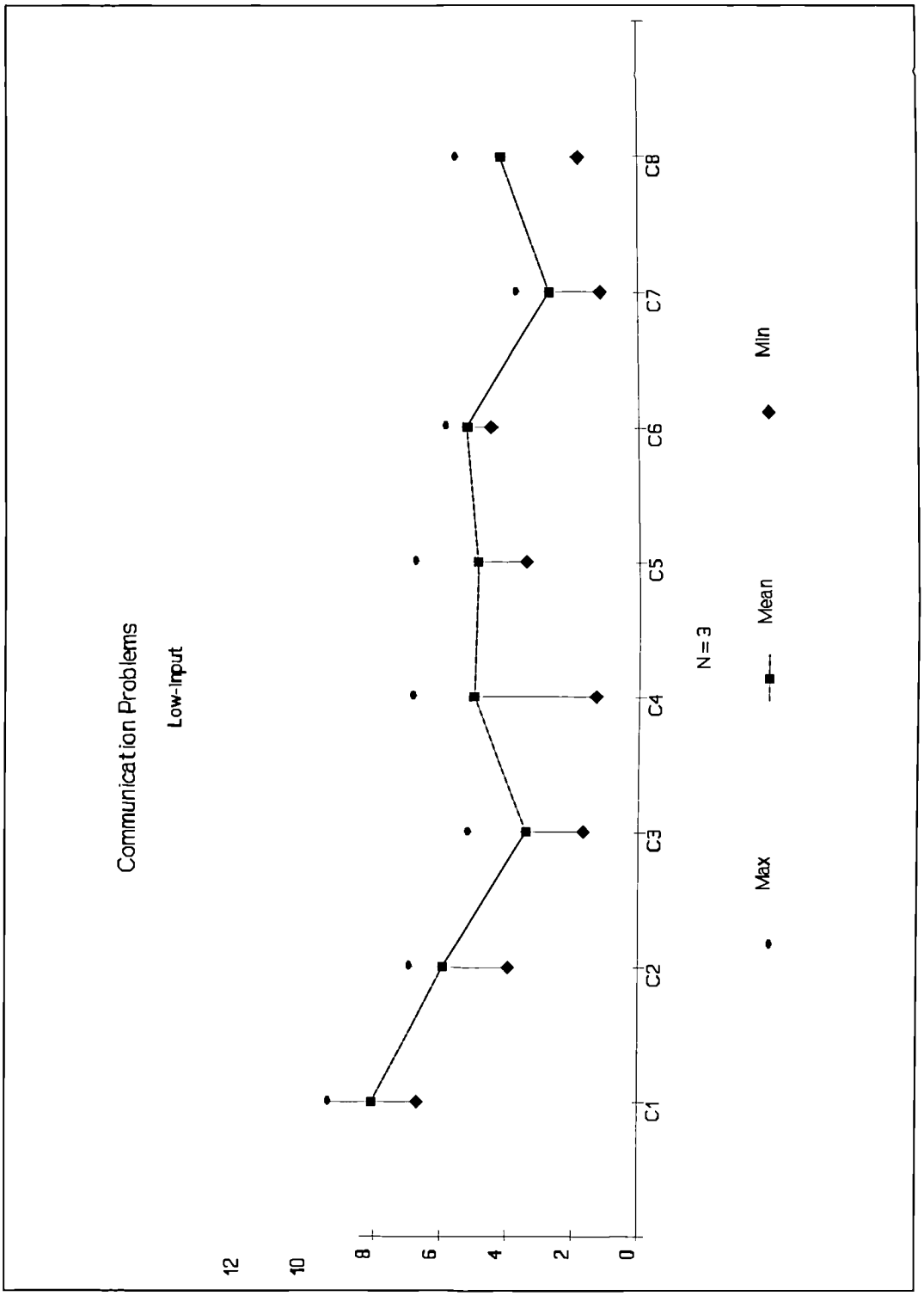


Figure 4.-ix:Change of the number of communication problems in the Low-input group in 8 conversations during six months.

On the whole, the results show an overall reduction of problems.

9.1.2. Language proficiency in Tests

As mentioned before, the tests were adapted from the 'Cambridge First Certificate Test of English' obtained through the English Language Unit of the department of English Language and Literature of the University of Liverpool. Version 1992 was used for the pre-test and 93 for the post-test.

Instructions were provided by the test designers for scoring the test. The weights given to different parts were different.

Bearing in mind that the adapted test consisted of three parts viz. reading comprehension, language use, and listening comprehension, each part was scored according to the related instructions and then the scores were summed up for an overall score for each subject and in turn for each group and also for the whole sample. The means of the scores for each separate part of the test were calculated for each of the three groups separately as well as for all of the subjects as a whole. Also the means of the total scores of all subjects were calculated.

The same procedures of scoring were carried out for both pre and post test and the results were compared. The following tables, ix-7-9, show the descriptive statistics of the results. The first table shows the results of the pre-test for all of the groups, and the second, those of the post test and the third one presents the comparisons (i.e. in terms of means).

Table ix.7: Pre-test scores in terms of means.

(Total Scores: reading comprehension= 15; language use = 45; listening comprehension = 30)

Subjects	Reading Comprehension	Language Use	Listening Comprehension	Overall
High-input	07.00	14.33	15.67	37.00
Low input	07.33	16.67	14.33	38.33
Control	06.00	16.67	11.33	34.00
Overall	06.77	15.88	13.77	36.44

Table ix.8 : Post-test scores in terms of means.

(Total Scores: reading comprehension= 15; language use = 45; listening comprehension = 30)

Subjects	Reading Comprehension	Language Use	Listening Comprehension	Overall
High-input	05.00	19.67	15.00	39.66
Low input	06.67	11.33	18.00	36.00
Control	07.00	18.67	14.00	39.66
Overall	06.22	16.55	15.66	38.44

Here, the means of each group for each part of the test are compared in pre and post tests and presented in table ix-9: in percentages.

Table ix.9: Comparison of group means regarding each part in terms of percentages of difference between pre and post test means.

Groups	Reading Comprehension	Language Use	Listening Comprehension	Overall
High-Input	**-28%**	**+37%**	**- 4%**	**+7%**
Low-Input	**-9%**	**-32%**	**+25%**	**- 6%**
Control	**+16%**	**+11%**	**+23%**	**+16%**
Overall	**-8%**	**+4%**	**+13%**	**+5%**

The overall means show improvement of listening and language use but some loss in reading comprehension. On the other hand, the results for individual groups are different. While the control group has shown improvement in all parts, the experimental groups have not. The results of the experimental groups are not similar either. The high-input group associates with the control group in their improvement in "language use", but the low-input group has shown improvement in "listening" and is similar to control group in this regard.

9.1.3. Language awareness in Conversations and Interviews

9.1.3.1. Introduction

A range of different types of sensitivities were examined, whether direct sensitivity to the nature of language and its role in life, how it works, what subjects knew about it, where they had problems with it; or sensitivity to the nature of language learning via strategies.

As the subjects had already received their declarative knowledge of communicative skills before they had arrived in the U.K., they were presumably at the stage of receiving meaning-focused L2 input (Long: 1983) and also producing meaning-focused L2 output (Swain 1985). Therefore, at this stage of the study their indications of awareness of language in the conversations and the interviews were examined. The development of these were to be compared with that of their CPs.

First, some descriptives and graphs based on the analysis of the

conversations are presented and then those of the interviews. However, before that, some explanation regarding selection of some of the tokens as indications of language awareness is given.

Since the interviews were done in L1 (i.e. Persian), they were considered only as a means of examining the subjects' sensitivity to language (SL). In other words, they were taken as a means for studying language awareness However, the conversations were also used, both for language improvement and language awareness development.

9.1.3.2. Learning strategies, and knowledge of transient processes and states and language awareness

Sensitivity to learning strategies and knowledge of transient processes and states are considered, in this study, as two of the tokens of awareness of language. The reason for selection of these two issues can generally be based on definitions like the one by Scott,1986 (cf. 2.1.1., no.5) i.e. the statements about feeling of the facts about language and strategies.

9.1.3.2.a. Knowledge of Transient Processes and States or sensitivity to one's abilities and shortcomings.

Becoming aware of one's abilities and deficiencies regarding learning in general is said to be associated with age (cf. Nisbet and Shucksmith, 1986). This association is reported in relation to children's development of metacognitive knowledge. Since the subjects are adults, it was assumed that they should be able to reflect upon their knowledge of abilities in this

regard.

Subsequently the subjects' sensitivity to their shortcomings (knowing about what they don't know) regarding learning the language or language learning in general and also sensitivity to their abilities and their improvement in learning the language were among the points considered in looking for clues of awareness of language in the interviews and conversations. This type of sensitivity is called knowledge of transient processes and states.

9.1.3.2.b. Knowledge of Strategies

Since learning strategies are used as signs or tokens of awareness in the analysis of the interviews and conversations, they are considered briefly to show how they fit in.

For this, first a series of statements from Nisbet and Shucksmith (1986: 25) is given below;

- ... strategies are the processes that underlie performance on thinking tasks ... .
- ...it is a series of skills used with a particular purpose in mind.
- They are almost always purposeful and goal-oriented, but perhaps not always carried out at a conscious or deliberate level
- They can be lengthy or so rapid in execution that it is impossible to recapture, recall or even be aware that one has used a strategy.

There are two arguments regarding the use of strategies in the analysis, 1) the term awareness, as mentioned before, is regarded from different points of view. The Freudian view (conscious versus unconscious) can be contrasted with Kelly's (1955) view of awareness consisting of different

levels. The latter view suggests that in studying the psychology of man-the-philosopher we must take into account his subverbal patterns of representation and constructions. So, this is one basis for justification of the use of strategies as indications of awareness.

Also, as awareness is defined as one's *conscious perception* (cf. chapter ii.), which in turn is a personal construct, the inexactness of the term as a mental image stands out. It could be a conscious, subconscious/subverbal, or probably even submerged construct of one's personality.

Therefore, strategies which are always purposeful and goal oriented can represent awareness whether or not they are carried out at a so-called conscious level.

2) For the analysis, only those strategies (of learning the language) were selected which the subjects said they used (or they were reluctant to use) consciously. That is, the ones that the subjects used consciously and were able to talk about explicitly; also those which they considered useless. It should be mentioned that the strategy tokens considered here are those which represent the 'click of realisation' as introduced in the following statements.

> Knowing about strategies is prior to feeling the 'click of realization', that they really work, ... (Scott, 1992: 280).

Therefore, when one reflects upon the workability or uselessness of the strategies, one is conscious of them, even on a conscious/unconscious view of awareness.

9.1.4. Language awareness in the conversations

Similar to the previuos analysis, the tagged tokens of LA (e.g. SSH= sensitivity to shortcomings, SC = self correction, TT= time taking, NL= nature of language learning and/or strategies, etc.) were considered. Here are two examples of tagged texts:

An example of the tagged data from a telephone call is given below:

A telephone call
Hello, I believe the battery is dead. Yeah. It's Mohammad, How are you? Fine? How is your computer? {-laughter-}. Thank you very much. Anyhow, will you be here tonight?... erm half past eight?
Sure. I mean... Oh 'see. OK. You have to [ ] the machine.
No,
not really. What time, depends erm... I mean. [ ] you come back STR
if you go home. No problem. yeah, no problem. Thank you very much.
It's very fav,... **CP**erm... pleasure of me **SC**, **CP** sorry
-laughter- **SSH**.
Erm... OK., OK. I mean it's not **CP** problem if you collect them 9:00 or
half past nine **CP** . I mean there is no problem **SC** at all. Yes I will do
it yeah. Thank you very much. OK. Thank you very much. Bye now.

