Errors in the learning of Italian as a foreign language: a contribution to the debate on the difference between acquiring a language in natural circumstances and learning a language in a classroom

by

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Abstract

The present study is based on the distinction between Second Language Acquisition (SLA), the acquisition of an L2 in a natural context, and Foreign Language Learning (FLL) in an instructed context. In the field of Applied Linguistics, there is a tendency to overlook the differences between the two contexts, both in terms of empirical research and theoretical work. Findings from SLA in a given country have been applied to FLL in another, without any questioning of the validity of the application.

Although this practice has become established in the field, an analysis of the differences between SLA and FLL, both contextual and learner-related, seems to justify the need to redefine two areas of enquiry which may be related but are also distinct. In Chapter One several models of SLA are reviewed with specific reference to the notion of error within each of them, and their relevance to FLL is questioned. In Chapter Two, an attempt is made to define a model which incorporates the differences between L1 acquisition, SLA and FLL and which seeks to categorize error sources in terms of the different socio-cognitive variables operant in each.

The following two chapters contain a report of a study designed to test the proposed model and addressing the following questions: 1. can findings on errors from SLA be applied to FLL? 2. is there a correlation between errors and learning context? The study comprises two schools with instruction as the independent variable in a process-product design. Data was collected by means of questionnaires, interviews, analysis of documents, classroom observation, and tests. Findings seem to highlight that SLA and FLL should be considered as separate areas of enquiry and support an affirmative reply to question 2. The study is concluded by a series of observations on the applicability of findings to foreign language teaching.

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List of abbreviations and symbols

BICS   Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills

CA   Contrastive Analysis

CAH   Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

CALP   Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency

CAN   Communicative Acquisionistic Naturalistic

CMM   Cumulative Mastery Method

CPH   Critical Period Hypothesis

EA   Error Analysis

ESL   English as a Second Language

FL   Foreign Language

FLL   Foreign Language Learning

FLT   Foreign Language Teaching

IL   Interlanguage

L1   First Language or NL

L2   Second Language

L3   Third Language

L4   Fourth Language

LAD   Language Acquistion Device

NL   Native Language or L1

NNS   Non Native Speaker

NS   Native Speaker

SLA   Second Language Acquisition

TL	Target Language
UG	Universal Grammar

Acronyms used to identify groups and subgroups

A1	Year 7 group in School A
A3	Year 10 group in School A
B1	Year 7 group in School B
B3	Year 9 group in School B
A3NC	Subgroup in A3 Non-Continuative
A3CO	Subgroup in A3 Continuative
MA1	Monolinguals in A1
MA3	Monolinguals in A3
MB3	Monolinguals in B3
BA1	Bilinguals in A1
BA3	Bilinguals in A3
BB3	Bilinguals in B3

Symbols used in lesson and data transcription

L	Unidentified learner
LL	Unidentified group of learners
T	Teacher
*A	Erroneous form

??A	Inappropriate form, not entirely erroneous
xx	Incomprehensible utterance
?	No reply

Acknowledgements

Dedication

To Simon and Guido

Introduction

Over the years, the field of Applied Linguistics has been characterized by a tendency to disregard the differences between naturalistic L2 learning, i.e. untutored acquisition of an L2 in a host environment, and foreign language learning (FLL), i.e. learning another language within one's culture, which Ringbom[1] defines as follows:

> In a second-language acquisition situation the language is spoken in the immediate environment of the learner, who has good opportunities to use the language by participating in natural communication situations . . . In a foreign language learning situation the language is not spoken in the immediate environment of the learner, although mass media may provide opportunities for practising the receptive skills. The learner has little or no opportunity to use the language in natural communicative situations. (Ringbom 1980: 38-9)

Despite the difference in opportunities for communicative interaction highlighted above, the acronym SLA has often been applied to both contexts and to a range of contexts intermediate between the two, thereby assuming that an identical, or at least highly similar, process underpins them all.[2] Moreover, starting from the assumption that SLA and FLL are one and the same process, findings from untutored, or partly-tutored, SLA have in turn been applied to tutored FLL without any questioning of the validity of the application. The transfer of findings between (uncontrolled) SLA to (controlled) FLL contexts has often been parallelled by a similar transfer of findings across research domains, countries, age-groups and, last but not least, across languages.

Edelsky and Hudelson (1980) argue that the tendency to subordinate FLL to SLA stems from the fact that most of the evidence in the field comes from the acquisition of a majority language, i.e. English, and that 'perhaps the SLA picture would look different if we were to focus on the second language acquisition of a minority language'. The present study seeks to make a contribution, however small, to

redressing the balance by focusing on the learning of a minority language, Italian, in the British context. It is assumed that the change in focus from a majority to a minority language will also involve a change in focus from an SLA to an FLL context and will allow the differences between the two, both contextual and learner-related, to be highlighted. Indeed, it is a central premise of the current study that SLA and FLL should be treated as two separate areas of enquiry since, although they are connected in many ways, they are also characterized by an array of differences in the socio-cognitive variables involved in each.

Among the variables separating SLA and FLL, and indeed different FLL contexts, instruction would seem to be crucial and has therefore been investigated in a number of approaches (see Chaudron (ed.) 1988; Doughty 1991; Long 1983b, 1988). The aim and focus of these approaches have differed over time, some sharing the flaw highlighted above of failing to distinguish between SLA and FLL, and it may be useful to categorize them as follows:

1. The first approach was rather indirect. From evidence gained in L2 acquisition in an informal environment, an invariant route of acquisition was claimed which was supposedly impermeable to differences related to learner or context (see Dulay and Burt 1972, 1974a, 1974b; Bailey, Madden and Krashen 1974; Krashen, Sferlazza, Feldman and Fathman 1976). The finding was used to argue that the effects of instruction were negligible and that the most effective classroom practices and procedures were those that did not interfere with natural development and that aimed at replicating in the classroom the conditions of L1 acquisition.

2. The second approach sought to compare SLA in the formal and informal

environment by ascertaining the validity of invariant routes. Data was rather contradictory: according to some researchers, it seemed to confirm the inefficacy of instruction (Felix 1981; Krashen 1977b; Wode 1981) although, in his review article, Long (1983b) pointed out that this was probably due to flaws in the design of various experiments and was therefore open to further investigation. Long himself, after analysing further studies on the effects of instruction, arrived at the opposite conclusion and argued that the effects of instruction are positive: '1) for children as well as adults, 2) for intermediate and advanced learners, not just beginners, 3) on integrative as well as discrete-point tests, and 4) in acquisition-poor environments' (Long 1983b: 374).

3. The third approach sought to test the effectiveness of instructional practices and procedures against learner outcomes. The first studies in this area, dating from the heyday of Audiolingualism, sought to test the effectiveness of audio tapes and of the language laboratory (Pickrel, Neidt and Gibson 1958; Buch 1963; Keating 1963) while later, more comprehensive, ones sought to compare the outcomes of different methods, the Audiolingual and the Cognitive, which were perceived as the main alternatives in the field of language teaching (Chastain 1970; von Elek and Oskarsson 1972; Oskarsson 1973). While these studies did not seem to point to a superiority of any of the methods evaluated, it was realised that the results were probably due to a flaw in the design of the various experiments. In fact, these described the method rather than investigated its classroom implementation, as in the case of Scherer and Wertheimer (1964) and Chastain (1970).

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in the comparison of

instructional practices and procedures as a consequence of dissatisfaction with variants of the Communicative Approach. A series of studies, notably those conducted on immersion in Canadian schools (Spilka 1976; Adiv 1980; Harley and Swain 1978, 1984; Pellerin and Hammerly 1986), have suggested that communicative activities alone might not be sufficient in developing accuracy. A number of other studies (Mitchell 1981; Beretta and Davies 1985; Montgomery and Eisenstein 1985; Spada 1986, 1987; Lightbown and Spada 1990) have sought to investigate the effects of form- and communication-focused activities and have discovered, not surprisingly, that each set of activities seems to develop the corresponding aspect of linguistic competence, i.e. focus on form has a positive correlation with accuracy and focus on communication with fluency.

The present study is based on the latter approach, i.e. it aims to investigate the correlation between instructional practices and procedures and error production. An attempt has been made at isolating instruction as an independent variable by analysing its effects in an FLL context. More precisely, the study investigates the effect of instruction on errors. Along with other aspects of SLA/FLL, the study of errors has also suffered from a failure to observe the distinction between the two areas and it has often been assumed that the source, nature and function of errors are the same in both. To the best of our knowledge, no fully-fledged model has been put forward to categorize the potential error sources which are specific to the foreign language (FL) classroom, although a number of interesting observations have been made over the years, especially within the framework of the Error Analysis (EA) movement. Its main proponent, Corder (see 1.3.1), contextualised the study of errors by observing that the peculiarities

of the FL classroom may influence error production and that any errors identified should be analysed against the teaching syllabus. Other advocates of EA (see 1.3.3) also suggested that errors can be triggered by teaching practices and procedures and analysed their data accordingly.

Over the years, although errors have lost the prominence they had enjoyed in the heyday of the EA movement, the idea that what goes on in and around the FL classroom has a connection with learner errors has never been abandoned (see 2.5.1 and 2.5.1.2). In particular, Kasper (1982) and Edmondson (1986) both conducted studies focused on the connection between teaching factors and learner errors and Hammerly (1991), in his extensive review of French immersion programmes in Canadian schools, similarly focused on the relation between pedagogic practices and errors.

While informative, however, none of the above studies systematically categorizes the various sources of errors in order to arrive at a comprehensive model. The primary aim of the present study is to outline such a model starting, in Chapter One, with a review of existing theories of SLA and the notion of error contained within each one. The relevance of these theories to FLL is questioned on the basis that they explain the process of error formation by drawing extensively on variables that are either exclusive to an untutored context or which interrelate differently in a tutored context. Chapter Two seeks to analyse the differences between L1 acquisition, SLA and FLL in order to motivate a model which is specific to the FLL context and, within this framework, to categorize potential sources of error in terms of the variables operant in the FLL classroom.

The following two chapters report on a study designed to test the proposed model and, more precisely, to respond to two research questions:

1. to what extent can findings on error in SLA be applied to the FLL context;
and

2. to what extent is there a correlation between errors and features of the
learning context.

The study comprises four groups of learners of Italian as a foreign language in two UK

secondary schools. Data was collected by means of questionnaires, interviews, analysis

of documents, classroom observation and researcher-administered tests. Results would

seem to indicate that the applicability of findings from SLA to FLL is limited and that

there is a correlation between instruction and error production. The study is concluded

by a series of observations on the relationship between SLA and FLL and on the

implications of this for pedagogy, both in terms of syllabus design and teaching

procedures, specifically within the UK secondary sector.

Notes to the Introduction

1. A number of other applied linguists support this view. Walker (1976: 24) writes:
'The distinction is worth making, since the acquisition of a foreign language cannot rely
on the support which the out-of-school environment supplies for a second language'
and Strevens likewise points out that 'The effect of this distinction upon teaching and
learning is very considerable, in the attitudes of the learners and teachers towards their
task, in the kinds of teaching techniques that are commonly successful, and in the
average levels of achievement that are expected' (Strevens 1977: 21).

2. The acronym is used, among others, by Hatch (ed.) (1977b), Krashen (1982),
Rutherford (ed.) (1984), Klein (1986), Preston (1989), Larsen-Freeman and Long
(1991) and Gass and Selinker (1994).

Chapter One

SLA MODELS, THE NOTION OF ERROR AND THE FL CLASSROOM CONTEXT

Any model of SLA has to come to terms with the fundamental notion of how target language (TL) features are acquired. To the extent that this is true, it also has to deal with the other side of the coin, i.e. with the development of non-TL forms that can be called 'errors' or 'deviations'. In many ways the latter is as important as the former in that the errors made in accessing the TL can provide a valuable (negative) insight into learner strategies, a view that was particularly developed in the pioneering work of Corder (1971a, 1973a), among others.

Different SLA models assign, of course, quite different roles to error formation and this has important implications, within a tutored context, for the related issue of correction and learners' sensitivity to correction. At one extreme, the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) argues that errors are the result of interference from the mother tongue (interlingual errors) and should, as such, be eradicated as quickly as possible before they fossilize. At the other extreme, nativists claim that learners' errors are largely developmental in nature (intralingual errors), and, in so far as they are natural, should be tolerated as 'correct' forms within the learner's system at any given stage. Indeed, in the work of Corder (1971b) and Selinker (1969, 1972) on the development of learners' interlanguage, the very notion of deviation as error is brought into question.

While different models view the role of errors quite differently, however, as either unwelcome habits or valuable insights, they tend to have one feature in common. That is, the source of error they identify is constant across a range of contexts. Both the behaviourist and nativist hypotheses assume that the nature, type and function of errors categorized in an untutored environment will remain relatively unchanged in a tutored one, regardless of the different contextual variables involved. Krashen's support for the 'natural approach' in FLL, which assumes the existence of an 'invariant route' both inside and outside the classroom, is merely the latest example of such an assumption.

The tendency to downplay (or ignore) contextual variables is not limited to the area of error formation but permeates the very notion of SLA, which is an umbrella term used to describe a range of processes, including the untutored acquisition of a language in a host environment, the acquisition of a *lingua franca* and the tutored learning of a foreign language in one's own culture. The fact that the term can be applied to such a wide range of processes means that there is an inevitable tendency for data researched in one area to be extended, often in the form of a model, to another area where the conditions for its validity simply no longer apply.

While such a process may be partly inevitable, it is also, as Widdowson (1990) indicates, dangerous in that it ignores the relativity of research data to the context of its use. 'The essential point', he argues, 'is that there are no universal solutions. We should not expect that research will come up with recipes and remedies that will work whatever the circumstances.' Selinker echoes the point when criticizing the tendency for findings from research in one domain of knowledge, or from a given experiment or case study, to be extended to SLA in general and, thereby, inappropriately to a range of other contexts:

> An all too common method is to claim that one should believe something about adult SLA because 'a child learns that way' (whether true or not), which supposedly provides a necessary condition for what one should do in language teaching. (Selinker 1992: 240)

The point that both Selinker and Widdowson are making is that the tendency in SLA to pose the solution to a problem in one context as the solution to a problem in another context is methodologically unsound and has dangerous practical implications. It can lead to imposing on the learning process a set of objectives -- and a methodology to reach those objectives -- that do not cohere with the needs of the learners involved.

The aim of this chapter is to examine a restricted number of SLA models in which progression is partly chronological and partly 'evolutionary', i.e. towards models which include a greater number of variables. The aims of such an analysis are threefold:

1. to highlight the notion of error within each SLA model, with particular attention to the cause, function and range of errors;

2. to consider the relevance of that model, and of the notion of error within it, for the FLL process; and

3. to review the classroom application or teaching method, if any, emerging from that model.

The assumption on which such an analysis is based is that SLA models of error, founded on research in an untutored context, have limited relevance for a tutored context where the variables are so different. More particularly, it is assumed that in a tutored context, where opportunities for communicative interaction are restricted, the emphasis is necessarily more upon what Corder calls 'the acquisition of the target language code than on the use of the code in communication' (Corder 1981: 77). To the extent that the focus of the learner is (at least initially) more on the form than

function, errors are more likely to stem from a different source and assume a different role from those in a naturalistic context even though, on the surface, it may seem possible to categorize them under similar labels. As Long points out:

> It would seem reasonable to expect instructed and naturalistic acquirers to exhibit either partially different acquisition processes or, at least, different degrees of preference for the same processes. For example, one result of teachers and textbooks isolating grammatical forms such as third person singular -s and progressive -ing is the increased saliency of those forms in the input. The increased saliency may cause instructed learners to notice and use the forms earlier, resulting in differing and perhaps ultimately 'healthier' error profiles. (Long 1988: 120)

1.1 THE BEHAVIOURIST APPROACH

In the early stages of development of the SLA field, errors were made to depend to a very large extent on the learners' mother tongue through the process of language transfer. This notion was at the core of the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) which is a product of the dominating psychological and linguistic theories in the 1950's. Before examining it in some detail, it may be useful to give an account of its source disciplines: Behaviourism and Structuralism.

1.1.1 Behaviourism

Behaviourism holds that any behaviour, including human behaviour, can ultimately be explained in terms of conditioned responses and the habits that arise from them. Although early behaviourists paid little attention to linguistic behaviour, the latter was seen as no exception and Watson (Watson 1925) defined it as nothing more than 'a manipulative habit'. A more comprehensive account of language acquisition was given by Skinner (1957) in his *Verbal Behavior* which studied the functional relation

between stimuli and responses -- stimuli that elicit behavioural responses, rewards and punishments that maintain these responses, and the modification of behaviour obtained by changing the patterns of rewards and punishments.

Skinner echoed Watson in viewing language, in spite of its complexities, as initially 'a very simple type of behavior'. The first vocal production of the child consists of random sounds which are 'shaped' by stimulus-response mechanisms until the child's language becomes adult-like, correct utterances being reinforced either verbally or in some other way. The role of the child is basically seen as passive although Skinner did perceive that, since not every syntactic combination can possibly undergo the 'shaping' process, the child must be able to join units into novel utterances. He did not, however, provide any account of the process.

Skinner's model now appears inadequate in relation to the complexities of language acquisition and use. His version of child-caretaker interaction is largely based on assumptions, most of which have increasingly been challenged at the empirical level. Early studies of children's L1 interlanguage (R. Brown 1968 for example) did not find any correlation between the order of frequency and the order of acquisition of known items and others suggested that syntactic errors were not corrected to the same extent as semantic ones.[1] Moreover, as Chomsky (1959) argued in his withering critique of *Verbal Behavior*, such a model simply could not account for certain aspects of language use/acquisition, notably creativity. While behaviourist accounts of L1 acquisition were rapidly to come under fire in the 1960's, their impact upon SLA/FLL -- largely through the work of linguists such as Bloomfield (1942) or Lado (1957) -- was extensive.

1.1.2 The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

The idea that SLA can be helped or hindered by L1 goes back at least to Sweet (1899), is present in Jespersen (1912), Palmer (1917), and in Fries (1945) who suggests that a comparison of native language (NL) and TL is the foundation for effective teaching materials.[2] This suggestion was taken up and developed most significantly, however, by Lado in his *Linguistics across Cultures* (1957) where a model of language learning and teaching is outlined with the notion of error as its centrepiece. Lado's much quoted 'fundamental assumption' is that:

> Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture -- both productively when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture, and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and the culture as practised by natives. (Lado 1957: 2)

Within this framework, NL features that are similar to those of the TL will be successfully transferred and will require no learning process as such; the features that are different will not function in the TL and must, therefore, be modified, i.e. 'learned'. 'Learning' invariably involves a problem, which may result in an error. The process can therefore have both positive and negative effects and is defined as follows:

> . . . the extension of a native language habit into the target language with or without the awareness of the learner. When the transferred habit is acceptable in the target language, we have FACILITATION. When the transferred habit is unacceptable in the target language, we have INTERFERENCE, and an extra learning burden is assumed. (Lado 1964: 222)

Fundamental to Lado's CAH are two notions that deserve emphasis. The first, as we have seen, is the association between linguistic difference and psychological difficulty. It is assumed that the further the TL is from the NL the more the NL habits will interfere in the creation of new habits and make the learning process more arduous. The second, a sort of corollary of the first, is that speakers of different NLs will

obviously find the TL more or less difficult and will produce different errors in the process of learning it. As Lado suggested, in the case of 'sequences of sounds', for example:

> Final consonants clusters in English are troublesome to many non-English speakers. Word final /-rd/ is frequent in English but nonexistent in Spanish, for example. A Spanish speaker therefore tends to say *car* for *card*, *beer* for *beard*, *her* for *heard*, etc. (Lado 1957: 17)

Areas of difficulty are identified by means of a comparison between the NL and TL which includes vocabulary, writing system, grammatical structures and culture. In terms of grammatical system, a detailed three-step procedure is recommended, which permits definitions such as the following:

> Problems as to form for a Spanish speaker learning English will then be (1) including a separate word, *he, she*, etc., as subject, (2) placing the verb *be* before the subject *he* to signal question, and (3) using a high-low intonation sequence instead of a rising one or an extra high-low (or mid) sequence as in Spanish. (Lado 1957: 69)

Identifying the 'difficult elements' of the TL has, according to Lado, positive repercussions on teaching, testing and research. A teacher using CA can understand why a student has a problem with any structure, sound or 'cultural pattern' and can prepare new (or supplement existing) materials which focus upon the problem areas. Likewise, testing can focus upon the areas described as 'difficult' and research can study only the language points which have to be learned.

Lado's study proved a seminal work. It triggered a number of CA comparisons, notably the *Contrastive Structure Series*, a number of volumes on the CA of English and the most frequently taught European languages, which were published under the patronage of the Center for Applied Linguistics of Washington.[3] The fortunes of CA, however, were short-lived and followed those of Structuralism: as the model came

under attack in the mid-sixties with the development of generative grammar, also CA

was challenged. The experimental basis of the CAH, which had been provided by the

studies on bilingualism by Weinreich (1953) and Haugen (1953), was also questioned

(Dulay and Burt 1972, 1974a) on the grounds that both Weinreich's and Haugen's

domains of enquiry and notions of transfer are different from Lado's. Indeed, the

feebleness of empirical support seems to be one of the main shortcomings of the model

from its origin.

1.1.2.1 Audiolingualism

As is well known (Rivers 1968) the development of Audiolingualism as an

influential approach to FLL started during the Second World War largely in response

to the growing need for US servicemen fluent in a variety of foreign languages. With

its emphasis upon the primacy of speaking over writing, it was widely considered to

embody 'scientific' principles drawn from behaviourist psychology and structural

linguistics. It is hardly accidental, for example, that the subtitle of Lado's influential

book *Language Teaching* (1964), which sought to catalogue such principles, was *a*

Scientific Approach. If L1 acquisition consists in reducing language processing

operations to habit, then, Lado argues, SLA is a matter of forming new habits and the

task of language teaching is to help form them. Habit formation is not an end in itself,

as he is careful to underline, but is instrumental to self-expression as, once the structural

aspects of language are reduced to habit, the learner can focus his resources exclusively

on meaning. The recommended techniques for habit formation are mimicry,

memorization and pattern practice, whose amount is directly proportional to the

perceived difficulty of each item.[4] Since errors may turn into wrong habits, they must

be prevented with the right methods and materials and, if they occur at all, they must be removed with additional practice (Lado 1957). The grading of pattern practice, the shaping of responses and immediate reinforcement are of crucial importance. As in other applications of the CAH, the teacher (and materials) have a central role in the process, whereas the learner is a passive recipient of stimuli.[5]

It may be noted that Lado pays some attention to the relation between instruction and some of the variables in the formal environment: student, materials, teacher, linguistic and cultural setting. He briefly takes individual differences (IDs) into consideration: age, previous eduction, proficiency, aptitude, motivation and the presence of handicaps but he plays them down, however, because they conflict with the tenets on which Audiolingualism is based, i.e. they point to mental mechanisms which behaviourist learning theory had excluded from its field of inquiry. Audiolingualism is open to the criticisms made of both Behaviourism and the CAH itself: it fails to take into account the learner's contribution and reduces a complex process to habit-formation. Moreover, learners exposed to the method often found pattern practice boring, and teachers found it too demanding in terms of energy and attention (Rivers 1968).

1.1.3 A critique of the CAH

The CAH has been challenged on three fronts which may be usefully termed: linguistic, psychological, and empirical. However, the first objections to the model came from the circle of its supporters who, while not challenging the model directly, found it inadequate and increasingly argued in favour of a range of other potential error sources. The latter included random response (Brooks 1960), overgeneralization

(Brooks 1960, Lee 1968), interference from an L3 (Wolfe 1967) and pedagogic factors such as inadequate grading of materials and/or practice (Lee 1968).[6] By the time of the 1968 Georgetown University's Annual Round Table Meeting (Alatis 1968), it was clear that the heyday of the CAH was over and its participants seemed more inclined to support what became known as its weak version, that is, that the L1 is one of many error sources, and CA should be used only *a posteriori* to highlight a transfer error (Wardhaugh 1970).

A second, and possibly more serious, challenge to CAH came from linguists who objected to Lado's choice of a structuralist model for CA. Even one of the authors of the Contrastive Studies Series voiced his doubts on the adequacy of structural grammar as a basis for comparison:

> The insistence on defining phonological and grammatical categories solely in terms of individual languages made detailed contrastive statements laborious, if not theoretically impossible, to phrase. (Di Pietro 1962). Only through difficult modification of the theory could the phonemes of one language ever be equated with the phonemes of another, or the morphemes of one be compared to the morphemes of another. (Di Pietro 1968: 66).

As Corder (1978a) observes the fact that Structuralism holds that each language has a unique frame makes the basis of comparison inadequate, and, in practice, the choice of different grammatical models produces different error predictions thereby making a psychological process depend on a linguistic description.

Other linguists expressed doubts on the feasibility of CA, especially in the case of unrelated languages, as summarized by Ellis (1985a): identifying common categories between two languages requires a theory of language universals, which was not available when early CA projects were started. The lack of an appropriate linguistic model was skirted around in the pedagogic area, he continues, only by selecting

languages from the same family, which by definition share a number of surface features. Structuralism was inadequate as a basis for CA, Ellis concludes, not only because it lacked any concept of linguistic universals but because it systematically neglected the pragmatic aspect of language and worked on the assumption that there is a one-to-one correspondence between form and function. Structural similarity does not always imply functional similarity and, for comparison to be theoretically sound, functional differences should also be taken into consideration. The fact that they were not, i.e. that the model limited itself to predicting difficulties in accuracy but not in appropriacy, made it even more ineffective as a pedagogic tool.[7]

The third challenge to the CAH arose from its assumption, as Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) put it, that analysis of a 'linguistic product' could yield insight into a 'psychological process', that is, that there is an association between similarity/ difference and ease/difficulty. On the contrary, cross-lingual research tended to show that some errors it predicted failed to materialize, i.e. it over-predicted (e.g. Dulay and Burt 1974a), and others that it did not anticipate did materialize, i.e. it under-predicted (e.g. Hyeltenstam 1977). Selinker (1989) reports on three such studies: Nemser (1961), Brière (1964) and Selinker (1966). While the three works conclude that CA provides the best starting point for the study of transfer, they claim that the latter occurs not uniformly but according to factors such as frequency and selection, and that the learners' production contains 'autonomous material', i.e. material alien to both NL and TL.

The tendency for such studies to catalogue errors as intra- rather than interlingual represented a shift away from behaviourist theories of language learning towards more cognitive ones as exemplified by Chomsky. Errors are seen not so much

as the interference of one set of habits with another set, based upon CA, but as 'developmental' in nature. The percentage of interference errors found by a number of studies in the early 1970's go from as little as 3% (Dulay and Burt 1973) to 51% (Tran-Thi-Chau 1975) and there is a corresponding emphasis upon intralingual errors. Duškova (1969: 19), for example, reports on the development of intralingual errors particularly in the area of morphology:

*Two month

*I am going to attended

as indeed does Tran-Thi-Chau (1975: 133):

*Yo me lavi/lavo la cara

*Alguno dinero

*Pedro tiene enfermo

Whitman and Jackson (1972: 40), who studied the predictive capacity of CA in the learning of English by Japanese students, were even more dismissive, concluding that 'interference . . . plays such a small role in language learning performance that no contrastive analysis . . . could correlate highly with performance data, at least at the level of syntax'.

It needs to be pointed out, however, that most of the studies that occurred in the early 1970's -- and which reflected the shift from inter- to intralingual sources of error production -- were largely carried out in untutored SLA contexts. While writers such as McLaughlin (1978a), James (1980) and Harley and Swain (1984) are equally critical of the CAH, they suggest that L1 interference might have greater weight in FLL on account of three specific factors: 1. learners share a common L1; 2. they are relatively cut off from native speakers of the TL; and 3. classroom interaction is

characterised by ongoing code-switching. A more detailed analysis of transfer in FLL is proposed by Sajavaara (1986) who likewise argues that certain factors specific to the context -- notably, lack of naturalistic language use, conscious monitoring and conscious problem-solving activities -- may reinforce L1 transfer strategies. It needs to be stressed, however, that transfer here is viewed as specific to a given context rather than as stemming from a generalised learning theory as in CA. Its implications will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two.

1.1.4 Conclusions

Nowadays, Lado's account of error formation seems both simplistic and mechanical. Individual and contextual variables are not regarded as relevant and psychological process of SLA are deduced simply on the basis of a linguistic comparison. As Selinker (1992) suggests, if Lado was tempted to make sweeping statements on the basis of limited empirical evidence, it was probably because he was seduced by the attempt to bestow scientific status upon the new discipline of Applied Linguistics.

The fact that a strong version of the CAH is no longer seen as tenable should not, however, undermine the importance of transfer in any account of error formation. In his review of research on transfer and related areas, Odlin (1989) concludes that the process occurs in all linguistic subsystems, contexts, and age groups and can be affected by language distance, typological and non-structural factors. Transfer may not be the main determinant of SLA as implied by the CAH and may stem from more diverse sources but, as Sajavaara remarks above, it can play a powerful role in the process and needs to be incorporated into any theory of error formation.

1.2 THE COGNITIVE APPROACH

In the early 1970's, as noted earlier, empirical research successfully challenged the CAH by showing that learners produce errors which cannot be explained simply as a function of L1 interference. Following the emerging cognitive models of L1 acquisition, and particularly Chomsky's, these errors were taken to be evidence of a hypothesis-testing process at the basis of SLA which was increasingly seen to have implications for Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) methodology .

1.2.1 Chomsky and the UG Hypothesis

The rationale of the cognitive approach to psychology is that the human mind is not a passive receptor of stimuli but actively processes the information it receives and transforms it into new forms and categories. It works like a computer: selects incoming information, compares and combines it with other information already present in memory, transforms, rearranges and retrieves it when needed. The response output depends on these internal processes and their state at the moment of processing.

Language acquisition is seen, within the cognitive framework, as another example of the mind's active data-processing potential. Partly because of the complexity of the outcome, however, and partly because of the poverty of the data to which he is exposed, Chomsky argues it is a discrete process unrelated to other aspects of the child's cognitive growth or environment and is heavily dependent on innate knowledge:

> A consideration of the character of the grammar that is acquired, the degenerate quality and narrowly limited extent of the available data, the striking uniformity of the resulting grammars, and their independence of intelligence, motivation and emotional state, over wide ranges of variation, leave little hope that much of the structure of the language can be learned by an organism initially uninformed as to its general character. (Chomsky 1965: 58)

There are essentially three characteristics of the input which Chomsky uses in favour of his hypothesis. The first, known as 'the poverty of the stimulus' argument, is based upon the observation that input cannot possibly contain all the information that a child needs in order to develop adult competence. Chomsky uses, as an example, the fact that the pronoun *them* in the following two sentences may only refer to *the men* in (2):

I wonder who [the men expected to see them] (2)
[the men expected to see them] (3)

and comments:

How does every child know, unerringly, to interpret the clause differently in the two cases? And why does no pedagogic grammar have to draw the learner's attention to such facts (which were, in fact, noticed only quite recently, in the course of the study of explicit rule systems in generative grammar?).
(Chomsky 1986: 8)

The second characteristic, degeneracy of input, concerns that fact that, despite being exposed to deviant as well as correct utterances, the young child seems able to distinguish one from the other and internalize only those rules that generate grammatical sentences (see 1.6.1 for a critique). L1 acquisition seems to overcome a third hurdle, lack of negative evidence, in that adults do not correct ungrammatical utterances produced by children (see 2.1.2.2) and do not provide adequate linguistic explanations about what is ungrammatical and why. For all three reasons, L1 acquisition is accounted for as dependent on an innate linguistic faculty referred to as the Language Acquisition Device (LAD).

The LAD develops according to a biologically predetermined programme and atrophies with age. L1 acquisition is therefore seen much more as a process of maturation than of interaction with the environment. What the child actually does, Chomsky argues, is to match the incoming data with the most suitable hypothesis,

rather than build rules on the basis of feedback. In later accounts (Chomsky 1981a, 1981b, 1986, 1987), L1 acquisition is made to depend on a set of innate principles which form Universal Grammar (UG). UG includes a number of basic principles[8] on which natural languages are developed, and a set of parameters within which languages can vary. The acquisition process involves assigning a value to the parameters present in UG based on the evidence coming from the linguistic environment:

> There is good reason to believe that children learn language from positive evidence only (corrections not being required or relevant), and they appear to know the facts without relevant experience in a wide array of complex cases . . . It must be, then, that the 'guessing instinct' submits very few admissible hypotheses to the evaluation procedure. (Chomsky 1986: 55)

Input can be processed thanks to what Chomsky calls 'channel capacity', i.e. general cognitive abilities. Structures which closely conform to UG, are described as 'unmarked' or belonging to 'core grammar' and are easier to learn, whereas structures which are language specific are seen as unrelated to UG, i.e. are 'marked', belong to 'peripheral grammar' and are more difficult. Developmental order does not necessarily follow this distinction in that a number of contextual variables may intervene.

Support for the notion that children are pre-programmed to acquire their L1 was provided by the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH), first put forward by Penfield and Roberts (1959), which argued the best period for language acquisition is the pre-pubertal age, after which a loss in brain plasticity impairs the process. A similar biologically-based argument was advanced by Lenneberg's (1967) who, in his study of brain damaged cases, revealed that recovery was fast and complete in children, slower and incomplete in adults. Lenneberg concluded that children can transfer language functions to the right hemisphere, if the left hemisphere has been damaged, while adults cannot.

Innatist views of L1 acquisition have been criticized both on theoretical and empirical grounds. In particular, the language used by adults with young children would appear neither as degenerate or impoverished as Chomsky assumed and, contrary to the CPH's claim that lateralization coincides with puberty, it is now suggested it could be complete by five or even be present at birth. Partly as a result of such criticism, a weaker version of the CPH has been suggested by Lamendella (1977) and Seliger (1978) who argue for the existence of several sensitive periods during which certain skills are acquired more easily than others. Despite the criticism that nativist views attracted, however, they were rapidly to displace the behaviourist framework which had until then influenced SLA.

1.2.2 Cognitivism and SLA

By the late 1960's Chomsky's views on L1 acquisition had been accepted in SLA although the extent to which SLA was seen to mirror L1 acquisition was the source of ongoing debate.[9] White (1989b), for example, distinguishes between four positions ranging from a belief that UG operates in an identical fashion in the two processes to the other extreme in which UG is seen as totally unavailable in L2 and is substituted by problem-solving strategies.[10] Between these extremes lie intermediary positions in which UG is available but does not work in an identical way to L1 acquisition.[11] While these differences are important, they should not blur the general shift in SLA circles away from the concept of language acquisition as a process of habit formation towards one in which, as Cook (1985) argues, the emphasis is upon the learner forming and testing hypotheses.

Within this new framework, the attitude to errors underwent a radical shift in perspective. Whereas in the CAH errors were seen as negative interference to be removed as rapidly as possible, the new view of SLA as a hypothesis-testing process meant that they assumed an entirely different role. Far from being negative interference, they were a sign that the learner was actively seeking to discover and test out hypotheses concerning the TL rule system and were, as such, part of a 'creative construct' process that was to be welcomed.[12] As Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) point out , it was only on the basis of the mismatch learners perceived between their production and the forms of the TL (i.e. upon errors) that they could modify their hypotheses about TL rules and improve in terms of accuracy. Errors, within this framework, assumed almost a functional role which was gradually to be extended from SLA in general to FLL learning in particular where, as Corder urged, teaching and materials must be adapted to the learner's 'internal syllabus'. Dulay and Burt's paper 'You can't learn without goofing' (1974a) sums up the change in mood.

While there are certain common features to the cognitive emphasis in SLA, however, it may be useful to distinguish -- as with the CAH -- between a 'strong' and a 'weak' version, depending on the role assigned to the mother tongue. In the strong approach analysed in sections 1.2.3 to 1.2.5.2 below, the process of SLA is seen to mimic strongly that of L1 acquisition whereas in the weak version that follows, the learner is deemed to have recourse to a variety of sources including general cognitive strategies, his L1 and his existing competence in the L2.