A conversation
}R: I know the size. I needed to **CP** erm... another [ ]
and seven [ ] but always I needed not I needed **SSH**, **CP**
I would like **SC** {-laughter-} during erm... **CP** 3 years.

{I: Well it's plenty, it's plenty of [ ] Dennis [ ]
}R: [ ] supervisor

{I: [ ] Dennis is the first person to ask and Andrew uses a lot of those things and, [ ] wait until the next 3 years until you get them.
}R: {-laughter-

{I: It's true; it's true I'm afraid, yeah. You [
] to rely on me to find [ ] for you. *} R: Only for{*
[ ]*} R: No only for **CP** {* If you need to
buy more, then find the details, ordering details. I'll have
a look at the prices. And again if you leave it to me to find
the ordering details you'll wait a long time, I'm afraid.

{I: Otherwise [ ] I mean, I am supervising 5 people
}R: I know, I know. * I: [ ]* but you mean, might
be **CP**, I, I think **TT**, erm... I don't know **CP SSH**

{I: [ ]
}R: NO, I think erm... erm... about the [ ],[ ] by you because, erm...
I did something {* I: [ ]*}
tell me that you have **CP** supervisor, a [ ] supervisor **SC**
and ... might be CP erm... between together CP

The descriptives of the subjects' sensitivity to language in the conversations are given before the results of the interviews. They are presented in the same way as for the language problems i.e. beginning with all the subjects as a whole in order to obtain a holistic picture of their sensitivity to language during the period of the study.

The figures shown below were calculated by adding up all the tokens of awareness in each conversation; then the ratios were calculated in relation to the number of words in conversations in the form of percentages given below: and then the ranges (from minimum to maximum) for each conversation among all the subjects were computed based on which the following graph, fig 5-ix, was drawn.

Table ix.10: LA tokens per 100 words in different conversations (C1 to C8)

The whole sample

High input								
Subjects	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**C6**	**C7**	**C8**
R6	2.04	2.54	3.95	2.63	2.12	1.21	2.72	2.29
R2	2.59	2.73	0.00	1.80	3.20	3.73	1.18	0.98
R10	0.92	9.50	1.09	0.59	2.30	0.66	0.71	0.46
Sub total mean	**1.85**	**4.92**	**1.68**	**1.67**	**2.54**	**1.86**	**1.53**	**1.24**
Low input								
Subjects	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8
R13	3.53	3.94	3.34	2.27	1.13	5.48	3.72	3.52
R3	2.41	1.39	1.09	0.00	2.35	0.28	0.28	1.80
R7	2.35	1.37	1.67	1.31	0.95	3.94	1.41	0.00
Sub total mean	**2.76**	**2.23**	**2.03**	**1.19**	**1.48**	**3.23**	**1.80**	**1.77**
Control								
Subjects	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**C6**	**C7**	**C8**
R19	3.53	2.56	2.12	3.03	3.29	4.79	0.28	0.04
R8	4.21	0.69	0.00	1.15	1.45	2.66	3.66	0.52
R18	3.24	5.13	2.89	1.47	1.36	1.65	2.44	3.00
Sub total mean	**3.66**	**2.79**	**1.67**	**1.88**	**2.03**	**3.03**	**2.46**	**1.19**
Overall mean	2.75	3.28	1.79	1.58	2.01	2.70	1.93	1.40

Table ix.11

	Ranges							
Subjects	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**C6**	**C7**	**C8**
Maximum	4.21	9.50	3.95	3.03	3.29	5.48	3.72	3.52
Mean	**2.75**	**3.28**	**1.79**	**1.58**	**2.01**	**2.70**	**1.93**	**1.40**
Minimum	0.92	0.69	0.00	0.00	0.95	0.28	0.28	0.00

As explained before, the means were grouped into triplets from the beginning and the end, and then the means of the triplets were compared in the following calculations.

Comparison of triplets: 2.60-2.01=0.59 i.e. 22.69% decrease

If the means are compared, whether considering those of the first and the last conversations or of the mean of the first three means with the mean of the last three means a noticeable decrease in the number of tokens is shown. The graph is given below.

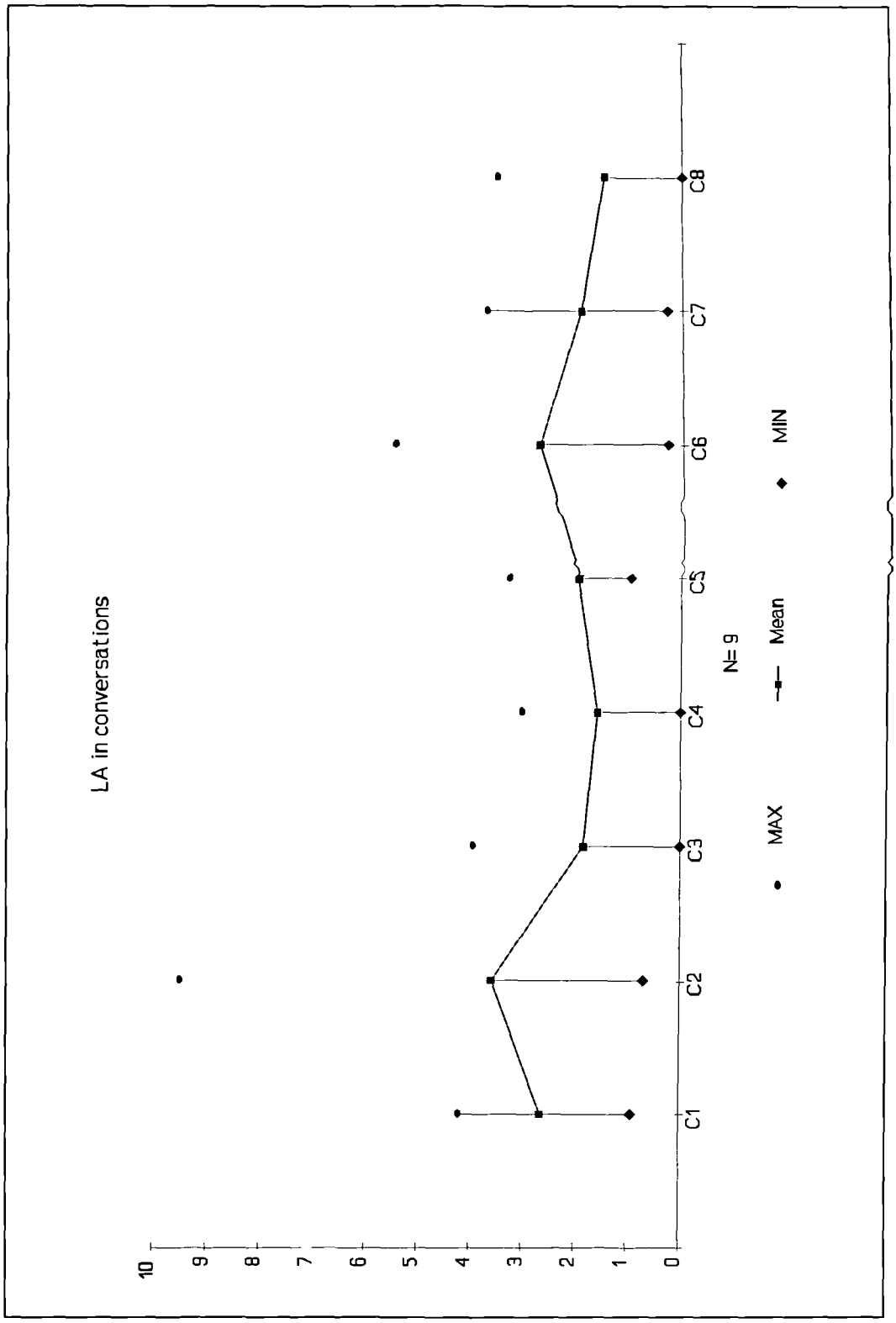


Figure 5-ix: Change in percentages of LA tokens in different conversations for all the subjects, maximums, minimums and averages.

To compare the results of the two experimental groups with the control group, the descriptives of the ranges for the latter are given next:

Table ix.12: LA tokens per 100 words in different conversations (C1 to C8) Control group

	Ranges							
Subjects	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**C6**	**C7**	**C8**
Maximum	4.21	5.13	2.89	3.03	3.29	4.79	3.66	3.00
Mean	**3.66**	**2.78**	**1.67**	**1.88**	**2.03**	**3.03**	**2.46**	**1.19**
Minimum	3.24	0.69	0.00	1.15	1.36	1.65	1.28	0.04

Comparison of triplets: 2.70-2.05 = .65 i.e. 24.07%

A similar change is seen here also. That is a noticeable amount of decrease is shown. The graph is given below.

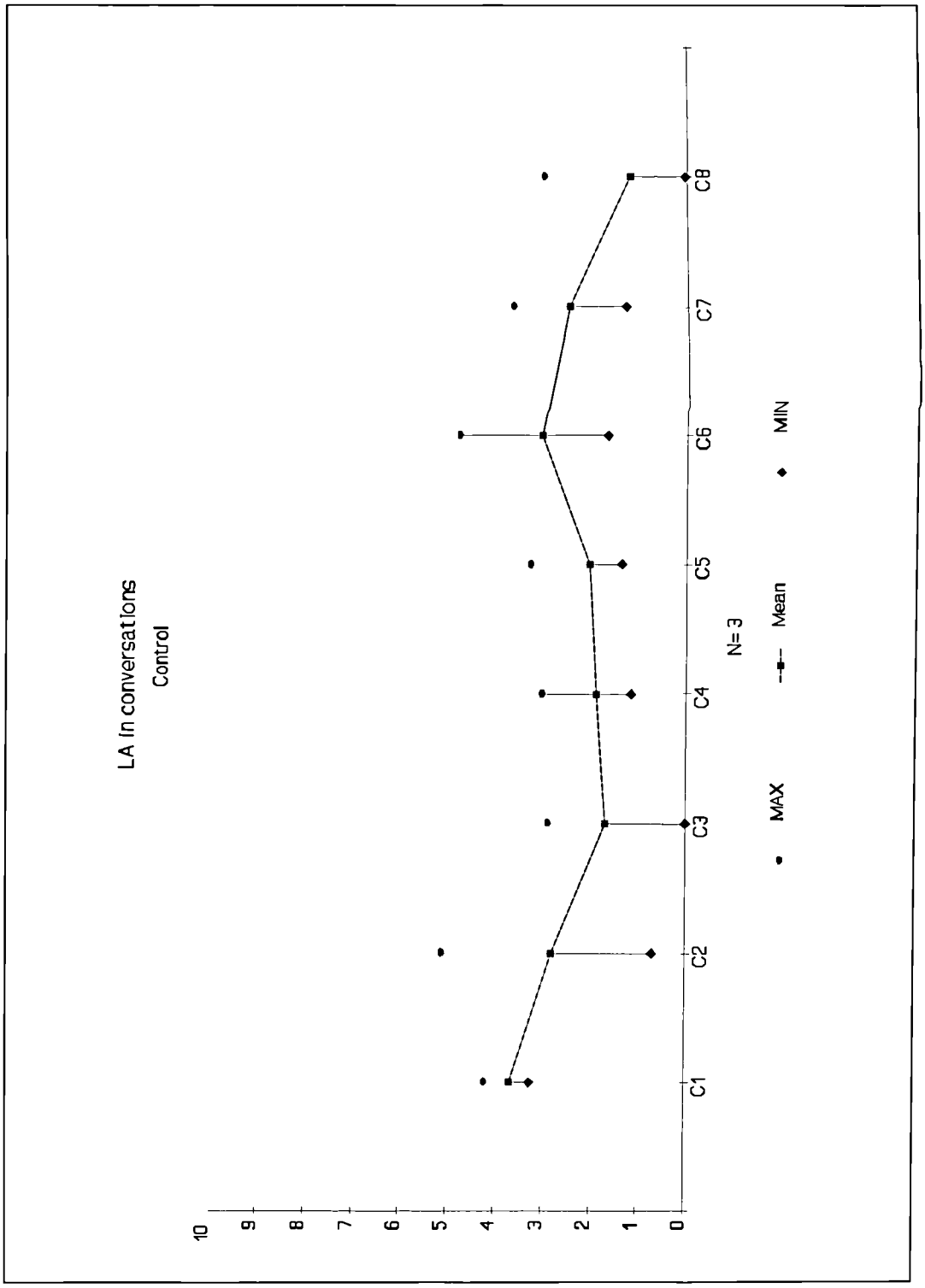


Figure 6-ix: Change in percentages of LA tokens in different conversations for the control group.

At this point the experimental groups are presented. First, the descriptives of the high-input group are given below.

Table ix.13: LA tokens per 100 words in different conversations (C1 to C8)

High-input group

	Ranges							
Subjects	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**C6**	**C7**	**C8**
Maximum	2.59	9.5	3.95	2.63	3.20	3.73	2.72	2.29
Mean	**1.85**	**4.92**	**1.68**	**1.67**	**2.54**	**1.86**	**1.53**	**1.24**
Minimum	0.92	2.54	0.00	0.59	2.12	0.66	0.71	0.46

Comparison of triplets: 2.81 - 1.54 =1.27 i.e. 45% decrease

The decrease in the number of language awareness tokens is striking for the High-input group as well. The related graph is presented next.

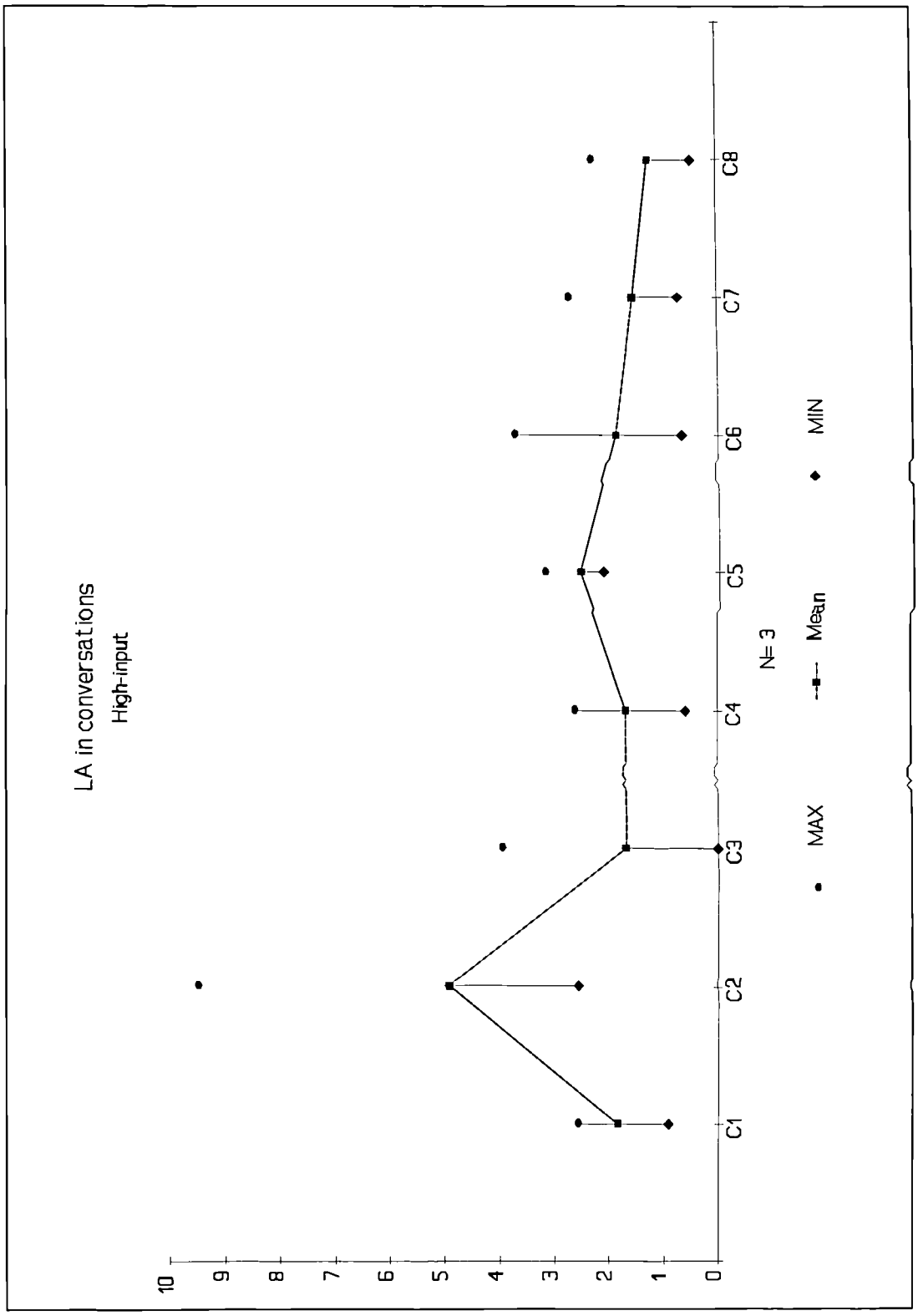


Figure 7-ix: Change in percentages of LA tokens in different conversations for the High-input group.

The last group in this series (language awareness in conversations), is the low-input group, i.e. the second experimental group. Here are the descriptives:

Table ix.14: LA tokens per 100 words in different conversations (C1 to C8)

Low-input group

	Ranges							
Subjects	**C1**	**C2**	**C3**	**C4**	**C5**	**C6**	**C7**	**C8**
Maximum	3.53	3.94	3.34	2.27	2.35	5.48	3.72	3.52
Mean	**2.76**	**2.23**	**2.03**	**1.19**	**1.48**	**3.23**	**1.80**	**1.77**
Minimum	2.35	1.37	1.09	0.00	0.95	0.28	0.28	0.00

Comparison of triplets: 2.34-2.26 = 0.08 i.e. 3.41%

Here again there is some decrease in the number of tokens of language awareness. See the graph below.

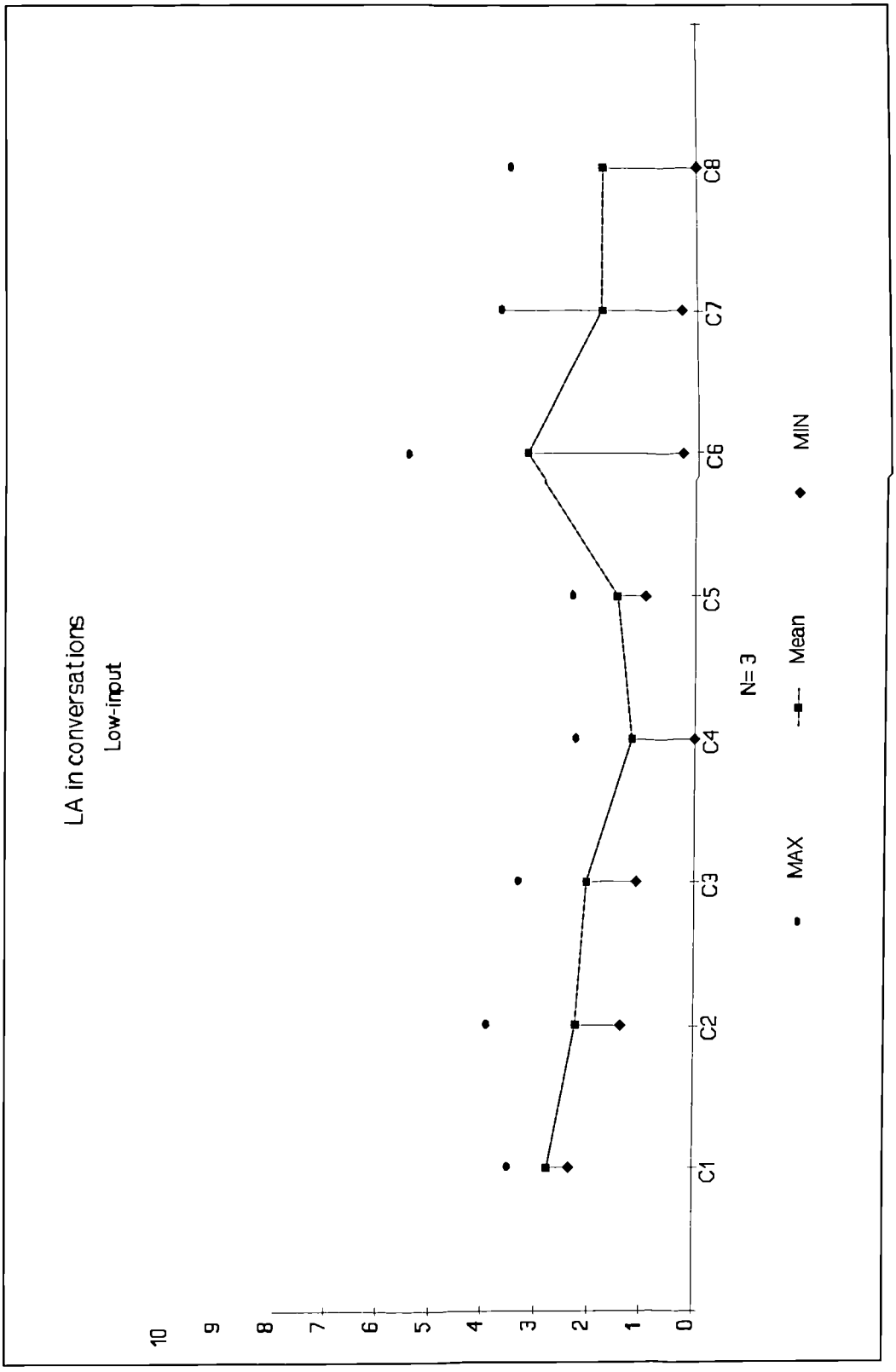


Figure 8-ix: Change in percentages of LA tokens in different conversations for the Low-input group.