1.2.3 The L1=L2 Hypothesis

Chomsky's nativist approach was first applied in a number of studies on the acquisition of English as L1 carried out by Cazden (1968, 1972), R. Brown (1973), J. de Villiers and P. de Villiers (1973). The production of subjects studied did not reveal a close connection with input, but rather an internally driven process of rule-formation, mirrored in a common acquisition order for 14 morphemes and in common stages of development. The acquisition order found by Brown, reported in Table 1.1, claimed high rank order correlations between his results and those of the de Villiers and equally meaningful correlations with a number of other studies involving some of the morphemes in his list. Brown attributed the acquisition order to 'cumulative complexity, both semantic and grammatical' and, while he makes some concessions to IDs and contextual variables, arguing that the rate of acquisition is different in individuals, his main point was that progression was 'approximately invariant'.

Brown's study seemed to confirm Chomsky's hypothesis that L1 acquisition was a maturational process relatively independent of external stimuli which, at the most, could affect the rate but not the route of acquisition. What is interesting to us about such studies, however, was the discovery of a similarity between errors made by L2 learners and children acquiring their mother tongue, as categorized by Cazden:

*Look how she stand up
*Let me have somes
*Does it works?
*Streets lights
*Two mans
*Why Paul waked up?
(Cazden 1968: 445)

Table 1.1 *Brown's mean order of acquisition of 14 morphemes across three children* (R. Brown 1973: 274)

Morpheme	Average Rank
1. Present progressive	2.33
2-3. *in, on*	2.50
4. Plural	3.00
5. Past irregular	6.00
6. Possessive	6.33
7. Uncontractible copula	6.50
8. Articles	7.00
9. Past regular	9.00
10. Third person regular	9.66
11. Third person irregular	10.83
12. Uncontractible auxiliary	11.66
13. Contractible copula	12.66
14. Contractible auxiliary	14.00

Such a similarity seemed to suggest that SLA was acquired according to the same process as the mother tongue and gave rise to further studies by Dulay and Burt (1972, 1973), using the Bilingual Syntax Measure,[13] on a subset of Brown's morphemes. While their original hypothesis, i.e. that there would be a correlation in the acquisition orders of L1 and L2, was not validated,[14] their study reaffirmed the similarity of the two processes as summed up in three postulates:

1. The language learner possesses a specific type of innate mental organization which causes him to use a limited class of processing strategies to produce utterances in a language.
2. Language learning proceeds by the learner's exercise of those processing strategies in the form of linguistic rules which he gradually adjusts as he organizes more and more of the given language he hears.
3. This process is guided in L1 acquisition by the particular form of the L1 system, and in L2 acquisition by the particular form of the L2 system.
(Dulay and Burt 1974a: 109)

To this it must be added that processing strategies are activated when the learner is exposed to a natural communication situation, where the focus is on content rather than form.

The L1=L2 Hypothesis that emerged from Dulay and Burt's study was based on the fact that only 3% of 'goofs' in their corpus (see Table 1.2) were categorized as 'interference errors' while 97% appeared to be 'developmental' in nature. The former were contentiously defined in habit-formation terms as 'the result of the child's transferring the structures of his L1 (his old habit) onto the structures of the L2 (the new habit he is trying to acquire)' (Dulay and Burt 1973: 247), while the latter were defined as 'similar to those of children learning the language natively', that is, the result of simplification and overgeneralization strategies.[15]

Table 1.2 *Dulay and Burt's error taxonomy* (adapted from Dulay and Burt 1974a: 116-7)

Type of Error	Example	Explanation
Interference	*I know to do all that	Omission of obligatory *how* in English, optional in Spanish
Developmental	*He took her teeths off	Irregular plural treated as regular
Ambiguous	*He no wanna go	Wrong *no* placement; *no/not* distinction; do missing (similar to L1 English acquisition Klima and Bellugi Stage 2, but also obligatory in Spanish)
Unique	*We do got no more book	Overuse of *do*

It is true that, in the work of Dulay and Burt, a number of errors which can be ascribed to interference are instead explained as developmental. The authors of the study invite us, for example, to consider the such utterances as: *Now she is putting hers pyjamas on, and *She's gonna brush her teeths. Such errors, they admit, could reflect modifier-noun agreement, obligatory in Spanish but not in English. 'However', they hypothesize, these are more likely to be 'instances of over-generalizing the possessive -*s* from NPs which are nouns, e.g. *Tim's, Mary's*. It is also quite possible that the child was overgeneralizing from the structure (NP is X's), e.g. *It's hers ...*

Tim's, which is a very common structure in English' (Dulay and Burt 1972: 239).

Whenever an error can be ascribed to either category, Dulay and Burt understandably

tend to analyse it in a way that supports their hypothesis, as in the following transitional

structures involving *wh-* questions:

> L1 (*Adam*)   L2 (*Rune*)[16]
> *What the dollie have   *What you eating?
> *Why not me sleeping?   *Why not me can't dance?
> *How he can be a doctor?   *What she is doing?
> (Dulay and Burt 1974a: 11)

Perhaps as significant as the ratio of intra- to interlingual errors in Dulay and

Burt's work is their claim that speakers of different NLs -- notably Chinese and Spanish

children learning English -- tend to follow a similar order of morpheme acquisition

which is impervious to instruction.[17] Such a claim for an innate, learner-centred,

'internal syllabus' was to have major implications for their views on practice in the SLA

and/or FL classroom as reflected in their paper 'Should we teach children syntax?'

(1973). The answer was evidently 'no' since, if learners are already equipped with an

'internal syllabus', the main aim of pedagogy should be to replicate 'natural

communicative situations', that is, exchanges where the emphasis is upon the message

rather than the medium.[18] As they were to put it:

> A child who doesn't understand all or much of what the teacher is saying (form)
> will certainly understand and retain interest in what is going on before his eyes
> (message). And in the magical manner of language acquisition, the child will
> process and begin to produce the speech that he hears.
> (Dulay and Burt 1973: 257)

Whereas others such as Ravem (1968) were more cautious on the implications of an

invariant route for the classroom, arguing that a 'language bath' might not be the most

efficient way to help learners achieve adult competence, Dulay and Burt, like Newmark

and Reibel (1968) before them, adopted a highly inductive approach. This approach was

initially restricted to children although, as revealed in their extensive review of experimental literature (1983), it gradually gave way to a set of criteria that were seen as applicable to all learners. These could be summarised as:

1. a natural language environment, i.e. one where focus is on the message, not on form;

2. communicative interactions at the learner's level of language development, i.e. the learner must be allowed to progress from the silent phase to full two-way communication in his own time;

3. comprehensible input, i.e. verbal input must be supported by concrete referents; and

4. a suitable model.[19]

It is not difficult to discern in such criteria an attempt to replicate SLA processes in the FL classroom and, as such, their approach increasingly merges (see Dulay, Burt and Krashen 1982) with Krashen's Monitor Theory.

1.2.3.1 A critique of the L1=L2 Hypothesis

The sweeping claims made in Dulay and Burt's model offered a fertile ground for debate. A comprehensive critique is to be found in Hatch (1978b) and Long and Sato (1984). Perhaps the initial problem lies in what has been deemed a simplistic method of data analysis by which much information is neglected to reach the desired results. Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991), for example, while recognizing that the L1=L2 Hypothesis cannot be easily dismissed, stress the fact that the claimed acquisition order is true only for a small number of morphemes, which constitute a rather heterogeneous group.

Ellis (1985a), on the other hand, in his critique of the L1=L2 Hypothesis, concludes on the basis of the influence of individual and contextual variables that the concept of invariant route has little validity. Ellis suggests that L2 acquisition can be better described as having two components, *rate* and *route of development*,[20] each of which is affected to a different extent by the variables indicated. Thus rate may be influenced by starting age, aptitude, and intelligence, whereas route may be affected by other variables such as instruction:

> The few studies of the effects of formal instruction on the developmental route suggest that the 'natural' route cannot be changed. These are not conclusive, however. Formal instruction can take many different forms and it is possible that the route of development is amenable to influence by certain methods but not by others. The research undertaken so far may not have investigated the right methods in the right conditions. (Ellis 1985a: 15)

The picture of SLA provided by Ellis is far more complex than that outlined in the L1=L2 Hypothesis and receives support in the arguments of Widdowson (1990) who suggests that results on invariant acquisition routes are based on the assumption that accuracy coincides with acquisition, i.e. that performance mirrors competence. This, he claims, may not be true since 'it may be that learners have internalized aspects of the system which for one reason or another they cannot access on particular occasions, that circumstances of different kinds prevent them from acting on this knowledge' (Widdowson 1990: 17). As Widdowson himself points out, such objections are supported by the work of Bialystock and Sharwood-Smith (1985) on the distinction between knowledge of a language and ability to access that knowledge, which will be returned to later in the present and in the following chapter.

Much of the criticism of the L1=L2 Hypothesis, as indicated above, is based on the methods of analysis and interpretation of data within an SLA context. Such criticism

must become even sharper when that hypothesis is, as in the case of Dulay and Burt, extended to the FLL context where the same conditions simply do not exist. The L1=L2 Hypothesis depends upon the existence of a 'natural communicative situation' in which the learner can unconsciously internalize form, according to his 'internal syllabus', by focusing on function. The classroom context can hardly be said to offer such situations since the learners usually share a mother tongue and therefore do not exactly need the TL for 'natural' communicative purposes.

Even though the classroom can provide activities focused on content rather than form, a certain degree of artificiality is inevitable. The differences between the formal and the informal environment cannot be easily overcome, and the transfer of a hypothesis appropriate to the first to the second is highly dubious. As Ellis was to suggest, instruction can speed up or improve on 'natural mechanisms' in a number of ways:

> With regard to the route of SLA, input may facilitate development by (1) providing the learner with ready-made chunks of language to memorize and later analyse, (2) helping the learner to build vertical constructions, (3) modelling specific grammatical forms with high frequency, (4) ensuring that the input is one step ahead of the learner's existing knowledge (by providing comprehensible input), and (5) providing the right affective climate to insure that input becomes intake. (Ellis 1985a: 161-2)

1.2.4 Monitor Theory

As observed in 1.2.3, Krashen's Monitor Theory can be considered a development of the L1=L2 Hypothesis, with which it shares a strong nativist orientation and a belief in the existence of an invariant route of acquisition. Monitor Theory is one of the first models devised with the primary purpose of explaining SLA and, even more so than Dulay and Burt, of setting guidelines for classroom practice. Over the years it

has appeared in different versions (Krashen 1977a, 1977b, 1978a, 1978b, 1981, 1985) although, in its more recent formulations, it can be summarized in five hypotheses: 1. the acquisition-learning hypothesis; 2. the monitor hypothesis; 3. the natural order hypothesis; 4. the input hypothesis; 5. the affective filter hypothesis.[21] The model postulates the existence of three learner factors: the filter, i.e. affective factors which control intake, the organizer, a subconscious language-organizing principle and the monitor, the former's conscious counterpart. The organizer, Krashen's equivalent of the LAD, is responsible for natural language acquisition and use, whereas the monitor is limited to editing production.

Acquisition, in Krashen's model, is triggered by meaningful interaction in which the focus is on meaning, not on form, and by comprehensible input. Input must be understood in order to be processed and its measure of comprehensibility is given by the formula $i + 1$, where i represents the stage reached by the learner and 1 the amount of unknown language he can make sense of and acquire. Comprehensible input is sufficient to develop acquisition while learning, which is characterized by conscious attention to form, plays little part in the process. At times the monitor can co-operate with the organizer, but this is an inferior process since it can contribute little to the acquisition of communicative skills. The monitor cannot initiate utterances, but only edit them, before or after production,[22] its availability being subject to three conditions: a focus on form, time and knowledge of the rule to be applied.

Krashen's argument that language acquisition is an unconscious process leads to the natural order hypothesis, which states that language structures are acquired in a fixed order, independent of input. Support for such a view is largely based on the morpheme studies examined earlier and others related to negation, interrogation and

auxiliaries which also seemed to provide an empirical foundation of the L1=L2 Hypothesis. Discrepancies in acquisition orders, i.e. different error patterns found by various studies, are explained away by Krashen (Krashen 1985: 43) by the interference of monitoring on the 'natural order'[23] or by a number of other factors:

1. insufficient quantity of input [as in FLL];
2. inappropriate quality of input [when $i + 1$ is not available];
3. the affective filter;
4. the output filter [which prevents acquired rules from being used in performance]; and
5. the acquisition of deviant forms.

The latter can be triggered, according to Krashen, by two circumstances: in FLL when a student is exposed to faulty input from the teacher, and in SLA when a learner has communicative needs which go well beyond his competence and/or is faced with input well beyond his comprehension.[24]

The latter errors are not to be confused with developmental errors such as the following which are related to the functions of the organizer and therefore considered a normal by-product of the acquisition process:

*I not this way
*I not like that
*Dolly 'er' not here
(Ravem 1974. Quoted in Dulay, Burt and Krashen 1982: 124)

Such errors are labelled 'systematic errors' whereas those due to monitoring or categories 1-5 above are labelled as 'intralingual errors'. These are claimed to occur infrequently and to concern syntax rather than morphology. The similarities with Dulay and Burt's model are readily apparent in this respect. In both models it is argued that 'intralingual errors' do not occur in normal conditions, but are induced by pressure to perform before time, conscious language processing (as in timed translation) and limited exposure to natural communication. The conditions listed are those typical of a formal

environment and, according to Krashen, the artificiality of the setting can severely limit SLA and inhibit natural development, even though using mother tongue resources can be an asset when the structures of the two languages are similar.[25]

Krashen's (1985) most recent formulation of Monitor Theory has acquired an even stronger nativist component. SLA is automatic, he argues, provided that the affective filter is low enough and the input sufficiently comprehensible: 'It is, in fact, unavoidable and cannot be prevented -- the language "mental organ" will function just as automatically as any other organ' (Krashen 1985: 4). As Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) observe, the fact that SLA is explained as a function of only two variables -- the remaining playing only a marginal and supportive role -- is an oversimplification of his earlier model and less explanatory than that model.

Despite the changes in Monitor Theory over the years, however, Krashen has long argued that it has important pedagogical implications, and these have received their most systematic expression in Krashen and Terrell's Natural Approach (1983/1988). According to its proponents, the latter is based on four main tenets:

1. comprehension should precede production, therefore the teacher's main function is to provide comprehensible input;

2. the course syllabus should consist of communicative goals; the learner's attention being directed towards message-oriented rather than medium oriented uses of language;

3. production should be allowed to emerge in stages according to the invariant route, accuracy being initially low at first and only errors in communication being corrected; and

4. activities should aim at a lowering of the learner's affective filter.

Table 1.3 *The case against the grammatical syllabus* (Krashen 1982: 70)

Grammatical syllabus (deliberate attempt to supply *i + 1*)	Communicative input (*i + 1* included naturally)
1. All students may not be at the same stage. The structure of the day may not be the *i +1*.	1. *i + 1* will be provided for all students eventually.
2. Each structure presented only once.	2. Natural and extensive review.
3. Grammatical focus may prevent real and natural communication.	3. Conscious focus of both student and teacher is communication of ideas.
4. Assumes we know order of acquisition.	4. Does not assume we know order of acquisition.

In general, the above tenets seek to replicate as far as possible the conditions of untutored SLA within a tutored context. Firstly, according to Krashen and Terrell, 'roughly-graded' input (i.e. the use of *i + 1*) is superior to a grammatically-based syllabus not only because it is impossible to know the order of acquisition most conducive to the learner's 'internal syllabus' but for a variety of other reasons outlined in Table 1.3 above. Secondly, the emphasis upon message-oriented speech is based on the assumption that learning seldom turns into acquisition, i.e. consciously-learned structures do not become part of the learner's unconscious repertoire and can be used only subject to the constraints listed earlier in this section. Moreover, direct presentation of rules which learners are not ready for can trigger errors which interfere with the 'natural' order since knowledge of a rule does not necessarily imply error-free performance.

1.2.4.1 A critique of Monitor Theory

Monitor Theory -- and its pedagogic implications -- has been criticized on various grounds (see Gregg 1984; McLaughlin 1978b, 1987). Its main weaknesses have been summarised by McLaughlin as follows:

1. a somewhat crude distinction between acquisition and learning and an inability to see their complex interrelation in any process;

2. the underrating of the role of conscious processes (i.e. of the monitor) in SLA, particularly in a tutored as opposed to non-tutored context;

3. the flimsy empirical evidence for the natural order hypothesis deriving from L1 and L2 morpheme studies;

4. the unclear definition of the $i + 1$ notion, from which derives the impossibility of validating the input hypothesis; and

5. the lack of an explanation for the development of the affective filter and for relating it to IDs.

Some of the above criticisms share much in common with those advanced against the L1=L2 Hypothesis, particularly in terms of the lack of empirical support for the 'natural order hypothesis'. Indeed, McLaughlin argues that there are 'three unfortunate tendencies' in Krashen's work generally which are contrary to the principles of research, i.e. tendencies: '(1) to switch assumptions to suit his purposes (Gregg 1984), (2) to make sweeping statements based on weak empirical data ([G.] Taylor 1984), and (3) to brush aside conflicting evidence in footnotes (Takala 1984)' (McLaughlin 1987: 57).

Monitor Theory has been criticized not only for its lack of empirical support but also for the inadequate way in which it deals with key theoretical issues, most notably

with the relation between acquisition and learning. The series of constraints that

Monitor Theory poses on the role of conscious processes in SLA in general, and FLL

in particular, appears unjustified. While it could be true that in a natural environment

unconscious processes are more efficient than conscious ones, this is unlikely to apply

to the FL classroom where the focus has to be to a large extent on 'learning', rather

than 'acquisition', and on form, rather than on function, because of the restrictions

created by the environment to 'meaningful interaction'. Moreover, as McLaughlin has

stressed, there is little evidence to substantiate Krashen's assertion that what is learned

consciously cannot become, as in other areas of skill development, gradually automated

and employed consciously.

1.3 NOTIONS OF INTERLANGUAGE

In the 'weak' approach adopted by Corder, Selinker and supporters of the EA

movement, both interlingual and intralingual strategies are used to explain SLA, i.e. it

is claimed that the learner resorts to any of the resources available to him, whether be

it his NL, his given stage of TL competence, or innate principles, to achieve his

objective.

1.3.1 The contribution of Corder

The figure of Corder is of primary importance in SLA. His speculations have

provided the thrust for the EA movement, triggering a number of empirical studies, and

they have repeatedly offered suggestions for further developments both in the

theoretical and empirical field. The premise of Corder's work is that errors are

systematic in nature and, following Chomsky's distinction between competence and performance, they can be divided into performance errors, which are random and due to occasional causes, and competence errors, which occur regularly and 'provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learnt or acquired' and 'what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in his discovery of the language' (1967). His analysis of the latter represents, in many ways, a meeting-point between the 'strong' and the 'weak' approaches. While he was influenced by the former and accepted the notion of a 'built-in syllabus', he took a somewhat more moderate stance than Dulay and Burt in that he recognised the difference between SLA and FLL on the basis of the contextual and individual variables involved in the two processes. He seemed to seek a model which aimed at a compromise between nativist and environmental views.

His first influential paper, 'The significance of learners' errors' (1967), exhibited a nativist influence by suggesting the idea of a similarity between L1 acquisition and SLA. Although Corder admits that between the two processes there are differences in outcomes, motivation, and the maturational stage of the learner, he accepts as a working hypothesis that L1 acquisition and SLA are based on the same mechanisms, procedures and strategies. In the years that followed, this nativist position became somewhat more attenuated so that, by the time of 'Language-learner language' (1978b), he seemed to have arrived at a compromise between nativist and environmentalist positions. Starting from two different views of IL as a system based:

1. on the mother tongue, that is, a restructuring continuum (Selinker 1972; Bickerton 1975);

2. on language processing abilities, that is, a recreation continuum, as in the L1=L2 Hypothesis.

Corder suggests that some components of SLA could be organized along the lines of a 'restructuring continuum' (phonology, adult language acquisition, tutored learning), and some others along a 'recreational continuum' (syntax, child language acquisition, untutored acquisition). As a basis for SLA Corder proposes neither L1 nor the LAD, but a simple code of the mother tongue, i.e. the stage where L1 and L2 are structurally similar.

One of his major contributions to the field is the foundation of the systematic study of learner's errors, EA. Although the practice was hardly new (see French 1949; Lee 1957), Corder aimed at giving EA the character and status of a scientific procedure, divided into: classification, evaluation, and explanation (Corder 1979). The first stage should determine whether we are in presence of errors and whether superficially well formed utterances are in fact erroneous, i.e. the result of holophrastic learning or avoidance, and whether they are both accurate and appropriate, as in:

> *You mustn't wear a hat at the party
> for
> You don't need to wear a hat (Corder 1972/1981:42)

The learner himself can be asked to help in the interpreting process.

The second stage, evaluation, is necessary for administration purposes and for remedial teaching. Corder summarizes a number of proposals on how to evaluate errors according to the relationship between error and comprehensibility of an utterance. The third stage, based on psycholinguistics, aims at making a contribution to the understanding of SLA and is based on the attribution of errors to various causes. The three most important error sources are: transfer, overgeneralization, and faulty teaching and materials, as in Table 1.4 below.

Table 1.4 *Error taxonomy according to Corder* (1973a: 286-92)

Type of error	Example
transfer	*She though to be a don
overgeneralization	*I seed him
faux amis (overgeneralization + transfer)	*I assisted at the class since three years
syntactic blends	*She is a woman of hers fifty and odd
nature of teaching	*He is a sitting (from overexposure to the phrase 'that is a'...)

Clearly, the status of error is reversed in Corder's work, as in that of Dulay and Burt and Krashen, from unwanted habits to valuable insights in that they provide evidence of the strategies used by the learner in his acquisition/learning of the language. Later Corder (1971b) was to go a step further in suggesting that if IL is viewed as a system in itself then the concept of error can be considered meaningless.

For Corder, the ultimate goal of the study of errors is pedagogic, i.e. they serve as feedback to the teacher and, most importantly, allow the learner to test his hypotheses about the TL. The learner is viewed as central to the instruction programme: his built-in syllabus and strategies providing the basis for the elaboration of the teaching syllabus. Errors may arise when there is a clash between the two (1971a, 1973a, 1973b, 1981), or when faulty material or inadequate teaching procedures (incorporating insufficient or misleading data) are used. These are classified as 'redundant errors' whereas 'normal errors' are those caused by internal processing. Both types are related to a context of use, either formal or informal:

> In a formal learning setting the focus of attention is still more on the acquisition of the target language code than on the use of the code in communication. The classroom does not encourage, or indeed easily allow, the free use of the interlanguage to create and receive messages. The learner therefore approaches the target language data in a fundamentally different way in a formal setting and

in an informal setting. The free learner concentrates on the data's communicative properties -- as a semantic challenge -- while the captive learner approaches it as a structural problem -- as a formal challenge.
(Corder 1981: 77)

Despite a recognition of the particular characteristics of the formal environment, however, Corder does not abandon the belief that FLT could be optimized with the discovery of a natural route of acquisition and its application to the classroom. His conclusion seems to be that evidence gathered by studies 'in informal learning settings' points to the existence of a similar sequence of development and that sequence could form the basis of a FLT syllabus.

1.3.2 Early Interlanguage notions

Corder (1967) was among the first to suggest that the dialect of the TL spoken by the learner should be recognized as a system in its own right and proposed the labels 'transitional competence' or 'idiosyncratic dialect' (1967, 1971a). Other such labels suggested were Nemser's (1971) 'approximative system' and Selinker's (1969, 1972) 'interlanguage' (IL), which is now commonly used. What the various definitions share is the idea that IL is somewhere in-between the learner's L1 and L2, is systematic and undergoes continuous revision in the TL direction.[26] Although the learner is seen to build his system by using strategies common to other language learners, he is considered to be the sole speaker of his IL and the notion of variation was to the fore in early IL models. Nemser (1971), for example, lists proficiency level, learning experience, communication function and personal learning characteristics as potential causes although, as Corder (1973b) suggests, the trends towards the idealization of data led to the notion of variation being temporarily cast aside.

Defining the differences and similarities between IL and natural languages has been, however, an ongoing and a crucial issue. In Nemser's (1971) definition IL is characterized by frequent and rapid changes which bring about a restructuring of the system. According to Selinker (1972), it is characterized rather by language transfer, backsliding and fossilization. Backsliding involves resorting to an IL rule which seemed to have disappeared, and represents evidence of a fossilization process, that is, of the tendency to retain in IL a form which cannot be eradicated from performance by formal instruction (Selinker 1972). Fossilized forms tend to re-appear when the learner is under stress or relaxation and they are the result of five learning strategies (see 1.3.3).[27]

According to Selinker, one of the chief causes of the trend towards fossilization is the type of strategies employed by the SLA learner. The latter, he argues, rarely has access to what Lenneberg (1967) defined as a 'latent language structure',[28] that is a biological equivalent to UG which would ensure that SLA shares the same characteristics as L1 acquisition. On the contrary, for a variety of reasons he is usually compelled to resort to more general cognitive strategies which Selinker calls 'latent psychological structure'[29] and which he describes as follows:

> (a) the latent psychological structure has no genetic time-table; (b) it has no direct counterpart to any grammatical concept; (c) it may never be realized into a natural language; and (d) it may overlap with other intellectual structures. (Selinker 1972/1974: 49)

The latent language structure works by making 'interlingual identifications',[30] i.e. by comparing NL, IL and TL and identifying similar features. If the process is successful, IL linguistic material is progressively adapted to TL norms. The latent language structure includes five main strategies: language transfer, transfer of training, strategies of second language learning, strategies of second language communication and

overgeneralization of TL linguistic material (see Table 1.5). These strategies, moreover,

in addition to secondary processes such as holophrase learning and hypercorrection,

account for the range of errors encountered in SLA and can result in fossilization (see

1.3.3).

Table 1.5 *Error taxonomy according to Selinker*

Type of error	Example
Transfer	*Elle marche les chats *Il est trois ans (Selinker *et al.* 1975: 143-4)
Overgeneralization	*What did he intended to say? (Selinker 1972/1974: 38*)*
Transfer of training	Use of *he* for *she* because of overexposure to the former and underexposure to the latter in instruction (Selinker 1972/1974: 39)
Strategy of second language learning	*I am feeling thirsty (Selinker 1972/1974: 40)
Simplification	*Mon maman et mon papa aller à Glendon (Selinker *et al.* 1975: 149)

While Selinker's notion of interlanguage avoids the strong nativist hypothesis

of Dulay and Burt, that is, as the result of general learning rather than language-specific

strategies, it still seeks to explain SLA in an informal rather formal context in which the

emphasis is upon meaningful interaction. For the same reasons expressed regarding the

L1=L2 Hypothesis, therefore, it cannot itself be an adequate account of FLL. The

strategies that Selinker identifies may very well be activated in both SLA and FLL

context and will necessarily interact differently with the specific features of those

contexts.

1.3.3 Error Analysis

According to the 'weak' cognitive approach identified with views of interlanguage, errors are seen to be a product of the application of learning strategies. According to Richards' (1972) definition, for example, L1-based strategies will give rise to 'interlingual' errors and L2-based strategies to 'intralingual' errors. Different IL models have different ways of classifying errors as can be seen in Nemser (1971), Selinker (1972), Corder (1978c). While they may differ, however, a number of definitions have emerged which are common to them all, such as transfer, i.e. an error occasioned by the interference of the L1, overgeneralization, i.e. an error due to the failure to observe rule restrictions within the TL, and simplification, i.e. an error resulting from the attempt to reduce the learning burden.

Table 1.6 *Error taxonomy according to EA*

Type of error	Example
Transfer	*The book of Jack (Tarone *et al.* 1976: 87)
Overgeneralization	*He can sings *We are hope (Richards 1971a: 174) *Her hairs are black (Jain 1974: 194)
Developmental	*Dog eat it (Dulay and Burt 1973: 250)
Prefabricated pattern	*I don't know how do you do that (Tarone *et al.* 1976: 87)
Induced errors:	
Input *He walks quickly*	*He is walks quickly (Richards 1971a: 175)
Presentation of *point out* and *notice*	*When I see a ship in the sea, I point out *The barometer noticed that it wouldn't be fine (Stenson 1974: 55)

While, as indicated earlier, IL is seen to be systematic, it is also recognized that unsystematic errors can occur as a result of communication strategies, that is, as a result of attempts to make up for a deficiency in IL in the course of conversation. Similarly, some faults with performance have been labelled lapses or mistakes (Corder 1967) if they can be rectified by the learner. They are seen as similar to errors made by native speakers, such as false starts or slips of the tongue and they do not reveal the underlying competence of the speaker so much as his psychophysical condition.

The fact that most studies in EA have focused upon an untutored context should not lead to ignore the important, if somewhat peripheral, studies that have taken place on errors in the FL classroom. While most observers accept that such errors can be classified according to those in a non-tutored context -- i.e. as transfer and/or overgeneralisation -- there appears to be a growing awareness that the source of such errors may lie not only in learning but teaching strategies. The notion that errors may be traced to faults in input is present in a number of studies (Richards 1971a; George 1972; Corder 1974; Tran-Thi-Chau 1975). Jain (1974) observes that, in so far as teaching methods encourage generalization, they are bound occasionally to result in false hypotheses and Richards (1971a) claims that 'transfer of training' is the main cause of error in the classroom, as in the following example where a teacher's interrogative forms are repeated by the learner in his reply:

Teacher	Student
Do you read much?	*Yes, I read much
Do you cook very much?	*Yes, I cook very much
What was she saying?	*She saying she would ask him
What does she tell him?	*She tell him to hurry
(Richards 1971a/1974a: 178)	

Stenson (1974) suggests the label 'teacher induced errors' and gives examples (see Table 1.6) of how teacher's explanations can be misunderstood by learners with consequent error production.

While EA benefited from a number of advantages, however, it also embodied a number of weaknesses. Schachter and Celce-Murcia (1977) list, among these, its assumption that errors coincide with difficulty, refuted by avoidance studies; its unsystematic count of error frequencies; the difficulty of classifying errors and of ascribing causes for them; and, possibly most important of all, the analysis of errors in isolation, thereby failing to highlight a number of IL features. As Long and Sato (1984) suggest, the notion that errors can themselves yield information about SLA was gradually abandoned in favour of the idea that the learner's entire production can provide richer information and EA was progressively incorporated into performance analysis. From the viewpoint of the present study, while EA was useful in illuminating the cause of error in the FLL context, it failed to provide a wider model which explained both theoretically and empirically the relationship between learning and teaching strategies in learner's internalization of the TL.

1.4 ACCULTURATION MODELS

The work of Labov (1966; 1969), J. Bailey (1973) and Bickerton (1971; 1973) forms the background of the models analysed in the following sections. Acculturation models share a common basis deriving from studies of pidgins and creoles and seek to establish a parallel between these systems and IL. This notion was already present in Nemser (1971) and Richards (1972) who observed that pidgins and creoles could be analysed according to IL strategies. In Germany, Clyne (1968) identified a number of

similarities between pidgin and the German spoken by immigrants, and his observations were later taken up by the Heidelberg Research Project (1976).

The fundamental assumption of the models examined here is that SLA involves a change in cultural attitudes which plays a crucial part in the acquisition (or non-acquisition) of the TL and which is rarely viewed positively by the learner. To the extent that development in SLA is related to the learner's stage of acculturation, both linguistic systems (pidgin and IL) will display a number of common features which will be particularly evident in the types of errors made.

1.4.1 The Acculturation Model

An extended comparison between SLA and the processes of pidginization and decreolization is at the basis of Schumann's Acculturation Model (1974, 1976, 1978b, 1979). The model draws on Smith's (1971) analysis of language functions as primarily threefold, i.e.: communicative, integrative and expressive. To the extent that a pidgin performs only the communicative function, it can be simplified at all levels and it only undergoes a process of complication and expansion -- to become a creole -- when it needs to serve integrative and expressive functions as well. According to Schumann, the first stages of SLA can be assimilated to the process of pidginization and it is only when integrative and expressive needs arise that the learner's IL will undergo a creolization process and become a richer system which is closer to the TL. Crucial to the successful development of this process is the ability of the learner to overcome feelings of social and psychological distance from the TL culture and, it is predicted, his proficiency in the TL will be a function of his acculturation stage.

Table 1.7 *Acculturation features* (adapted from Schumann 1978b: 75)

Feature	Explanation
*I no understand	He [Alberto] used the uniform negative *no* for most of his negative utterances as in American Indian Pidgin English (AIPE) and English Worker Pidgin (EWP).
*This is good?	He did not invert in questions as in Neo-Melanesian Pidgin (N-MP) and EWP.
*They skiing	He lacked auxiliaries as in EWP.
*The king food	He tended not to inflect for the possessive as in AIPE.
*Is similar	He used the unmarked form of the verb as in English-Japanese Pidgin (E-JP), AIPE and EWP.

The empirical foundation of the model originally came from Schumann's study of Alberto, a Spanish speaker living in the USA, whose IL was characterized by a series of idiosyncratic features which corresponded to pidginized features as summarized in Table 1.7. While, in Schumann's model, it is attitudinal factors which explain common errors in the above processes, he does not ignore the cognitive factors on which such attitudes are based. In his earlier writings, he tends to stress nativist constraints -- i.e. primitive linguistic universals -- as underlying learner strategies but, in subsequent writings (Schumann and Stauble 1983a, 1983b), these are described only as 'tentative speculation' and a greater emphasis is placed upon the use of general cognitive strategies. As he was to argue in a later study of five learners fossilised at the basilang level:

> When basilang speakers want to say something in the target language, they take their knowledge of target language words and phrases and the experience they have constructing utterances, narratives and conversations in their native language and use these tools to communicate what they want to say. This solution does not require any highly specific linguistic system that may be necessary for the acquisition of the complexities of the morpho-syntax. (Schumann 1987: 39)

A slightly different version of the Acculturation Model is the Nativization Model proposed by Andersen. According to the latter (1979a, 1980, 1983a) SLA is characterized by two processes: nativization and denativization, which can be compared to Piaget's (1955) notions of assimilation and accommodation. In the early stages of SLA, the learner is involved in the former, that is in building an individual system, partly autonomous from the TL, based on innate, language-specific knowledge and on his social, psychological and physical distance from NSs and the TL culture. This process is equated with both that of pidgin and creole development in that, as Andersen puts it:

> The individual language learner will follow universal principles of language acquisition in processing what little external input is available and will make up for this limited access to the external ideas by drawing on internal input -- the native language of the learner (for pidginization and SLA) or of the parents (for creolization), the developing community norm (for pidginization and creolization), and (for pidginization, creolization *and* SLA) the developing interlanguage of the learner. (Andersen 1980: 70)

As and when a learner develops contact with the TL, he will progressively adapt his system to it, passing from internal to external regulation. This process is called denativization. Within this framework, errors will tend to be more developmental than transfer errors and will pass through a variety of stages such as those in the acquisition of negation quoted by Andersen:

(A)	(B)	(C)		(D)	
1. No!	No the dog.	He no	eat.	1'. I dunno.	
2. No!	Not the dog.	He don	eat.	2'. I don	know.
3. No!	Not the dog.	He didn't	eat it.	3'. I didn't	know.

(Andersen 1989: 50)

1.4.2 A critique of Acculturation models

Acculturation models have been criticized primarily because they fail to provide a complete model of how input is internalized, particularly in terms of interaction

between learner and context, and secondly because the notions of social and psychological distance are not easy to measure and findings on these two variables are not consistent. Moreover, as Cook (1993) puts it, in reference to Schumann's study of Alberto, 'one bad L2 learner does not make a theory'. Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) add a number of other problems specifically in terms of the comparability between SLA and pidginization. As they point out, more than two languages are involved in pidginization, only two in SLA; pidgin speakers are usually bilinguals whereas SLA learners are usually monolinguals; pidginization concerns a group whereas SLA concerns individuals; and, finally, pidginization is an independent development of a variety whereas SLA is a graded approximation to the TL in a context where the TL model is available and is correction. These differences in both learner and contextual variables between the two processes, they argue, make comparability difficult.