9.1.5. Language awareness in the interviews

As mentioned before, the interviews were done during the same period of time as the conversations, to examine the subjects' language awareness only. The analysis was basically similar to the above two series of analyses. An example of data is given below(St= strategy; NL = nature of language learning and/or strategies; SSH = sensitivity to shortcomings):

}R: Usually I might raise **ST** my voice a bit and perhaps speaking a little faster for him to know that I *am not finished yet*

{I: In opening a talk on phone don't you have any difficulty
}R: Well at the beginning one is a bit nervous as for what one should say but as I start with the first few words then it is solved automatically **SSH**

{I: In your opinion what is the position of language in your life suppose as I asked you previously you go back to Iran and there is a committee what will be your stance, to increase, decrease, change or what?
}R: I think it should be increased **NL** but not in the traditional way, but in a new way because we were taught in a bad way even the specific ones perhaps they taught the basics much better than the specifics, the teacher used to read and translate from a handout and that was it and would never discuss e.g. that this word has this meaning here but **NL** in conversation it will never have the same meaning many a word which has a meaning in conversation but not in science so we would get stuck so I think it should be increased but the method of teaching was wrong in my opinion i.e. that[method] didn't get us anywhere.

Next example
R: One thing that I myself have difficulty with is the passive voice I know how I should do it but during the course of conversation I make mistakes and I realize **SSH** that I have done it wrong I notice ... because one intends to answer quickly and so one thinks answering slowly might not be convinient while if one answers moderately and correctly **NL** is better than speaking fast but incorrectly as a result one might misplace she and he which one knows what it is

I: So do you prefer to speak fast and not care about mistakes or speak slowly and more correctly
R: I perhaps prefer to speak fast because I guess if one speaks fast automatically the tongue turns **NL**much better than when slowly

One difference, however, was that the means of the interview series were grouped into pairs from the beginning and pairs from the end of the series. As explained before, the comparable series of interviews, after organizing the data were 5 for each subject (cf. p 170). The descriptives are presented in the same manner i.e. first those of the whole body of the sample, viz. the 'total group', are given below followed by the rest in turn. However, the layout is different in that the subjects, here, are presented horizontally and interviews vertically.

Table ix.15: LA tokens per 100 words in different interviews (Interviews 1-5); The whole sample

	R2	R10	R6	R13	R7	R3	R18	R8	R19
Interview 1	1.57	0.57	1.79	1.71	4.76	1.30	1.03	1.06	0.86
Interview 2	0.52	0.92	1.02	1.90	2.17	1.04	1.11	0.58	0.62
Interview 3	0.67	0.82	1.04	1.11	1.01	0.23	1.13	0.67	1.07
Interview 4	0.37	0.51	4.55	1.90	1.10	1.05	1.66	1.25	0.75
Interview 5	1.91	0.32	1.74	1.95	1.17	1.62	1.21	0.78	1.99

Table ix.16: Ranges

	Maximum	Mean	Minimum
Interview 1	4.76	1.63	0.57
Interview 2	2.17	1.09	0.52
Interview 3	1.13	0.86	0.23
Interview 4	4.55	1.46	0.37
Interview 5	1.99	1.41	0.32

Comparison of pairs **1.365-1.435 = .070 i.e. 5.12% decrease**

The calculations below the table, comparison of pairs, show the difference between the mean of the first two means compared to the mean of the last two means. In terms of percentage, 5.12 percent decrease of indication of awareness is indicated.

The following graph presents the decrease through five interviews.

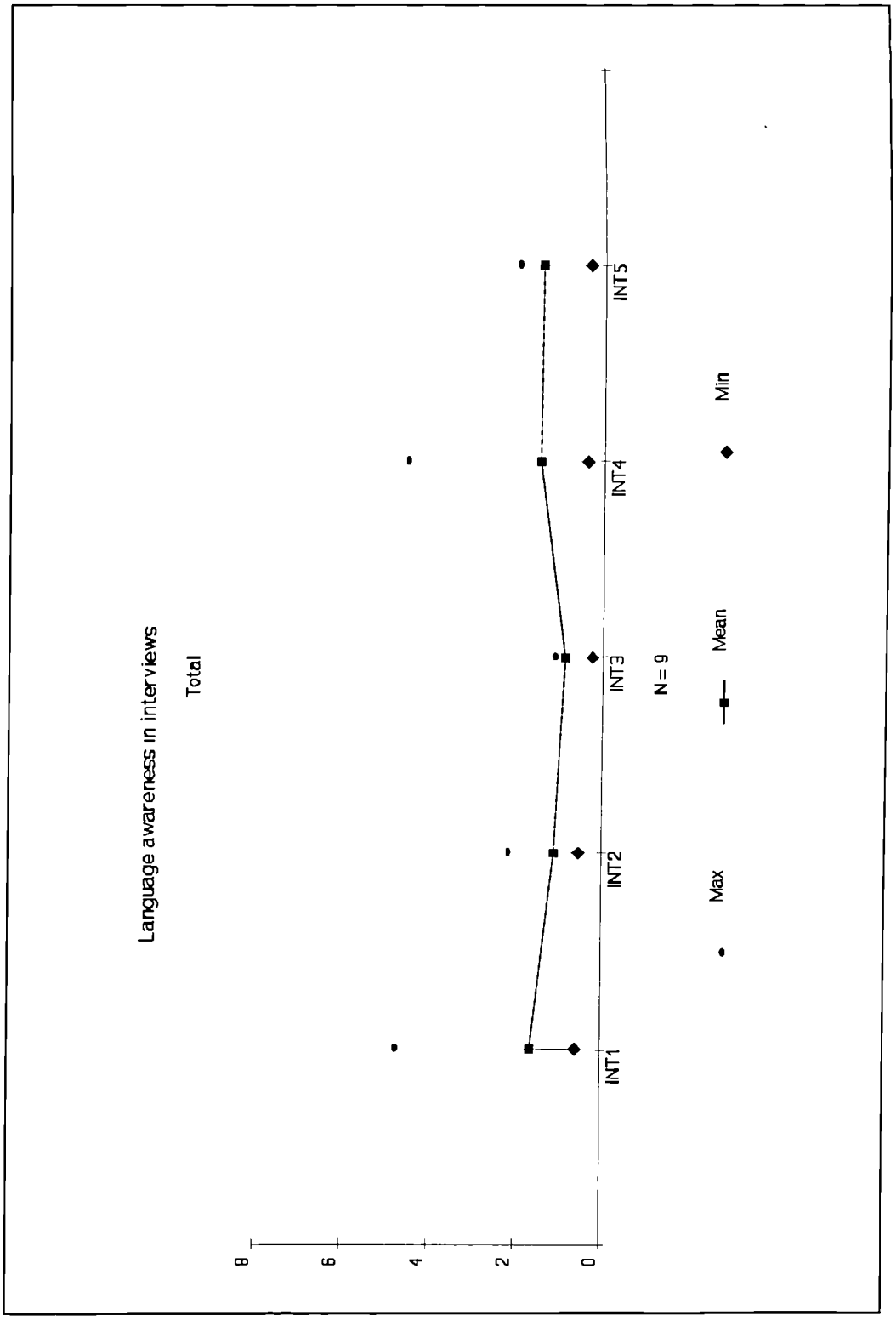


Figure 9-ix: Change in percentages of LA tokens in different interviews for all the subjects.

The next group in order of comparison, is the control, the descriptives of which followed by a graph are shown below:

Table ix.17: LA tokens per 100 words in different interviews (Interviews 1-5)

	Control group		
	R18	R8	R19
Interview 1	1.03	1.06	0.86
Interview 2	1.11	0.58	0.62
Interview 3	1.13	0.67	1.07
Interview 4	1.66	1.25	0.75
Interview 5	1.21	0.78	1.99

Table ix.18: Ranges

	Maximum	Mean	Minimum
Interview 1	1.06	**0.98**	0.86
Interview 2	1.11	**0.77**	0.58
Interview 3	1.13	**0.96**	0.67
Interview 4	1.66	**1.22**	0.75
Interview 5	1.99	**1.33**	0.78

Comparison of pairs **0.875-1.275= -0.400 = 45.71% increase**

Obviously there is an outstanding increase. The gradual increase is shown in the following graph.

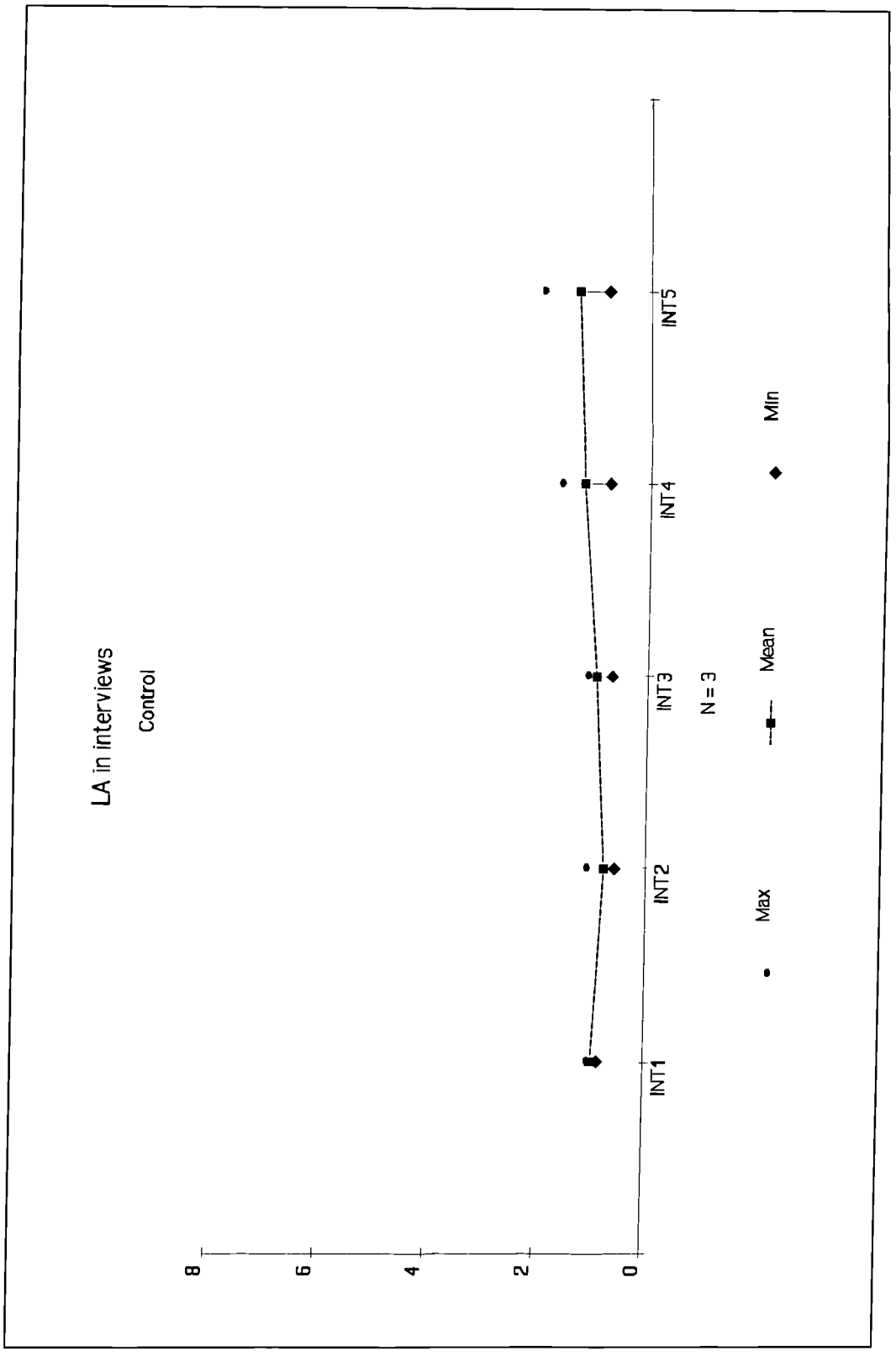


Figure 10-ix: Change in percentages of LA tokens in different interviews for the control group.

In order for the possibility of comparing the experimental groups with the control group, the related descriptives of those groups are given below. This time only the ranges are given in order to avoid repetition. The first group, as in the same order as in the previous sections, is the high-input.

Table ix.19: Hi-input group

Ranges

	Maximum	Mean	Minimum
Interview 1	1.79	**1.31**	0.57
Interview 2	1.02	**0.82**	0.52
Interview 3	1.04	**0.84**	0.67
Interview 4	4.55	**1.81**	0.37
Interview 5	1.91	**1.32**	0.32

Comparison of pairs **1.065 - 1.565 = -0.500 i.e. 46.94% increase**

A similar pattern to the previous one is evident here. The increase can be followed from the second interview to the end, like for the previous one.

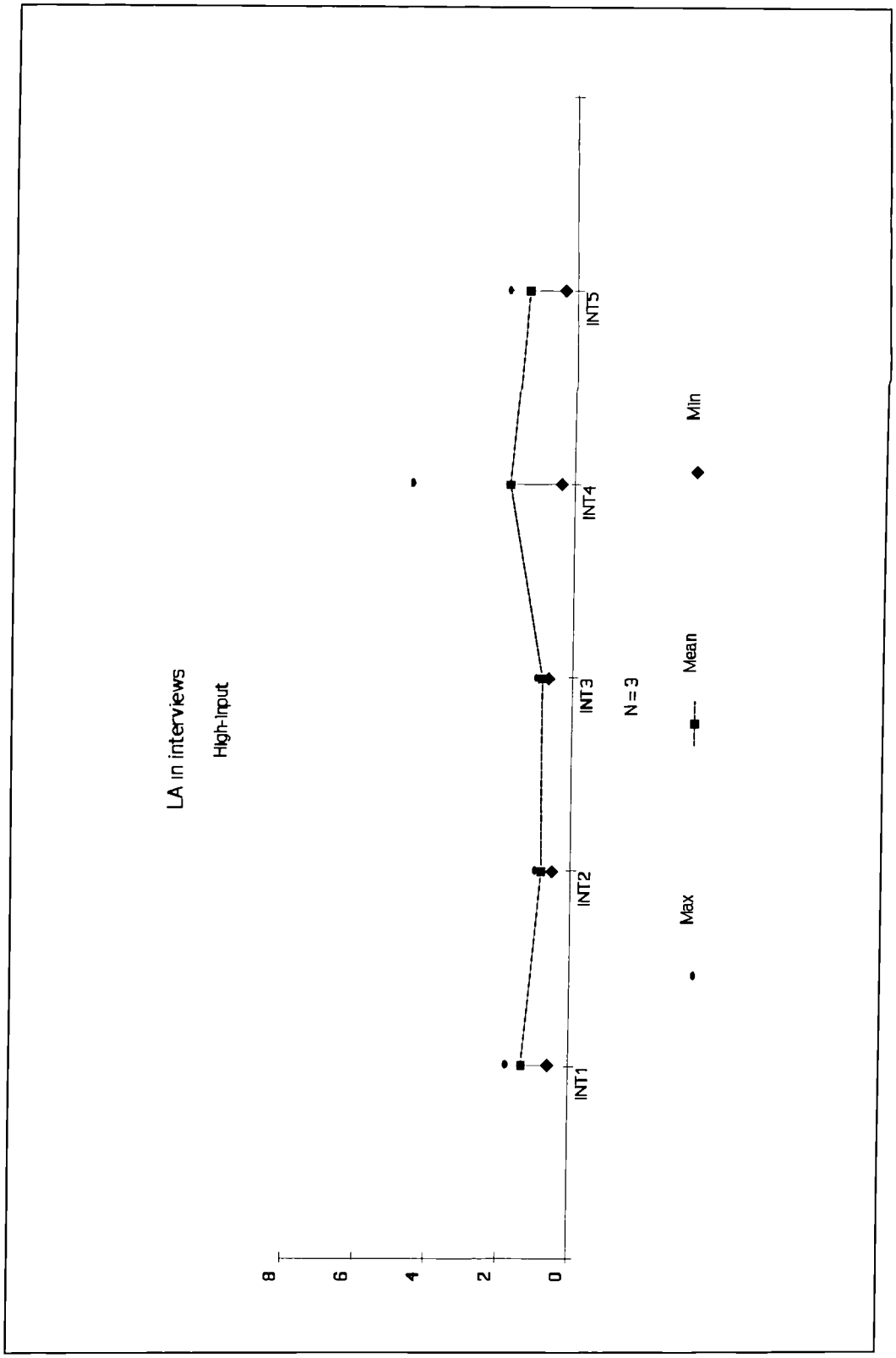


Figure 11-ix: Change in percentages of LA tokens in different interviews for the High-input group.

The second group to be examined against the control group is the low input group.

Table ix.20: Low-input group

Ranges

	Maximum	Mean	Minimum
Interview 1	4.76	**2.59**	1.30
Interview 2	2.17	**1.70**	1.04
Interview 3	1.11	**0.78**	0.23
Interview 4	1.90	**1.35**	1.05
Interview 5	1.95	**1.58**	1.17

Comparison of pairs 2.145 -1.465= 0.68 i.e. 31.70% decrease

Contrary to the previous ones, this group has shown an outstanding decrease. This is evident in the following graph.

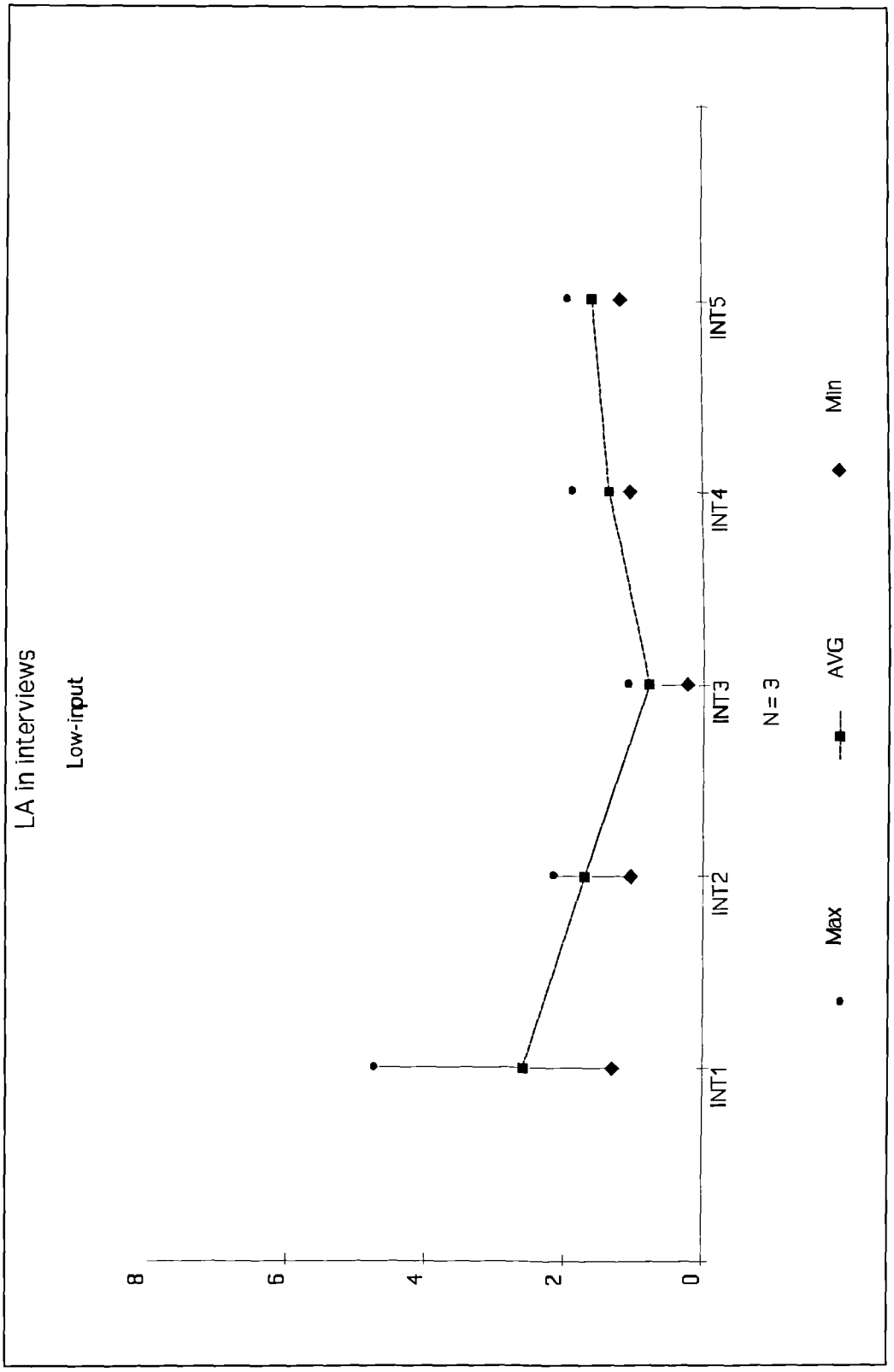


Figure 12-ix: Change in percentages of LA tokens in different interviews for the Low-input group.

9.1.6. The overall comparison

As previously explained (9.1.1.1.b) data from one individual conversation or interview, may present a considerable difference from data from the next one in the series of conversations or interviews. To avoid the problem of affective factors such as the topic of conversation or interview, it was decided to compare the development of language awareness and language proficiency by grouping data into triplets (for conversations and pairs (for interviews) .

Table ix-21 shows an overall comparison, showing the developmental change over 6 months, in terms of CPs and LA tokens.

Table ix.21: Comparative table of different results for different groups The means of the first 3 & the last 3 (triplets); the first two and the last two (pairs).

Variables --------> / Groups ↓	Communication Problems (triplets)	Tests	LA in Conversations (triplets)	LA in Interviews (pairs)
Overall	34% decrease	05% *increase*	22% decrease	05% decrease
High Input	31% decrease	07% *increase*	45% decrease	46% *increase*
Low Input	30% decrease	06% decrease	3% decrease	31% decrease
Control	40% decrease	16% *increase*	24% decrease	45% *increase*

The above table presents four series of results: language proficiency in

conversations; language proficiency in tests language awareness in conversations, and language awareness in interviews.