The above is even more true in terms of FLL than SLA more generally. Acculturation models have very limited applicability in a formal context not only because of the points outlined by Larsen-Freeman and Long above but on account of the differences between a tutored and an untutored context. This was partly recognised by Schumann (1986: 385) himself who admitted: 'Since the Acculturation Model is designed to account for SLA under conditions of immigration where learning takes place without instruction, I have no proposal to make concerning language teaching'.

As no doubt Schumann was aware, the FL learner's system may well go through simplification and complexification stages but not for the reasons he outlined in a non-tutored context. For the FL learner, it is the L1 which serves communicative, integrative and expressive functions and there is not the same need to draw closer to the TL norm in order to improve communicative interaction. On the contrary, pressure towards

adapting to the TL norm is explicable in the classroom less in terms of acculturation

factors than in terms of teacher, parent and peer pressure, academic motivation and/or

the constraints of examinations.

While Acculturation models are not directly helpful in explaining the source and

forms of error in a FL context, however, they may shed some light on the way in which

a classroom pidgin may emerge. As Schumann himself points out, teaching methods

could play a crucial role in the development of certain pidginized features in a formal

environment. If the method focuses on accuracy, for example, the initial reduction of

redundant grammatical features will be opposed but if fluency is encouraged at the

expense of accuracy, a 'classroom pidgin' (see Hammerly 1991) is likely to develop. In

fact, as we shall see in Chapter Three, this was partly the case in the schools observed

in the present study. Schumann's and Anderson's models may not be applicable in FLL

but pidginization mechanisms, although the product of a quite distinct psychological and

contextual situation, seem to be at work also in the language classroom.

1.5 VARIABILITY MODELS

The framework for Variability models comes, as for Acculturation models, from

the work of Labov (1969, 1970), J. Bailey (1971) and Bickerton (1971, 1973). The

underlying assumption of such models is that variation in learners' performance is

systematic and that such variation cannot be accommodated within existing SLA models

which view competence as homogeneous according to the Chomskyan hypothesis. The

notion of variation in SLA was first discussed by Corder (1973b), who considered both

individual and contextual variation. As indicated above, however, in a pedagogically-

oriented EA, whose aim was to provide relevant information for syllabuses and teaching

materials suitable for a group, Corder argues that the emphasis had to be on common errors. The inconsistency (i.e. variation) observed in learners' errors was accounted for by the presence in IL of systematic and unsystematic errors. It was only later that Corder (1978b) was to address the issue of systematic variability more centrally and note that a L2 learner can, like a native speaker, vary his performance according to context along a scale of complexity within the limits imposed by his imperfect command of the TL. In this section two attempts to examine the systematic variation of errors will be considered: Tarone's Capability Continuum Paradigm and Ellis' Variable Competence Model. While the latter is a comprehensive account of SLA, Tarone's proposal aims mainly at accounting for variability in IL, but it can, as here, be interpreted as a model for SLA.

1.5.1 The Capability Continuum Paradigm

According to Tarone's model (1979) a learner's linguistic knowledge can be described as a collection of styles ('capability continuum') which vary over time as a result of acquisition and according to task. Styles are determined by the amount of attention paid to speech-processing and range from the vernacular at one extreme, used when least attention is paid to form and exhibiting the least variability, to the prestige style at the other, used when the maximum attention is paid to form and exhibiting the most variability. The evidence of style-shifting across tasks, which is the basis of Tarone's model, can be traced in the studies conducted by the Dickersons (L. Dickerson 1974, 1975; W. Dickerson 1976; L. Dickerson and W. Dickerson 1977), Schmidt (1978) and Fairbanks (1982). The latter's subject, for example, a Japanese

speaker, seldom produced the third person present singular -*s* ending in casual speech

(2-4) as he did in his careful style (6-8):

> 2. * . . . if she *have* a ch-children . . .
> 3. * Because she *have* to care their son . . .
> 4. * He *live* with their ch . . .
> 5. . . . each store uh *has* er own price.
> 6. That store uh *sells* this transportation.
> 7. Um some uh station *says* uh Minneapolis . . .
> 8. *Some parts of town uh *has* a lots of food and others *has* a lots of medicine
> (Fairbanks 1982. Quoted in Tarone 1983: 143)

Conscious attention to form is most apparent, Tarone suggests, in the prestige style

where TL forms are acquired. It is only gradually that the latter penetrate other styles,

working their way along the continuum until they reach the vernacular (see Table 1.8

below).[31] To the extent that the learner's IL is more permeable in formal than non-

formal situations, it is to be expected that the prestige style will approximate more

closely to the TL and exhibit a wider range of errors.

Table 1.8 *Variable second-verb deletion in four elicitation tasks for nine learners of English* L2 (Tarone 1983: 142)

	Free oral production	Elicited imitation	Written sentence combining	Grammatical judgement
Mary is eating an apple and Sue a pear	0%	0%	25%	50%

Findings by Gatbonton (1975), Felix (1977) and Beebe (1980) would seem to

confirm Tarone's suggestion, i.e. that IL shifts towards TL in formal situations, is more

permeable to TL rules and therefore richer in errors. The shifting relationship between

IL and TL across the continuum of styles is also reflected in the nature of errors.

Developmental errors tend to predominate in the vernacular, largely due to the

operation of innate UG parameters, and interlingual and intralingual errors in the

prestige variety. Indeed, according to Tarone, errors can be categorized according to the notion of IL as a continuum of styles.

Tarone's (Tarone 1985; Tarone and Parrish 1988) own attempt to provide empirical validation for her model is only partially successful. Systematic variability across tasks and maximum TL influence in the careful style do not apply to one (noun plural -s) out of the three grammatical morphemes tested. Although Tarone suggests that the results show written performance does vary from oral performance, she has more recently expressed doubts on the validity of her model. Variation, she has suggested (1989), cannot any longer be explained as a result of attention shift but must take into account a wider range of factors such as form/function relationships, linguistic context, identity and role of the interlocutors, topic and social norms. Moreover, she concludes, variation will be a function of how they 'interact in any particular elicitation situation'.

1.5.2 The Variable Competence Model

Ellis' Variable Competence Model (1985b, 1987b, 1989a, 1992a) shares many features in common with that of Tarone's. New forms, he suggests, are first 'acquired' (i.e. enter the IL) in the careful style of planned discourse when the learner is 'monitoring' or 'attending to' speech. At this stage, the forms exist in free variation with other existing forms and it is only gradually that they spread across the continuum of IL speech styles, from formal to informal, and begin to take on restricted functional uses according to context (linguistic, discourse, social and interactional), in planned and unplanned mode.

Crucial to Ellis' model is the gradual shift from free to systematic variation of items in the learner's IL. Free variation is when two (or more) items are used in the same context (linguistic, discourse, situational) to achieve the same meaning. The causes of free variation can be a lapse in performance, a reference to competing rules, for example UG unmarked rules and marked TL rules, a variable TL rule or different TL models. An example of this is given by Ellis in his description of the acquisition of the English negation by an eleven year old Portuguese speaker:

> J began with a single negative rule ('no' + verb) and used this to perform both commands and statements. Later he internalized a second negative rule ('don't' + verb). First he used this with the earlier rule in commands, while continuing to use only 'no' + V in statements. Next he used both rules to perform both meanings. (Ellis 1985b: 128)

The presence in the learner's IL of a new form gradually causes, however, a re-elaboration of old forms since, if a new and old structure perform an identical function, new form-function relations will be required to overcome redundancy.[32] This process is summarized by Ellis as follows:

> 1. Innovation, i.e. the introduction of new forms into the interlanguage system.
> 2. Elaboration, i.e. the extension of the sociolinguistic base of the new form.
> 3. Revision, i.e. the adjustments to the entire interlanguage system resulting from innovation and elaboration. (Ellis 1989a: 37)

Within this framework, systematic variation replaces free variation 'when forms are distinguished in terms of situational, contextual and discourse use' (1985b: 128). In the case of the young Portuguese speaker above, this began to occur when, instead of being used without distinction, 'don't + verb' became restricted to commands and 'no + verb' to statements.[33]

In the Variable Competence Model, errors do not necessarily coincide with variation but, to the extent that they do, the same causes that account for the former can

serve to account for the latter. In terms of free variation, for example, errors can be explained away as due to competing rules and/or lack of attention to form whereas, in systematic variation, they can be a product of the development of the notions of function, value and awareness. One of the interesting aspects of Ellis' model, compared with that of Tarone, is the extent to which it is applicable in the FL classroom. In his discussion on the relative merits of product- and process-based syllabi, Ellis argues that the former -- organised according to linguistic principle rather than tasks with no specific linguistic content -- are well-suited to a variability perspective. As he put it:

> The careful style is characterized by close attention to form. Here, then are grounds for arguing that the process of change in interlanguage can be directed by supplying the learner with the norms of the target language, presented as a series of items to be carefully learnt. This is exactly what is intended by a product syllabus. (Ellis 1992a: 222)

To the extent, however, that not all forms can enter the careful style as explicit knowledge (see Pica 1985, Hyeltenstam 1985), not all forms can be taught. A process syllabus also seems relevant, therefore, in that it allows the learner to practise and use a number of styles, test out forms in different contexts and eliminate free variation from his IL. This is the viewpoint of Brumfit (1980) who argues for the combination of the two in a spiral syllabus. Ellis, on the other hand, tends to favour a parallel development, where time allocation to each approach can be based on various factors such as the aims and age of the learners. The classroom, he suggests, can afford a number of different types of interaction on the planned-unplanned continuum, each of which can contribute to the learner's IL:

> Classroom learners will outperform naturalistic learners on tasks that tap the careful style. They will also outperform them on tasks that tap other styles providing they have the opportunity to extend explicit knowledge towards and into the vernacular style. (Ellis 1992a: 229)

The proposal is concluded with a note of caution, however. Acknowledging the limited amount of knowledge gained in SLA, any application of it to the classroom has to be in the form of '*suggestions* rather than directions'.

1.5.3 A critique of Variability models

An extensive critique of Variability models is to be found in Swan (1987) and Gregg (1990), who observe that both models tend to undermine the distinction between competence and performance, one of the fundamental notions of SLA, without giving any satisfactory justification for doing so. Moreover, Gregg notes both Tarone's and Ellis' belief that SLA consist in the acquisition of variable rules draws on a notion now defunct in sociolinguistics on account of the complexities involved in describing a variable competence and the process of its formation. Neither model, he concludes, adequately explains what is acquired nor how it is acquired. Swan (1987) goes somewhat further in questioning the very notion of 'style' which is central to the work of writers such as Tarone, arguing that data from elicited imitation, minimal pair production and grammaticality judgements can hardly constitute evidence for a style.[34] The criticism is then extended to the whole corpus of evidence for variation and the conclusions drawn from it:

> The position of the authors quoted is perhaps open to the criticism that they are deriving a very general view of language use and development from limited data of a particular kind -- from those phonological and grammatical features which do exhibit variety. (Swan 1987: 66)

More important perhaps from the perspective of the current study is the criticism of the applicability of such models to the FL classroom. As Tarone herself observes, 'variation presupposes the knowledge of more than one form for a function' and 'this is not true

for many classroom learners' (Tarone 1982: 73). Indeed, in most cases the classroom learner is not exposed to the issue of stylistic variation, except in the case of macroscopic issues such as formal and informal addresses and greetings. The notion of competence across a stylistic range is closely linked to a knowledge of the socio-cultural context, requires a certain amount of exposure in varied contexts to be understood and appreciated. These conditions may certainly be met in a natural SLA context but the same is not true in the FL classroom where, due to constraints of time, context and opportunities for communicative interaction, learners are exposed only to a basic style, a polite, or formal, register which is acceptable across a range of contexts.

1.6 INTERACTIONIST MODELS

The models analysed in this section make use of findings and proposals coming from a number of different disciplines. Their common characteristic is an attempt at explaining SLA by taking into account the interaction of contextual and learner-related variables. This approach mirrors a similar development in the study of L1 acquisition, which is described briefly in the following section.

1.6.1 Language experience and language development

A central notion of Chomsky's model of L1 acquisition is the existence of an LAD which is necessary to overcome what he calls the 'poverty of the stimulus' (see 1.2.1). The latter has been increasingly challenged, however, in a number of studies which support the Motherese Hypothesis (Snow 1972; Phillips 1973; Cross 1977, 1978), i.e. which argue that the language addressed to children by caretakers has a

number of characterizing features which enhance acquisition. It is now widely accepted

that the use of contextualized discourse in child-adult interaction is the key to L1

acquisition (Ellis and Wells 1980; Zukow, Reilly and Greenfield 1982). The claim is

supported by the comparison of language development of both normal and blind or deaf

children (Harris 1992), the latter groups developing language more slowly because of

constraints on their use of contextual clues.

The importance of social context and interaction in language acquisition were

first pointed out by Vygotsky, followed, among others, by Halliday and Bruner.

Vygotsky (1934/1986, 1978) viewed L1 acquisition as a process of internalization of

social experiences based, initially, on interaction with caretakers. A child's gestures, for

example, may initially be unintentional but, because they are often given a 'meaning' by

the caretaker, are used thereafter intentionally once the child has internalized the

gesture-meaning relationship (Vygotsky 1978). For Vygotsky, the development of

language as a symbolic meaning depends upon interaction with others in a social

context. Such a viewpoint is similar to the Functional-Interactional Approach adopted

by Halliday (1975) which is based on the concept that language is acquired to perform

social functions, e.g. 'to regulate the behaviour of others'. For Halliday, as for

Vygotsky, the social context is an integral component in the process since it provides

the link between sign and meaning:

> The relation of talk to environment lies in the total semiotic structure of the
> interaction: the significant ongoing activity (and it is only through this that
> 'things' enter into the picture, in a very indirect way), and the social matrix
> within which meanings are being exchanged. (Halliday 1975: 141)

Bruner (1975a, 1975b, 1983) likewise stresses the importance of the pre-verbal

communication strategies developed betweeen child and caretaker as the basis for L1

acquisition. For Bruner, it is the Language Acquisition Support System, the routinized exchanges between child and caretaker in familiar settings which help the child make sense of language and thereby to evolve from pre-linguistic to linguistic communication. Although the following SLA are not directly based on the approaches briefly discussed here, they do share a common view that language emerges out of social interaction.

1.6.2 The Experiential Approach

The Experiential Approach, proposed by Hatch (1977a, 1978a) and co-workers (Hatch, Flashner and Hunt 1986; Hatch, Peck and Wagner-Gough 1979), draws heavily on the studies of motherese and discourse. It is based on the premise that 'language learning evolves out of learning how to carry on conversations' (Hatch 1978a: 137) as distinct from other models which see conversational skills emerging out of acquisition. As Hatch and Hawkins (1987: 251) were to suggest: 'The internal mental systems of language, cognition and social meaning are interactively built and . . . language develops as a result of the external experience that continually feeds the internal mental systems'. Within this perspective, L2 acquisition is seen as creating a system parallel to L1, coinciding with it in the early stages and progressively becoming more 'separated-but-connected'.[35] The process involves building up a store of abstract conversational scripts (knowledge structures) to which linguistic expressions are attached. While the knowledge structures built up in L1 can often be used in SLA, particularly in the early stages, some may be inappropriate and new ones have to be built. Such a view of the relationship between the L1 and the L2, Hatch argues, is more useful than that posed traditionally in CA.

In an untutored SLA context, the model suggests, a learner starts by selecting a script and memorizing its salient phrases, relying in the beginning on chunks, high-frequency vocabulary and short pragmatic phrases. Slips, false starts and repairs are inevitably generated in the process of matching semantic content and vocabulary with the developing pragmatic and syntactic frames. When the learner encounters a new phrase, he will try to make it fit with pre-existing schemes, by adding it, or by reorganizing the scheme itself.[36] The acquisition process can happen only if the new element is relevant to the learner's experience. In the process, errors can arise from three sources. In the first place, they may emerge as overextension of a NL phrase (transfer) or another phrase to a wrong context. In the second place, they may stem from a failure to analyse the components of a phrase, as in the case of Shapira's (1976) subject Zoila who used 'pickyaup' as a verb, with mixed results, as in '*She's a little angry but I think so because the other sister no come her mm for ehh pickyaup her'. In the third place, errors may stem from retrieval problems, which arise especially in the case of a lesser used L3 or L4. On the other hand, in-depth knowledge of a script common to the two languages, i.e. the tale script, can make up for a defective knowledge of structures and render communication effective, despite grammatical errors, provided that the listener is willing to make a contribution.

In the Experiential Approach, SLA is viewed not only as acquisition of language, but as acquisition of pragmatic knowledge, the amount of new knowledge to be acquired depending on the distance between NL and TL (Kasper 1989). To the extent that proficiency in SLA depends upon linguistic and pragmatic knowledge, it follows that errors will arise not only at the grammatical but also at the pragmatic level.[37] As it now stands, the Experiential Approach has not been validated empirically.

The evidence quoted (Hatch and Hawkins 1987) comes mainly from studies of child L2

acquisition.[38] Data from adult learners is held to be very similar (even if gathered in the

formal context):

> T: What does it mean when she says she wore thick bull's eye glasses -- that
> S: Her glasses were thick.
> T: Like
> S: The glasses
> T: The eyes of a
> S: Bull.
> (Faerch 1985: 186)

While Hatch (Hatch and Hawkins 1987) admits that the learner who has acquired an L2

through the written medium, or in a classroom environment, undergoes a quite different

experience, she does not expand on the consequences for the applicability of the model

to a tutored context.

Such an application would seem minimal. Even if there is no qualitative

difference between the formal and the informal context (which is hardly undisputed),

there surely is a quantitative one. The opportunities for communicative interaction --

out of which language proficiency is seen to arise -- are few in a formal environment

where there is no necessity to communicate in the TL and where the ratio of teacher to

student is often in the range of 1 to 25. In a natural SLA context, the learner is

motivated by the need to use the TL to achieve communicative goals and will build

scripts and expand them, making linguistic and pragmatic errors in the process. As

Hatch (Hatch and Hawkins 1987: 273) observes: 'the communication goal drives the

learner to discover options available (in conversation or text structure, scripts or text

types, lexicon, suprasegmentals, word order, pragmatics and syntax, and morphosyntax

and phonology) to meet communicative needs'. Within the artificial confines of the

classroom, where there exists no such 'communicative goal', the learner is not

motivated to build scripts and add to them and, in so far as this is the case, the source, nature and range of errors are likely to differ. In particular, the notion of discourse error is probably non-applicable in the classroom, at least in the initial stages, where the interactions which could trigger them simply do not occur.

1.6.3 The Multidimensional Model

The Multidimensional Model evolved as a result of the ZISA project on Germans as a second language conducted by Meisel, Clahsen and Pienemann. It regards SLA as revolving around two axes -- the developmental and variational -- and sees innate cognitive structures being tempered by the influence of IDs. The ZISA project identified five stages in the acquisition of word order (see Table 1.9) and, on this basis, extended the notion of five developmental stages to the entire process of SLA in formal and informal contexts alike (Meisel, Clahsen and Pienemann 1981). Each stage is characterized by the use of three speech processing procedures linked in an implicational hierarchy. To the extent that procedures, within this model, are viewed as constraints on SLA, acquisition consists in breaking free of them, i.e. overcoming limitations.[39]

The fact that SLA is seen, within this model, to evolve along a predetermined route led to the 'teachability' hypothesis (Pienemann 1984, 1985, 1989). Developmental stages pose limits on the linguistic material which a learner can assimilate and which consequently a teacher can present with hope of success regardless of the context of acquisition. Such an assumption seemed to be borne out by studies of learners of German as a second and foreign language (Pienemann 1984, 1987a, 1978b; Eubank

1987) who adhered to the same word-order sequence regardless of the order in which

the rules were presented in textbooks and in classroom teaching.

Table 1.9 *Developmental sequences for GSL Word Order Rules* (adapted from Pienemann 1987b: 87-8)

Stage X -- Canonical Order

Romance learners of GSL start out with an SVO order as their initial hypothesis about German word order. For example:
> *die kinder spielen mim ball*

Stage X + 1 -- Adverb preposing (ADV)

> *da kinder spielen*

At this stage all sentences with ADV are deviant since standard German requires a word order like *there play children*.

Stage X + 2 -- Verb separation (SEP)

> *alle kinder muß die pause machen*

Before verb separation is acquired, the word order in the interlanguage is the same as in sentences with main verb only.

Stage X +3 -- Inversion (INV)

> *dann hat sie wieder die knoch gebringt*

In standard German the subject and the inflected verbal element have to be inverted after preposing of elements

Stage X + 4 -- Verb-end (V-END)

> *er sagte, daß er nach hause kommt*

In many ways, the Multidimensional Model can be seen as an application of a 'strong' version of the invariant order hypothesis analysed in 1.2.3 above although, it should be noted, adults' cognitive and mnemonic abilities may enable them to benefit from instruction in rules they may not be developmentally ready to acquire (Pienemann 1985).[40] Even though acquisition stages appear relatively fixed, however, there is room within the model for considerable variation in that individuals are seen to follow different paths, or routes dependent on the extent to which they show an inclination towards accuracy (i.e. 'standard' orientation) or towards fluency (i.e. 'simplifying'

orientation). Orientation may vary with proficiency level and depends on a number of socio-psychological factors: amount of contact with native speakers, situations in which the language is used and extent to which the language is used to mark one's identity (Meisel 1977, 1983b).

Errors, within the given model, are likely to be determined both by developmental constraints and by IDs. While it can be predicted that the former will be common to all learners, a number of the latter errors will be typical of certain groups, and will depend upon orientation, age, or type of simplification used. An interesting example of this is the fact that all learners in the ZISA group exhibited restricted simplification strategies (omission of semantically-redundant elements) in the early stages and elaborative simplification strategies (over-production of semantically-redundant elements) in the later ones. While all students produced errors stemming from such strategies, however, it was found that the relative frequency of the two kinds of simplification differed between certain groups at any one time and between them over time.

A comprehensive evaluation of the Multidimensional Model is contained in Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991). On the positive side, they observe that the model attempts to explain the interaction of social and psychological factors in SLA as well as providing a more coherent framework for developmental stages. Moreover, while the model supposedly seeks to cover both formal and informal contexts, its relevance to FLL is hindered not only by a paucity of empirical validation for developmental constraints but also by the fact that its emphasis on social context as a decisive factor in IDs hardly applies in the classroom. The relevance of its notion of error is likewise questionable: its view of developmental errors as 'innate' hardly differs from the L1=L2

Hypothesis and its view of others being caused by socio-psychological factors is hardly pertinent to the FLL as opposed to SLA process.

1.6.4 IDs models

A number of the SLA models examined in the previous sections share the common goal of identifying universal tendencies in acquisition routes. One of the advantages of the Multidimensional Model was its attempt to combine universal stages of development with learner variation and the emphasis upon IDs, that is, on examining each learner as an individual and the way in which personal factors interact to achieve success or failure in SLA.

To date, few models based on IDs have been proposed, and they are still at a rudimentary stage. They could be subsumed under the research-then-theory approach, or defined as set-of-laws models. Set-of-laws models derive from research into a relevant area and are expressed as a series of statements, not necessarily related. Their empirical basis gives set-of-laws models a certain guarantee of correctness, but does not provide them with any ultimate explanation of findings. A useful example of the latter is Naiman, Frölich, Stern and Todesco (1978) taxonomy (rather than model) of factors involved in instructed SLA, which includes three independent variables (teacher, learner and context) and two dependent variables (learning and outcome). Each variable has a number of sub-divisions. Skehan (1989) observes that, while the taxonomy has the merit of highlighting the complexity of the process, it does not explain very much. A similar criticism could be applied to his modified version of Naiman *et al.* which takes into account a larger number of factors, including social context and opportunities for TL use.
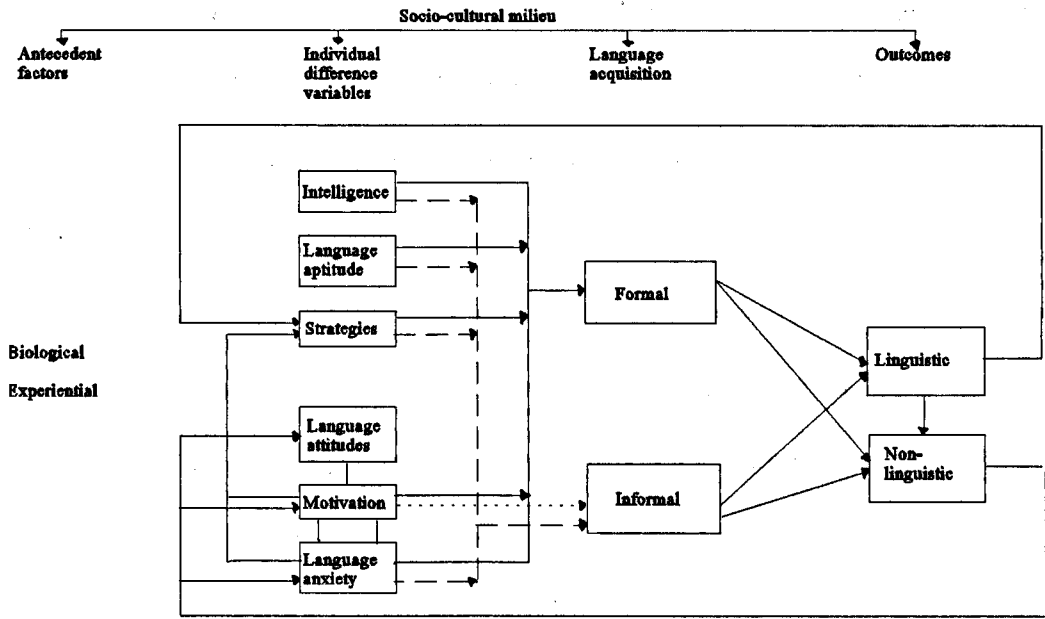
Figure 1.1 *The Socio-Educational Model of second language acquisition* (Gardner and McIntyre 1993: 8)

Perhaps a more satisfactory model is Gardner's (1979, 1983, 1985; Gardner and McIntyre 1992, 1993) Socio-Educational Model of Second-Language Learning. The latter, which has undergone a number of revisions over the years, seeks to account for the interaction of both cognitive and affective variables in the acquisition process. Gardner (1988) does not make any claims for completeness but argues for the heuristic value of the model and its seminal effects on research. The rationale of the Socio-Educational Model is that acquiring a language means acquiring a different culture and that success is dependent on the learner's attitude towards the TL community. The learner's attitude is influenced by 'cultural beliefs', i.e. the attitudes towards the SLA process and the TL community held by the society he belongs to. According to Gardner (Gardner and McIntyre 1993), the social context which determines learner's attitudes can be analysed under four headings -- antecedent factors (such as age, gender etc.),

IDs (such as cognitive and affective factors), SLA contexts and learner outcomes -- which are connected either directly or indirectly, as exemplified in Figure 1.1.

Within this model, language attitudes have a direct influence on motivation, i.e. they provide it with an affective basis, and motivation in turn correlates negatively with language anxiety. For Gardner, motivation has a dominant role in informal contexts because only highly motivated learners will look for learning opportunities outside the classroom, whereas in acquisition-poor contexts, cognitive factors such as aptitude will play a proportionately more important role. Both contexts are then linked with outcomes, non-linguistic outcomes having an effect on IDs, which gives the model its developmental character.

Gardner's (1988)[41] claim that the Socio-Educational Model has empirical validation is questioned by Au (1988). The latter not only challenges the validity of results showing a positive correlation between integrative motivation and achievement but also argues that the fundamental notion in the model, that of cultural belief, is inadequately defined and cannot therefore be tested. Moreover, the Socio-Educational Model has been developed on the basis of studies on the acquisition of French in Canada and is somewhat biassed by this context. While cultural beliefs could indeed be at the core of outcome in SLA in the Canadian context, this need not necessarily apply to other societies, where other variables could play a more important role. This might particularly be true in the case of FLL, although attitudinal factors certainly need to be taken into account. To be fair, Gardner was aware of this criticism and sought to answer it:

> Although a possible explanation, it tends to ignore the great diversity across Canada of the immediate relevance of the French language to many people. It also overlooks findings in other cultures where the relation of

> attitudinal/motivational variables to achievement have been reported, such as in
> Finland (Laine 1977) and in Belize in Central America (Gordon 1980).
> (Gardner 1988: 121)

While Gardner's response may not fully answer the criticism raised, his model is

certainly interesting in view of the potential correlations between IDs, contexts and

achievement. Moreover, the model accepts that different teaching methods will pro-

duce different outcomes as do different modes of exposure, and that the relation

between cognitive and affective factors may change in more formal learning

environments:

> Students either opt in or out of informal contexts, and the extent to which they
> do would be expected to be influenced primarily by their degree of motivation
> and/or anxiety. Once students enter an informal context, their level of
> intelligence and aptitude will influence how much language material is learned,
> but, since their effects are contingent upon the students entering the situation,
> they play secondary roles. This is indicated in Figure 8.1 [here Figure 1.1] by
> the broken lines linking intelligence and aptitude with informal contexts.
> (Gardner 1985: 148)

The above observations remain somehow marginal and are not put to the empirical test

in any of the studies conducted by Gardner to validate his model.

Other models favouring learner IDs have emerged in recent years such as

Spolsky's General Theory (1985, 1988, 1989, 1990) which seeks to codify a number

of conditions according to whether they are essential to successful SLA, have a positive

or negative impact upon it or are typical of it.[42] As De Keyser argues (1991), however,

rather than amounting to an explanation of SLA, they tend to be no more than a list of

separate hypotheses describing it and thereby fall into the problems discussed earlier

about set-of-laws models.[43]

1.7 CONCLUSIONS

The SLA models reviewed in the current chapter differ widely in emphasis and scope. While almost all of them are based upon research carried out in untutored second (and often first) language acquisition, only a few of them -- such as Schumann's Acculturation model -- view their findings as limited to those processes. On the contrary, many of these models see their findings as being relevant to both untutored SLA and tutored FLL despite the fact that there are important contextual and learner-related differences between the two. This is true not only in terms of general differences between an acquisition and learning context but also true in terms of the causes, nature and range of errors.

Attitudes to errors bridging the SLA and FLL divide can be defined as twofold. The first is associated with writers such as Lado for whom errors are evidence of L1 interference in the SLA/FLL process and which need to be eliminated as rapidly as possible to avoid fossilization. The proponents of the second approach accept, either implicitly or explicitly, the view put forward by Dulay and Burt, that is, that errors are a natural by-product of the acquisition/learning process and are evidence of the learner's attempt to make sense of the data to which he is exposed. This learner-centred approach is most explicit, of course, in the 'invariant route' hypothesis argued by writers such as Krashen but also underpins models as diverse as those of Selinker to Hatch or Ellis. All such models, in so far as they direct their attention to FLL, argue that classroom conditions should seek to replicate those suitable for natural communicative interaction and that the teacher should not seek to interfere with developmental routes. In fact, it is often predicted that any attempt of the sort will obtain the opposite effect, i.e. will trigger 'redundant' errors. This is bolstered by the widespread opinion, again

either explicit or implicit, that untutored language acquisition is somehow superior to tutored learning, and that the latter should aim at replicating the former.

It is clear that Lado's notion of error cannot be accepted today, nor can his advice on how to prevent and eradicate errors, because of the flawed psychological theory in which they were based. An error is, however, a breach of the TL code either at the level of system or appropriateness, or both, and an efficient instruction programme should aim at reducing errors as far as possible. The predominant view that teachers should tolerate errors in the classroom as in a natural context is theoretically unproven, as we shall examine in Chapter Two, and does not take into account a growing body of evidence emerging from immersion programmes that tolerant attitudes to error do not lead to their disappearance, but, on the contrary, to their fossilization.

It would appear that SLA models which attempt to apply findings on errors in untutored contexts to tutored contexts fail to take into account the contextual and learner-related variables that separate the two processes. It is only on the basis of such an appreciation that it is possible to arrive at a clear understanding of the source, nature and range of errors in a FLL context and to outline a number of pedagogical procedures that might help reduce them and make FLL a more efficient process. As Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) have pointed out, given the current state of research any SLA model cannot but be tentative. This is particularly true in terms of the application of any such model to a context which it was not designed primarily to illuminate.

Notes to Chapter One

1. Not only did it appear that semantic errors were corrected more often than grammatical ones but that correction of grammar itself had little or no effect (Cazden 1972; R. Brown 1973; H. Clark and E. Clark 1977).

2. For van Els, Bongaerts, Extra, van Os and Janssen-van Dieten (1977) the birth of CA coincides with the comparison of Greek and Latin with Sanskrit drawn by W. Jones in 1786 although, for Di Pietro (1971), it coincides with a later study, i.e. Gradgent's (1892) comparison of the English and German sound systems.

3. Some of the studies published in the series are Agard and Di Pietro (1965a, 1965b) and Stockwell, Bowen and Martin (1965).

4. As Stern observes, the emphasis on pattern drills borrowed heavily from Structuralism: 'The structural linguist brought to language teaching the skills of isolating, closely observing, and analysing specific linguistic patterns. The method of analysis of structural linguistics are reflected particularly in pattern practice and language laboratory drills which focus, one by one, on particular features of the language in syntagmatic relationships' (Stern 1983: 163).

5. For example, Brooks recommends 'the modelling of all learnings by the teacher' (1960: 142), and Stockwell et al. warn: 'A student needs the experience that will enable him to call on any pattern in his repertory, fill it with any appropriate vocabulary item he has learned and place sentences in a logical sequence without any thought of analysis' (Stockwell et al. 1965: 294).

6. A number of observations made by Lee (1968) appear particularly interesting. Errors: 1. can be caused by the L1, but also by features of the teaching process and materials used (i.e. inadequate grading); 2. can arise at those points where the L1 and L2 show greater similarity than difference; and 3. require direct observation rather than the a priori approach of CA.

7. It is to be noted, however, that Lado draws attention to the relation between language and culture in the last chapter of Linguistics across Cultures in relation to the bullfight. The distinction man/animal in Spanish culture, he observes, is mirrored in the terms used to refer to parts of the body: 'In English both animals and persons have legs. In Spanish animals have patas "animal legs" and humans have piernas "human legs". Similarly, in English animals and humans have backs and necks, while in Spanish, animals have lomo and pescuezo "animal back" and humans have espalda and cuello "human back" and "human neck" '(Lado 1957: 116).

8. The former are defined as substantive universals and the latter as formal universals.

9. Ritchie (1967), for example, argues that language courses should not be based on the relationship between the NL and TL but on the learner's UG as a key to the structures to be learnt and Lee (1968) points out that the CAH denies the existence of linguistic universals indicated by the presence of widespread errors.

10. Working within this hypothesis, Bley-Vroman (1989), for example, maintains that the L2 learner possesses cognitive and linguistic skills radically different from those of the child. Whereas the latter is endowed with UG and learning procedures, the adult has to rely upon his knowledge of the L1 and on his problem-solving ability as substitutes. SLA is a process of 'sifting' the L1 and separating universals from features typical of

the L1.

11. Such a position has not, to the best of our knowledge, been developed into a fully-fledged model but has been used to form hypotheses for empirical research which has confirmed that UG is indeed available in SLA even if providing conflicting evidence on how it functions (Ritchie 1978, Schmidt 1980, Otsu and Naoi 1986). Indeed, Wode (1984) claims that studies on L2 'developmental structures, variation, pidgins and language change' support the hypothesis that UG principles and parameters still function in SLA.