Some general association between LA in interviews and LP in tests is evident. That is, two of the groups viz. high-input and control, who show increase of indications of awareness in the interviews, also show improvement regarding the results of the tests. The low-input group on the other hand, show loss in both awareness in interviews and proficiency in tests.

9.1.7. Summary of findings

* All the subjects overcame a considerable number of their language problems.

* The low-input group did not improve but showed loss of proficiency in the tests.

* In the conversations, none of the groups showed any increase in indication of awareness of language. On the contrary, the indications for language awareness in this regard decreased in all of the subjects.

* Regarding indications of language awareness in the interviews, two groups, i.e. the high-input and the control, showed noticeable increase. The low-input group however, showed decrease in their indications of awareness.

* The control group and the high-input group showed improvement regarding language proficiency both in their conversations and in the tests;

and concerning language awareness, as mentioned before, showed improvement in the interviews.

The above results are discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER

X

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE LONGITUDINAL STUDY

Contents:

10.1. Discussion

10.1.1. Introduction

To discuss the results, let us return to the main question concerning the relation between language awareness and language proficiency and to the additional and more specific one, whether noticing affects language proficiency regarding the subjects involved in the research, who had already had some formal instruction before arriving in the UK.

It should be mentioned again that noticing in this case was taken in a generic sense. That is, intake of knowledge about language in general, but not about specific forms, was considered. Also, the sequence of input for our different groups, has been:

High-input →	Formal instruction	exposure to communicative use
Low-input →		***input salience enhancement***
Control →	Formal instruction	
		exposure to communicative use

Table x.1

As shown in the table (x.1), the subjects' formal instruction and their exposure to communicative use of language were not simultaneous. Also the type of consciousness-raising the experimental groups received was of the so-called *minimal type, namely input salience enhancement* (cf. 2.1.4. no.3).

Input salience enhancement is different from formal instruction of forms (e.g. Fotos, 1993), or from teaching about language quite explicitly (e.g.

Carter, 1991).

So, while noticing is to be considered as a possibility, obviously our subjects' procedures of input receiving may not have been exactly similar to those examined in previous studies.

Our discussions are based on the following assumptions.

1) All our subjects had received formal instruction and came from a similar educational background.

2) The only formal instruction they received in the UK was the course of English for Academic Purposes. This, too, was prior to the study.

3) The input given in this study was generally about language and not in any form of formal instruction but rather minimal consciousness-raising, 'input salience enhancement'.

4) In the natural environment the researcher was not the only source to provide them with knowledge about language.

10.1.2. Analysis

On the whole, the results do not show any straightforward relations between language awareness and language proficiency .

From the figures on the results of the changes in the number of communication problems for the whole sample, it is clear that all groups (high-input, low-input, and control) improved their language in terms of their specific type of interactions.

On the other hand, in terms of the results of the tests (see chapter viii),

two groups showed an overall improvement regarding their language proficiency, i.e. the control group and the high-input group, whereas the low-input group, on the contrary, indicated reduction and loss of achievement.

For the second variable, i.e. language awareness, LA in conversations and LA in interviews were considered separately. For the conversations, the charts and figures are almost the same for all groups. That is, indications of LA show decrease although, the decrease for the low-input group regarding LA is small (0.03%). For interviews on the other hand, only two groups show an increase, the high-input group and the control group, while the third group (i.e. the low-input) shows decrease. For the subjects taken overall, there is an overall decrease of awareness.

So, the summary of results is:

for the high-input group: improvement of proficiency in discourse, also improvement in the results of the tests; improvement in indications of awareness in the interviews, but decrease in the indications of awareness in the conversations.

for the low-input group: improvement of proficiency in discourse, but an overall decrease in the results of the tests; decrease in indications of awareness in the interviews, and decrease in the indications of awareness in the conversations.

for the control group: improvement of proficiency in discourse, also an overall and significant improvement in the results of the tests, improvement in indications of awareness in the interviews, but decrease in the indications of awareness in the conversations.

Apparently, there is little difference between the high-input group and the control group. The low-input group differs from the other two with regard

to LA in the interviews and also, the results of the test.

So, the results are very complicated and it is therefore, very difficult to draw conclusions. The complexity of the results allows for a number of arguments.

First of all, the size of each group is so small that the validity of comparison is questionable.

Second, the results of the low-input group might have been because: a) they failed to digest the input given to them; b) they faced testing problems e.g. hidden anxieties not mentioned to the researcher c) they had forgotten the forms, did not pay attention, etc.

Thirdly, for how the control group surpassed the low-input group, it is possible that: a) with a rather subjective and semi-structured interview, it is difficult to draw lines between the levels of consciousness raising and of invoking awareness in the subjects i.e. there might have been some involuntary invoking of LA; b) in a natural environment it is unrealistic to consider one agent as the invoker of language awareness, but individual differences concerning their personality as well as the circumstances and opportunities are different possibilities which must be taken into account. One possibility is that the awareness of the control group can be ascribed to input from social interactions..

Still another possibility is that the decrease observed in awareness of language is that of *signs* of awareness of language not the knowledge itself. If so, the reason could be the fact that once the Iranian learners arrive in

the UK. their awareness of language receives a boost and afterwards they get used to it and do not talk about it very much.

10.2. Conclusions

Returning to the main research question we found no clear-cut answer to whether there is a relation between language awareness in general and language proficiency in general. However, due to the complexity of the results a number of arguments are possible. The complexity could partly be related to the limitations and constraints of the study.

On the whole, the results do not show any indications of the effectiveness of minimal consciousness-raising when the input is not relevant directly to the practice of language, and when the input given in the natural environment is isolated from the forms previously covered by instruction. So, with this view, we cannot support the findings of Fotos (1993) regarding the interface role of noticing of forms.

CHAPTER

XI

GENERAL DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Contents:

11.1. Discussions

On the whole, the results of the research, in both studies, are complex and some of them go against what was expected.

Making generalisations about the association of 'beliefs about language' with the 'time of exposure to a foreign language' seems unrealistic. One cannot base general conclusions on one or even two significant results out of twenty (section 6.1). On the other hand, 45% of the cross-tabulations showed some kind of change over time. Moreover, different statements were treated differently by the subjects. That is, the change in the percentage of the answers seems to be specific to some specific groups of statements. Subsequently, one may argue that the beliefs could be categorised and their development could be checked separately in relation to time and other factors. Accordingly, the development of beliefs might be called variety-specific.

In the longitudinal study, language proficiency in the subjects' discourse showed improvement, as expected, though in the tests one subject group showed a loss. This is unexpected, given that subjects were living in an English speaking environment. Nevertheless, the results confirm the claim made by Tarone (1985) and Sajjadi and Tahririan (1992) that second language performance on a written grammar test may differ from performance on an oral task at the same point in time.

What is more surprising is the complex result of the awareness of language measures, which showed a decrease in conversations and conflicting results

in the interviews. There was a decrease in the low-input group scores and an increase in the other two groups' scores.

There are different possible arguments to explain the outcome of the research with regard to the main question i.e. the association between Language Awareness and Language Proficiency.

11.1.1. First argument

The first argument could be that there is no relation between the variables in each study. That is, a) there is no relation between *time of stay* in an English speaking country and the development of *language awareness* in terms of conscious beliefs about language learning, and b) there is no relation between *language awareness* and *language proficiency*.

So, the results do not confirm what some writers (e.g. Martin, 1989) have stated because there is no sign of association between conscious knowledge of language (and of the way it functions in social contexts) and language proficiency. There is not any indication of LA empowering the individual or constituting a factor in one's ability to communicate properly and therefore, effectively.

11.1.2. Second argument

It is possible that some relation might be detected with a different research design.

a) Regarding the cross-sectional study, the following procedures might

change the results: using more items which are more specifically chosen for this purpose (i.e. those which seem to be subject to change e.g. items 6 and others with the likelihood of change in the questionnaire), and examining them with one group of subjects longitudinally.

b) With regard to the longitudinal study, it is possible that using a different approach and/or a large sample might give different results. As Alderson *et.al.* (1995) have stated, it might be the case that there is a relationship between students' knowledge of the rules governing particular structures in a language and their ability to use those structures accurately. So, if for instance awareness of a set of specific forms (similar to those examined by Fotos, 1993) were considered in close relation with the development of competence regarding the same forms, then some association might be detected.

In our case, language awareness in general was compared to language proficiency (sociolinguistic competence) in general and, on the whole, the results from this point of view support Alderson's findings, that metalinguistic knowledge and linguistic proficiency are relatively unrelated.

11.1.3. Third argument

The apparent decrease in the number of indications/signs of language awareness in conversations might be treated differently. That is, one might argue that it is possible that as awareness increases, paradoxically, it

turns into a subconscious foundation for automatic language performance and is transferred into subconscious habits of communication. The click of realisation might occur gradually and continuously. As a result, declarative knowledge might turn into procedural knowledge. The knowledge 'what' (e.g. of grammatical rules) might change into the knowledge 'how' i.e. automatic performance. If so, one is less likely to talk about it explicitly unless one is asked to or provoked e.g. in an interview. One might take the results of the longitudinal study in favour of this assumption, in that the subjects who showed a noticeable decrease in Language Awareness in conversation, showed a noticeable increase in Language Awareness in interviews. On the other hand those who showed a small decrease of LA in conversation (3.41%) and remained at almost the same level, did not show any increase in LA in interviews. This could be because of not feeling the facts.

There is clearly a difference between LA itself and an indication of LA, and it is possible that as proficiency becomes smoother and more automatic the learner does not speak about what one knows about language. It is likely that knowledge is merged into practice in the form of intention. Of course, there is no positive evidence to support this, and it must remain an area for further research.

11.1.4. Fourth argument

Another argument can be produced based on the role of elicitation tasks

on the linguistic performance.

In this regard, the claim made by a number of researchers that task variation entails variation in the linguistic form of learners' performances (L. Dickerson, 1975; W. Dickerson 1976; Beebe, 1980, Tarone, 1983, 1985) was investigated by Sajjadi and Tahririan (1992), using Persian learners learning English in a non-native speaking environment. Their findings supported the claim made by Tarone (1985; mentioned above).

Our results also confirm their findings in that the learners' performance on a written grammar test differed from their performance on an oral task at the same point in time. Accordingly, it is possible that the relations are aspect-specific as explained below.

In the longitudinal study, all the subjects showed improvement in the conversations with English people. However, the tests gave different results in that the low-input group did not show improvement. Also, there were different results for different parts of the test.

The development of language awareness in different groups (in relation to interviews) was similar to that of their language proficiency in the tests. While only one part of our test viz. 'language use' might correspond to 'written grammar', it is also the part whose results associate with the subjects' LA improvement in interviews. Of course, one might argue that with regard to one group, i.e. the control group, the same argument is possible with regard to listening. Nevertheless, the difference is that with 'language use' the association is true for all three groups while for listening

there is not a similar association for all the three groups.

Subsequently, there is probably some association between the subjects' language proficiency and language awareness in this regard. The relation might be called variety-specific

Variety-specificity can also be used to explain the results of the cross-sectional study. As mentioned, beliefs about language could be classified into sub-groups. Our findings regarding the details of the results of the cross-sectional study revealed some association between beliefs about language learning and length of time in the UK. Some types of beliefs are associated with length of time of stay with native speakers in the language environment. Returning to Masny's findings (1992) we find that from this perspective our results, to some extent, confirm hers.