12. Corder's paper 'The significance of learner's errors' (1967) epitomised this change in attitude.

13. The task consisted in a series of pictures about which the researcher asked questions aimed at eliciting spontaneous responses. Data was analysed according to the notion of *obligatory occasion*, i.e. the components of an utterance created the need for certain forms to be used.

14. This was explained by differences in cognition.

15. Their claims appeared to be supported in a range of other studies such as Price (1968) and Ravem (1968). Other empirical studies supporting Dulay and Burt's model were quoted in the same paper, e.g. for the plural, D. Natalicio and L. Natalicio (1971) and for negation, Milon (1972) and Ravem (1968).

16. Adam is one of the children studied by R. Brown (1973) and Rune is a learner of ESL studied by Ravem (1968, 1974).

17. See, for example, Dulay and Burt (1974c: 51).

L2 rank orders (sequences) obtained in the morpheme studies

group score method	group mean method	SAI method
1. case	1. case	1. case
2. article	2. article	2. copula
3. copula	3.5 copula	3.5 article
4. -ing	3.5 -ing	3.5 -ing
5. plural	5. plural	5. auxiliary
6. auxiliary	6. auxiliary	6. plural
7. past-reg	7. past-reg	7.5 past-irreg
8. past-irreg.	8.5 past-irreg	7.5 possessive
9. long plural	8.5 -ing	10. past-reg
10. possessive	10. long plural	11. long plural
11. 3rd person	11. 3rd person	11. 3rd person

As Dulay and Burt point out (1974c: 47) 'The syntax acquisition rate [SAI] is the quotient resulting from a computing ratio whose numerator is the sum of the values of all the utterances of the child and whose denominator is the sum of the values of all the corresponding grammatical forms, multiplied by 100. For example, if the child response

value is 80 and the grammatical form value is 120, the SAI would equal (80/120) (100), or 67'.

18. Even before Dulay and Burt, however, Newmark and Reibel (1968) were suggesting that, since L1 acquisition and SLA were fundamentally similar, the classroom should be turned into a replica of the natural context by grading materials according to situational rather than structural principles.

19. This is based on the finding that learners choose as a model people they can identify with.

20. Ellis defines rate of acquisition as 'the speed at which the learner develops L2 proficiency' whereas the concept of route of development is explained as follows: 'L2 learners go through a number of transitional states en route to acquiring the target language rules. This is referred to as the "route of development" and is intended as neutral regarding whether it is universal or subject to variation'. In this book "route" is intended to be neutral regarding whether it is universal or subject to variation'(Ellis 1985a: 303).

21. Under the notion of 'affective filter' Krashen includes a number of individual variables: motivation, social group identification, and emotional states. The affective filter is said to determine choice of what is to be learned, at what speed, in what order, and when learning must stop.

22. Krashen (1981) quotes a number of studies which support his account of how the monitor functions, among which are: Krashen and Pon (1975), Cohen and Robbins (1976), Stafford and Covitt (1978), Birnbaum (1976). The third and the fourth study describe learners who displayed very frequent hesitations, false starts, repetitions and pauses in their spoken performance. According to Krashen, this behaviour provides evidence that the monitor can edit utterances before production.

23. It may be argued that in FLL the natural acquisition order is probably disrupted since learning is often the prevailing mode.

24. Krashen would seem here to be pointing to a distinction between lapses and errors, i.e. causes 1-4 could be interpreted as triggering lapses, whereas permanent acquisition of erroneous forms would seem to take place only in case 5. However, since the list appears under the section 'The fossilization issue', it would seem that causes 1-4 can, in due course, also give rise to permanent erroneous forms.

25. Krashen (Krashen and Terrell 1983/1988: 42) underlines the manifold disadvantages of using L1 rules: 'First, the L1 rule may not be the same as an L2 rule, as noted above, and errors can result. The conscious Monitor can note and repair these errors in some cases, but not all, since, as we have seen, the constraints on Monitor use are severe. Thus, use of L1 rules requires constant vigilance on the part of the Monitor. Second, this is an extremely awkward and tiring way to produce formally correct sentences in a second language'.

26. Again Corder (1977, 1978b) argues that early IL definitions fail to highlight that IL develops along a scale of progressive complexity and by smooth change rather than being 'a sequence of static but overlapping systems' (Corder 1978b: 73). He therefore suggests that the label 'dynamic system' could better describe the IL continuum.

27. Selinker's argument that fossilization does not necessarily coincide with error raises a major problem: how is it possible to identify a correct form which has fossilized? Selinker provides no guidelines on the issue.

28. Selinker (1972/1974: 33) writes that the latent psychological structure: 'according to Lenneberg, (a) is an already formulated arrangement in the brain, (b) is the biological counterpart to universal grammar, and (c) is transformed by the infant into the *realized structure* of a particular grammar in accordance with certain maturational stages'.

29. Selinker estimates only 5% achieve success in SLA using the latent language structure.

30. The definition was first used by Weinreich (1953).

31. The vernacular is defined as the least permeable IL style and its regularity is internal rather than being referred to a TL norm. Tarone (1982) points out that a learner's vernacular does not necessarily coincide with the TL vernacular. On the contrary, it resembles more closely the TL formal register because of exposure to that variant in the classroom.

32. As Ellis (1987a: 127) writes: 'The learner will try to avoid the elimination of forms that have entered his interlanguage -- he can scarcely afford to lose valuable linguistic material -- so he will be driven to resolve the profligacy of forms by creating his own system of relationships. This will be continuously subject to revision as long as new forms are assimilated'.

33. Style-shifting is explained according to Krashen's tenet that conscious monitoring is restricted to simple rules, such as the regular past, and can operate only if there is time to attend to form.

34. As Swan (1987: 62) was to continue: 'A style, if we are to use the word in something approaching its normal sense, is a bundle of features which are found together and which have a certain coherence. One variable feature alone doesn't make a style. Nor indeed do whole catalogues of variable features, as long as they are investigated independently and cannot be shown to co-vary systematically in groups'.

35. According to Hatch the model can account for transfer better than a comparison of structures in the two languages: '*Contrastive Analysis* also plays an important role in this model. In broad terms, L1 knowledge structures constitute much of what one has in the initial stages of L2 learning. For some learners, it may continue to be the base on which the second language is "built". For other learners, this may not be efficient so that, once a foundation of L2 scripts is built, the new language builds on these knowledge structures rather than on those of the first language' (Hatch and Hawkins

1987: 258).

36. In the assimilation of a new item, the choice between addition and reorganization is made on the basis of its difference from acquired material. This depends on perception/production factors (frequency, coverage, perceptual saliency) and on the similarity of form-function relationships in L1 and L2 (see Hatch and Hawkins 1987).

37. The issue is currently under study. An interesting series of papers on discourse errors is to be found in Gass, Madden, Preston and Selinker (1989 Vol. II).

38. Such as the following conversation between a Japanese child and a native English speaker:
>Takahiro: /flo/.
>NS: Flower. Green flower.
>Takahiro: Green flower.
>NS: Oh, what color is this?
>Takahiro: Green, green flower.
>(Itoh and Hatch 1977: 82)

39. The five stages in SLA are explained by means of a model of sentence processing developed by Bever and co-workers (Bever 1970; Fodor, Bever and Garrett 1974; Townsend and Bever 1978).

40. In a study conducted to test the hypothesis, Pienemann (1984) claims that inversion (Stage 4) can only be taught to learners who are developmentally ready for it. In other words, the study supports that hypothesis that no stage of naturalistic development can be bypassed by instruction, although it can be speeded up.

41. See Gardner (1983, 1985) for a comprehensive review of relevant studies.

42. Spolsky (1989) lists a total of seventy-four conditions which can be grouped under linguistic, psychological, social and pedagogical heading and whose interaction is intended to explain IDs in terms of SLA success and failure.

43. De Keyser (1991) lists 5 main faults with the model of which the most important are: 1. the choice of seventy-four conditions lacks theoretical justification; 2. the nature of the conditions, that is, whether they are descriptive, predictive, directive or evaluative, is not clear; and 3. some conditions seem to lack empirical support.

Chapter Two

TOWARDS A THEORY REGARDING ERRORS IN FLL

As observed in Chapter One, FLL has been considered to be largely an appendix of SLA, and models devised to account for the latter have often been extended to the former. The self-evident danger in this practice has been to assume that learner and context-related variables are identical, or at least very similar, in the two processes.[1] To apply findings from SLA to FLL -- or, even more dangerously, to assume that findings from the three distinct processes of L1 acquisition, SLA and FLL are mutually applicable -- downplays what is specific to each process. This tendency is most obvious in the CAH, the L1=L2 Hypothesis and Monitor Theory.

The current chapter seeks to argue that the ongoing confusion between these processes is unwarranted, at both the theoretical and empirical levels, and argues that the strategies employed by the learner will depend upon the precise interplay of learner and context-related variables in that process. The underlying view behind this is that learner/context-related variables are more uniform in L1 acquisition than in SLA, and in SLA than in FLL. Achievement in each area will probably depend upon a different set of variables and will become more differentiated the further one moves across the continuum from L1 acquisition to FLL learning. An attempt will therefore be made in this chapter to examine the differences between L1 acquisition and SLA, and between SLA and FLL in order, on this basis, to identify a framework that can explain the

specificity of errors in FLL. The differences between SLA and FLL have been adequately summarized by H. Brown as follows:

> [SLA] learning another language either (a) within the culture of that second language . . . or (b) within one's own native culture where the second language is an accepted *lingua franca* . . .
> [FLL] learning a non-native language in one's own culture with few immediate and widespread opportunities to use the language within the environment of one's own culture. (H. Brown 1980a: 130)

The actual picture is, of course, much richer than the above if age/time factors are taken into consideration. SLA and FLL can start before and after puberty and, if L1 and L2 acquisition are contemporary, one is dealing with simultaneous bilingualism. In the current study, the analysis is deliberately simplified and a range of intermediate contexts is ignored in order to highlight the differences between L1 acquisition, SLA and FLL as the basis for developing a taxonomy of error sources in the latter. No reference is therefore made to the acquisition of a *lingua franca* or to simultaneous/sequential bilingualism in childhood as these processes do not closely relate to our line of enquiry.

2.1 LANGUAGE OUT OF SCHOOL: A COMPARISON OF L1 ACQUISITION IN CHILDHOOD AND SLA AFTER PUBERTY

The variables present in L1 acquisition are bound, in many ways, to be less differentiated than in SLA (or FLL) both in terms of the learner and the context and this may explain the greater uniformity of results in L1 acquisition. While a distinction is made between learner and contextual variables, however, this should not be taken to assume that the two are mutually independent. On the contrary, it is argued that their interaction is manifest particularly in such areas as attitude and motivation that are often decisive in determining access to input and to native speakers.

2.1.1 Learner-related variables

The L1 child is characterized by common cognitive/affective variables that change in the case of the post-puberty SLA learner and are influential in differentiating outcomes. The variables highlighted here are divided into cognitive (age and cognition, consciousness, linguistic and metalinguistic skills) and affective (motivation, attitude, personality). Achievement is discussed as dependent on the interaction of the above factors.

2.1.1.1 Age and cognition

Cognitive and age factors are closely related. L1 acquisition is an integral part of the child's cognitive development and involves the discovery of self and world, and the building of conceptual categories. The correlation between L1 acquisition and cognitive growth is a matter of considerable dispute, those in the Piagetian tradition arguing that language 'maps out' onto the cognitive schemes developed through interaction with the world and others, in the Vygotskyan tradition, suggesting that it is the concepts implicit in language which allow a social tool to become transformed into a cognitive organizer, thereby helping the child to categorize and make sense of his experience (Vygotsky 1934/1986). While differences may exist as to the causal nature of the interrelation between language and thought, however, few would dispute that the two are intimately linked.

SLA undertaken by adults does not involve any of the above processes in so far as the learner transfers concepts that he has already acquired in L1 acquisition to the L2 process. It has been suggested by proponents of the CPH that the SLA learner suffers from a handicap in that those mental faculties which ease L1 acquisition -- most notably

the plasticity of the brain -- disappear after puberty. While it is questionable whether this claim has any validity, it has been further suggested on the basis of such arguments that adults may have no access to the UG, or that access may be possible only through their L1 (see 1.2.1).

Similar positions have been put forward over the years by others inspired by the CPH such as Felix and Bley-Vroman. Felix (1985) makes a distinction between the Language-Specific Cognitive System (LSC) and the Problem-Solving Cognitive System (PSC). While the former is available from birth, he suggests, the latter is developed in adolescence with the advent of the formal operations stage (in a Piagetian model). Although the PSC is not very helpful in language acquisition, it is used in competition with the LSC in SLA and is responsible for variation in levels of attainment (depending on its differential use among learners). A similar view is put forward in Bley-Vroman's (1989) revised version of the CPH, the Fundamental Difference Hypothesis, which argues that language acquisition is made possible by: 1. a definition of a possible grammar; and 2. a way of arriving at a grammar based on available data. Whereas in L1 acquisition the two functions are performed respectively by UG and by domain-specific learning procedures, in adult SLA they are performed by knowledge of the native language and general problem-solving systems.

2.1.1.2 Consciousness

The child acquires his L1 through a largely unconscious process, whereas the SLA learner is involved, at least to a certain extent, in a conscious process to which he can contribute greater cognitive, metacognitive (i.e. planning and self-monitoring) and metalinguistic skills. The older SLA learner can handle abstract formal systems, has

greater short and long term memory; can concentrate for longer periods of time and is more able to conceptualize (and therefore control) the process in which he is engaged. While proponents of the CPH would argue that conscious skills cannot replace the ease of L1 acquisition, and may even be an obstacle, few would argue that the adult SLA learner makes use of general world knowledge and cognitive skills in the acquisition process.

Among the general conceptual categories and knowledge that an adult learner brings to SLA, linguistic and metalinguistic skills are of primary importance. The relation of L1 to SLA has been discussed at some length in the previous chapter and, while no agreement exists about the modality and extent of its influence, it is now commonly accepted that such an influence does exist.[2] The least that L1 can contribute is to provide the learner with expectations about the TL based upon the knowledge of linguistic code and pragmatic use. As Bialystok was to put it:

> Adults learning a second language have essentially only to master the analysis and control relevant to the language system. They must restructure, reconsider, and re-evaluate the structure of the linguistic system, possibly in both languages, as analysis of linguistic knowledge is intensified to accommodate the second language. At the same time, they must perfect the control procedures for processing language to meet the heightened demands of operating in an imperfectly known and sometimes structurally different system. But the starting point for these tasks is not zero as it is for children. Adults have a considerable skill base upon which to build these new and refined procedures. Children must develop the underlying skills in conjunction with acquiring language. (Bialystok 1991: 75)

One drawback about the adult learner's greater (implicit or explicit) awareness of language is the self-consciousness that may accompany it. The adult SLA learner, precisely because he is more aware of the acquisition process and is able to make comparisons between L1 and L2, may develop a critical stance towards his imperfect performance. These observations can impede success in SLA whereas, in L1, the child

has no such problems in so far as errors are not stigmatized but forgiven and sometimes even included by caretakers in baby-talk.

2.1.1.3 Affective factors: motivation and personality

An equally important difference between L1 acquisition and SLA concerns motivation. The young child is obviously strongly motivated to learn the language spoken by the community he is born into for the fulfilment of a wide range of physio-psychological needs. As Cortese (1990) has argued, the question of volition and purpose has often been overlooked in by behaviourist and cognitivist models of L1 acquisition, but may be crucial in explaining relatively uniform achievement rates without recourse to the notion of mechanical habit-formation or an innate LAD.

Interactional models of acquisition do, indeed, place motivation at the centre of their vision. According to Halliday (1975), for example, the primary needs of the child are to act upon the world and interact with other people, thereby tending to use language as a tool, in which its functional role is privileged over its propositional one. A similar approach can also be found in the work of Austin (1962), Searle (1967, 1969) and Hymes (1972). The latter in particular argues that L1 acquisition as mastery of a set of functions involves a more complex process than that envisaged by Chomsky as simply mastery of a linguistic code. What is involved, he was to suggest, is not only the development of grammatical but 'communicative competence':

> A normal child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner. In short, a child becomes able to accomplish a repertoire of speech acts, to take part in speech events and to evaluate their accomplishment by others. This competence, moreover, is integral with attitudes, values, and motivations concerning language, its features and uses, and integral with competence for,

and attitudes toward, the interrelation of language with the other code of communicative conduct. (Hymes 1972: 277-8)

In other words, a child's motivation to acquire his mother tongue arises as he becomes aware of the uses he can put language to and of the diverse outcomes he can produce by varying his verbal performance. Moreover, the acquisition of the L1 for functional ends is, as both Hymes and Halliday suggest, intertwined with the development of personality, cognition and social and cultural identity.[3]

Whereas L1 acquisition benefits from strong motivational factors, however, the same is not true in SLA. On the contrary, in SLA motivation may be affected negatively in a number of ways due largely to the learner's own perception of the role of his mother tongue and the value of the culture it embodies. It may be, for example, that he does not feel any instrumental or integrative need to learn an L2 (Gardner and Lambert 1972) because his mother tongue is seen as sufficient to satisfy his communicative needs and/or he does not value the target language culture. Motivation in SLA can be highly differentiated and seems to derive from the attitude to the TL and the TL culture prevalent in the learner's own speech community. Very often, the learner can perceive SLA as a threat to his identity and it is not uncommon for him to experience a culture shock when he first encounters the TL community. As M. Clarke (1976) points out, the latter can culminate in schizophrenia. On the other hand, of course, negative attitudes in the learner might stem not from the attitude of his speech community but that of the TL community which have segregative attitudes towards him because of ethnic reasons.

Finally, while personality does not seem to correlate with competence in L1 acquisition, it has been claimed in SLA that certain traits do correlate positively with achievement while others do not. While, as Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) point out,

self-esteem, extroversion, anxiety, risk-taking, sensitivity to rejection, empathy, inhibition and tolerance of ambiguity have all been studied in relation to the process, there are many problems with research in this area. As Ellis argues:

> First, the personality variables constitute a very mixed bag. Some relate to well-established theories of personality (extroversion/introversion) but have been investigated without reference to the theory from which they have been drawn. Others are based only very loosely on constructs in general psychology (for example, risk-taking). Others entail an extension of a psychological construct to make it applicable to L2 learning (for example, Guiora's notion of a 'language ego'). (Ellis 1994: 517)

Moreover, as Ellis continues, other objections remain: the various definitions of variables are often vague or overlap, the reliability of the instruments used to measure them is not satisfactory[4] and results from the studies are contradictory. According to Ellis (1994), the most reliable results are based on the extroversion-introversion continuum and based on the twin hypotheses that extroversion has a positive correlation with Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and introversion with Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP).[5] It should be noted, however, that while the first hypothesis has received clear support, the second has not.

2.1.2 Contextual variables

Greater uniformity of competence in L1 than in SLA is not simply a result of learner-related variables but also to the fact that contextual features are more uniform in the first than the second process. Contextual variables will here be discussed in relation to: the amount of exposure and number of models available for the learner, the quality of the input to which he has access and the type of feedback received in relation to performance.

2.1.2.1 Models and amount of exposure

It is commonly accepted that input to NNSs from NSs shares some of the characteristics of motherese, i.e. simplification, regularity, redundancy, brevity, slow rate and clearer articulation particularly of key-words. Topics are dealt with briefly and often concern 'here and now' issues, and to this Long (1983a) adds that NSs modify their interaction with NNSs to avoid or repair 'conversational trouble',[6] as caretakers do with children, and are more tolerant of ambiguities and accept topic switches pleasantly. As Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) observe, simplified input may be of greater value in SLA since innate mechanisms for language acquisition may atrophy with age.

An interesting study investigating the difference between language addressed to L1 children and adult SLA learners is that of Freed (1980). According to Freed, as indicated above, input to foreigners appears to be less varied as it contains fewer surface forms than that addressed to L1 children although the Mean Length of Utterance is double and syntactic complexity greater. The most noticeable differences concern not so much the structural as functional uses of language: most interactions between NSs and NNSs consist of information exchanges with a wider range of 'conversation continuers' and of repetitions, whereas language addressed to L1 children has the primary function of directing their behaviour and contains a higher proportion of 'conversation supports' (i.e. emotional support). In her conclusions,[7] however, Freed does not address the issue of whether the differences claimed have any effect on acquisition processes and she also fails to highlight the fact that the two groups differ in their ability to negotiate input -- adults are obviously more skilled than children.

2.1.2.2 Correction and feedback

Recent theories of L1 acquisition agree that adults neither correct children's erroneous utterances nor provide comparisons of grammatical and ungrammatical sentences. Bohannon and Stanowicz (1988) argue, however, that there are several problems with studies in this area and therefore with the generalizability of their results. In the conclusions to their own study on correction they state that even though 60%-70% of errors went unnoticed, correction may still be effective if it is to the point, that is if it concerns 'solitary errors of a specific type'. They also observe that the most effective form of correction could be the repetition of the child's ungrammatical sentence in its correct version: 'in this fashion, children are informed about their language errors (i.e. given negative evidence) and simultaneously provided with the correct form to contrast with their immediate error' (1988: 688).

One of the first studies on correction in NS-NNS interaction (Gaskill 1980) would seem to suggest that correction is relatively infrequent and that, when it occurs, it is tempered by an uncertain tone. Two other studies seem to support Gaskill's conclusion that correction is rare. Chun, Day, Chenoweth and Luppescu (1982) report 8.9% correction, of which 89.5% refers to factual errors, followed by correction of discourse and vocabulary errors, and then by grammatical errors. They also observe that if each error was corrected, the conversation flow would be severely impaired. Day, Chenoweth, Chun and Luppescu (1984) tend to agree with Gaskill's first conclusion but point out that correction is often open and direct and, unless made in a threatening tone, does not stop the conversation flow. Crookes and Rulon (1988) add that correction is related to topic: more feedback is given in 'problem-solving, task-related conversations rather than in free conversation'. More recently, Oliver (1995) in her analysis of child

NS-NNS conversation observes that NSs are capable of providing negative feedback and they do so in two forms: negotiation strategies and recasts. They also seem sensitive to the type and complexity of errors and tend to correct rather than ignore them.

Correction in SLA has also been investigated in its social and psychological aspects. Liming (1990) supports the claim that correction is not readily available and adds that learners have to ask for it. Her explanation is that 'there is a social problem involved here: correcting someone could imply a position of superiority. Therefore it is awkward for native speakers to do so'. A NNS could also resent being corrected or, as Burling (1981) observes, when there is a breakdown in communication between a NS and a NNS an excessive effort to clarify the meaning of an utterance can be embarrassing, and so one of the sides may just pretend he has understood the message.

It would appear that the issue of correction is unresolved both in adult-child and NS-NNS interaction. The most salient difference between the two groups seems to be the feelings of social awkwardness linked to the issue in adult SLA, which may make correction more dependent on a number of factors, such as personality, social status and intimacy of the interlocutors. On the other hand, adult L2 learners seem to be better equipped at understanding metalinguistic concepts and therefore should profit from correction more fully than children.

2.1.3 Attainment and conclusions

Disparity in level of attainment seems to be the outcome of the differences highlighted in the comparison between L1 acquisition and SLA. Although it is no longer believed that L1 acquisition is completed by the age of five,[8] the mastery reached by an

average child by that age cannot be matched by five years of exposure to the TL in adults. So far no satisfactory explanation has been given, but evidence indicates that in SLA native-like proficiency can be reached only if the process starts in childhood.

In most cases, an SLA learner does not reach full competence. Even after years of exposure to the L2 his performance is marked by idiosyncratic features, fossilization among others, which characterize it as 'foreign'. In addition, SLA learners present a higher amount of variation in levels of attainment than L1 children, which is accounted for by the effect of IDs. However, this is not to deny the effect of learner and context-related variables in L1 acquisition which are portrayed in Figure 2.1 (Wells 1979, 1985).

In his analysis of IDs in L1 acquisition Wells (1979) starts by discussing the 'Child's Linguistic Behaviour' and argues that it can be studied in various aspects but the most frequently used measure is Mean Length of Utterance (MLU).[9] This factor is not so interesting in itself as in its co-variation with other variables, a co-variation which can be studied both on a synchronic and on a diachronic axis:

> A typical strategy here is to assume the existence, over the population as a whole, of a linear correlation between age and linguistic development, and to examine *rate* of development (defined as score at a given age on the measures discussed above [i.e. MLU, syntactic complexity, vocabulary, comprehension. etc.]) in relation to nonlinguistic attributes. A second strategy is to look at changes in linguistic behaviour over time in particular individuals in an attempt to identify *styles* [i.e. route] of development (Nelson, 1973b [here 1973], Ramer, 1976) which are then related to other child attributes. (Wells 1979)

The other attributes analysed concern the child's environment (Social Background), the stylistic character of the interaction (Style of Linguistic Interaction), the context in which interaction takes place (Situation), and learner-related features (Inherited Attributes).

Variation in the four groups of factors correlates with the 'ease and speed' of

L1 acquisition. Although, as Wells points out, there is considerable similarity between

the strategies and resources children use in the process, there is variation in the quality

and quantity of 'conversational experience' caretakers and children share: 'in their [the

children's] willingness to engage in interaction and, at each stage, in the meanings and

purposes that they most frequently attempted to communicate' (1985: 416). Wells

concludes by stressing that L1 acquisition has a strong interactionist component and

quality and quantity of interaction seem to be especially important in determining its

'ease and speed'.
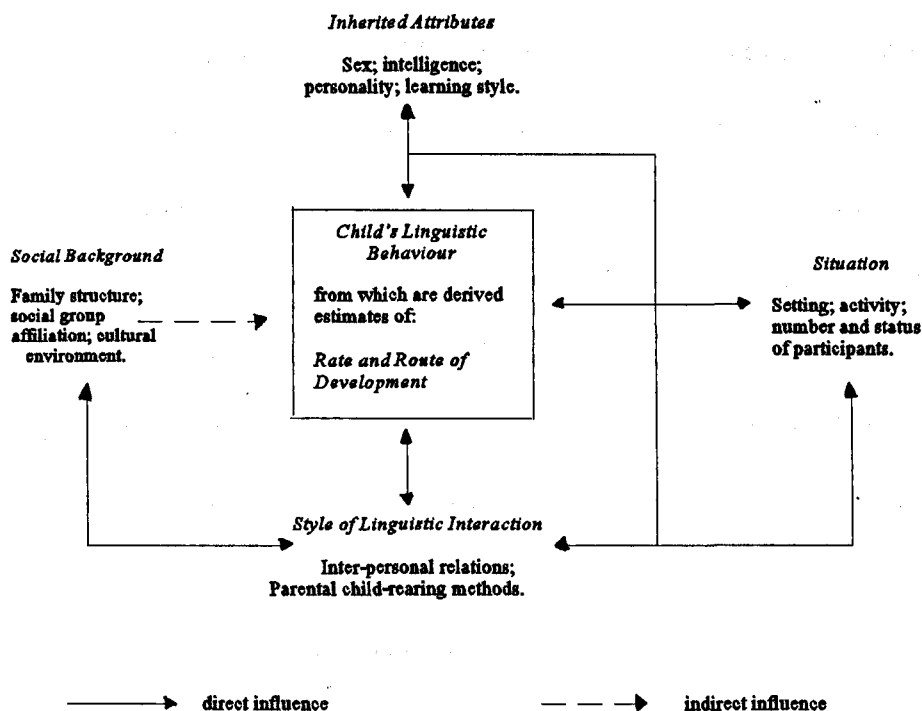
Figure 2.1 *Influences on individual differences in language development* (Wells 1985: 342)

There can be no doubt that SLA does share the interactionist dimension of L1

acquisition in so far as proficiency depends upon contact with NS of the TL. While

sharing many features in common with L1 acquisition, however, what the adult SLA

learner brings to the acquisition process in affective and cognitive terms, and what he

encounters in terms of contextual variables, suggest that SLA cannot be seen less as an

extension of L1 acquisition than as a break from it.

2.2 LANGUAGE AT SCHOOL: FORMAL V. INFORMAL ENVIRONMENT

The differences between contextualized and decontextualized use of language

have been analysed by, among others, Bruner (1975a, 1975b), Olson (1977), Donaldson

(1978) and E. Hawkins (1981, 1984). The crucial difference is that between

contextualized and decontextualized uses of language. The first refers to everyday use

of language in the oral mode, where communication is eased by shared knowledge,

contextual, paralinguistic and extralinguistic information and feedback from the

interlocutor. The second refers to use of language, often in the written mode, where no

shared knowledge can be taken for granted and where meaning depends to a large

extent on linguistic information, without any opportunity for immediate feedback.

A. Rubin (1980) illustrates the difference between the two when comparing

participation in a conversation with reading a story, the first of which is ranked lowest

in a 16-point scale from easy to difficult, and the second highest. 'A child's oral

language experiences', Rubin suggests, 'may be described as interactive conversations

in which the child participates as both speaker and listener. All the participants share a

spatial, temporal and situational context and their verbal communication is augmented

by intonation, facial expression and gestures' (1980: 413). The movement to reading

a story, however, involves the erosion of all such clues and, in the taxonomy of Table

2.1 below, Rubin highlights the difference in relation to structure, topic and function.

In terms of structure, differences regard vocabulary and syntax: reading not only

exposes the learner to vocabulary items he may not have come across but to more

complex syntactic patterns which lack both the familiar interactive rhythms of

conversation and their redundant features.[10] Difficulties with reading stem not merely

from the more unfamiliar use of language but also from the use of that language to

describe topics which are distant in time and space, i.e. which can only be accessed via

linguistic rather than contextual clues. Finally, as far as function is concerned, while

conversations often have a clear instrumental value for the child, reading a story does

not and can appear removed from his immediate goals or needs.

Table 2.1 *A contrast of children's typical oral language experiences (conversations) and the experience of reading a story on three message-related dimensions* (A. Rubin 1980: 425)

STRUCTURE	
CONVERSATIONS	STORIES
familiar words	*unfamiliar words*
imprecise, redundant syntax	*formal syntax*
discourse structure	*story structure*

TOPIC	
CONVERSATIONS	STORIES
everyday objects and situations	*abstract or unfamiliar objects and situations*
shared knowledge base -- good model of listener	*unshared knowledge base -- incomplete model of reader*

FUNCTION	
CONVERSATIONS	STORIES
persuasion, information gathering	*description, evocation*
congruent with child's goals	*not child-initiated*

The pedagogic implications of the above analysis would appear to be clear. To

the extent that reading dispenses with contextual clues in the access of meaning, children who make the transition from oral to written language have to be able to increasingly focus on language as its own context, that is, to extract meaning from the linguistic organisation of the text rather than from the extra-linguistic props which they use on an everyday basis.[11] This requires, of course, a certain degree of cognitive maturity, the ability to see language as a symbolic system to which Vygotsky drew attention in the early 1930s.

2.2.1 Language, context and cognition

The distinction between contextualized and decontextualized use of language is at the core of Vygotsky's paper 'The development of scientific concepts in childhood' (in *Thought and Language*, 1934/1986) in which he points out that 'written speech' demands a 'high level of abstraction' for two main reasons:

1. words, which have a sensory quality, must be replaced by symbols, which are conceptual; and

2. the interlocutor is not real, he must be imagined.

Further demands are placed upon the child's cognitive abilities, he argues, in mastering the related skill of writing where the flow of speech has to be broken into word units and matched with sound and where he has to overcome his initial lack of motivation, imagine a goal and plan in order to achieve it. Vygotsky concludes by identifying three keywords to define the differences between oral and written speech: the former is labelled 'spontaneous, involuntary, and unconscious', the latter 'abstract, voluntary, and conscious'.

```
                        COGNITIVELY
                        UNDEMANDING
                             |
                             |
            A                |                 C
                             |
  CONTEXT- _____ | _____ CONTEXT-
  EMBEDDED                   |                   REDUCED
                             |
            B                |                 D
                             |
                             |
                        COGNITIVELY
                        DEMANDING
```
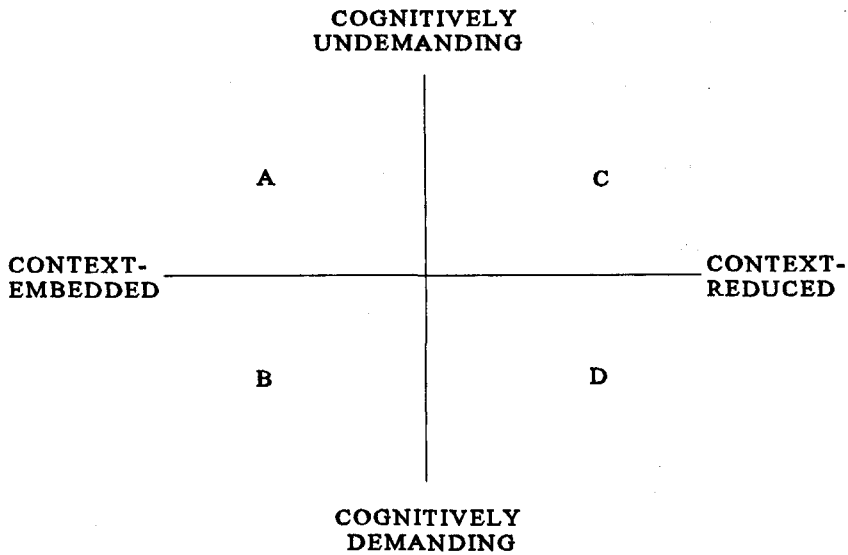
Figure 2.2 *Range of contextual support and degree of cognitive involvement in communicative activities* (Cummins 1983: 120)

Vygotsky's view of the relation between contextualized and decontextualized uses of language was limited to L1 acquisition. The issue was raised within the SLA context mainly by Cummins (1980, 1983) in his distinction between CALP and BICS.[12] For Cummins language proficiency can be visualized along two continua (see Figure 2.2): from context-embedded to context-reduced, and from cognitively undemanding to cognitively demanding, according to the amount of information needing to be processed to complete a given task. As he was to point out:

> Thus, the upper parts of the vertical continuum consist of communicative tasks and activities in which the linguistic tools have become largely automatized (mastered) and thus require little active cognitive involvement for appropriate performance. At the lower end of the continuum are tasks and activities in which the communicative tools have not yet become automatized and thus require active cognitive involvement. (Cummins 1983: 121)

According to Cummins, such a model allows to differentiate between 'degree of cognitive involvement' and 'range of contextual support', whereas other models (e.g. Bruner and Donaldson among others) tend to unify the two concepts. The model can

be applied to pedagogy and testing, as it allows the grading of tasks according to their difficulty. Finally, Cummins argues that the proposed framework supports findings from Wells' (1981) work on the relationship between linguistic activities in the home and reading skills at school and recommends that instruction programmes should 'ensure that initial literacy instruction is sufficiently context-embedded and culturally appropriate to students' backgrounds'.
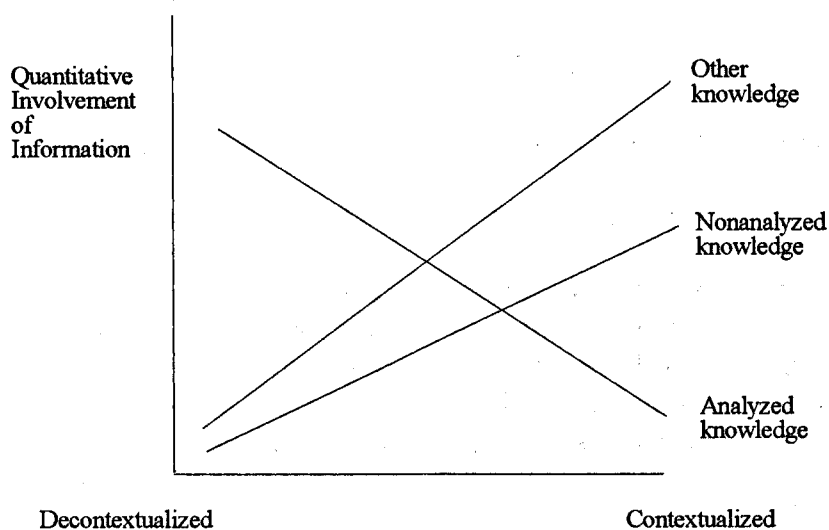
Figure 2.3 *Role types of information in language tasks as a function of contextualized support* (Bialystock 1988: 43)

A third model analysing the relation between contextualized and decontextualized uses of language is that proposed by Bialystok (1981, 1982, 1988, 1991) for SLA. This is integrated with that of Cummins in Figure 2.3 above. Bialystock uses the automatic/nonautomatic label (y-axis) to refer to ease of access to stored information. The x-axis, on the other hand, represents 'a continuum of language situations which range from highly contextualized to highly abstract'. The former is defined as awareness of a structure, allowing the learner to perform tasks which cannot be achieved if only nonanalysed and/or other knowledge are available to him. The latter

is composed by knowledge of a situation or topic (contextual knowledge) together with knowledge of the world (conceptual knowledge) and knowledge of the other languages (language knowledge). In Figure 2.3 each line represents the extent to which each kind of knowledge is necessary for any task in the decontextualized-contextualized continuum, e.g. communicative tasks set in a familiar context will draw on nonanalysed and, especially, other knowledge to a larger extent than a abstract tasks, which will require a higher level of analysed knowledge.