Masny looked for specific aspects of language competence that might be related to Linguistic Awareness; she aimed at establishing the strength of that relationship and also the conditions in which such relationship might hold. She concluded that increasing linguistic awareness is important in second language development and that it is significantly related to different aspects of second language competence which provides the learners with the ability to gain control over language to meet their communicative needs.

11.1.5. Fifth argument

Having in mind that the small size of the sample makes breaking it into

different groups questionable; also the fact that the researcher might have not been the only source of invoking awareness in the environment where the language is being used, the results could be considered for the sample as a whole. In that case, the pattern of development of awareness in the conversations (for all the sample) shows a boost of indications of awareness in the second conversation and a gradual decrease afterwards.

Similarly, the communication problems show a constant presence up to the second conversation and a gradual decrease afterwards.

If so, some general association between language awareness and language proficiency might be concluded. Still, one cannot generalize a clear causal relation to support what is suggested by Hawkins (1984) that heightening Language Awareness leads to language proficiency. To decide about causality, evidence of causation is needed. That is, to find which variable affects the other one needs evidence, and association does not necessarily show which variable is cause and which one is effect.

11.1.6. Sixth argument

Starting from the pilot study, where three types of awareness were identified in Iranian research students, let us return to the hypothesis developed in the conclusion of that study.

The hypothesis was that adult learners who realise their shortcomings might fear loss of face and refrain from language use (cf. 4.3.3). This was supported later in the section on the relation between feeling of the facts

and change of beliefs (chapter 7). In the pilot study, it was also assumed that the learners might overcome the fear of loss of face and start practising the use of language, provided that they felt the need. This was also supported in the same section regarding feeling of the facts about the use of practice in eliminating the shortcomings.

That section also showed that facing the facts about the relative difficulty of language skills in practice, viz. feeling the facts about language skills, changed the subjects' opinions. This made them take the skill/skills more seriously, which in turn could lead to improved competence.

This evidence suggests a relation between language awareness in the form of click of realisation and language proficiency as a result of conscious practice.

11.1.7. A final note

Finally, as, '... restricted networks of use are said to be leading to restricted interactional opportunities, which affect how successful acquisition is'. (Ellis, 1987: 131), one might argue reasonably that because of the special circumstances of the subjects' research environment and the fact that they had been busy, most of the time, doing experiments in laboratories, their social networks were too restricted to show the developments in language and awareness that were sought. However, this argument is dubious.

Firstly, all the subjects showed some improvement, at least in the

conversations.

Secondly, the conversations provided were not on merely laboratory work but rather a series of different ones such as interactions in common rooms, offices, at home with English guests, at surgeries, telephone calls to the tax office, telephone companies, hospitals and so on.

Thirdly, since the concept of 'proficiency' usually means having sufficient command of the language *for a particular purpose* (Hughes, 1988), i.e. one may improve one's language abilities within the range of the topics one is being taught or of one's social networks in a natural acquisitional situation. Therefore, one may get proficient in a specific area while fossilizing or even losing what he has already learned in other areas. Similarly, as specific skills can be broken into different types (e.g. listening types) one may become more proficient in one type than the others. One may become skilled at 'listening to exchange information or listening to someone giving instructions', where one is not an outsider and there are opportunities for one to interrupt, watch, etc.; however, one can remain efficient in listening to radio as an outsider (cf. Underwood, 1989).

So, although restricted social networks might slow down language proficiency they are unlikely to stop it, and this factor is not plausibly to be attributed as an obstacle in our study.

11.2. Conclusion

This research aimed at finding answers to the following questions:

1. What indications are there of Language Awareness in Iranian research students in the UK?
2. To what extent does LA develop as subjects live and work in the UK?
3. How does Language Proficiency develop as subjects live and work in the UK?
4. How does the Language Awareness variable relate to the Language Proficiency variable?
5. Does noticing of input play an interface role in the subject's development of Language Proficiency?

Concerning the first question, three major types of LA were identified in Iranian research students. However regarding the extent to which LA develops, as they live and work in the UK (question 2), the results were complex.

A relation between the amount of time one stays among the community where the target language is spoken, and one's awareness of language or language proficiency cannot be concluded based on the results of this research. Accordingly, we cannot reject Carter's (1991) argument that "learning a language involves understanding something of that language; that it is unlikely that such understanding can be developed by naturalistic exposure; and that it has to be quite explicitly taught". Neither can we accept it because at least some changes for some types of beliefs were detected in the first study. That is, naturalistic exposure could have been an important factor in understanding something about language.

With regard to question 3, and the results of the longitudinal study, it was found that the subjects' proficiency improved noticeably specifically in oral communication.

On the other hand, the null hypothesis about the relation between LA and

LP (question 4) cannot be rejected and neither can it be accepted. It is likely that the associations between general knowledge about language and its functions in life, and language proficiency are what we may call variety-specific.

With respect to question 5, no evidence for the interface role of noticing was found, but some evidence in favour of the role of 'click of realisation' was detected. However, the evidence for the latter was not enough either to make generalisations.

11.3. Suggestions for further research

There is a further need to investigate the relationship between language awareness in general and language proficiency of foreign language learners. Supplementary to that, better understanding is needed of the relations between metalinguistic knowledge and mere exposure to communicative use of language.

It would be desirable to investigate the relationship with subjects with a special interest in foreign language learning as opposed to our subjects whose main interest was research in fields other than language.

To identify the relation between time and language awareness in terms of beliefs about language further research could be carried out, working on the beliefs that are most likely to be changed. For this, a longitudinal study is needed.

11.4. Pedagogical recommendations

In spite of the fact that this thesis has not established a clear linkage between LA and linguistic proficiency, I would argue that this is primarily due to the complexity of the phenomena under investigation; and it remains my firm belief that in the absence of compelling evidence to the contrary, LA will be beneficial to those learning a foreign language in our country. I believe language awareness and practice of the use of language should go hand in hand. Consciousness should be raised consistently in a chain of closely linked modules for different skills. In this regard a bottom-up and a top-down type of consciousness raising is suggested.

For metalinguistic knowledge, as it usually begins with grammar courses (at least in Iran), it should be continued subsequentially (or supported simultaneously) in reading courses and study skills. That is, texts should be read analytically in the sense that the teachers should make sure that the learners can use their knowledge of grammar rules in analysing compound and complex sentences to understand the infrastructures and in turn comprehend the message. This can turn gradually into a subconscious habit and an automatic means of problem solving whenever faced with complex structures.

Then, if this is accompanied by exposure to and practice of communicative use of language together with minimal consciousness raising, the learners may establish their knowledge about language and its importance in language learning.

In a non-native environment like Iran, exposure could be compensated for by conversation courses using audio/video aids and of course minimal consciousness raising about already learned structures.

This input salience enhancement should continue consistently in all the subsequent courses in language. The extent will, of course, depend on many factors such as the learners' speed in learning about the language. Knowledge about language in general, Language Awareness in a wide sense, may start with minimal salience enhancement (by exposure to and practise of language use) and be increased gradually and reach a high level in the courses on methodologies, linguistics, literature etc.

For this, I suggest that during the two years in the middle school, Iranian pupils should not receive any instruction on grammar rules except for what they obtain from a communicative method. Then the process can continue with grammar rules in high schools and of course communicative use of language at least in the classroom without concern about restricted social networks. Afterwards, grammar instruction can be reduced at college level and the use of language increased in terms of conversation, reading and writing courses.

Finally, I suggest that Language Awareness be included as a subject in MA courses by the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education in Iran, especially for English language majors. If so, it will be easier to organise team work on raising consciousness in BA and lower educational stages.

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APPENDICES

Contents:

Appendix. 1

Test

Note: a) paper 2 is actually based on paper 3 of the original test.
b) *in this appendix papers 2 and 3 are only introduced, but they are not presented 'completely' as they were given to the subjects.*

ADAPTED FROM THE:

FIRST CERTIFICATE IN ENGLISH (Version: 1992)
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE LOCAL EXAMINATIONS SYNDICATE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

PAPER 1 READING COMPREHENSION

Instructions to the candidates:
DO NOT OPEN THIS BOOKLET UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.
Read the notes carefully.

....

In this section you must choose the word or phrase that best completes the sentence. **On your answer sheet** *indicate the letter* ***A, B, C or D*** *against the number of each item 1 to 5.*

Section A

1 In the hotel lobby the detective caught ..... of the man he had been hired to follow.

A. glance B. view C. vision D. sight

The rest are similar to #1

2 .....
3 .....
4 .....
5 .....

Section B

In this section you will find a the passage a number of questions about the passage, each with four suggested answers or ways of finishing. You must choose the one which you think fits best. **On your answer sheet,** *indicate the letter* **A, B, C, or D** *against the number of each item 6-10 for the answer you choose. Give* **one answer only** *to each question. Read the passage right through before choosing your answers.*

THE PASSAGE

I walked down through the garden .....
.....
.....

6. Why did the writer feel happy as he walked through the garden?

A He was delighted that it looked just like the photograph.

B He was finally on holiday.

C He had found what he had come for.

D He was alone at last.

The rest are similar to #6

7 .....

8 .....

9 .....

10 .....

Test continued...

ADAPTED FROM THE:

FIRST CERTIFICATE IN ENGLISH (Version: 1992)
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE LOCAL EXAMINATIONS SYNDICATE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

PAPER 2 USE OF ENGLISH

Instructions to the candidates:

Answer **all** *the questions.*
Your answer must be written in ink in this booklet, using the spaces provided.

PART ONE

Fill each of the numbered blanks in the following passage. Use only **one** *word in each space.*

One evening I went to a sports centre for some exercise. (1) .....
I was changing Afterwards, I dropped (2) .....

PART 2

Finish each of the following sentences in such a way that it means the same as the sentence printed before it.

EXAMPLE: I haven't enjoyed my self so much for years.

ANSWER: It's years since I enjoyed myself so much.

(a) Jane hates horror films and so does her sister.

Jane doesn't .....
.....

The rest are similar to 'a'.

(b)
(c)
(d)
(e)

PART 3

The word in capitals below each of the sentences can be used to form a word that fits suitably in the blank space. Fill each blank in this way.

EXAMPLES: He said 'Good morning' in a *friendly* way. FRIEND

My teacher *encouraged* me to take this examination. COURAGE

(a) The jockey was accused of ..... to the horses he rode.

CRUEL

The rest are similar to 'a'.
(b)
(c)
(d)
(e)

PART 4

Make all the changes and additions necessary to produce, from the following sets of words and phrases, sentences which together make a complete letter. Note carefully from the example what kind of alterations need to be made. For each question, write a single sentence in the space provided. Do not change the order of the information given.

EXAMPLES: I be very surprised / receive / letter / you this morning.
ANSWER: *I was very surprised to receive a letter from you this morning.*

24 rue St. Jacques
Paris 17

28 May 1992

Dear Mr and Mrs Farmer

(a) I write / thank you for have me / stay / you / my Exchange Visit last month.

.....

The rest are similar to 'a'.
(b)
(c)
(d)
(e)

Centre Number	Candidate

Candidate Name....................................