Bialystok explains that, while initially linguistic knowledge is unanalyzed and non-automatic, it gradually develops along both axes and, in the process, more difficulty is encountered in the combination of the two marked aspects:

> The general dynamics of this model, then, are as follows: specific language uses (conversations, tests, reading, studying, etc.) demand specific levels of skill in each of these processing components; different language learners have mastered each of these components to specific levels; learners may therefore perform under conditions in which the processing demands of the task do not exceed the processing demands of their skill development. (Bialystok 1991: 64)

The development of analysis is helped by literacy and instruction, for example, learning to read generally enhances metalinguistic skills, and the direct presentation of rules can favour the process of 'self-reflection on knowledge' which children normally carry out. Control develops through two main experiences, one being bilingualism and the other schooling.[13]

2.2.2 The relationship between L1 acquisition and FLL: the Vygotskyan perspective

In Bialystok's and Cummins's accounts, the passage from nonanalysed to analysed, and from context-embedded to context-disembedded use of language, is

carried out in parallel with the progressive automatization of cognitively demanding tasks. Vygotsky (1934/1986) again anticipated the work of contemporary scholars in his observations on the interdependence of language and cognitive development. He approached the issue from the angle of concept development and argues that while scientific concepts start with the 'initial verbal definition' and evolve into concrete phenomena, spontaneous concepts evolve in the opposite way: from the concrete phenomena to their verbal generalization.[14] Scientific concepts are, however, built on spontaneous concepts, e.g. historical concepts can develop only if the child possesses the notion of 'past' through personal experience.

There is a fundamental similarity between the formation of scientific concepts and FLL on the one hand, and the formation of spontaneous concepts and L1 acquisition on the other. As Vygotsky was to argue:

> The influence of scientific concepts on the mental development of the child is analogous to the effect of learning a foreign language, a process that is conscious and deliberate from the start. In one's native language, the primitive aspects of speech are acquired before the more complex ones. The latter presuppose some awareness of phonetic, grammatical and syntactic forms. With a foreign language, the higher forms develop before spontaneous, fluent speech. (Vygotsky 1934/1986: 195)

While the L1 acts as 'a mediator between the world of objects and the new language', FLL makes a child aware of language as a system, which in turn has a beneficial effect on the formal use of his mother tongue. The child will, however, possess abilities and knowledge at different levels in the two languages:

> The child's strong points in a foreign language are his weak points in his native language, and vice versa. In his own language, the child conjugates and declines correctly, but without realizing it. He cannot tell the gender, the case, or the tense of the word he is using. In foreign languages, he distinguishes between masculine and feminine genders and is conscious of grammar forms from the beginning. (Vygotsky 1936/1986: 195)

If the NL therefore provides the child with schematic knowledge, the FL provides him with systemic knowledge and it is the marriage of these two different perspectives on language which allow the learner to grasp the 'whole picture'. It is only if the learner achieves a 'certain degree of maturity in the native language' that he will be able to access the decontextualized FL and it is only the mastery of the FL which allows him to develop a broader framework within which to re-evaluate, and deepen skills in, the L1.

2.2.3 Academic proficiency in L1 and FL

The passage to the analysed, context-free use of language, in parallel with the automatization of cognitively demanding tasks, would appear to be heavily influenced by environmental factors. As Vygotsky had done earlier, E. Hawkins (1984) explores the issue starting with a distinction between two stages of L1 acquisition -- oral and written -- but he views language awareness as a pre-requisite for the second stage and argues that such awareness is affected by parental occupation, the quality of child-caretaker dialogue and the child's access to the written word. Schooling, he also argues (1981), often cannot compensate for lack of pre-school language experience. These observations are supported by a number of researchers (Donaldson 1978; Tizard and Hughes 1984; Wells 1985) who also endorse Hawkins' (1984) view that social class appears to be linked to proficiency in the analysed, disembedded use of language, which in turn is the key for developing reading skills in school.

A study on the correlation between indices of L1 development, FL aptitude and FL achievement carried out by Skehan (1986) claims that differences in FL aptitude are a consequence of variation in L1 acquisition, which in turn is heavily influenced by

social factors. Decontextualized abilities are crucial in helping the learner make sense of classroom activities. Thinking must be applied to tasks which are not of immediate, personal interest to the child. Once more Vygotsky (1934/1986) anticipated current thinking with his observation that 'awareness and deliberate control' of mental functions develop through schooling and then become an essential component in education. His views are echoed by Donaldson:

> Education, as it has developed in our kind of culture, requires him [the child] to be able to do just that -- to call the powers of his mind into service *at will* and use them to tackle problems which do not arise out of the old familiar matrix but which are 'posed' -- presented in abrupt isolation and presented, to begin with at least, by some other person whose purposes are obscure.
> (Donaldson 1978: 121-2)

And this is precisely what is required also by FLL in that part of education: the ability to use a language out of context and to find motivation in classroom activities without an immediate application of the knowledge in question. Since FL instruction usually starts around the age of eleven, after five years of primary schooling, a child should be quite familiar with the demands made by the formal environment and equipped to meet them. This is not always the case, however, and Hawkins is not alone in arguing that linguistic awareness and motivation -- which are pre-requisites for accessing a FL in a decontextualized situation -- do not always exist due to factors in many learners' social backgrounds and L1 acquisition.[15]

2.2.4 Conclusions

It has been argued that achievement in SLA is more differentiated than in L1 acquisition and that the gap is even wider between L1 acquisition and FLL. The latter not only involves many of the strategies required in any language acquisition/learning

context, such as those outlined in Naiman, Frölich, Stern and Todesco's (1978) taxonomy, but those specifically imposed by the classroom context, such as:

1. general cognitive skills for encoding and decoding information;

2. metacognitive and metalinguistic skills needed to access and monitor performance in a decontextualized setting; and

3. ability to sustain interest in an abstract task with little or no direct application.

As observed by E. Hawkins (1981, 1984) and Skehan (1986), among others, lack of caretaker's help in the early years can hinder the development of cognitive and linguistic abilities and ultimately make FLL an arduous task. Therefore, an instruction programme should take into account the needs of learners from less privileged backgrounds and aim at facilitating access to structure rather than letting them free to apply their own (often limited) skills to their discovery.

2.3 L1 ACQUISITION V. FLL AND SLA V. FLL

The current study is centred on FLL at the time between puberty and higher education, a period which coincides with the high school years in most Western countries. According to the distinction made above, the most salient characteristic of FLL is that it is based exclusively on the formal learning environment. SLA and L1 acquisition may involve some formal study of language in a classroom -- particularly L1 acquisition which, at least in the Western World, invariably has a tutored component -- but they both also occur in a natural environment, which sets them apart from FLL.

This is not to deny that FLL shares a number of the characteristics of adult SLA as distinct from L1 acquisition. The observations made in 2.1 about the cognitive and affective differences between L1 acquisition and SLA apply, to a large extent, to FLL

as well, at least as far as the following factors are concerned: age, cognitive, linguistic and metalinguistic skills, level of attainment, motivation, attitude and personality. There are also differences in these factors separating SLA and FLL, however, and this is even more true as regards the contextual factors.

2.3.1 Learner-related variables

In this section the following variables are analysed: motivation, attitude, adolescent personality and anxiety. Of these, motivation seems to be the single affective variable with the major weight in the process since it provides the driving force for the acquisition/learning process.

2.3.1.1 Attitude and other affective factors

The observations on attitudinal factors regarding the comparison between L1 acquisition and SLA also apply to FLL, although the various components may be said to have different weight. Segregative and integrative orientation are less relevant and the learner's attitude will be primarily influenced by that of parents, peers, teachers and by the status that FL teaching has in the school and in the given country's education system. Attitude to FLL can also, as Hawkins observes, be linked to adolescent personality:

> The unfamiliar (in language dress, colour of skin) is less readily accepted. Racial prejudice is most virulent in adolescent and post-adolescent years. Acceptance of racial differences and willingness to behave in the foreign language probably both depend on a common characteristic: *capacity for 'empathy'* -- the ability to see reality as someone else sees it -- which in turn depends on confidence and security. (E. Hawkins 1981: 206)

Other traits of the adolescent personality can equally result in negative attitudes towards

the FL and its culture. Hawkins points to an increase in insecurity and inhibition at this time, which make some classroom activities such as oral practice more difficult to carry out, and attainment can also play a contributory role. A learner who is negatively assessed and is compelled to continue studying the TL may very well develop negative feelings towards it particularly if he is not sustained by an understanding and appreciation of the long-term goals. Assessment can, moreover, cause anxiety, which Krashen (1981, 1982, 1985) argues is the single most important block to further TL acquisition/learning. In tutored SLA, on the other hand, assessment is not an intervening variable and a sense of achievement can emerge as a result of successful communication which, in turn, reinforces positive attitudes.

2.3.1.2 Motivation

In FLL, motivation is much weaker than in L1 acquisition or SLA for self-evident reasons. Communicative needs can be satisfied by use of the NL and therefore cannot provide a ready stimulus for FLL. Moreover, instrumental or integrative factors do not appear to play the same role as they do with SLA learners since they often involve long-term goals which the younger FL learner has difficulty in conceptualizing. As Rivers suggests:

> The high school student already possesses an effective method of communication. To learn another which does not supply any of his needs, he must limit himself and humiliate himself by his obvious incapacity to express his real meaning. His incorrect efforts often bring more disapproval than a stubborn silence. Sounds which his social group has previously approved are not good enough. To him all this foreign language-learning business is a classroom activity which ceases once the bell has announced the end of the hour.
> (Rivers 1968: 51).

Overcoming the problems pinpointed by Rivers can partly be realized by helping the

learner to find motivation in the learning process itself (i.e. in the tasks set and completion of those tasks). In the long term, however, if the learner is to persevere with FLL and achieve a given level of proficiency, he has to be prepared to accept what Hammerly (1991) refers to as 'delayed gratification', that is, an understanding of the long-term value of the goal with little immediate 'pay-off'. This requires a degree of maturity on the part of the FL learner which is rarely required of the L1 or SLA learner whose new skills are almost immediately rewarded.

2.3.2 Contextual variables

In the area of contextual variables, the following are taken into account: use of language, input, models, interaction, output, and correction. While a number of analogies can be found in learner-related variables across SLA and FLL, a much greater disparity exists in contextual factors between formal and informal environments. To some extent, of course, the picture is complicated by the fact that within the former there is a wider variety of 'sub-contexts' depending on factors related to the instruction programme, both organizational and pedagogic.

2.3.2.1 Use of language

As suggested earlier, the transfer from oral to written skills in L1 involves young learners in a much more decontextualised use of language. The transfer from L1 to FL in the school context extends this process still further in the sense that the FL is, as E. Hawkins argues, parasitic not so much upon L1 oral as literacy skills:

> Learning the foreign language under school conditions is also parasitic upon the learned skills of reading and writing and of matching sounds to symbols, with the added complication that long-practised speech-habits, and well-worn

listening expectations, must be unlearned. (E. Hawkins 1981: 181)

Brumfit and Johnson (1979) have argued, among others, that the FL should be taught only 'in relation to the uses to which, as a communicative tool, it can be put'. This requires introducing it to simulate everyday activities in which contextual clues can help to illuminate meaning. While commendable, however, there are strict limitations on the possibility of creating 'real world' situations in the classroom since even everyday tasks, such as shopping or booking a holiday, are in reality simulated activities in which learners lack any genuine 'intention to mean'. Cook draws out the specific role of language in a FLL as opposed to SLA context when suggesting it is both subject and medium of instruction, organization and control:

> The students and teachers are interacting through language in the classroom, using the strategies and moves that form part of their normal classroom behaviour. But at the same time the L2 strategies and moves are the behaviour the learner is aiming at, the objectives of the teaching. There is a falseness about much language teaching that does not exist in other school subjects because language has to fulfil its normal classroom role as well as be the content of the class. (Cook 1991a: 92)

2.3.2.2 Input

Differences in input are crucial in the comparison between L1 acquisition and SLA on one hand and FLL on the other. In FLL, input is graded and in most cases restricted to what is offered in the class. Dodson (1967) claims that one week of contact in the L1 natural environment corresponds to about one year in FLL. Wilkins observes that 'the amount of contact provided by five years of classroom-based learning is the equivalent of no more than 15-20 weeks of natural language contact' (1983: 26). Higgs (1985) calculates that a university student specializing in a FL will on average receive 31.26 days of exposure to the TL over his entire course against the 18 hours per day

offered by the informal environment. The above measurements throw some light on the ratio between exposure and achievement in the two processes and ultimately on their effectiveness. Contrary to what is commonly believed, L1 acquisition does not appear to be such an efficient process, and FLL not so unsuccessful, after all.

One of the salient characteristics of input in the traditional FL classroom is grading, whereby language is divided into learnable/teachable portions and presented to learners gradually. Its quantity and quality are heavily dependent on the teacher, materials and on a number of other factors which characterize the formal environment: timing and quantity of lessons, teacher/student ratio, noise level etc. Finally, the language presented to the language learner is in most cases accurate (i.e. well-formed) but non-authentic, despite intentions of bringing the spoken language into the classroom. Dialogues, for example, are often devised with the purpose of illustrating a certain function, notion, or structure; turn-taking follows a neat order, interlocutors often use fully formed sentences, without hesitations or ungrammatical features that often characterize unplanned speech. In this respect, input in the language classroom shares some of the properties of motherese, such as simplification, well-formedness and slow rate of delivery.

In FLL, as opposed to a natural environment, there is usually only one source of input: the teacher. The nature of the input and the feedback from the teacher are therefore crucial since the learner has hardly any other opportunity to amend his hypotheses about the TL if not by comparing them with the model presented by the teacher. It is true that input might occasionally result out of peer-interaction in which each learner is exposed to the IL of his classmates whose degree of accuracy can vary drastically. On the issue of faulty input, Gass (1990) observes that '*all* learners

misinterpret information irrespective of the context where the language is acquired'. While this may be true, however, the misinterpreting of information is a far more serious problem in the FL classroom since the opportunities to form and test out hypotheses are more strictly limited than in an SLA context where repetition of the same item by a variety of speakers in different contexts can help correct false hypotheses. Exposing learners to the faulty input of their peers can, in a FLL context, therefore, be unproductive.

2.3.2.3 Models

In contrast to the natural environment, FLL is based on one model, the teacher, who may not be adequate due to lack of training (or re-training), personality factors or incomplete knowledge of the subject. In the large majority of cases, the teacher is not a native speaker, which means that he is probably is an imperfect model, at least as far as pronunciation is concerned, and that he will use the learners' NL during the lesson, at least to a certain extent, thus reducing the TL input. Faults with teachers and materials cannot be easily compensated for, especially if the learner is not trained to use other sources, such as books or other media. Problems in terms of the teacher's linguistic competence may also be compounded by a teaching style which may not be fully compatible with some learners' learning style, thereby impairing achievement

2.3.2.4 Interaction

Interaction in the FL classroom has unique characteristics. It usually offers a limited range of language discourse types and often follows a familiar script. It is traditionally dominated by the teacher, who is in command of activities, exchanges and

turn-taking. It has been estimated (see Cook 1991a) that teacher-talk takes up about 70% of the lesson. Exchanges often have a typical three-phase structure -- elicitation, learner's response, feedback -- whose artificiality is readily apparent. Obviously, interaction in the natural environment presents rather different properties, being potentially much more varied and much less predictable.

2.3.2.5 Output

Learner's output, both oral and written, appears to be poor in FLL. As pointed out in the above section, studies conducted in various countries show that the teacher does most of the talking. Swain (1988) reports, for example, that in the sixth-grade class there are two student turns per minute, nearly half of these being of minimal length, and only 14% longer than a clause. This does not compare favourably with Brooks' (1960) estimate that a five-year old produces from 10,000 to 15,000 words a day in his NL. Moreover, FL learners, despite Krashen's advocacy of a 'silent period', are usually put under pressure to perform in the TL, even when they are not willing to do so.

2.3.2.6 Correction

It has been argued that the opportunity for correction is much greater in the formal environment, but the empirical basis of this claim is flimsy because the study of feedback in SLA has been quite limited (2.1.2.2). However, it is accepted that in the natural environment correction is infrequent. Studies on correction in the formal environment also show that negative feedback is not systematic and varies with task and learner. Allen, Swain and Harley (1988) claim 19% of errors are corrected, and

Cathcart and Olsen (1976) report a smaller percentage, 6.3%.

The effectiveness of correction, and of different forms of correction, in the formal environment has also been investigated with contrasting conclusions (see Carroll, Swain and Roberge 1992): Hendrickson (1981a) claims that direct correction of each and every error does not have any significant effect, whereas Carroll *et al.* argue that explicit negative feedback correlates positively with acquistion of TL forms. Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994: 480) view correction from an interactive perspective and point out that its effectiveness depends to a large extent on instructors 'who in consort with the learner dialogically co-construct a zone of proximal development in which feedback as regulation becomes relevant and can therefore be appropriated by learners to modify their interlanguage systems', and that, while the successful instructor is 'willing to relinquish control' as soon as the learner is capable of continuing the task on his own, the successful learner will actively seek feedback.

It might finally be added that correction in the formal environment is also dependent on the method used in instruction and on the teacher's teaching style. Advocates of the Communicative Approach, which is widely employed in schools in the UK, suggest that encouragement is more effective than correction for successful learning and that any utterance should be praised, whether grammatical or not, because it constitutes a genuine attempt to convey meaning.

2.3.3 Conclusions

From the above analysis, it can be concluded that a model devised to account for either L1 acquisition or SLA is inadequate for FLL unless the necessary modifications are made to accommodate changes in learner and contextual variables.

However, this has not traditionally been the case, as is illustrated in the Audiolingual model of a Lado which borrowed heavily from behaviourist accounts of L1 acquisition, or the Communicative Approach of Dulay and Burt, and Krashen, which borrowed equally heavily from the nativist model of Chomsky. Tables 2.2 and 2.3 help to summarize the comparisons made in previous sections between SLA and FLL. Table 2.3 illustrates learner variables in SLA and FLL. Table 2.2 below shows the differences between the formal and informal environments.

Table 2.2 *Contextual differences between SLA and FLL* (based on Ringbom 1980: 39 and Lightbown and Spada 1993: 71)

Variable	SLA	FLL
1. Use of language	Contextualized. Oral medium predominant	Decontextualized. Language subject and object of study
2. Input	Rich and varied, with limited organization	Usually highly structured, selected and sequenced
3. Models	High ratio of NSs to learners	One model (often NNS) to many learners
4. Interaction	Varied	Restricted
5. Output	The learner usually compelled to be creative and active	Learner allowed to adopt a passive role
6. Correction	Limited with emphasis on feedback on content not form	More frequent and form-focused
7. Time available for learning	Ample	Limited
8. Amount of exposure	Large	Little

As can be seen in the table above, the main differences between the two processes is that FLL is more decontextualized and offers less exposure and opportunities for communicative interaction. Table 2.3 below seeks to summarize the differences in learner variables between the same processes.

Table 2.3 *Learner variables in SLA and FLL* (based on Ringbom 1980: 40-1)

Variable	SLA	FLL
1. Attitude	Very influential based upon the status, prestige and the extent of use of the TL	Less important, since the FLL learner is not involved in the same way as the SLA learner
2. Motivation	Benefits from integrative and instrumental factors as well as a genuine communicative need	Weaker in the sense that instrumental and integrative objectives are more distant
3. Personality and other factors	Extroversion seen as an important positive trait	Introversion may be a positive trait as it is associated with good study skills
4. Selection	The learner has to consider saliency, deciding on what features of the input to select for intake	Saliency is largely decided by variables outside the learner (e.g. teacher, syllabus and method)
5. Learning process	Acquisition rather than learning. SLA learners work on a trial-and-error basis and have good opportunities to test their hypotheses	Learning is largely the result of conscious effort. Less use of trial and error method because of time constraints
6. Monitoring	Probably less monitoring because of time pressure	Probably more monitoring because of rule isolation and error correction by teacher
7. Strategies	Variety of communicative strategies used since the learner frequently in contexts where his competence is insufficient.	Cognitive and metacognitive strategies more important than communicative ones
8. Outcomes	Sufficient vocabulary for different communicative contexts more important than accuracy	Linguistic competence rather than communicative competence is in the foreground

2.4 PROPOSAL OF A FLL MODEL

As observed in the previous two sections, FLL is subject to a number of constraints which include limited exposure to the TL and reduced contextual clues. These constraints, in turn, place a number of affective and cognitive demands on learner which E. Hawkins (1981, 1984) defines as twofold:

1. the ability to cope with the fact that language transacted in the FL classroom

has no 'intention to mean' (i.e. has no 'force' or 'drive'); and

2. the ability to develop an awareness of language (i.e. insight into pattern) on which depends the rapid processing of linguistic messages.

2.4.1 The Communicative Approach

An attempt to overcome the first limitation has a central concern of the Communicative Approach. The movement for a Communicative Approach to language teaching started in the late 1960's and developed in the following decade (Brumfit 1978) on the basis of interactionist models of language use proposed by, among others, Halliday (1975) and Hymes (1972). It was not a monolithic movement, but its promoters shared a series of assumptions: i.e. that a FL should be taught as a tool for communication and that a teaching programme should centre on the learners' communicative needs. Syllabuses were, as a result, outlined on the basis of notions and functions and teaching procedures sought to involve learners in activities focused on communicative interaction and exchange of meaning rather than medium-oriented practice. Errors were tolerated as a natural by-product of the process and learners were encouraged to develop risk-taking skills as these were recognized to be of primary importance once they had to use the TL in real talk (Johnson 1987).

In practice these assumptions gave rise to a variety of teaching practices and procedures which as Ellis (1982),[16] Howatt (1984) and Allen (1988) suggest, can be divided between a 'strong' and a 'weak' Communicative Approach. The former, perhaps more usefully illustrated by Krashen and Terrel (1983/1988) and Prahbu (1987), is based on the premise that structures in FLL can -- as in L1 or SLA processes

-- be internalized as a by-product of communicative interaction. No attempt is made at grading or sequencing linguistic materials in this approach and learners, exposed to 'roughly-tuned input', are encouraged to use whatever resources are available to them to put their meaning across. The 'weak' approach (Wilkins 1976; Brumfit 1980, 1984a; Finocchiaro and Brumfit 1983) adopts a somewhat more analytic approach to communication, i.e. is based upon a syllabus which can be combine functional or grammatical features and which structures practice so as to help students focus, at least initially, on form-meaning relationships.

Brumfit has expressed some doubts as to the consequences of a method that focuses so much on fluency rather than on accuracy. He points out:

> It may be argued that an emphasis on fluent language activity of this kind may result in the development of a fluent pidgin, but not a fully-fledged language system, capable of being used with maximum, native-language efficiency . . . Only experience of using this approach will resolve this question fully: if teachers feel that a heavy emphasis on fluency is resulting in deficient conversational abilities compared with reliance on good procedures, they will no doubt adjust to the other procedures for the good of their classes.
> (Brumfit 1984a: 131)

Brumfit's doubts seem to have been confirmed by six studies conducted in the Canadian context reported in Hammerly (1991). Hammerly points out that evidence against the 'strong' form of the Communicative Approach comes even from studies on achievement in immersion programmes which should provide a more appropriate context for its application in that they recreate the conditions for natural language acquisition to a larger extent than the FL classroom. The six studies reviewed by Hammerly indicate that learner's performance is laden with errors, which fossilize rather than disappear and, while vocabulary and fluency increase, accuracy remains poor. [17]

Ultimately, lack of accuracy adversely affects the effectiveness of

communication, rather than gradually disappearing through interaction. It could not be otherwise in that language is a highly complex tool and cannot be manipulated successfully without the user knowing how it works. In fact, it is the ability to manipulate language which allows the learner to communicate his own meaning and be creative, not the reverse. The underlying rationale of the Communicative Approach is that natural learning is better than artificial, and that unconscious learning is better than conscious. The validity of such assumptions has been questioned in a number of studies (see 5.1) which stress that the attempt at recreating natural processes in an artificial environment has not proved entirely successful, and moreover, as Roberts (1992b) observes, 'natural acquisition is a long and inefficient process' and education should aim at improving upon it rather than replicating its shortcomings.

2.4.2 A model of FLL

In order for FLL to be successful both the limitations identified by E. Hawkins (1981, 1984) must be overcome: a learner must be given the opportunity both to express himself and to understand the language patterns necessary for conveying meaning. As pointed out by Vygotsky (1934/1986), and more recently by E. Hawkins (1981, 1984), Dodson (1985a, 1985b), Hammerly (1991) and Roberts (1992b), among others, FLL cannot but start out as a conscious process, focused on the acquisition of systemic knowledge. Only when relevant elements of the system have been inputted, practised and mastered can it be used for communicative purposes and, as a result, become part of an unconscious process as control develops.

The suggestion that SLA involves a passage from controlled to automatic processing comes also from McLaughlin (1987, 1990a, 1990b) and his associates

(McLaughlin, Rossman and McLeod 1983; McLeod and McLaughlin 1986). In turn, this model is based on the work of Shriffin and Schneider (Schneider and Shriffin 1977; Shriffin and Schneider 1977), and Karmiloff-Smith (1986):

> A complex cognitive skill, such as acquiring a second language, involves a process whereby controlled, attention-demanding operations become automated through practice. This is essentially learning through accretion, whereby an increasing number of information chunks are compiled into an automated procedure. In addition, however, there are qualitative changes that occur as learners shift strategies and restructure their internal representations of the target language. (McLaughlin 1990a: 125)

In this framework, although McLaughlin himself does not give clear directions as to its pedagogic application, an instruction programme should help the learner pass from controlled to automatic processing and thereby free resources for communication.[18]

Over the years, a number of pedagogic proposals have been made in this direction. Dodson (1978, 1985a) suggests two stages in FL instruction: 'medium-oriented communication' (level 1) and 'message-oriented communication' (level 2). The passage from 1 to 2 is not considered a final goal, but characterizes every step of the instruction programme. Dodson clarifies the point that the ability to manipulate language is not a function of the amount of language known to the learner, but of its level of analysis. Hammerly states the same principle, which is at the basis of his Cumulative Mastery Method (CMM):

> A complex system, once mastered, is **used** 'top down'; but it is best **learned** and mastered 'bottom up' -- cumulatively, one step at a time, with the leaner using every aspect of the growing system as it is learned and to the extent it has been learned. (Hammerly 1991: 19)

The same principle is illustrated by Roberts (1992b) in Table 2.4. In the three stages of FL instruction the emphasis shifts gradually from left to right, from reflection on the language to its use, through practice.

The opportunity to arrive at level 2 (in Dodson's words) or at the use stage (in Roberts' analysis) is not to be intended as a mere 'sugar on the grammar-pill'. Evidence from research indicates that utterances which do not involve 'intention to mean' are not easily memorized (E. Hawkins 1981; Sajavaara 1983). The importance of arriving at the expression of one's own meaning is therefore a crucial step in the process: it can provide the learner with motivation, which in turn activates memory processes.

Table 2.4 *The three stages of FL instruction* (Roberts 1992b: 27)

Input ⟶	Practice ⟶	Use
medium	medium/message	message
system	system/function	function
accuracy	accuracy/fluency	fluency
meaning	meaning/sense	sense

2.5 ERRORS IN THE FL CLASSROOM

Various observations on the potential sources of errors in the FL classroom have been made over the years, however, to the best of our knowledge, research has not taken up these suggestions and put them to the empirical test, with a few exceptions (see Kasper 1982; Edmondson 1986). Errors in FLL have more been often considered on the same level as errors in SLA, according to the well-established practice of equating the two processes. The present section starts with a review of the literature on errors in the FL classroom and then moves on to propose a more comprehensive model.

2.5.1 A review of the literature on errors in the FL classroom

As Edmondson (1986) points out, a common fallacy in EA has been to consider the learner as error generator and to look for confirmation of this hypothesis, neglecting

other error sources, notably the teacher. However the FL classroom has attracted some interest as a context which triggers peculiar patterns of error development and, since the heyday of EA, the notion that errors may be traced to faults with input has been put forward in a number of papers.[19]

It was Selinker (1969) who introduced the notion of 'transfer of training' which Richards (1974a) later defined as 'a basic analytic approach' in FLL. Richards' suggestion was then applied in a study by LoCoco (1975) on the correlation between error and presentation of rules. LoCoco concluded that there was a positive correlation between the two variables, especially between intralingual errors and the introduction of a new rule or an increased exposure to rules. In the same period Tran-Thi-Chau warned against a simplistic classification of interlingual errors, pointing to the importance of pedagogic factors in error production:

> The interfering factors behind the latter [interlingual errors] are so diversified and complex (chronological order of introduction of the structures, teaching techniques, type of learner, and so on) that quite frequently they cannot be readily revealed by the techniques of EA presently available and are liable to the subjective judgements of the individual analyst. (Tran-Thi-Chau 1975: 135)

Later, McLaughlin (1981) suggested errors in FLL are both traceable to universal strategies and to 'tactics' devised by learners to cope with the formal environment, above all when they are required to perform beyond their proficiency level. A similar approach is adopted by Kasper (1982) who views the formal environment as an error source additional to psycholinguistic sources and goes on to propose a distinction between 'primary teaching induction' and 'secondary teaching induction'. The former refers to the presence of deviant rules in input, either passed on to the learner through explicit grammar teaching or through other activities, such as exercises, whereas the latter refers to errors caused indirectly by:

1. poor presentation of input; and/or

2. inadequate practice.

Kasper concludes that these trigger psycholinguistic processes which, in turn, lead to error production.

In Edmondson's (1986) analysis a distinction is made between 'T-errors', utterances that the teacher 'treats as ungrammatical' and 'U-errors', utterances that are objectively deviant. There is overlap between the two categories, but a 'T-error' is not necessarily a 'U-error'. The core of Edmondson's paper is the claim that errors are not just the product of learner-centred processes, but also of classroom interaction, or rather, to put it more bluntly, of faults with input and correction procedures:

> The teacher can be held responsible for errors in the speech of the learners under his charge and for errors of *learning*, in the case that the teacher's reaction to learner speech production is internally inconsistent, or inconsistent with pedagogic or native speaker norms' (Edmondson 1986: 113)

The teacher may, for example, either lack knowledge of a particular language feature, or may be incapable of passing on his knowledge to the learner effectively. Gass (1990) also observes that errors can be provoked by the structure of the FL class and adds that some forms may not be teachable (such as word order in Italian), but can only be acquired through input in a natural environment.

A more detailed outline of error development in FLL has been carried out by Hammerly (1991) as a comparison of the outcomes of two methods: the Communicative Acquisitionistic Naturalistic (CAN), and the CMM, which includes systematic grammar instruction (see 2.4.2). Hammerly observes that if learners are encouraged to communicate freely from the start and use structures and or vocabulary they have not yet mastered, a large amount of errors will be produced. This makes

correction arduous and therefore a 'classroom pidgin' soon develops. The learner's IL will increase in vocabulary but not in accuracy. Moreover, the learners' growing awareness of their imperfect command of the FL will clash with their initial illusion of fast achievement and make them reluctant to use it. If the CMM is applied, Hammerly predicts the following error sources:

> 1. The teacher or the materials have not presented the point clearly enough; 2. there hasn't yet been enough practice of the point, mechanical or meaningful; 3. the students have not made the efforts necessary to master it, even though they have had adequate opportunity to do so; or 4. the students have ventured into still-to-be charted territory. (Hammerly 1991: 83)

Hammerly proposes the division of learner's errors into 'faults', errors made in case 4 above, and 'distortions', in case 3. If the teacher is responsible for errors, the term suggested by Hammerly in 'mismanagement distortion' in cases 1 and 2, and 'mismanagement fault', when the teacher allows his students to use structures which have not been taught yet.

The studies quoted above all contribute, in different measure, to clarifying error sources peculiar to the FL classroom and do point to a correlation between cognition and the formal environment in the form of certain mental mechanisms, i.e. 'tactics', which are unique to, or more frequent in, the FL classroom. None of the studies reviewed, however, seems to attempt a comprehensive analysis of the variables involved. Hammerly's analysis seems more interesting as does not consider teaching processes in general, but rather addresses the issue of method, which would appear to be a crucial variable as, in principle, it determines a number of other teaching variables, i.e. selection, grading, presentation, practice, etc. Moreover, while Hammerly seems biassed by a desire to criticize the 'strong' version of the Communicative Approach and therefore does not acknowledge the importance of learner factors in the CAN

classroom, he does so when he focuses on the CMM classroom, thereby arriving at a framework which can provide a useful starting point for a more comprehensive model.

2.5.1.2 Transfer in the formal environment

Among various error sources, the L1 has traditionally occupied a central and controversial role. It seems appropriate, therefore, to a quote a number of observations made on transfer in FLL in a separate section. It has been suggested that the process may have a greater weight in a tutored rather than untutored context by McLaughlin (1978a), James (1980) and Harley and Swain (1984) who suggest that in the classroom setting L1 interference can be reinforced by three factors:

1. learners share a common mother tongue;

2. they are relatively cut off from speakers of the L2; and

3. classroom interaction is characterized by constant language switching.

A more detailed analysis of transfer in FLL has been proposed by Sajavaara (1986) who argues tutored learning is characterized by lack of naturalistic language use, conscious monitoring and conscious problem-solving operations. These three factors have mutually reinforcing effects on transfer:

1. lack of naturalistic language use results in reduced fluency. In order to compensate for this, a learner will resort to conscious monitoring, and L1 based processes will interfere with L2 production;

2. since most learners perceive the FL as a set of problem-solving operations, they will use their mother tongue in the early stages of problem-solving and then translate into the TL;

3. conscious monitoring, contrary to what is claimed by Krashen, will not

necessarily enhance performance.

If a learner makes a constant use of the above processes, Sajavaara concludes, transferred structures will fossilize.

The factors mentioned by McLaughlin, James, Harley and Swain certainly intervene in FLL, but there is no empirical evidence that they actually operate as claimed. Moreover, while factors 1 and 2 apply to any FLL context, constant language switching would seem to depend on teaching method. Lack of empirical support is a fault shared by the assumptions made by Sajavaara and so is the failure to discriminate between factors which apply to FLL in general, and those which are dependent on a given teaching method and its implementation. Lack of naturalistic language use, for example, is very often a characteristic of the FLL classroom but there are methods which claim to have overcome this limitation. Conscious-monitoring and a problem-solving attitude to FLL again seem to be linked to either a teaching approach (such as the Grammar-Translation method) which taps these particular skills or to a learner's individual approach.

2.5.2 A framework for errors in the FL classroom

Errors in FLL are of crucial importance. As has been observed in 2.2, in the formal environment communication is dependent to a large extent on linguistic clues, and therefore accuracy counts a great deal in the successful transmission of a message. In the natural environment, on the other hand, context and/or shared knowledge can help to a larger extent to facilitate understanding and can make up for the deficiencies of an ungrammatical message.

In the present chapter, a distinction has been drawn between the informal and

the formal context. This distinction appears to be at the basis of a developmental approach which allows differences to be delineated in three inter-related ways between the two contexts:

1. contextual differences.

In L1 acquisition and SLA, the learner is exposed to contextualized uses of language but, in FLL, to decontextualized uses for a reduced amount of time. Given such contextual limitations, the FL learner requires the metalinguistic skills needed to extract meaning from language -- as a system -- rather than from extra-linguistic clues. He will, at least in the early stages, have to focus on form rather than function.

2. learner differences.

The adult FL learner is at a higher cognitive level than the child acquiring his L1, and he should, therefore, be able to conceptualize and categorize language. This would seem to depend, however, on his previous experiences with language, particularly in terms of literacy-skill development, both at home and at school. Affective factors would appear to have a stronger influence in FLL (as in SLA) compared with L1 acquisition.

3. motivational differences.

In FLL motivation patterns are more differentiated due to the learner's conscious approach to the task and his ability therefore to influence, if not determine, outcomes. In the formal context, there seems to be a positive correlation between motivation and success.

The context-specificity of FLL does not negate the existence of general learner strategies as outlined by Selinker (1972) among others. They do not exclude the

possibility of a progression from transfer to developmental strategies as proficiency increases, a progression which has been claimed by a number of empirical studies (see B. Taylor 1974, 1975c). It is simply argued here that the development of such strategies is not discrete but interacts with contextual and learner-related variables in a complex way. Among contextual factors, teaching methodology would seem to be of central importance. The learner's general learning strategies can be helped or hindered, for example, by the extent to which teaching decisions -- regarding the selection, sequencing and grading of input -- clarifies access to the TL rules.

Table 2.5 *Error sources in the formal context*

- Learner:
  - affective variables:
    - attitudes and motivation
    - language anxiety
    - social and affective strategies
  - cognitive variables:
    - aptitude and intelligence
    - metacognitive strategies
    - cognitive strategies
- Teaching:
  - teacher:
    - degree of competence in the TL
    - degree of professional competence
    - personal variables
  - organization:
    - general organization
    - syllabus organization:
      - selection
      - grading
      - materials
  - pedagogy:
    - teaching method
    - nature of presentation
    - extent of presentation
    - nature of practice
    - extent of practice
    - correction

Errors, within this framework, will necessarily differ from those in a natural context in source, function and range. First, it can be expected that they will be linked

to form rather than function (at least initially) in so far as opportunities for communicative interaction are highly limited. Secondly, the type of error made by learners in accessing the form will depend on the way in which general cognitive strategies interact with a range of context-specific variables which can be divided into two categories: those identified with the learner and those with the teacher (see Table 2.5). In other words, the range of errors which can be produced will depend upon factors which many studies simply ignore (e.g. Scarpa 1990). Third, and finally, the errors that develop will not necessarily be automatically harmful, as in the Audiolingual tradition, or necessarily a sign of rule-creation that has characterized communicative attitudes to error. Their function (and therefore value) will depend upon the given context. It may be useful to examine some of the above variables in more detail.[20]

2.5.2.1 Learner

Learner variables are divided into affective and cognitive. The former include attitude and motivation, language anxiety, social and affective strategies while the latter comprehend aptitude and intelligence, metacognitive strategies and cognitive strategies. The weight of learner variables would seem to vary according to the focus of the instruction programme. If every effort is made to facilitate access to structure, it can be predicted that weaker learners will also achieve a certain level of proficiency. If learners are left to their own devices, the emphasis being on 'roughly-graded' rather than selected and sequenced input, achievement in FLL is likely to depend to a large extent on IDs. In other words, the 'ideal' learner, endowed with motivation and language-awareness, is less dependent on teaching variables, especially on quality of instruction.

2.5.2.1.1 Affective variables

Attitudes and motivation. As stated earlier in the present section, in FLL motivational patterns vary depending on the extent to which a learner can be satisfied with 'delayed gratification' and manages to concentrate on a task which is at times arduous and remote from his immediate needs. Gardner and McIntyre (1993) consider motivation to be closely linked to four other variables: integrativeness, attitudes towards the learning situation, language anxiety and 'other attributes', i.e. instrumental orientation, parental encouragement and orientation index.

As Gardner and McIntyre point out, motivation is a 'complex of factors -- proposed here to encompass desire to achieve a goal, effort expanded in this direction, and reinforcement associated with the act of learning' (1993: 4). It has been observed, however, that motivation may well be the result of achievement rather than the other way round. If the cause and the result of the process can be debated, there is clearly a link between the two, and therefore between motivation and error production.

Language anxiety. Gardner and McIntyre hold that language anxiety develops as a result of negative experiences with the TL. At first, it may only be a transient feeling, but as negative experiences accumulate, it is permanently associated with FLL. Obviously, the formal context can easily foster such a process, especially through assessment. Language anxiety may start a vicious circle and influence the learner's attitude to FLL in and out of the language classroom, triggering a series of inappropriate behaviours which may result in a constantly poor achievement.

Social and affective strategies. Motivation and attitudes have a direct correlation with the learner's use of cognitive, metacognitive and social and affective strategies, e.g. his attention span during the lesson and his participation, the amount of

practice and feedback he will go endure in oral and written work, the extent to which

he will reflect on and correct his own errors etc.

Cognitive and metacognitive strategies are analysed below in section 2.5.2.1.2,

and a taxonomy of social and affective strategies is reported in Table 2.6. Social

strategies in the FL classroom involve interaction with teacher and peers to obtain a

learning goal. Affective strategies are instead directed towards the self, providing 'self-

encouragement' when the learner is tackling a difficult task and a reward when a task

is completed with positive results.

Table 2.6 *Social and affective strategies* (adapted from O'Malley and Chamot 1990: 139)[21]

Social and affective strategies involve interacting with another person to assist learning or using affective control to assist a learning task.

1.	*Questioning for clarification*: Asking for explanation, verification, rephrasing, or examples about the material; asking for clarification or verification about the task; posing questions to the self.
2.	*Cooperation*: Working together with peers to solve a problem, pool information, check a learning task, model a language activity, or get feedback on oral or written performance.
3.	*Self-talk*: Reducing anxiety by using mental techniques that make one feel competent to do the learning task.
4.	*Self-reinforcement*: Providing personal motivation by arranging rewards for oneself when a language activity has been successfully completed.

Obviously, the enactment of social and affective strategies is dependent both on

the personality of the people involved in the FL classroom and on group dynamics.

Seating arrangements, for example, can either hinder or favour peer interaction; an

intimidating attitude on the teacher's part can block any requests for clarification; if

less motivated learners happen to take the lead of the class, this will have negative

repercussions on cooperation with teacher and peers, which will also affect the better

learners.

2.5.2.1.2 Cognitive variables

Aptitude and intelligence. Gardner and McIntyre observe that 'language aptitude is probably the single best predictor of achievement in second language' (1992: 215); its origins may well be both environmental and genetic (Skehan 1986, 1989, 1991). Intelligence, according to J. Carroll (1962), has a positive correlation with the understanding of instructions and explanations and with the ability to make inference and, while there appears to be some correlation between intelligence and aptitude, they are not generally considered as one. Their influence of both can, as Gardner and McIntyre argue, be enlarged or diminished by the quality of instruction:

> In either context [formal and informal] where material is presented in less than optimal conditions, both factors would be expected to account for differences in achievement. If the intellectual requirements were reduced by clarity of materials and instruction, intelligence would be expected to be less influential. If ability requirements were reduced by facilitating transfer of skills onto existing ones by improving lesson plans, providing ample opportunity and practice, etc., the role of aptitude would be reduced.
> (Gardner and McIntyre 1992: 216)

Learner strategies. Learner strategies as error sources have been widely discussed in the literature. There is apparent individual variation in their use, both qualitative and quantitative, depending on proficiency, aptitude, motivation and gender, among other variables. Learners can be trained in strategy application, and policy decisions can be made in order to help students in FLL (institutional strategies). In the formal environment, therefore, variation in their use will also depend on whether training and institutional strategies are in operation and on the quality of both.

As indicated, in the formal environment learner strategies will more often be focused on form rather than on function, and therefore they will result more frequently in form-based errors, at least in the early stages. However, as O'Malley and Chamot

claim, the use of certain strategies will also depend on the focus of the instruction programme:

> A classroom emphasizing the grammatical structure of the foreign language and an analytical comparison of the target to the native language fosters strategies such as **deduction** and translation. On the other hand, a classroom focusing on proficiency fosters strategies such as inferencing and **substitution**.
> (O'Malley and Chamot 1990: 140)

Table 2.7 *Cognitive and metacognitive strategies* (adapted from O'Malley and Chamot 1990: 137-8)

Metacognitive strategies involve thinking about the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring the learning task, and evaluating how well one has learned.

1. *Planning*
2. *Directed attention*
3. *Selective attention*
4. *Self-management*
5. *Self-monitoring*
6. *Problem identification*
7. *Self evaluation*

Cognitive strategies involve interacting with the material to be learned, manipulating the material mentally or physically, or applying a specific technique to a learning task.

1. *Repetition*
2. *Resourcing*
3. *Grouping*
4. *Note taking*
5. *Deduction/Induction*
6. *Substitution*
7. *Elaboration*
8. *Summarization*
9. *Translation*
10. *Transfer*
11. *Inferencing*

Cognitive strategies are closely connected to the learning process itself and, in so far as they are directly concerned with processing linguistic data, may represent the evolution of the error sources identified by EA. They include repetition, translation, and inferencing which can be identified with holophrase learning, transfer and overgeneralization respectively (see Table 2.7 above). Metacognitive strategies, on the other hand, include planning, monitoring and evaluating performance, i.e. reflecting on

the learning process itself as part of an ongoing self-regulative process.

2.5.2.2 Teaching factors

Teaching factors include: teacher, organization, and pedagogy. The first set of variables refer to the teacher's personal and professional characteristics. The second is divided into: general organization, and syllabus organization, i.e. selection and grading, choice of topic, published materials. The third comprehends: teaching method, nature and extent of presentation and of practice, use, and correction.[22]

2.5.2.2.1 Teacher

The phrase 'degree of competence' refers to an obvious problem connected with the model offered by teachers. Few of them have a perfect command of the TL and will therefore offer an imperfect model at least as far as pronunciation is concerned. This can be reflected directly in the learner's pronunciation and indirectly in other language areas. Moreover, a number of teachers are not fully competent in the areas of structure and vocabulary and therefore cannot offer consistently correct input, both in terms of explanation and in their own performance in the TL. Their level of competence in the TL will be refracted across the range of teacher factors, and their knowledge gaps will also affect self-prepared materials and correction.[23] The extent to which teacher's errors will be assimilated by learners is partly a function of the availability of alternative input sources. However, the search for alternative authority presupposes a remarkable degree of self-regulation which most learners do not have. Finally, evaluation reinforces the trend to conform to the teacher's IL.

Under the label of degree of professional competence we include the teacher's

professional skills, other than competence in the TL, such as training, teaching style and self prepared materials. These variables are encompassed by the remaining teacher factors, in particular pedagogy, and are therefore analysed with them in the following sections. A remaining number of factors are included under personal variables, from personality down to 'trivial' ones, such as the teacher's health and private life, which, however, do influence learning outcomes.

2.5.2.2.2 Organization

General organization. Provision for FLT is strongly influenced by the status FLL has in society, in the educational system and in the school. Poor general organization will mean lack of qualified teachers and teaching aids, frequent turnover of teaching staff, unsatisfactory accommodation and time allocation for the FL class. Although such an extreme situation is not common, flaws in the general organization must certainly be considered a potential error source.

Syllabus organization. The syllabus factor has three equally important component: selection and grading and materials. Selection of structures and topics to be included in a teaching syllabus is of crucial importance to a learner's achievement. In the learning process, it is fundamental to choose structures with a 'high transfer value', in Hornsey's definition (1981), i.e. samples of the TL from which relevant generalizations can be drawn, which can be used as models and adapted to a wide range of contexts. This can facilitate self-expression and give the learner a sense of achievement, thus positively influencing motivation. Similar guidelines should dictate choice of vocabulary, preference should be given to high-frequency terms which are relevant to the learner's needs, avoiding the introduction, at least at beginner's level,

of fashionable, ephemeral register-discrete items.

It is not enough merely to choose items which illustrate general patterns in the TL but to present them in an order which allows the learner to move progressively from the simple to more complex structures. The latter, which has often been called grading, corresponds in many ways to Vygotsky's (1934/1986) notion of the 'zone of proximal development', that is, the stage at which the learner can be helped to progress through interaction with an adult who mediates access to the task to be completed. The absence of grading in input can present learners with exposure to chunks of the language whose underlying rules are difficult to detect and which can, as a result, trigger errors -- e.g. transfer, simplification or overgeneralization in type -- which multiply over time. Similar errors can arise from an excessive amount of input, from insufficient re-circulation of previously accessed items and/or integration of old with newly acquired ones.

Finally, it is widely recognized that published materials often present ungrammatical input. Since input errors are often reproduced by learners, it is important that the teacher -- provided that his knowledge of the language and self-assurance permit it -- correct them as, indeed, he should correct the numerous faults that appear in published materials in the areas of selection and grading.

2.5.2.2.3 Pedagogy

Teaching method. As observed in the previous sections, the formal environment places a number of constraints on FLL. These can be largely overcome if the instruction programme guides the learner, as efficiently and rapidly as possible, to form correct hypotheses about the underlying patterns of the TL, to test them out and internalize them. If the learner is not helped to understand the rule-governed nature of the TL in

the limited amount of exposure time available, i.e. if activities focus on free communication, the predicted outcome will closely resemble Hammerly's (1991) description of the CAN classroom (see 2.5.1), i.e. a pidgin will develop, especially in the case of weaker learners.

If teaching is organized according to the guidelines suggested in 2.4.2 and in the present section, errors could still arise from, for example, inadequate learner processing skills and/or affective factors. It is not possible, of course, to determine the degree of metalinguistic awareness and motivation which learners bring with them to the FL classroom. Any teaching programme, however, which does help to clarify the form-meaning relationship in the TL, i.e. which throws the learner back upon his own resources with very limited contact time, is likely to make hypothesis-testing much more difficult, to result in increased errors (i.e. incorrect hypotheses) and undermine motivation.

Nature of presentation. At the presentation stage the learner is exposed to new lexical and structural items. As Roberts (1992b) puts it, in FLL the learner can hardly have 'intention to mean', his attention will initially be focused on the language itself. The crucial task at this stage, Roberts continues, is to aid the learner to draw the correct hypotheses regarding the form-meaning relationship which can largely be accomplished by the careful selection of the item (i.e. finely rather than roughly-graded input) and its graded presentation. Presentation involves prior decisions regarding what to input and in what order it should be inputted. A range of subsidiary decisions are also involved, such as the linguistic channel through which it should be inputted (oral/written), the clues that can help hypothesis-formation (i.e. extra-linguistic or linguistic context) and the range of topics through which it will be circulated. Moreover, if the teacher's TL

competence is incomplete, attention will need to be paid to audio-visual support.

Nature and extent of practice. During the practice stage, the learner should be encouraged to test out his hypotheses about the newly-inputted material. Initially, this can be most usefully achieved in teacher-controlled activities, such as question-and-answer exchanges and simple tasks requiring increasingly generative use of the item in question, in order to gain rapid and ongoing feedback. Hypotheses need to be tested against the teacher model in order for false ones to be corrected and/or correct ones to be confirmed. As the learner gains in confidence in his use of the TL items, teacher-controlled activities can gradually give way to more peer-interactive ones in which the emphasis shifts from medium-oriented activities to message-oriented ones, i.e. ones involving a genuine exchange of meaning.

It might be noted here that it is not only graded input but graded practice which is important if learners are to avoid developing a flawed knowledge of the TL code. Rote repetition of unanalysed chunks of language at the input/practice stages, in particular, will not equip the learner with the ability to manipulate the code and undertake increasingly open-ended activities in which the expression of personal meaning is encouraged. Setting activities requiring the manipulation of given patterns to learners who have not been taught to analyse them in the earlier stages is bound to trigger a range of uninformed errors.

Use. If, during the practice stage, learners have been encouraged to test their hypotheses about the TL and arrive at relevant generalizations, the use stage allows them to undertake activities in which the focus is on the extra-linguistic exchange of meaning. Activities at this stage should relate to, and stem from, the learner's own interests and needs and offer a range of less predictable outcomes.

These three stages in an instruction programme should not be interpreted in an overly schematic or linear way. It is clear that we are dealing with a process rather than three separate components and that the movement from mastery of language form to its functional use is ongoing. Once the learner has consciously accessed an item, he is involved in a process which -- by recycling it across a range of topics -- allows him to enrich it and move from its formal to pragmatic use.

Correction. Principled correction should help learners improve their performance. Empirical studies tell us, however, that teachers are not consistent in this respect and there is considerable disagreement about what form of correction is more effective. Edmondson (1986) actually describes how correction can have the opposite effect from that intended and actually confuse the learner. Lack of correction, on the other hand, can expose learners to wrong models, which can be internalized and/or which will clash with input from other sources and cause confusion. Clearly, correction of errors will depend upon the teacher's judgement as to their source and function.

2.5.3 EA and a framework for errors in the FL classroom

The paper by Schachter and Celce-Murcia (1977), already quoted in 1.3.3, highlights five major weaknesses with EA, among them is the analysis of errors in isolation. Schachter and Celce-Murcia were seeking to argue that, in order to gain a clearer picture of the learner's code,[24] correct as well as incorrect utterances should be analysed. What has been suggested in the current chapter is a further widening of the perspective on errors to include both learner and teacher-related factors.

This 'widening of perspective' is not a novelty in other areas of applied linguistics (as, for example, in discourse analysis, classroom observation and especially

process-product studies) but it has been applied only fragmentarily to the analysis of errors in the FL classroom, as shown in section 2.5.1. An integration of various data-collecting techniques can shed some light on errors which have traditionally been explained by concentrating on learner strategies, thereby focusing on what goes on inside the learner's mind and neglecting what goes on around him.

As pointed out in section 2.5.1, instruction as an error source is briefly analysed in the papers which lay the foundation of EA, but it is put on the same level as the other error sources taken into consideration. Only Richards (1974a) observes that 'transfer of training' could be 'a basic analytic approach' in FLL, and his indication is not expanded by further theorizing into a detailed analysis of error sources in the formal environment.

Corder himself, despite his observations about the properties of the formal and informal context and the nature of errors, fails to connect fully the two areas of enquiry. He therefore puts forward a model for classifying errors without making a distinction between the two contexts. Starting from the assumption that FLL is a product of the interaction between the learner and the teacher, Corder (see also section 1.3.1) suggests a number of different causes for error formation particular to the classroom, without specifying whether dealing with a host or foreign environment:

1. internal processing ('normal' errors) and faults with materials, teaching and learning ('redundant' errors);

2. a clash between the built-in syllabus and the teaching syllabus; and

3. insufficient or misleading data.

With regard to the formal/informal distinction, Corder (1981) points out that the L2 learner is first and foremost interested in the semantic component of input, i.e. he faces

'a semantic challenge', whereas the FL learner concentrates on its structural properties, thereby facing 'a formal challenge'.

After almost twenty years of speculation about, and research into, the demands made by the formal environment (see 2.2), it seems to be worth considering the hypothesis that errors in FLL could be largely the result of what Corder defines as a 'formal challenge', i.e. could be linked to cognitively demanding tasks, often requiring the use of language out of context, which in turn are connected first and foremost to upbringing and motivation, and then to a number of learner and teaching factors. The likely connection between 'formal challenge' and nature of error is not made in Corder's writings.

In his most complete guides to EA (1973a, 1974, 1978c), Corder indicates three direct error sources: language transfer, overgeneralization and faulty teaching techniques or materials; and an indirect one, holophrasal learning, and avoidance. However, he fails to consider whether, in FLL, teaching factors (which include teaching techniques and materials) are likely to interact with learner factors (including strategies such as transfer and overgeneralization), rather than being alternative error sources.

Selinker's (1972) list of error sources (language transfer, transfer of training, strategies of second language learning, strategies of second language communication, overgeneralization of TL linguistic material) basically refers to SLA, despite the concession made to instruction as an error source under the label 'transfer of training'. In fact, Selinker describes a situation where the learner builds up his system uniquely for communicative purposes:

> This strategy of communication dictates to them [i.e. learners], internally as it
> were, that they know enough of the TL in order to communicate. And they stop
> learning. Whether they stop learning entirely or go on to learn in a minor way,

e.g., adding vocabulary as experience demands (cf. Jain)[25] is, it seems to me, a moot point. (Selinker 1972/1974: 37-8)

Furthermore, the focal point of Selinker's analysis is the time when learners cease to learn ('fossilization') and he views errors sources in this light, i.e. as psychological processes contributing linguistic material for fossilization. This perspective obviously cannot be accepted in the formal context where, first, communicative needs seldom provide the motivation that triggers the process and where, second, learners are not normally allowed to stop learning when they consider their proficiency adequate to their needs, unless they drop out of the instruction programme. If we isolate Selinker's five central processes, however, from the issue of fossilization, they can be considered an inadequate approach in the FLL context for the same reasons as the sources listed by Corder, i.e. they must be integrated with a number of other potential error causes related to the variables specific to the classroom context.

Among the contributors to the classic *Error Analysis*, only the editor himself, Richards, and Sampson seem to point to a widening of error sources. Apart from the traditional factors that determine IL, they also list modality of exposure and production, age and sociolinguistic situation:

> Different settings for language use result in different degrees and types of language learning. These may be distinguished in terms of the effects of the socio-cultural setting on the learner's language and in terms of the relationship holding between the learner and the target language and the respective linguistic markers of these relations and identities. Included here are thus the effects of the learner's particular motivations for learning the second language as well as the effects of the socio-cultural setting. (Richards and Sampson 1974: 6)

The paper does not, however, make any reference to how the above factors could work in the formal context, but only looks at bilingualism and SLA. The contribution of Richards and Sampson is therefore rather limited in the terms of the proposal of a

theory on errors in FLL.

To sum up, EA does contain a series of points which are of some value to the present enquiry, first and foremost the identification of the more common error sources. These need to be revisited, however, in the light of teaching and learner factors which cannot but alter the weight of traditional error sources in the process. Although learner and teaching variables are not entirely neglected by EA, they are dealt with only in a piecemeal fashion. Even the studies which focus on errors in the formal context do not attempt to cover the error sources at work in that particular context, an attempt which, to the best of our knowledge, has been started here.

2.5.4 A first application

As seen in the previous section, in EA the emphasis has been on examining learner strategies. The most common pattern of development, identified by Selinker (1972) and B. Taylor (1974, 1975c) among others, is from use of transfer to use of overgeneralization. While learners may indeed follow this pattern of strategies in a natural context, however, in a formal one they are severely constrained by teaching factors. The aim of the teacher -- by selecting/sequencing and grading material etc. -- is to reduce the need of the learner to go through a complex IL (from transfer to overgeneralization), rather than encourage it. Errors may be unavoidable in open-ended activities, but if the teacher carefully selects input and sets tasks which are commensurate with the learner's knowledge at any given stage, then the latter should not feel the need to rely upon (incorrect) 'prior knowledge' in L1 or L2. Input and activities which do not help the learner to see the form-meaning relationship will, in this sense, provoke errors that can be classified as transfer or overgeneralization but whose

source is actually in the teaching process.

Before proceeding to the application of the suggested framework for the analysis of errors in FLL, a difficulty must be acknowledged, one which is common to traditional frameworks for EA and which Celce-Murcia and Schachter (1977) define as 'the proper classification of identified errors'. The attribution of an error to one or another of the learner factors appears rather problematic, whereas teaching factors would seem to be more open to objective assessment and therefore constitute a more easily identifiable error source. Obviously, the weight of each factor could be tested in a series of experiments, by keeping the other variables constant. This is an ambitious and demanding task, which has not been possible in the present study because of its exploratory nature and because of inadequate researcher control over the variables involved.

A series of examples, taken from a study conducted to test the proposed taxonomy, which are explained in greater detail in the following two chapters, can illustrate the inadequacies of traditional EA in explaining errors in FLL (see Table 2.8). What emerges is that, by taking into account the variables involved in the process of FLL, traditional views on errors need to be modified since the factors listed under learner and teaching interact with traditional error sources either to reinforce or to inhibit them.

In Table 2.8 it is apparent that what could be labelled as transfer errors are in both instances due to teaching factors. In the first case, it would appear that the transfer strategy was used first by the teacher. When the ungrammatical phrase is inputted to the learners, it becomes intake on the basis of the principle of authority (input from the teacher is correct). At this stage, transfer may be activated a second time by the learners

themselves, and the error is reinforced. The third and fourth examples illustrate how overgeneralization can be traced to teaching materials, in a process similar to that involved in the first 'transfer' error, or to nature of presentation. In this case the term *ananas* (pineapple) was inputted with other nouns referring to fruit and the learners were then asked to use the plural of the fruits studied, but were not made aware that *ananas* has only one form. Here again, instruction functions as the trigger for an overgeneralization process.

Table 2.8 *Error sources in EA (bold) and in a framework for errors in the FLL (italics)*

Example	Type of error
*Che cos'è la data oggi?	**transfer** *degree of competence*
accanto *a la stazione	**transfer** *grading (nature and extent of presentation and practice)*
*sul sdraio	**overgeneralization** *degree of competence*
*due ananae	**overgeneralization** *nature of presentation*

In Chapter One, it was pointed out that EA has promoted a radical change in the attitude towards errors, from one which regarded them as unwelcome habits to positive insight into the mental processes at work in SLA. They were unavoidable and their study aided understanding of learners' creative rule-governed approach. On the basis of the argument in 2.5, this view may still be acceptable in SLA but not in FLL where an error often represents a flaw in the teaching programme and/or the way in

which the learner approaches a given task. Certain consequences flow from this viewpoint. In the first place, learners' errors will primarily provide the teacher with feedback about the effectiveness of the instruction programme and will signal changes that may need to be made to relevant parts of that programme. In the second place, when reasonable efforts have been made to improve instructional practices and procedures, such errors may reveal learner-centred problems related to level of metalinguistic awareness and/or motivation. These can sometimes be remedied by further adapting input but may prove intractable. In the third place, when errors do occur, they imply that teachers should have clearly-defined correction strategies. Hendrickson (1978) suggests guidelines, based on a review of the literature, which seem acceptable:

1. errors should in general be corrected, as correction has positive effects on proficiency;

2. three types of errors should always be corrected: 'errors that impair communication significantly; errors that have slightly stigmatizing effects on the listener or reader; and errors that occur frequently in students' speech and writing' (Hendrickson 1978: 392); and

3. errors that might not be corrected are those made in meaning-focused activities where the teacher's goal is to create an environment which favours self-expression.

In terms of how errors are corrected, and by whom, Hendrickson (1978) and Celce-Murcia (1985) both recommend engaging learners in interactive activities which enable them to become aware of their errors and to co-operate with the teacher in their correction; these are believed to be more effective than traditional forms of teacher-led

correction.

2.6 CONCLUSIONS

Our description of error sources does not claim to be exhaustive but is intended as a first step towards a more comprehensive approach to EA in a formal environment. Both theory and research in the field have almost exclusively concentrated on learner processes, taking it for granted that the other variables involved in SLA/FLL have little effect on error production. The latter approach is a direct result of the interest in the learner and in natural processes and universals which characterized the 1960's and 1970's and is still active nowadays.

However, the tendency to view learning as an interactive process is becoming stronger and interactive theories have been, and are being, developed. The present chapter has aimed at making a contribution to this area by analysing the variables characterizing FLL, outlining a model for it and proposing a classification of error sources in a formal environment. The final section forms the foundation of the hypothesis which is going to be tested in a study, reported in the following two chapters, designed to bring out context-induced errors according to the taxonomy in Table 2.5.

Notes to Chapter Two

1. At times they rely on a mixture of the two. For example, in some of the morpheme studies (see 1.2.3) subjects which were supposed to be naturalistic acquirers had received at some stage a certain amount of instruction.

2. It has been claimed (Ervin-Tripp 1981) that if a good cultural match exists between the two languages, SLA may require only a renaming procedure. Schachter (1988) points out that 'equipotentiality' distinguishes L1 acquisition from SLA. While the

former presents the same amount of difficulty for any child, the latter can be more or less difficult depending on the learner's NL. Observations along these lines are clearly indebted to the CAH, and are therefore just as problematic.

3. Viewing L1 acquisition in the context of social experience throws light on differences in L1 competence among children from different social backgrounds. Hymes (1972: 274) quotes a paper by Cazden (1966) in which she reports differences in language development according to social status and comments: 'The differences reviewed by Cazden involve enabling effects for the upper status children. Moreover, given subcultural differences in the patterns and purposes of language use, children of lower status may actually excel in aspects of communicative competence not observed or misread in tests summarized'.

4. Ellis criticizes in particular Guiora's use of alcohol and Valium to study the correlation between inhibition and pronunciation. As a result of this experiment Guiora (Guiora 1972; Guiora, Acton, Erard and Strickland 1980) suggests the existence of a language ego. In the language ego the features of the mother tongue are objectified and acquire boundaries which become less and less permeable with age.

5. The concepts of BICS and CALP are discussed in section 2.2.1.

6. 'Native speakers appear to modify interaction for two main ends: (1) to avoid conversational trouble, and (2) to repair the discourse when trouble occurs. Modifications designed to achieve the first purpose reflect prior, long-range planning by the native speaker. They tend to govern the way s/he conducts entire conversations, and primarily concern what is talked about (conversational topic), but affect how topics are treated, too. I call these conversational *strategies*. Modifications motivated by the need to fix up conversation when trouble arises seem to be spontaneous solutions to the immediate short-term problems. They affect primarily how topics are talked about. I call these *tactics* for discourse repair' (Long 1983a:131).

7. 'Functional adjustments are made to perceive cognitive limitations and status differences. Native speakers differentiate among topics appropriate for young children and older foreign listeners. They select certain sentence forms for their conversations with foreign adults, and the forms have different underlying intent when analysed for meaning in context. Native speakers relate to their foreign partners more as conversational peers no matter how rudimentary their knowledge of English. Conversational constraints thus dictate certain adjustments made to child listeners but not made to adult foreigners or vice versa' (Freed 1980: 25).

8. 'There are at least two main reasons why the development of language is now seen as taking place over a longer period of time. The first reason is that our concept of what the child has to acquire in order to become a fully competent adult language user has broadened beyond mere lexical and syntactic competence, to include such skills as the ability to understand and produce coherent discourse, . . . and to produce language which is appropriate for a particular listener and a particular situation . . . Some of the abilities involved in these kind of linguistic skill continue to develop well into adolescence' (Harris and Coltheart 1986: 80).

9. This was originally measured in words and, at the time Wells was writing, in morphemes, after the morpheme studies reported in 1.2.3.

10. 'One frequent sequence that has been identified in conversations is [question]-[answer]; another is [question]-[request for additional information]-[response to request]-[answer to original question]. "Sequences" tend to be short and misunderstandings are cleared up in short order because of the interactive nature of the medium' (Rubin 1980: 423).

11. Rubin suggests some of the activities in the proposed 1-16 scale (from participating in a conversation to reading a story): 'carry on a conversation by writing notes or typing on linked computer terminals' and reading aloud to children. Rubin also suggests devising compute programmes with a help feature the child can use whenever he has a comprehension problem.

12. In Vygotsky's terms 'written speech' corresponds to CALP and 'oral speech' to BICS.

13. 'The logical abilities that underlie success in school performance demand objective examination of problems and selective attention to relevant information, irrespective of ordinary or commonsense meanings' (Bialystok 1991: 73).

14. In the terms used by Cummins and other contemporaries scientific concepts would be labelled 'disembedded' and spontaneous concepts 'embedded'.

15. This is not to deny, as Vygotsky argues, that FLL does not have a beneficial effect on analysed knowledge of the L1.

16. Ellis himself, at the time, seemed to favour the first approach in that he repeats (in accordance with Krashen's Monitor Theory) that learning only has limited function. Ellis isolates the three main aspects of language teaching (syllabus, materials and methodology) and argues against the adoption of any syllabus on the grounds that knowledge on routes of acquisition is still incomplete. By the same token he claims materials must not be focused on a particular linguistic item but must offer the opportunity of genuine communication which, he concludes, is also the prime function of methodology.

17. The studies are: Spilka (1976), Adiv (1980), Gustavson (1983), Tatto (1983), Pawley (1985), Pellerin and Hammerly (1986).

18. This view has been supported by, among others, Dodson (1978, 1985a), J. Allen (1980, 1983, 1984), Littlewood (1981b), Rivers (1983), Stern (1983, 1990), Hammerly (1991), Roberts (1992b).

19. Selinker (1969, 1972), Richards (1971a, 1971b, 1974a), George (1972), Corder (1974), Stenson (1974), C. Taylor (1976), Netsu (1984), Tenjoh-Okwen (1989).

20. The studies discussed in 2.5.1 have obviously provided a number of valuable suggestions for the current study.

21. Tables 2.3 and 2.4 are in turn quoted by O'Malley and Chamot from Chamot, Küpper and Impink-Hernandez (1988).

22. Two of the above factors, degree of competence and published materials, can be the direct cause of errors, which in the literature have often been labelled input errors. The term will be used in Chapter Three and Four.

23. In the particular case of British Education it must remembered that language teachers are often asked to teach two FLs and it is obviously harder to reach and maintain a good standard in both at the same time.

24. Schachter and Celce-Murcia's proposal was then taken up by Performance Analysis.

25. The paper referred to is by Jain (1974).

Chapter Three

ERRORS IN ITALIAN AS A FL IN TWO LONDON

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The present and the following chapter report a process-product study carried

out to test the validity of the model on errors in FLL proposed in Chapter Two. The

specific research questions addressed in this study are:

1. can findings on errors based on evidence from SLA be applied to FLL?; and

2. is there a correlation between errors and learning context?

The first question is directly linked to the review of SLA theories undertaken in Chapter

One and assumes that most existing studies share a common fault: that is, they offer an

inadequate account of error formation in FLL since they do not take into consideration

the variables intervening in the classroom context. The second question seeks to define

the intervening variables and focuses in particular on the link between error production

and instructional practices and procedures. Other contextual variables studied are the

learner, the teacher, the school and parental attitudes to FLL.

3.1 BACKGROUND

As indicated in the first chapter, there are several theories of error in SLA. At

one extreme Lado (1957) argues that most errors are caused by transfer from the

learner's NL and, at the other, Dulay and Burt (1972, 1973, 1974a, 1974b, 1974c,

1974d) claim that the majority of learners' errors are developmental and that only 3%

are caused by transfer. A third trend, represented by applied linguists such as Selinker, seeks to combine the two opposing viewpoints: 'it is now possible to view the creation of IL as a process reflecting (universal) hypotheses about the L2 input, as well as a process of selectively using NL knowledge *and* other ILs known to the learner' (Selinker 1989: 289).

Selinker himself (1969, 1972) was one of the first to suggest that learners' errors stem from a combination of transfer and overgeneralization strategies, in which use of the former is inversely proportional to the learner's degree of proficiency in the TL. B. Taylor (1974, 1975a, 1975b, 1975c), in his study on errors made by native Spanish speakers studying EFL at the elementary and intermediate levels, makes an identical point: 'as a learner's proficiency increases he will rely less frequently on his native language and on the transfer strategy, and more frequently on what he already knows about the target language and on the overgeneralization strategy' (B. Taylor 1975c: 394). Taylor's and Selinker's views are re-stated by Scarpa (1990) in her study of errors made by beginners in Italian as a FL at Trinity College, Dublin. Scarpa rates CA as highly effective in error prediction and, on the basis of Taylor's findings, suggests that this may 'be related to the fact that the learners were beginners'. The approach represented by researchers such as Scarpa is particularly relevant to our present work, in that at least it seeks to focus upon a tutored as opposed to an untutored context.