0100/4,0101/4 **EFL**

FIRST CERTIFICATE IN ENGLISH

PAPER 3 LISTENING COMPREHENSION

TEST 103 Approx. 35 minutes

Additional materials provided by the Syndicate:
Answer sheet

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE LOCAL EXAMINATIONS SYNDICATE

INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

First Certificate in English

Instructions to candidates:

Answer **all** *the questions.*

Indicate your answers on this question paper during the test. At the end of the test, transfer *them to the* **separate answer sheet** *which shows your name and candidate number.*
Write clearly in the numbered boxes.

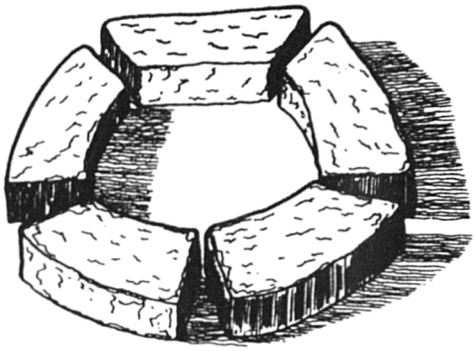
Use a pencil or a pen (**not** *a ballpoint pen) to complete the answer sheet.*
Further instructions are given at the beginning of each section of the test.

This Question Paper consists of 6 printed pages and 2 blank pages.

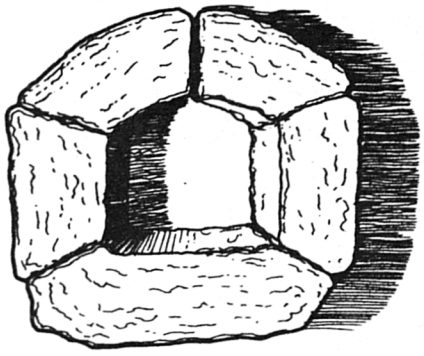
PART ONE

You will hear a tourist guide talking to some tourists who are visiting an ancient settlement called Blagdon Plain to see the famous Five Stones.
For questions 1 to 4, tick (1) one of the boxes A, B, C or D to show the correct answer.

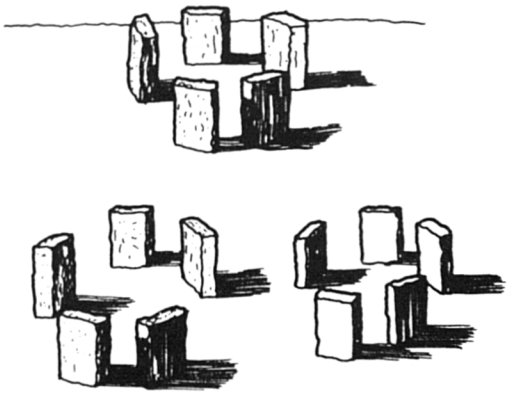
1. Put a tick (✓) in the box next to the picture of the Five Stones.



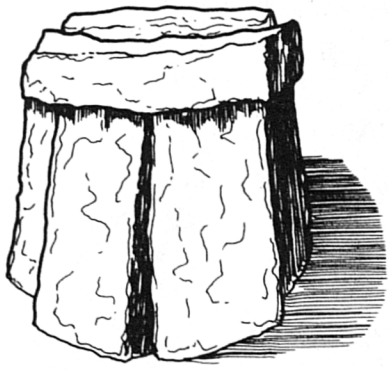
A ☐



B ☐



C ☐



D ☐

2.What is known for certain about Five Stones?

A. It took less than three hundred years to build.

B. It was extended during the Middle Ages.

C. It was built over a short period.

D. It was built in three stages.

A	
B	
C	
D	

3. The tour guide says that some of the stones come from

A. Blagdon Plain.

B. over a hundred miles away.

C. less than 14 miles away.

D. the South East.

A	
B	
C	
D	

4. The tour guide thinks Five Stones was most likely to have been built as:

A. a religious temple

B. a place to bury people.

C. a palace.

D. a very large calendar.

A	
B	
C	
D	

PART TWO

You will hear a man talking about how he jogs - runs - in order to keep fit. For questions 5 to 14, decide which of the statements are **TRUE** *and which are* **FALSE**, *and put a tick (✓) in the appropriate box.*

	TRUE	FALSE
5. The speaker thought that 2 hours' running per week was too much.		
6. He thought the running shoes were expensive.		
7. His running shoes hurt his feet.		
8. His running shoes are nearly worn out now.		
9. He took up jogging to train for cycling.		
10. He runs regardless of the weather.		
11. He feels embarrassed about wearing shorts.		
12. He starts out at high speed, then slows down		
13. His wife was afraid he'd fall over someone on the beach.		
14. He was pleased that he did not have time to start running on the beach.		

PART THREE

You will hear part of a radio programme in which two women, Mary and Pat, talk about their interest, being an amateur radio operator, or radio 'ham'. For questions **15 to 19**, *tick (✓) one of the boxes* **A, B, C or D** *to show the correct answer.*

I5. Mary got to know Leah

A .while on holiday.

B. through her family.

C. through the radio.

D. while in Luxembourg.

A	
B	
C	
D	

16. Why did Mary become a radio ham?

A. She wanted to improve her mathematics.

B. Her husband wanted her to help him.

C. She wanted to share her husband's hobby.

D. She was bored with her night-school job.

A	
B	
C	
D	

17. Why do you have to take an examination to become a licensed radio ham?

A.to improve your knowledge of world geography.

B.to make sure you can operate in more than one language.

C.to raise your level of applied mathematics.

D.to ensure you don't interfere with other radio operators.

A	
B	
C	
D	

18. What is Mary's main interest in being a radio ham?

A.having the chance to speak to other people.

B.arranging for people to meet up with each other.

C.the opportunity to travel all over the world.

D.receiving invitations to stay with friends.

A	
B	
C	
D	

19. Pat Hawkins and her family travel to faraway places because they

A.enjoy contacting remote radio hams.

B.set up training for new radio hams.

C. meet other radio hams who are on holiday.

D. like to encourage other radio hams io contact them there.

A	
B	
C	
D	

PART FOUR

You will hear the director of a school talking about his job.
For questions 20 to 26, look at the advertisement for a new school director and fill in the spaces with a word or some numbers.

THE MANSION SCHOOL SEEKS A NEW DIRECTOR

Small school for (20) ..... students.

For ages (21) ..... and under.

Weekly teaching (22). ..... .hours.

Duties: Meetings with (23).....

Discussing timetable problems with (24).....

Occasional meetings with (25).....

Organising (26).....

Appendix.2

Questionnaire

20 Items Selected from BALLI

SA= Strongly Agree A= Agree N= Neither agree nor disagree

D= Disagree SD= Strongly disagree

1. Some people have a special ability for learning a foreign language.
SA(36) A (69) C (45) D (8) SD (4)

2. It is necessary to know about English speaking cultures in order to speak English.
SA (18) A (29) C (38) D (29) SD (19)

3. I believe that I will learn to speak English very well.
SA (1) A (43) C (69) D (14) SD (5)

4. You shouldn't say anything in English until you can say it properly.
SA (11) A (13) C (15) D (67) SD (25)

5. People who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning a foreign language.
SA (5) A (3) C (20) D (39) SD (62)

6. It is best to learn English in an English speaking country.
SA (52) A (43) C (19) D (9) SD (7)

7. It is Ok. to guess if you don't know a word in English.
SA (30) A (70) C (16) D (10) SD (4)

8. I have a special ability for learning foreign languages.
SA (5) A (28) C (78) D (18) SD (0)

9. The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning the vocabulary words.
SA (11) A (53) C (31) D (29) SD (4)

10. It is important to repeat and practise a lot.
SA (107) A (19) C (0) D (1) SD (3)

11. I feel timid speaking English with other people.
SA (2) A (24) C (27) D (43) SD (36)

12. The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning the grammar.
SA (9) A (30) C (52) D (34) SD (5)

13. I would like to learn English so that I can get to know British/American people better.
SA (8) A (19) C (28) D (45) SD (29)

14. Learning a foreign language is different from learning other academic subjects.
SA (15) A (56) C (27) D (25) SD (8)

15. The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning how to translate from my native language.
SA (3) A (19) C (33) D (54) SD (22)

16. If I learn English very well, I will have better opportunities in my life.
SA (27) A (58) C (27) D (12) SD (8)

17. People who speak more than one language are very Intelligent.
SA (6) A (36) C (51) D (32) SD (7)

18. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.
SA (30) A (74) C (12) D (7) SD (6)

19. It is easier to read and write than to speak and understand.
SA (14) A (38) C (35) D (36) SD (9)

20. It is easier for someone who already knows a foreign language to learn another one.
SA (18) A (62) C (33) D (13) SD (5)

Appendix.3

Table.2: Sensitivity to the Nature of Language and of Language Learning (✓ shows the instance).

Subtypes	R1	R2	R3	R4	$C1_2$	$C2_6$	$C3_8$	$C4_{10}$	$C5_{12}$
Practice	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓
Formal.informal	✓								
Needs analysis		✓				✓		✓✓	
Motivation		✓							
Seeking Media			✓						
Advice			✓				✓		
Pref. natives	✓	✓	✓						
Suprasegmentals				✓					
Language variety	✓			✓					
Intake	✓								✓
Effect of emotions				✓					
Knowledge recognition							✓✓		✓✓✓
Curiosity						✓	✓✓✓		
Sensitivity to the relations between spelling and pronunciation							✓✓		
Surprise at word order & progress		✓					✓		
Goal justification						✓		✓	
Writing the criterion							✓		
Name/Nature of lang								✓	
Contrast.analysis (fall back)	✓								
Analogy;L2-L3 &/L1							✓		✓
Role of teacher		✓						✓	✓

Appendix.4

Table.3: Sensitivity to the Language Learning and communicative Strategies (✓ shows the instance).

Subtypes	R1	R2	R3	R4	$C1_2$	$C2_6$	$C3_8$	$C4_{10}$	$C5_{12}$
Self-correction	✓								✓
asking native peers			✓					✓	
reading texts	✓						✓		✓
Listening to natives			✓			✓		✓	
imp.of immed.feedback								✓	
sign lang.				✓	✓✓				
random choice of words				✓	✓				
Modelling L2 for L1						✓	✓	✓	
Contrast.analogies				✓			✓		✓
Copying Texts				✓		✓	✓		✓✓✓
Startling to look for words				✓					
Advice:how to research into lang.			✓	✓					
Initiat.teach./learn. strategies		✓✓					✓	✓	
relying on teacher		✓						✓	
Fall back on L1 for same concepts		✓							✓
Analogyzing L2 to L3	✓								✓
Initiat.switch to L2/L1	✓					✓			✓
Using dictionary for specific purposes	✓							✓	✓

Appendix. 5

Table 4: Sensitivity to One's Shortcomings (metacognition) in Language Learning (subscripts show the age of the children; ✓ shows the instance).

Subtypes	R1	R2	R3	R4	$C1_2$	$C2_6$	$C3_8$	$C4_{10}$	$C5_{12}$
Dissatisfaction with results:tests;progress	✓	✓							
Asking the researchers help	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Dissatisfaction with Iranians' English		✓							
Implying one's fear of speaking out in L2		✓							
Comprehension ability in diff. situ.			✓						
Iranians' foreigner talk				✓					