While this may be true, however, it suffers from several shortcomings in that it seeks to examine learner competence independently of those contextual variables which relate both to the learner and to the amount/nature of the input. Scarpa's work, in particular, shows weaknesses in three specific areas:

1. the research involved a number of confounding variables. There were, for example, a variety of IDs represented in the fact that the subjects were at different levels of knowledge of Italian and, as undergraduates in Modern Languages, were studying other foreign languages;

2. motivation, opportunities for learning and aptitude were ignored because they 'are difficult to measure and evaluate' (Scarpa 1990: 7) and because of practical problems with the administering of a questionnaire on these factors; and

3. the question of the amount of exposure to the TL and the methodology employed, including the weighting of the various skills, is not referred to and is, therefore, assumed to have no bearing on the final results.

Lack of attention to the wider language context is a feature of SLA research where it can often be assumed that variables will be relatively consistent across a range of situations. This is not at all the case, however, in a *learning* as opposed to an *acquisition* process where any of these given variables may exercise a major influence on the results. The difference is highlighted in Richards (1974a), referring to Selinker (1969), when talking about the priority of the quality of input in a tutored context:

> In a foreign language setting, where the major source of input for English is the teaching manual and the teacher, the concept of transfer of training may be a basic analytic approach, since many of the errors observable are directly traceable to the manner of presentation of the language features in the school course. (Richards 1974a: 89)

In the field of Italian as a FL, the need to take into account those factors specific to a tutored context was further argued by Katerinov who stressed: 'l'analisi degli errori dovrebbe partire da fattori di ordine didattico (metodo usato, libri di testo, motivazione, ore di studio globali, ore di studio settimanali, ecc.)' (Katerinov 1975: 25).[1]

Learner strategies cannot be examined in isolation since they inevitably interact, as Katerinov suggests, with other variables of the learning context. In our opinion, Scarpa's or Taylor's results on the relation between transfer and overgeneralization strategies may indeed be accurate but seem premised on an approach which seeks to replicate in a tutored context an untutored SLA process. In the latter, as has been indicated in Chapter Two, the learner/user is communication-led. Errors normally arise when he seeks to convey a message which lies above his linguistic competence at any given stage of the acquisition process and which compels him to overgeneralise on the basis of his knowledge in the L1 and, increasingly, in the L2. In a tutored context, however, where there are very few natural opportunities for communicative interaction, the learner's initial focus must inevitably be on the medium rather than the message. If initial focus on the medium is the most salient feature of a tutored, as opposed to an untutored context, then the cause, nature and frequency of errors is likely to depend as much -- if not more -- upon teacher-led decisions regarding the organisation, presentation and opportunities for practice of the TL as upon the strategies that the learner may bring to that process.

It may well be, therefore, that the learner will seek to employ the same general learning strategies in the classroom as outside it. The fact, however, that the teacher can control (i.e. select and sequence) the input, and ensure that the tasks stemming therefrom are commensurate with the learner's linguistic competence at any stage of the learning process, means that those rule-seeking strategies can be more efficiently guided inside the classroom and the range and extent of errors reduced. This is not to deny that the learner will make interlingual and intralingual errors but merely that such errors are more likely to arise when:

1. the activities in which the learner is involved require a degree of linguistic proficiency for which he has not been prepared, due, in part, to avoidable problems at the input and practice stages; and

2. the transition from interlingual to intralingual errors is likely to be delayed in a context in which the input does not help the learner to perceive what Jacobovitz calls 'significant generalizations' in the TL, i.e. which encourages rote-learning. In the latter case, the lack of analytic knowledge of the TL is likely not only to perpetuate transfer errors but also to provoke a range of errors associated with memory gaps.

3.2 METHOD

In order to test the correlation between error formation and learning context, it was decided to conduct a comparative study in two schools using different instructional practices and procedures for the teaching of Italian. Although most Modern Languages Departments in UK schools would claim to use a 'Communicative Approach', this does not imply that what goes on in the lesson is identical over the country. On the contrary, as Spada (1987) observes, the literature would seem to suggest differing models of classroom application:

> Furthermore, even if detailed methods, curricula and techniques for CLT [Communicative Language Teaching] were carefully prescribed, this would not guarantee that such procedures would be implemented. Teachers have traditionally taught in a manner which is consistent with their own personal philosophy of teaching and learning, and tend to incorporate methodological innovations in ways which are consistent with their individual teaching styles and experiences. (Spada 1987: 138-9)

Having chosen instruction as the independent variable, a number of other variables had to be constant: pupils' social background, ability range, age, previous

experience of foreign language learning and amount of exposure to the TL. Given the large number of variables involved in FLL, and the composite and varied provision of Italian as a foreign language at the time the study was started, it was not considered practical to delimit the variables any further.

With the aim of getting some insight into error development over a period of time, and of comparing the results with those obtained by Scarpa (1990) and B. Taylor (1974, 1975a, 1975b, 1975c), it was decided to conduct a pseudo-longitudinal study of four groups: two groups of Year 7 learners (not less than 25) and two groups of Year 9 learners (not less than 15). Therefore data allows for a comparison between the two Year 7 and Year 9 groups in the two schools.

3.2.1 Subjects

Subjects had to be learners of Italian as a foreign language, but of no other foreign language, since that would have served as a confounding variable. Moreover, they had to be of the same ability range and social background. Each set of Year 7 and Year 9 learners had to be taught by the same teacher and in the case of the Year 9 groups by the same teacher over the three-year period.

In November 1991 names and addresses of schools in London were obtained from official sources and a list of schools teaching Italian as a foreign language was compiled. Most of the schools had confounding variables largely because:

1. Italian is a minority language taught only in a few schools; and

2. the study was begun before the introduction of the National Curriculum and the pattern of provision was, as a result, extremely varied.

Given the above restrictions, only two schools seemed suitable and were invited to take part in the study. They will be referred to as School A and School B.

Even though the given schools were seen to satisfy many aspects of the study, they did not meet four requirements originally established:

1. it was not possible to keep the gender variable constant. School A is single sex (female) whereas School B is mixed. It should be pointed out, however, that the study does not address the issue of gender;

2. age could not be kept constant in the two Year 9 groups (see 3.3) and this obviously implies differences in the area of cognition;

3. the two groups in School A were of mixed ability, while those in School B were set. While this might seem to imply a differences in overall ability, however, this difference was compensated for by the fact that reading ages between the two schools were roughly comparable;

4. ideally subjects were to be English monolingual NSs in order to avoid confounding variables, but no school in London qualified. Under the circumstances, it was decided to ignore the above condition and to include NNSs and bilinguals in the study. Data from these subjects has been analysed separately with the aim of highlighting any relevant difference between bilinguals and monolinguals.[2]

The fact that the above criteria were not met means that the study suffers from certain limitations which, as Lightbown observes, cannot always be avoided in educational research: ..

> The impossibility of identifying comparable control groups or ensuring random selection for treatment groups; the influence of unmeasured variables such as

momentary motivation and attentiveness; the problem of knowing what happens
in the classroom environment when no observer is present.
(Lightbown 1991: 82)

Adapting an experimental design to the real world is a rather complex, and at times,

frustrating task which is inevitably associated with a range of imperfections. In this

sense, the applicability of the conclusions is not to be taken as absolute but rather as an

attempt to shed some light on the process of FLL, with the ultimate aim of making a

contribution, however small, to its effectiveness.

3.2.2 Data Collection

In order to arrive at a comprehensive picture of the schools under investigation,

three sets of data were considered. The first concerned the social and organizational

background of the schools and was obtained via a range of documentation; i.e. pastoral

and academic policy, language policy and, within the latter, the foreign language

syllabus and scheme of work. The second concerned the instructional process itself and

was obtained via observation of lessons carried out at the rate of two per month of the

four groups tested for two terms. Given the aims of the study, lesson observation

focused primarily upon three areas: the input, practice and creative use stages of

selected structures. Lessons were tape-recorded and transcribed with the aid of informal

notes, and further supportive evidence was obtained by informal interviews with

teachers and by analysis of teaching materials.

The third concerned the learners themselves and was obtained via aptitude tests,

a motivation and attitude questionnaire and, with the aim of developing a picture of

learners' performance in the target language, via samples of their written and oral

production and researcher-administered achievement tests. A key concern was to link

classroom observation with researcher-administered achievement tests so as to satisfy the first aim of the present study, i.e. to verify the correlation between, on the one hand, instructional practices and procedures and, on the other, error production.

The report on the study is divided into two sections. The present chapter deals with the observational side, i.e. with classroom observation and related factors such as syllabuses, materials and assessment. Chapter Four reports more specifically on the investigator's intervention, i.e. on the results of tests and questionnaires specifically designed for data collection, and seeks to discuss the latter in relation to the former.

3.2.3 Item Selection

In terms of language items, it was decided to concentrate on errors in morphology -- such as gender, number and agreement of article and nouns -- and to analyse syntactic and semantic errors as and when they arose. This choice was dictated mainly by the limited points common to the syllabuses in the two schools. A further, although secondary, factor was the existence of potentially contrasting evidence from two studies on the acquisition of Italian. The first, by Sabbadini, Volterra, Leonard and Colgi Campagnoli (1987), concludes that in L1 acquisition children aged between three and four years of age develop 96% accuracy in the use of the plural of nouns and 100% accuracy in the use of articles such as *il, la, un, una.*

The second, carried out by Katerinov (1975) into the acquisition of Italian as a second language by English NSs, ranks the use of such articles as second in a frequency scale of errors and the use of the gender/number of nouns as fourth. Apparently, while the above forms are among the first to be acquired by NSs, they seem to cause difficulty to L2 adult learners. No attempt is made here at a comparison

between the data accumulated by Sabbadini *et al.* or Katerinov and the present research project, where the individual and contextual differences are obvious, but they do provide a useful starting point for analysis.

3.3 SCHOOL A

School A is a girls' school. It enjoys a very good reputation which is reflected in the fact that, every year, it receives four applications for every place available. Its exam results at GCSE are consistently high and in 1991, the year the study was begun, the pass rate reached 98.7% in all subjects. The Modern Languages Department shares in this high academic profile and its pass rate in the Graded Proficiency Tests in Modern Languages it has used since 1986-87 averages 85.5%.

The first group of learners studied, A1, comprised 27 Year 7 learners who started learning Italian as a foreign language in the Autumn term of 1991-92. Their ages ranged between 11.07 and 12.06. The second group, A3, comprised 19 Year 10 learners, whose ages ranged between 14.02 and 14.11. Three girls in A3 were also studying French and were, therefore, excluded from the study as they did not meet its requirements.

According to the Modern Languages Department Policy, in place prior to the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1992-3, languages were offered on a rota basis. In the first two years learners studied French for one year and either German or Italian for another year and, as a rule, continued one of these languages into Year 9. It follows that the subjects who were studied as third year learners of Italian were actually in Year 10.

Seven learners in A3 had started Italian in 1988-89 and continued, after a one year gap, in 1990-91, and nine learners had started in 1989-90 and continued in Year 10 without a gap. A3 could, in this sense, be divided into two subgroups, according to whether their learning of Italian was continuous or not. The Head of Modern Languages, when consulted on the matter, observed that differences between the two subgroups usually disappeared early in Year 10. Data from the two groups analysed in Tables 4.10 and 4.11 (4.3.4) has revealed some differences between the two.

Table 3.1 *Community languages in A1*

Name	Community language	Oral fluency and literacy in first language	Period of time spent in the United Kingdom[3]	Level of competence in English
AM	Greek	Orally fluent. Reads and writes very well	Born in the UK	Second stage learner
BJ	Bengali	Orally fluent. Reads quite well. Writes a little	Born in Bangladesh. Five years in the UK	Second stage learner
EE	Arabic	Orally fairly fluent. Illiterate	Born in the UK	Third stage learner
HZ	Tagalog and Bisaya	Orally fluent. Reads and writes a little	Born in the Philippines. Two years in the UK	Third stage learner
MC	Malay	Orally fluent. Reads and writes quite well	Family from Malaysia. Four and a half years in the UK	Fully competent
PŠ	Singhalese	Orally fairly fluent. Illiterate	Born in the UK	Third stage learner
VN	Hebrew	Orally fairly fluent. Reads quite well. Writes a little	Born in the UK	Third stage learner
YW	Farsi	Orally fluent. Reads and writes well	Born in Afghanistan. Five years in the UK	Second stage learner

Finally, contrary to the initial design, eight learners in A1 and three in A3 were to varying degrees bilingual in a range of 'community languages', as revealed in Table 3.1 above and 3.2 below.[4] This factor has been taken into consideration in the overall analysis and data from bilinguals and monolingual English speakers have been examined separately to ascertain any significant differences (see 4.3.3).

Table 3.2 *Community languages in A3*

Name	Community language	Oral fluency and literacy in first language	Period of time spent in the United Kingdom[5]	Level of competence in English
CD	Portuguese	Not fluent. Reads and writes a little	Born in the UK	Second stage learner
JC	Twi, Ada and Ga	Orally fluent in Twi and Ada. Illiterate. Not fluent in Ga	Born in Ghana. Two years in the UK	Fully competent
NL	Cantonese	Orally fairly fluent. Illiterate	Born in the UK	Fully competent
PU	Bengali	Orally fluent. Illiterate	Born in the UK	Third stage learner

3.3.1 Syllabuses: A1 and A3

The aim of the syllabus for Year 7 in School A (see Appendix A), drafted by the Languages Development Centre, is to equip learners for a hypothetical visit to Italy. It is, therefore, organized on the basis of such topics as 'Personal information', 'Finding the way', 'Travel', 'At the cafe', and 'Shopping'. Surprisingly, the syllabus itself presents a number of errors (see Table 3.3 below). These include loanwords from the French, slightly inappropriate use of phrases, wrong collocations, wrong position of two adjectives, one inconsistency regarding gender, two substitution tables that lack a syntagm. Furthermore, the syllabus invariably suggests that NSs will address eleven year

olds using the polite form *lei*, rather than the appropriate familiar form *tu*, which is anyway more common now even among adults. While the vocabulary selected is in broad terms appropriate to the topics listed, occasionally odd items such as *Vietato sputare* (No spitting) are included.

Table 3.3 *Errors in A1 syllabus*

Error	Correct form
Gender	
*La viale	Il viale
Inappropriate phrase	
*È dritto	Sempre dritto
*Salga/scenda la via . . .	Prenda via . . .
*Indietro l'ufficio postale	Dietro l'ufficio postale
*Un biglietto mezzo	Un biglietto ridotto
*Un abbonamento di biglietti	Un carnet di biglietti
??In tutto costa	In tutto sono/fanno
*Prezzo netto	Peso netto (?) Prezzo scontato (?)
Use of article + preposition	
*Vorrei biscotti[6]	Vorrei dei biscotti
*Negozio abbigliamento	Negozio d'abbigliamento
Wrong position	
*Una grande/piccola bottiglia	Una bottiglia grande/piccola

More important than the occasional error contained within the syllabus is the apparent lack of sequencing and grading which is also observable in the Year 10 syllabus (see Appendix A). The latter may differ from the former in the greater degree

of maturity with which the topics are presented, and the length of time devoted to each one, but it is based upon identical organizing principles. In both, language items are subordinated to the situations in which the learner is expected to operate and this, inevitably, means that they are topic-discrete, i.e. they are not sequenced in a gradually cumulative way across a range of topics which encourages the learner to see the underlying pattern and to use it creatively to convey personal meaning. In the Year 10 syllabus, for example, grammatical patterns such as the present tense of reflexive verbs are limited to a single topic and, in the Year 7 syllabus, the eight forms of the definite article are introduced simultaneously. The lack of appropriate sequencing in both cases inevitably encourages a tendency to learn the various forms by heart rather than to internalize the underlying pattern which could then be creatively extended to new contexts of use.

Widdowson (1990) argues, of course, that a syllabus is merely an 'inert inventory of items' and that it is the task of the teacher to turn that inventory into a teaching programme which may, by recycling items across contexts, help to develop generative use. While it may be true that a syllabus cannot dictate teaching methodology, however, there is no doubt that it must influence it and the fact that items are topic-discrete does not help retention of new items nor their integration with previously-learnt material. Moreover, the problems deriving from poor sequencing and grading highlighted above are likely to grow more acute as the years of study increase. The fact that learners acquire topic-discrete language items, and are not encouraged to analyse them and apply the underlying pattern to new contexts of use, means that they have no organizing principles for generating new items and the burden upon memory becomes even heavier.

3.3.2 Classroom Observation: general

In the following two sections (and in section 3.4.2 for School B), sample lessons will be examined from the point of view of:

1. presentation, i.e. selection and sequencing decisions and their relation to the syllabus, the length and nature of presentation and the teacher's competence in the TL;

2. practice, its length, structure and nature (i.e. drilling, translation or graded activities) and the extent and basis of learners' involvement; and

3. use, which will be analysed according to the same criteria as in 2 above.

In School A, considerable emphasis seems to be placed in all classes on presenting items as unanalysed phrases to be learnt by heart. This is reflected in the priority given to the teaching of vocabulary items, usually nouns, whose selection and sequencing seem to be dictated on semantic (i.e. topic-related) rather than structural criteria. It is also reflected in the teaching of verbs which are usually confined to the first person singular with the result that learners often have recourse to that form when seeking to ask questions of each other in the second person singular. The emphasis upon phrasal learning is reinforced in the mode of presentation employed by the teacher where items are presented orally, often with visual clues to clarify meaning, and comprehension is checked simply by asking learners to 'guess' the meaning in English.

The oral introduction of items easily merges into practice activities which usually involve choral repetition of the items followed by some pseudo-communicative activity in which the teacher asks a question (with the aid of visual prompts) and learners are expected to answer chorally or individually. The lesson is usually concluded with a written exercise, which often involves copying new vocabulary and phrases from

the blackboard or worksheets. There appears to be very little opportunity for the learners to use the phrases learnt, either orally or in written form, to carry out more meaningful tasks, as in information-gap activities where the emphasis is upon the use of language to exchange information.

Presentation, practice, and use all appear to be rather unsatisfactory. Presentation of discrete items does not allow pupils to draw generalizations regarding structures and, therefore, does not provide a basis for medium-focused practice. Practice itself, being restricted to choral repetition or brief conversational exchanges, does not allow the learners to manipulate language items as a preparation for conveying personal meaning at the use stage. In the case of Italian, attention to, and controlled practice of, form would seem particularly necessary, since the language has a complex morphology. The fact that neither occurs helps explain why there is a high percentage of errors in this area in learners' oral performance and also, perhaps, why teacher correction of such errors appears to be infrequent and unfocused.

Finally, it might be noted that the teacher did not appear to be fluent in Italian judging by her performance in class. She used the TL most of the time but made a number of basic errors. In particular, her IL presented two characteristics: she consistently resorted to the infinitive instead of the imperative to give commands, and to the clumsy phrase *Vado a . . .* + infinitive to express a near-future action, instead of the far more appropriate present tense. Other frequent errors, or inaccuracies, in her oral performance were as follows:

> *Che cos'è la data oggi?
> ??Leva la mano.
> *Andiamo a revisare.
> *Finalmente. [Instead of Infine]

3.3.2.1 Lessons: A1

The observations made in the previous section can be illustrated by a series of examples such as the following excerpt from a lesson on the 'At the cafe' topic. The lesson aims at inputting the phrase *È tutto, il conto per favore!* (That's all, the bill, please!) which was presented as follows:

(6 March)

[T puts the picture of a waiter on the OHP.]
T: Ascoltate! Lui chi è?
L: Waiter.
T: È un cameriere. OK.
[T puts the picture of a lady on the OHP.]
L: Did you draw that?
T: Sì, l'ho disegnato io. Questa signora va a un caffè. Cosa vuol dire? Cosa vuol dire?
L: She goes to a cafe.
T: Ha molta fame. Cosa vuol dire?
[T feels her stomach and bends to pretend weakness due to hunger.]
L: She is hungry.
[T puts pictures of smiling faces on the OHP to symbolize greetings.]
T: Cosa dice?
L: Buongiorno.
T: Il cameriere cosa chiede?
L: Come si chiama lui?
T: Luigi. Il cameriere cosa chiede?
L: xx.
T: In Italiano.
L: Desidera?
T: Sì, desidera. Lei ha molta fame, la signora dice: 'Vorrei un panino al formaggio. [T puts pictures of waiter and lady on OHP, than adds pictures of food and drink ordered.] Vorrei un panino al prosciutto'. Lei mangia, mangia, mangia. Diventa sempre più grossa. Mangia, ha ancora fame. Chiede: 'Vorrei un gelato alla fragola'. Il cameriere dice: 'Ecco il gelato alla fragola'. Poi la signora dice: 'Vorrei una coca-cola'. *Finalmente è molto grassa [T puts picture of the lady on OHP. She has put on weight. Laughter from LL] e dice: 'È tutto, è tutto, il conto per favore!' E lui fa: 'Il conto, signora'.
L: The bill.
T: Cosa vuol dire: 'È tutto?'.
CM: No more.
T: Almost.
L: That's all.
[T writes *tutto* on the blackboard.]

T: Tutto means all.
[T writes *tuttifrutti* on the blackboard.]
T: You know tuttifrutti, è un gelato, fragola, limone, arancia, all flavours. Repeat after me: 'È tutto!'
LL: È tutto!
T: Cosa vuol dire il conto per favore?
L: The bill.
[T writes *Il conto, per favore* on the blackboard.]

It is noticeable in the above extract that the item selected for input not only has

what Hornsey (1981) calls 'low transfer value' but that analogies used by the teacher

to clarify its meaning blurred, or downplayed, the difference between singular and plural

forms of *tutto*. This tendency to treat the item as an unanalysed chunk was further

reinforced through practice activities which focused on choral repetition to aid

memorization. This is not a negative procedure in itself, considering the young age of

the learners, but it often represents the only way of practising the language offered to

A1:

(6 March)

T: Alzatevi.
[LL stand up.]
T: Copiate me. Cosa vuol dire copiare?
L: Copy.
T: Copy me.
[T makes gesture with arms to mean *È tutto.*]
T: È tutto!
LL: È tutto!
T: Il conto, per favore.
[T lifts her arm as if to call the waiter's attention.]
LL: Il conto, per favore.
[T and LL repeat the two phrases a few times accompanying them with the corresponding gestures. LL are then asked to repeat the same conversation in pairs with the aid of the same visual prompts on the OHP. After five minutes they are called to the teacher's desk to repeat the conversation.]

The whole 'At the cafe' topic was presented and practised as in the above

sample. Lesson after lesson, learners were presented with new vocabulary and phrases

in the first twenty minutes which they were then required to memorize through a variety of pseudo-communicative activities. There was little or no movement from the simple to the complex, or from guided to free expression, in the latter unit since the rote-memorization of items at the presentation stage did not permit it. The only identifiable progression was towards the accumulation of more vocabulary and set-phrases in order to arrive at a satisfactory repertoire for the topic.

Year 7 learners participated with enthusiasm in the above activities, which require little effort and allow for some movement and play. It is doubtful, however, whether they could profit from them in the long run since the lessons sampled did not provide any opportunities for them to use the TL creatively either in the classroom or for homework over the entire year. Lessons emphasizing only memorization of phrases and scripts obviously do not equip learners with the ability to adapt (rote-)learned material to new situations. Set-phrases and scripts are likely to remain in memory as unanalysed chunks and, as the latter accumulate, so do errors, especially when learners are asked to perform a creative task they are not equipped for (see 3.3.3.2).

The fact that the emphasis was upon phrasal learning does not mean that issues of structure were never addressed. In a later lesson on 11 June, for example, where fruit items were being introduced, the issue of number was explicitly addressed when the teacher drew learners' attention to morphological changes in the word *mela* ('apple'). What was noticeable about the discourse, however, was that it was untypical (rather than typical) of the teacher's approach and supplementary to (rather than the focal point of) a lesson which rapidly returned to further repetitive activities:

(11 June)

T: Perché diciamo una mela, e un chilo di mele?

L: Mele is plural.
T: Bene.
[After that the teacher asks questions about flashcards according to the following pattern: *Questa è un'arancia o una mela?* Pupils answer in chorus. As the teacher pretends not to understand the correct answer, there are bursts of hilarity. After five minutes, a pupil is asked to take over for two minutes, and then the teacher starts a new guessing game. She shows a covered flashcard and then slowly uncovers it as pupils try to guess what it represents. At the end of the lesson pupils copy the new vocabulary from the blackboard.]

While the pupil in question gave a correct response, the fact that the teacher moved on so quickly meant that it was by no means clear that the whole class was aware of the given pattern. Moreover, the ability of the pupils to perceive such a pattern was not helped by the fact that, while all the nouns of fruit used were feminine, two out of the six presented some peculiarity (*arancia/arance* and *pesca/pesche*). In another lesson about a month later, on 6 July, when the noun list was revised, four more items were added to it but, of these, two were masculine (*limone* and *melone*) and two more (*uva* and *ananas*) were irregular. 'Roughly-graded' input of this kind cannot but make learner perception of a pattern more difficult, especially when it is presented via the classroom procedures outlined above.

Correction is not frequent and is usually brief and teacher-led, as in the following examples:

(6 March)

[The teacher is showing learners a series of flashcards with pictures of items covered in 'At the cafe' topic. Learners are asked to order the item shown following the prompt *Desidera?* (May I help you?)]
T: Desidera?
AM: Un fragola.
T: Una fragola è questa. Non è una fragola.
L: È un gelato alla fragola.

. . .

T: Desidera?
L: Patatine fritte.
T: Delle patatine fritte. Delle = some, delle = some.

(16 March)[7]

MV: Il toast.
RR: Hot-dog.
KR: Il coca-cola.
T: Il è machile, boy. La coca-cola.

Learners are not invited to take an active role and grammar generalizations are not called into question: correction seems to serve the function of re-inforcing the rote-learning process learners in School A are encouraged to adopt.

In conclusion, it would seem that the approach adopted in A1 focuses almost exclusively on rote-learning. In terms of errors, it might reasonably be predicted that they would arise from two main causes:

1. a memory gap, when a learner has to perform a repetition task based upon items covered in a previous topic; and

2. a lack of analytic knowledge of the TL, when a learner has to perform a creative task requiring the generation of new meaning.

Such a prediction would appear to be confirmed by an analysis of A1's written work, presented in section 3.3.3.1 and 3.3.3.2, and in the researcher-administered task in the following chapter.

3.3.2.2 Lessons: A3

As observed in 3.3.2, input and memorization of vocabulary and phrases seem to be the main aim of Italian lessons in School A. This trend extends up into Year 10 and can be illustrated by an extract taken from the topic studied in the Spring term, 'Free time and entertainment'. In the transcription below, from a lesson on 29 January, the teacher was introducing terms related to film genres:

(29 January)

[T shows film posters.]

T: *Robin Hood* è un film d'avventura. Si chiama un film d'avventura. *The Addams Family* è un film dell'orrore, del terrore. *Hotshots* è un film comico. *Bugsy* è un film drammatico. *Prince of Tides* è un film d'amore.

[T shows film posters again and asks LL to repeat the pattern: *Un film . . .* after her in chorus. Every now and then she interrupts choral repetition and asks LL whether they have seen the film advertised in the poster.]

T: Chi l'ha visto?

L: Sì.

T: Ti è piaciuto?

L: Sì, molto.

[T introduces new adjectives: *interessante, noioso, divertente* through mimicry and drawings of a face. Choral repetition of the above follows. Then T shows pictures of actors and actresses.]

T: Questo chi è?

LL: Warren Beatty.

T: È un attore. Attore maschile. Lei è un'attrice. Un'altra parola: regista. Cosa vuol dire regista?

In oral presentation, the various nouns and phrases are not inputted within a conversation, but as discrete items in the broader, and rather vague context of the topic. The underlying assumption is that pupils, once introduced to the new vocabulary items, will be able to pass spontaneously from the single word to the sentence and thence to the conversation using their own resources. This is hardly the case, as the researcher-administered tasks analysed in Chapter Four seem to point out. Moreover, the fact that learners were not helped to see the pattern underlying what they were exposed to meant that the teacher was continually compelled to 'scaffold' their production even at the practice and use stages. This can be seen in the following examples from a lesson on 4 February (where adjectives were being revised) and one on 12 March (where set phrases incorporating the verb *andare* were being practised):

(4 February)

[T shows pictures of actors and actresses and film posters.]
T: Lui, la sua professione, che cos'è lui?
L: Attore.
T: Un attore. Lei, è un attore, lei? Lei è un'attrice?
L: Attrice.
T: Questo è un film d'avventura o un film comico?
[LL do not answer.]
T: E' un film d'avventura?
L: Sì.
T: Lui è un attore o un'attrice?
L: Attore.
T: Bello? Bello o brutto?
L: Brutto.

(12 March)

[T puts a picture on OHP. LL repeat chorally.]
T: Questo è andare al ristorante o andare a ballare?
LL: Andare al ristorante.
T: Questo è andare in spiaggia o visitare i monumenti?
LL: Visitare i monumenti.
T: Questo è andare in treno o in aereo?
LL: In treno.
T: Questa è la crema da mangiare o la crema solare?
LL: Crema solare.

What is noticeable about both examples is that the teacher almost never moved beyond alternative questions which required the learner to repeat what she had heard. It was very rare that she introduced more open-ended questions involving a structure presented in that topic or transferred from another topic. On those occasions where it did seem to occur, as in the following more 'natural' conversation on 7 May, the learners were, in fact, required to do no more than provide short (if not monosyllabic) answers or set phrases such as *Sono andata al cinema*. Their IL was, moreover, often guided by alternative questions to 'cue' their memory when they had difficulty remembering a given phrase:

(7 May)

T: Che cosa hai fatto il weekend scorso?
SP: Ho fatto la spesa, *al cinema, guardare la TV, leggere.
T: ??Non posso sentire. LR?
LR: *Amico.
T: È bello? Sono andata dal mio amico. Che cosa avete fatto?
LR: ?
T: Cosa hai fatto il weekend scorso?
VA: Niente.
T: Hai dormito?
VA: Sì, sì.
T: Cerca di parlare un pochino, dove sei andata?
VA: *Casa, mia casa.
T: ??Tutto il tempo? Noioso! JN?
JN: *Ho andato al cinema, guardare la TV.
T: Cosa hai fatto?
LN: *Sono andato al cinema.
T: Andata. SS?
SS: *Parco. Ho passeggiato.
T: CS, cosa hai fatto?
CS: *Visitare mia amica.
T: Dove abita la tua amica? Nel Nord, Sud di Londra?
CS: Sud.

As often pointed out by studies on classroom observation, the teacher dominates all exchanges and learners are limited to one or two turns per lesson. This limited productive (as opposed to reproductive) use of the TL was due essentially to the fact that -- as in Year 7 -- learners were not required to infer patterns from the examples they were presented with but simply to learn those examples off by heart which could be triggered, at a later date, by the relevant teacher 'cue'. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that despite the results of the motivation questionnaire, learners' interest in the Italian class appeared weak. Repetition of the same phrases, albeit with the pretence of performing a 'communicative' task, can become highly demotivating at this age.

It is true that, on occasion, grammatical points might be dealt with explicitly and at length in the classroom, as on 10 March where the *Passato prossimo* was introduced

(see Appendix B). The first part of the lesson consisted of a lengthy question-and-answer exchange aimed at revising the auxiliary component of the tense which had been presented in the previous lesson. This was then analysed (in English) and the grammatical rule was presented by the teacher almost as in the Grammar-Translation tradition. It is noticeable, however, that no attempt was made to encourage the learner to infer the pattern from the examples to which they had been exposed. On the contrary, the formal analysis was presented in a way which seemed to have little connection with the repetitive exercises that preceded it and followed it.

Correction, as observed earlier in the case of A1, is brief and teacher-led and seems to function as a re-inforcement of the rote-learning process that the instructional practices and procedures in School A seem to encourage:

(10 March)[8]

JN: Sono stata a Francia.
T: In Francia.
JN: Sono stata in Francia, a Parigi.
T: Dove sei stata l'anno scorso?
L: Sono stata in francese.
T: No, non in francese. In Francia. Francese is French. Dove sei stata in vacanza?
L: In Spagna.

(12 March)

T: L'anno scorso lei . . .
NS: *Sono andata.
T: No, io sono, lei?
NS: È . . . andata.

3.3.3 Materials and written work: general

In Chapter Two it was pointed out that instructional practices and procedures can prompt learners to make incorrect generalizations and/or be the direct cause of

errors. This is particularly apparent in the use of materials and written work in A1 and A3 classes. From our analysis it emerged that 64% of written work in A1 consisted of copying lists of words and phrases, practised orally, with or without English translation and, while the tasks set for A3 seemed more varied, they were not more demanding in terms of language manipulation and creativity than the corresponding oral/aural activities. Moreover, English is often used in instructions (in random alternation with Italian) and in questions and answers in reading and listening comprehension exercises.

Tasks which make so few demands upon learners may give the latter a false sense of achievement while actually hindering their chances of developing proficiency in the TL. In terms of errors, it is hoped it will become apparent from sections 3.3.3.1 to 3.3.3.4 how crucial the teaching programme is in determining them, especially if, as in this case, presentation does not help learners to perceive underlying patterns and practice and use (both oral and written) do not help them to apply such patterns to convey personal meaning in even more open situations.

3.3.3.1 Teaching materials errors: A1

Materials used in the first year are exclusively teacher-prepared. No textbook is used and only some (19) of the worksheets employed were available for direct examination, the content of the missing ones being inferred from the learners' exercise books. The syllabus was not followed literally, and, as a result, syllabus errors were not repeated in the worksheets, with the exception of the following:

*Salga/scenda la strada
*Ufficio informazione
*Un biglietto mezzo

In addition to the above syllabus-based errors, however, there was a range of input errors whose sources were, as discussed in 2.5.4, more complex and which appeared to originate with the teacher as L2 learner, e.g.:

> *Matiera
> *Un andata
> *Ha gli spiccioli?
> *Frutteria

Largely because her competence in the TL was less than complete, the teacher tended to adopt transfer and overgeneralisation strategies herself, among others, both in dealing with the erroneous items present in the syllabus and in preparing her own materials. The non-TL forms which she accepted or produced were then reproduced by learners on the basis of the authority principle, i.e. the teacher is always correct, and on the basis that the erroneous forms were those that the learners might themselves have developed using similar strategies.

3.3.3.2 Sources of written errors: A1

In A1, presentation often consisted in copying lists of words and phrases, with or without English translation. A number of spelling errors, however small, were common to most learners and probably due to a misreading of the teacher's handwriting, either from the blackboard or worksheets:

> *mate matica
> *for maggio
> *pisana [for piscina]
> *desi dera

Other errors, while they may superficially have been due to misreading the teacher's handwriting on the blackboard/worksheet, were more probably due to the inefficient

presentation of new patterns, as in the case of the plural of fruit items discussed in 3.3.2.1, particularly in the work of less able learners:

(11 June)

Learner	Error
AM YT YW	Un chilo di *mela
HG	Un chilo di *pesca
HG YT	Un chilo di *arancia
HG YW	Un chilo di *fragola
YT	Un chilo di *pera
	Un chilo di *banana
	Un chilo di *spesca

The fact that a lack of careful sequencing had hindered the learners' capacity to see the underlying pattern almost certainly helped promote the confusion between singular and plural across a range of examples. Such errors are the source of considerable concern when we bear in mind that learners in A1 did not have access to reference materials other than their own exercise books and might easily have treated such examples as models to apply to other language items.

Another category of errors, particularly at the practice stage, seemed even more obviously attributable to inadequate selection, sequencing and/or oral practice. Examples of such errors can be seen in the exercises devoted to exploiting the structure *a* + definite article which was introduced in the lesson on 15 November and which, subsequently, had only four pieces of work devoted to it despite its complexity. Learners were required to answer some true/false questions and then to produce a number of sentences on the basis of symbols and/or drawings, as follows:

(15 November)[9]

P 50 m → ⊠ = Il parcheggio è vicino all'ufficio postale

While the above exercises demanded very little manipulation of the structure in question, it was clear from the range of errors made that most learners had simply failed to grasp the pattern underlying the use of the preposition *a* and nouns of different gender. Out of the 15 students sampled, only one learner (MC) made no mistakes, the total number of errors being 34, copy-writing ones excluded, that is, an average of 2.26 out of 3 or a percentage of 80.95%. Such errors included the following:

(15 November)

Learner	Error
BA	accanto * all la stazione
BA DM	vicino *all' la stazione
BA RR	vicino *all' il porto
BJ HZ LL TC	vicino *il porto
BJ LL RR TC	accanto *la stazione
EE	accanto *al il campeggio
EE SL	accanto *all' stazione
	vicino *all' porto
ER	davanti *al stazione
	accanto *al stazione
HZ	*davanti FS
	*accanto FS
KR	davanti *la stazione

Learner	Error
KR RR TC WE	dietro * la stazione
SS	accanto *a la stazione
	vicino *a la porto
	davanti *a la stazione
VM	accanto *al la stazione
WE	*Il campeggio la stazione

The variety of different solutions to the exercise would seem to confirm the hypothesis that instruction has failed to give direction to learner strategies. While in traditional EA, transfer and overgeneralization would be offered as explanation of the above errors, it appears that the latter can be more usefully attributed first to selection and sequencing factors and, secondly, to the nature and extent of input and practice. This is not to deny the importance of learner strategies, but simply to suggest that, in a learning context, they can either be guided towards correct generalizations or left to work unhindered, as in the present case.

What is also noticeable about the above is the extent to which errors committed at one stage in the learning process can themselves contribute to the accumulation of errors at a later stage. In the above example, the fact that learners had not been helped earlier in the year to internalize the pattern governing the gender of nouns meant that they were deprived of any organizing principle when seeking to combine such nouns with the preposition *a*. A similar process could be seen in another lesson on July 6 when learners were requested to write sentences on the basis of the picture of one or more pieces (see Appendix C).[10] Once more, the fact that learners had not been helped to internalize the notion of gender meant that they experienced problems in identifying the

gender basis of the plural of nouns. In other words, errors seem to be built upon earlier errors. Such a process was reflected in researcher-administered tests analysed in Chapter Four.

Only on four occasions in the whole year pupils were asked to write a complete conversation, that is to go beyond the single phrase or two lines dialogue characteristic of the practice stage. Apart from one case where no guidelines were given, such occasions involved pupils[11] in merely repeating set phrases learnt by rote in response to symbols/drawings or written cues, as in the example below:

(21 February)

a - Buongiorno.
b - . . . . . .
a - Desidera?
b - . . . . . . (She wants a strawberry ice-cream)
a - Ecco. (Ecco = here you are)
b - Quanto costa?
a - . . . . . . (It costs lire 1.000)

What is to be noted about such cued dialogues is that the English prompts -- usually in the third person -- can themselves become a source of errors to the extent that they enforce upon the learner an unnecessary process of translation.

The only conversation without guidelines was assigned early in the year, which is rather surprising since no creative work was set later on. An example of the response to it by one of the ablest learners (MC) is given below and appears to be well-structured and accurate except for one errors in register and two spelling mistakes:[12]

(29 November)

C - Scusi!
J - Sì.
C - Dov'è la stazione, per favore?
J - Prenda la seconda strada a sinistra. La stazione è sulla destra.
C - Accanto al cinema?

J - No, davanti alla piscina.
C - Grazie.
J - Come ti *chaimi?
C - Mi *chamo Carol. E tu, come ti *chaimi?
J - Mi *chamo Jane.
C - Dove abiti?
J - Abito a Roma.
C - Arrivederci Jane!
J - Arrivederci Carol!

What is interesting about the above is the extent to which the learner's IL reflects teacher-led decisions in terms of presentation and practice. The many accurate uses of the TL indicate an intelligent use of the set phrases learned in class whereas the errors -- such as that on register where she passes from the formal *lei* to the informal *tu* for no apparent reason[13] -- can be explained by the fact that certain voices of verbs, *scusi* and *prenda*, were inputted only in the third person singular (formal register) and some others, *ti chiami* and *abiti*, only in the second person singular (informal register).

3.3.3.3 Teaching materials errors: A3

Under 'degree of competence' are grouped errors which are directly linked to the teacher's proficiency in the TL (see 2.5.2). A large number of such errors are contained in A3 worksheets, as reported in Table 3.4 and these are classified under broad grammatical categories and 'omission'.[14] The quantity of errors is surprisingly high and, as in the case of A1, they are very frequently replicated by learners in their written production.

If these errors were analysed in terms of EA, most of them could be explained as transfer, both from English and French,[15] or overgeneralization errors. As hypothesized in 2.5.4 and 3.3.3.1, however, in a formal learning context, their source may lie less in learner strategies than in the teacher's erroneous input which is accepted

by the learner on the basis of two factors: the authority principle and 'identification'.

That is, on the basis that these forms are produced by the teacher using the same

strategies that the learner himself may have applied in the exploration of the TL.

Table 3.4 *Errors in A3 worksheets*

Error	Correct form
Article	
*Un'attore comico	Un attore comico
*Uno grande specchio	Un grande specchio
*Non c'è un giardino/balcone/garage	Non c'è il giardino/balcone/ garage
*Quando si porta una sciarpa e i guanti?	Quando si portano (la) sciarpa e (i) guanti?
*Il/sul scaffale	Lo/sullo scaffale
*Il tuoi compiti	I tuoi compiti
*L'Israele	Israele
*Sabato il dieci dicembre[16]	Sabato dieci dicembre
Clitic	
*Si può abbronzarsi	Ci si può abbronzare
*Si può vivere in molti	Ci si può stare in molti
Gender	
*Questo foto	Questa foto (fotografia)
*Un televisione	Una televisione
*Un serpe	Una serpe/un serpente
*Tutto Firenze	Tutta Firenze
*Sul sdraio	Sulla sdraio (sedia a sdraio)
*Nel regione di Toscana	Nella regione Toscana
*Sono andata	Sono andato
Lexical	
*Mappa	Pianta
*Prospetto	Depliant
*La sera	Il pomeriggio
*Mangi la cena	Ceni
*Prendiamo la prima colazione	Facciamo la prima colazione
*Che cos'e la data oggi?	Che giorno è oggi?
*È andata	È stata
*Dove sei restata?	Dove hai alloggiato?
*Dove si tratta?	Dove è ambientata?

Table 3.4 *Errors in A3 worksheets*

Error	Correct form
Number	
*Delle pianta	Delle piante
*In vacanze	In vacanza
Omission	
*Andiamo sciare	Andiamo a sciare
*Quando si chiede	Quando mi si chiede
*Che genere sono	Di che genere sono
*Nell'ovest	Nella zona occidentale
Possessive	
Per le *mie vacanze	Per le vacanze
*I miei occhiali	Gli occhiali
Preposition	
*Nella periferia	Alla periferia
*Nella casa	In casa
*Nel anno	Nell'anno
*Al aereoporto	All'aereoporto
*Alla casa	A casa
*Ho fatto le passeggiate	Ho fatto delle passeggiate
*Il fiume a Firenze	Il fiume di Firenze
Spelling	
*Bichiere	Bicchiere
*Biancho	Bianco
*Qualchevolta	Qualche volta
*Andallare	A ballare
Tense	
*Che tempo faceva?	Che tempo ha fatto?
*Faceva bel tempo	Ha fatto bel tempo
*Pioveva tutti i giorni	È/Ha piovuto tutti i giorni
*Il sole splendeva	C'è stato il sole
Verb construction	
*Ho seduto	Sono stata seduta
*Ti ha piaciuto	Ti è piaciuto
Word Position	
*Città bella	Bella città
*Anche mi piace	Mi piace anche

3.3.3.4 Presentation errors: A3

In A3, written work assumes a more prominent role in the learning process than in A1 in two respects. First, it is used not only to consolidate items practised orally but to introduce new material and, secondly, the range of written activities tends to widen significantly and indicate an increasingly asymmetrical development between oral and written skills. While written work assumes a greater prominence than in the past, however, it continues to share many features in common with the presentation of new items that can be traced back to the early years and which encourages given categories of errors.

Two features stand out. The first is the fact that new items are often introduced in a way that deliberately impedes rather than facilitates the learner's ability to grasp the pattern underlying them. A useful example of this is the introduction of new vocabulary which is presented in the form of a list but which, as in the furniture list from the topic 'House and home', makes no attempt to differentiate masculine and feminine nouns:

(17 September)

Camera da letto
Il letto - A bed
Una lampada - Lamp
L'armadio - A wardrobe
Una scrivania - Desk
Il tappeto - Carpet
Le tende - Curtains
Il radiatore - Radiator
La sveglia - Alarm clock
La finestra - Window

In the above list, it is not only the lack of consistency in the English translation which is of concern, i.e. the fact that the indefinite article is simply not translated at all or that the use of the definite article is twice translated by the indefinite article. Equally

important is the fact that masculine and feminine nouns are listed in a jumbled order and two of them are preceded, without any explanation, by the indefinite rather than definite article. This presentation of new items as random rather than as governed by underlying patterns cannot but continue to cause memory gap errors or errors based on incorrect generalizations.

Moreover, when there is an attempt to present a new item more systematically, it tends to share the problems already identified in the oral presentation of grammatical items illustrated in 3.3.2.2. above. An example of this is the worksheet illustrating the use of the structure *in* + definite article and followed by sample exercises:

(25 September)

IN THE

The word 'in' in Italiano is the same as English. This is frequently followed by 'the'. When this happens you should refer to the table below.

IN + IL → Nel
IN + LA → Nella
IN + L' → Nell'
IN + I → Nei
IN + GLI → Negli

e.g.   Nella cucina   Nell'ingresso

1. In the sitting room → Nel soggiorno
2. In the bathroom → Nella stanza da bagno
3. In the car → Nella macchina
4. In the books → Nei libri
5. In the cupboard → Nell'armadio
6. In the bath→ Nel bagno

What is problematical with the above exposition is not only that it is incomplete, i.e. *in + le→* nelle and *in + lo →* nello are missing,[17] or that the list of phrases with English translations does not contain any example with *negli*. More important is the fact that no attempt was made to introduce such a complex structure by helping pupils to infer

the patterns from a series of examples graded over a period of time. On the contrary, the formal analysis acted as a substitute for such a process and seemed to have little connection with the activities that preceded and followed it. It is unlikely that, by itself, such a formal description would overcome the list of errors revealed only a week earlier (17 September) in response to questions on the worksheet of the *Dove metto la televisione?* ('Where shall I put the television') type, e.g.

(17 September)

Learner	Error
BN	*Nel'salotto *Nel sala da prenzo *Nel camera da letto
CD	*In una (used with every noun)
JC	*Nel' salotto
NJ	*Nell la camera da letto *Nell salotto
NS	*Nella la camera da letto *Nella il soggiorno *Nella il salotto *Nella la camera da letto *Nello la cucina
PSu	*Nell salotto *Nell sala da pranzo *Camera da letto *Ingresso
SC	*Nella la cucina *Nella il salotto *Nella la stanza da bagno *Nella la camera da latto *Nel l'ingresso

The same absence of grading highlighted in the presentation of new items also characterises the move to the practice and use stages. Tasks appear to be arranged in

a random order rather than in a progression from guided to free expression. An example of this can be seen in the 'House and home' topic which started with a reading comprehension followed by a fill-in the blanks exercise and ended with a composition on one's own home. This was then followed by a list of nouns referring to furniture, which would have been of use for the above composition had it been provided in advance, before moving to a further gap-filling activity. In this range of activities, there was no progressive use of the structures presented in the early stages and, if the errors produced were relatively few, this was largely because of the undemanding nature of the exercises in general rather than because the patterns had been internalised.[18]

As indicated earlier, the lack of grading in the presentation of new items and in the tasks designed to practise them is a long-term feature of the learning process. Errors made in number and gender in A1, for example, are thus replicated in A3 where learners' guesses do not become more educated as they continue their study of Italian. Indeed, the fact that the same problems in presentation and practice continue mean that errors are rarely the product of a single moment of the teaching/learning process but a cumulative response to the entire instruction programme. As suggested, this can often be hidden by simple tasks -- e.g. listening/reading comprehension and cued question-and-answer exercises -- which place minimal demands upon the linguistic knowledge of learners and their ability to manipulate language creatively. It is readily apparent, however, when more creative activities are set, such as the composition exercises that were employed with some frequency at the beginning of the year.

What becomes obvious in the less guided form of written work represented by composition was the existence of a learner IL which Hammerly (1991) labels a 'classroom pidgin'. This was evident in the composition exercise carried out under the

'House and home' topic, where learners were asked to write a description without the necessary linguistic preparation,[19] or in the following example where they were asked to write a brief description of a morning routine based on a series of pictures:

NL   Il *giornato di Nico. Nico *è dorma. È molto tranquillo. Sono *sette. *Ha svegliarsi! L'orologio *è suona. Nico si sveglia. Lui *salira *fuori *di letto. Va nel bagno. Nico canta nella doccia. *Ha strofinata. Poi si *vestia. *Scenda dalle scale, *della cucina. Nella cucina, *prenda la colazione e *bera il tè o il caffè. Poi, *porta fuori l'impermeabile. Poi, è domenica!

The above example by learner NL, who was considered to be among the most proficient by her teachers, is characterized by a range of errors in verbal forms which are clearly the result of a series of incorrect generalisations developed over a period of time. Similar compositions based on the 'Holiday' topic (a postcard to a friend) reveal the same 'grammatical confusion' especially in relation to gender and verbal forms:

(9 June)

Learner	Composition
BN	Cara MH, sono arrivata a *l'Israele ieri sera. Ieri ho visitato la spiaggia, *il discoteca e il 'Wailing Wall'. Fa caldo, *I tempo qui è bello. Mi sto divertendo. Oggi *andare *la piscina. Tanti saluti da BN
MH	Cara BN, sono *arrivi a Roma 9.00 *pm martedì. Fa caldo *molto! Io sono *stato *in il mare. *Oh *visito museo. Mi piace Roma *molto la gente locale *a simpatica. Sto bene, ciao, MH
NJ	Cara C, sono stata a Rimini. Ho *alloggiata in la *campeggia per due *settimana. *Il tempo è bella. *Molto caldo c'è il sole. Ho *fatto nuotare, *ballare e una passeggiata. Ho visitato *molto museo. *Amore NJ
SC	Cara NJ, sono a Rimini. Ho viaggiato in aereo con *mia famiglia e *una amica. *Ho alloggiato per due *settimana. Fa bel tempo c'è il sole, *il temperatura molto alto. *Ho sono andata in bagno [ho fatto il bagno?]. Io *molto *bronzatta. *Andare a ballare stasera. Ciao SC

Once again, overgeneralization and transfer would be the more common labels used, within an EA framework, to classify the above errors, although a number of them cannot but fit into the simplification category, which shows the lack of linguistic awareness of School A learners. Sentences such as *Oh visito museo*, *Io molto bronzatta*, *Andare a ballare stasera* and *Oggi andare la piscina* where constituents are omitted and verbs are in the infinitive or in the (incorrect) present tense provide clear examples of that. Errors in the above compositions can be most easily explained using the taxonomy proposed in 2.5.2 and taking into account a range of factors specific to the teacher, particularly degree of competence, selection and grading.

3.3.4 Assessment: A1 and A3

In the whole year, six tests were administered to A1, and thirteen to A3. Most of these involved dictation of a single word or article + noun in Italian immediately followed by their translation into English. Such tests only measure auditory and visual memory and are grossly inadequate as achievement tests, even if they mirror the emphasis on vocabulary which characterizes Italian teaching in School A. As in the case of the Graded Objective Tests discussed in the following paragraph, it can be argued that dictation + translation tests cover the scanty competence attained by learners in School A.

Only two tests did not involve dictation and translation and they were administered to A1 on 9 December and 23 March. The distribution of the tests was not even. They were concentrated in the Autumn and Spring terms with an average of two tests per month in the case of A3, and one per month in the case of A1. Obviously, their

spacing over the year does not appear to be satisfactory since the units taught after 25 March were not tested until the end-of-year test.

The Graded Proficiency Tests used by the school are just as unsatisfactory as illustrated by the reading and listening tests for Level One used for A1. These consisted of multiple-choice exercises which simply require the learner to tick the correct translation of one word from English into Italian, or from Italian into English, as illustrated in the following examples. The first two are taken from the reading test and the second two from the listening test:

1. What would you buy in a building carrying this sign?

PANETTERIA

A. stamps
B. fruit
C. bread
D. clothes

10. If you wanted a cheese sandwich you would look at the menu for

A. Panino con prosciutto
B. Pasticcino
C. Un amaro
D. Panino con formaggio

2. Come ti chiami?

A. Your name
B. Your date of birth
C. Your age
D. Your nationality

15. Accanto alla piscina

A. Near the youth hostel
B. Next to the swimming pool
C. Behind the police station
D. On the other side of the car park [20]

Both tests place minimal demands on the learners' TL knowledge and the high pass-rates therefore do not necessarily mean a high level of achievement. The fact that the same tests are repeated year after year casts further doubt on their validity and it seems

that, although badly designed, they are very effective in concealing the weaknesses of the syllabus.

3.4 SCHOOL B

School B is a mixed school where pupils are divided into 'broad ability bands' on the basis of their primary school records. The school has a good academic record. the pass-rate at GCSE in 1989 being 96% in all subjects and 100% in Italian. In 1992 the pass rate in Italian was again 100%, with six A's, one B and one D. The interest in the teaching of Italian has increased over the years: at the time of the study there were ten groups.

The first group that was studied, B1, comprised 24 Year 7 learners who started learning Italian as a FL in the Autumn Term of 1992-93. Their ages ranged between 11 and 11.11. The second group, B3, comprised 24 Year 9 learners, whose ages ranged between 13.01 and 13.11. Four learners in B1 and one in B3 have one, or both, parents of Italian origin. They were therefore excluded from the study because they did not satisfy its requirements. According to the school language policy, in the beginning of Year 7, learners are taught each of the languages offered[21] for a week. At the end of this introductory carousel, they choose one language which they study for five years. Of course, choice is subject to availability and, as for the other subjects, learners are taught in ability bands. Both B1 and B3 belong to the top to medium ability range. They were preferred for our study to the medium to low ability groups because their average reading age matched more closely that of School A learners (see Appendix J). Further to our enquiry, conducted according to the self-assessment principle adopted in School A (see 3.3) 6 learners in B3 were found to have some knowledge of a community

language, as shown in Table 3.5. As for School A, data from bilinguals and NNSs have been analysed separately. Last but not least, it may be noted that both teachers and pupils in School B were very co-operative and readily accepted the demands imposed by the research on their daily commitments.

Table 3.5 *Community languages in B3*

Name	Community language	Oral fluency and literacy in first language	Period of time spent in the United Kingdom[22]	Level of competence in English
AS	Twi	Only listening	Born in the UK Moved to Ghana for four years as a baby. Ten years in the UK	Fully competent
AJ	Twi	Only listening	Born in the UK	Fully competent
HS	Gaelic	Only listening	Born in the UK	Fully competent
MS	Patois	Only listening	Born in the UK	Fully competent
TY	Amharic, Afrikaans Sesotho	Orally fluent in Amharic. Only listening for the remainders	Born in the UK	Fully competent
YR	Maltese	Orally fluent	Born in Malta. Five years in the UK	Fully competent

3.4.1 Syllabuses: B1 and B3

On the surface, the syllabuses for School B seemed organised on similar topic-based lines to those for School A. The syllabus for B1, for example, was devoted in the Autumn term to 'Personal identification' and 'Basic classroom exchanges', in the Spring to 'The family' and 'Parts of the year' and in Summer to 'Telling the time', 'Food and shopping for food', 'Daily routine' and 'Directions'. The syllabus for B3, while it was under revision at the time of the research due to a change in the textbook used, essentially involved revision and expansion of the first year syllabus around a

slightly different range of topics. While topic-based, however, both syllabuses in School B showed notable differences from those in School A in four areas:

1. they did not contain any errors that might be reproduced, via the teacher, in the learners' oral or written work;

2. they were more differentiated, being divided into 'core' and 'higher' levels in relation to the amount of vocabulary, language structures and tasks set; and

3. there was a stronger emphasis on structural progression than in School A.

The syllabus for B1, for example, which follows the requirements of the National Curriculum, was organised according to the following headings: vocabulary, language structures, differentiated activities, skills and revision opportunities, and the syllabus for B3 was similarly organised according to the following categories: topic/vocabulary, language development, extension work, revision, additional sources and assessment. The section under language development was further sub-divided into grammar, structures and functions. The syllabus in both B1 and B3 was based on selection and grading principles which facilitate learners' access to the structures indicated above. The teacher (personal communication) indicated, for example, that she sought to follow broad grading principles in the introduction of new items, e.g. not to introduce nouns which present an exception to the rule/pattern she was trying to establish. It might finally be noted that the topics covered in School B, particularly in the B1 syllabus ('The family', 'Daily routine' etc.) appeared to be more relevant to learners' interests than those in School A which pivoted around a hypothetical trip to Italy.

3.4.2 Classroom observation: general

The presentation of new items in School B shared certain features with that in School A, particularly in terms of the preoccupation with vocabulary lists which, in B3, were based on teacher-prepared materials and/or the coursebook *Ciao!*. While there were similarities, however, the essential differences would appear to be twofold. First, there tended to be a greater variety of activities at the presentation stage in School B than in School A, probably because the teacher relied more on the textbook which offered a wider choice of tasks. This involved, for example, in addition to presenting isolated vocabulary items or phrases, the use of introductory dialogues containing new words and structures that learners were encouraged to practise. Secondly, there was a greater emphasis upon the direct presentation of structures. This occasionally involved the teacher in inviting learners to infer the pattern from the examples presented but, more often than not, it was the teacher who explained the grammar and imparted the rule and the exceptions.

The fact that pupils at the presentation stage were given some insight into the structure of the items in question, albeit largely deductively, means that the practice stage could be more varied than in School A. Although drills from *Avanti!* were by far the most frequent form of practice, the range of exercises was generally more varied and extended to asking learners to read aloud conversations from the coursebooks and dramatise them, activities which were never observed in School A. While learners were given opportunities to practise what they had learnt, however, they were rarely given open-ended activities which involved the generation of personal meaning. This may be understandable in the case of beginners but is certainly not in the case of intermediate learners in B3. This is not to deny that the teacher encouraged learners to manipulate

the structure in question, whenever the opportunity was available, but merely that mastery of the grammar was rarely utilized for creative use. The teacher appeared more intent upon the accurate internalisation of the structure -- which explains her frequent correction of grammatical and pronunciation errors -- than upon its use for purposes of communication.

The teacher in School B was a NS of Italian but, despite her fluency in the TL, she did not use it very much in the lesson and at times had recourse to a mixture of two languages, even within the same sentence. This reflected her greater emphasis than in School A upon analysing what was being learnt for the benefit of the learners and contrasting it with their L1. While there is an improvement in the Italian/English ratio over the five years, in B1 the TL is almost exclusively an object of instruction rather than a medium for classroom communication and in B3, while the TL is used more frequently, it is still not used systematically.

As in School A, most lessons were teacher-centred. The large majority of exchanges were from teacher to learner rather than among peers and learners rarely had the chance to do pair or groupwork. Attention was paid to ensuring that each learner participated in the lesson and to checking comprehension and understanding, especially in the case of grammatical rules. The learners appeared motivated although the results obtained in the motivation questionnaire (see 4.3.1 and 4.4.1) did not entirely confirm this impression. Within normal limits, most learners were attentive and participated with interest and, although B3 were chatty, they settled down readily and worked fast and accurately.[23] Assignments were completed by the majority of learners in both groups and attendance was generally high.

3.4.2.1 Lessons: B1

For B1 the presentation, practice, and use stages often coincide with those of the coursebook (see 3.4.3). Most lessons sampled involved the rehearsal of dialogues, drills or reading aloud from the textbook, a procedure which was used extensively. A typical example of presentation occurred towards the end of the Spring term in the topic 'House' where a variety of vocabulary items were introduced via pictures or, slightly later on 8 March, when items were presented without any visual context at all:

(8 March)

T: Cos'è un divano? What sounds like?
CM: A sofa.
T: Well done, CM. A divano is a sofa. Un divano. You think about divan. Now try to understand dischi is record, giradischi, what do you think it is? Record-player. Giradischi is a record player. Gira, gira. [T makes turning movement with hand.]
L: What do you say for compact disk?
T: We say the same. Number four, una lampada. A lamp. There are a lot of words which are similar, easy to remember. Lampadario is the one which hangs from the ceiling, you call it light, you call it chandelier.
SC: Luce.
T: Well done, light, lampadario. Luce means light, any kind of light. The one you will see in the picture is in the middle of a room, is lampadario. I don't think you can guess this. [T points to the word poltrona.]
L: Table.
L: Television.
L: Front door.
MA: Armchair!
T: Armchair! How did you know?
MA: A lucky guess.
T: A lucky guess for MA. He said una poltrona is an armchair. Una poltrona. Now I know you can't guess this. Un quadro.
LL: It's a picture. We have done that with the test.
T: Well done, they remember from your test. Un quadro. Now, this is a funny one, uno scaffale.
L: Scaffolding!
T: Similar to scaffolding. If you have a scaffolding against the wall, what will you do with it?
LL: Shelves!
T: Shelves, well done. It is similar to a scaffolding. Uno, non un. I'll tell you the rule afterwards.

While the above activity makes extensive (and unnecessary) use of translation, learners were stimulated to reflect upon the language in question and to develop strategies to guess the meaning based upon their existing knowledge of Italian and/or comparison with the L1. Moreover, as in the case of *lampada*, *lampadario* and *luce*, useful wordfields were explored. Another example of the attention paid to clarifying the meaning of new items through analysis can be seen in the revision of gender that occurred somewhat earlier on 11 January:

> (11 January)
>
> T: What is the difference between ragazza and ragazzo?
> L: Feminine and masculine.
> T: I know that but what is the difference in the spelling?
> L: One is *a* and the other is *o*.
> T: *O* and *a* . . . [T writes *ragazza* on the blackboard.] se io voglio dire a beautiful girl, what do I write next to it?
> LL: Bella.
> T: Se io voglio dire un ragazzo?
> LL: Bello.
> L: Brutto [jokingly].
> T: Ragazzo bella. È giusto? Cos'è sbagliato?
> LL: No, bello!

Learners showed interest in grammatical explanation and at times corrected each other. In one lesson, a girl asked if she could play Giorgio's part in a dialogue they were rehearsing and when the teacher said to her she couldn't be a Giorgio, but a Giorgia, a boy exclaimed: 'Then I can be a Lauro!'. Awareness of grammatical patterns is helped by the practice of calling learners by the Italian version of their names, or its nearest equivalent.

As indicated in 3.4.2, the fact that learners were helped in the early stages to see the underlying pattern of the items in question freed them for more open-ended activities at the practice stage. While this was often restricted to question and answer

exchanges, as in the following example where gender was once more explored, it had the advantage of allowing them to extend that pattern (or their hypothesis of the pattern) with new linguistic items:

(18 January)

T: OK, vediamo, AM, sei inglese?
AM: Sì, *è inglese
T: Sì, sono inglese. PJ, sei inglese?
PJ: Sì, sono inglese.
T: FL, sei alto? [T makes gestures to mean tall and short.] Sei alto? No, sono
 . . . sono?
FL: ??
L: Piccolo?
T: Sono piccolo. FL, sei biondo?
FL: ??
T: MD sei bello?
MD: ??
T: Sì, sono bello e modesto. Su, ripeti.
MD: Sono *bella e modesto.
L: Bello.

The care that the teacher took in ensuring that learners were aware of the given pattern extended to error correction. Whereas the teacher in School A tended to correct infrequently (and often without explanation), the teacher is School B tended to correct errors according to the following pattern:

(22 February)

T: What was wrong with LJ's ho and ha?
NF: He pronounced the *h*.
T: He pronounced the *h*. Why you shouldn't? Because the *h* in Italian is silent. We need it to write it down. Later on we'll see that sometimes *o* or *a* have a meaning, *a* means to. All you need to know now is that the *h* at the beginning of the word is silent.

Correction typically took this format: as an error was detected, the teacher stopped the activity and asked the class to point out the error. Generally learners could correct their classmates' errors and at times they could also correct their own errors. The teacher

often concluded the sequence by expanding the correction proposed by the learner and stating the relevant rule.

3.4.2.2 Lessons: B3

As observed in 3.4.2, presentation of new language items was usually carried out in a teacher-centred mode, i.e. the teacher stated the rule rather than guiding the learners to discover it from instances of its use. A typical example of this deductive approach, which became more pronounced with older learners, can be seen in the lesson on *di* + definite article reported in Appendix C (5 January). Although a certain attempt was made to elicit generalizations from learners, the approach was rapidly abandoned and the teacher assumed the main role as 'dispenser of knowledge'. In this specific case, learners would probably have been able to make more sense of the rule and (even to induce it themselves) if they had been provided with a number of relevant examples (i.e. full sentences), rather than being asked to infer the rule on the basis of memory and of the table written on the blackboard.

It is true that the teacher was more prepared to relax her control and invite the learners to indicate the pattern at the practice stage but, as the lesson on 29 March illustrates, this usually involved revision of what was known (or should be known):

(29 March)

T: Cos'è nero?
LL: Black.
T: Black. Posso dire una porta nero?
SA: Black door.
L: No, the doors are not black.
T: No, but can I say una porta nero?
MB: Nera.
T: OK, una porta nera, va bene e come si dice white?
LL: Bianco.

T: Bianco, bianca. SM, quando dici bianca e non bianco? Quando lo dici?
SM: Bianca?
T: Yes.
SM: When the word ends in *a*.
T: OK. Vediamo, rosso, rossa. Che colore è rosso o rossa? Come?
SH: Vino rosso.
T: Vino rosso. E rossa?
SM: Porta rossa.

In the above example, an effort was made to involve the whole class in exploring the notion of adjectival agreement and learners did show some awareness of the structure in question. The freedom offered them was still limited, however, and this was a feature of the practice stage where the teacher tended to spoon-feed learners by explaining in detail what they should do and by giving as example dialogue or sentence frames which they could then complete with little effort, as in the excerpt below:[24]

(1 March)

[B3 have been listening to a tape in which five prospective hosts introduce themselves. Here they are asked to choose their favourite host and say why.]
T: Now, I'll give you a few seconds to go through them and I want you to give me yourself, mi piacerebbe, I'd like, stare, to stay, con and give me the name of the family because I am 15, 14 what you want to say e mi piace andare in discoteca, il windsurf. This is the example and you fill in the missing word. You've also got last Friday's. Make up a full sentence and I'll ask you. Fill it up and then you tell me why you like to stay. I would like to stay with Simona Caniati because . . . ho 15 anni e mi piace la ginnastica e il windsurf.
[After five minutes.]
T: Sentiamo DE.
DE: Mi piacerebbe stare con Simone . . .
T: Simona.
DE: Simona Caniati perché mi piace ginnastica e windsurf.
T: Well done. Vediamo BM.
BM: Mi piacerebbe stare con Emanuele, perché *mi piace i gatti e il cinema.

It might finally be pointed out that activities rarely moved beyond this sort of highly-controlled practice and no instance of use was observed during lessons. It could therefore be predicted that the lack of this stage in the learning process would probably limit achievement in B3.

3.4.3 Materials: B1

The coursebook *Avanti!* was extensively used for B1 even though the teacher did not find it completely satisfactory because of its slow structural progression. *Avanti!* is published in Australia and designed for the Australian context, especially as far as its cultural matrix is concerned. It is broadly topic-based although care is shown in the grading of the vocabulary in accordance with the introduction of grammatical rules. Nouns which require *lo* as definite article, for example, which are less frequent than nouns requiring *il* or *la*, are introduced in the same unit as *lo* itself, and are accompanied both by relevant exercises and grammatical explanations. The latter come at irregular intervals initially and later appear at the end of every chapter to summarize structures met. They are clear and concise:

> **The definite article -- the**
> In English we have only one *definite article* -- the word the. The Italian **il** is used with masculine singular words and **la** is used with the feminine singular ones.
> e.g. **il libro**   the book
>   **il limone** the lemon
>
>   **la matita** the pencil
>   **la classe**   the class
> If the Italian word starts with a vowel, then **l'** is used whether the word is masculine singular or feminine singular.
> e.g. **l'astuccio** the pencil case
>   **l'aula**   the classroom
> (*Avanti!*: 62)

Explanations are generally summarized and expanded in the course of the book as more material is introduced so that, for example, tenses are not given in the full conjugation, but in smaller portions.

As indicated in 3.4.2.1, presentation in B1 lessons was often carried out by using the dialogue in the form of a comic strip in the book. The dialogues sounded

'authentic' and were relevant to learners' interests. Practice materials came in the form of oral (*Avanti parliamo!*) and written (*Avanti scriviamo*) exercises which closely resembled Audiolingual drills and which have often been criticised in the literature (see Rivers 1964). While such drills were relevant to the vocabulary and structures introduced in the dialogue, as can be seen in the following dialogue:

> Kevin, sei contento? Laura, **sei contenta?**
> Faye, sei timida? Dario, **sei timido?**
> Angela, sei bugiarda? Giorgio, sei . . . . ?
> (*Avanti!*: 23)

they seemed to lack any progression and they were far from providing meaningful practice. This is the most serious fault with the coursebook: its failure to provide learners with opportunities for meaningful use of the structures practised. The claim made in the introduction that: 'Situations can be easily acted out in pairs, or practised by the whole class divided into small groups' (*Avanti!*: 4) is far too ambitious. It is in fact surprising that the authors did not provide any material for communicative activities to satisfy what they themselves seem to perceive as a need.

3.4.4 Sources of written errors: B1

The limited availability of a coursebook imposes the need of alternative reference materials which is again satisfied by extensive copying from the blackboard (e.g. lists of new words with English translation) as in the case of A1, or from *Avanti!* (e.g. transcripts of dialogues). The range of the remaining written exercises closely resembled that offered by the coursebook and suffered from the same weaknesses as the oral ones, that is, they offered few opportunities for creative use. Such exercises (in

the *Avanti scriviamo!* section) include labelling, listing, completing sentences, filling in blanks, question and answer and matching parts of speech.

Typical examples of such exercises are those which concentrate on noun-adjective agreement, starting with colours and moving to personal description. Since the linguistic demands imposed by the exercises are limited, most learners make very few mistakes. It is noticeable, however, that in one of the very few open-ended exercises at this stage of the course (*Avanti!*: 25), which required answers of the type: *Mi chiamo Laura. Sono piccola. Sono contenta.* ('My name is Laura. I am short. I am happy.'), the number of errors rose to 8.3% (that is, 10 gender errors in 120 items). The percentage went down to 5% about one and a half months later in a similar exercise included in a test (see also 3.4.7) and would seem to indicate a faster progression towards accuracy than in A1.

Error percentages remain low in the other samples collected. The plural noun, one of the structures tested in the researcher-administered tasks, was presented on 26 April by means of a table followed by four examples (see Appendix C) and was practised in the following lessons first on its own, then in conjunction with a number and then with a number and an adjective. The exercises set for homework on 28 April to test its assimilation revealed a low error count, only 3 children out of 14 making errors in the formation of plural nouns referring to animals. SA used the feminine plural instead of the masculine and vice versa, and although she produced nouns which do exist in Italian, she made mistakes in the context of the exercise. MA consistently used singular endings and so did MP for one item where the plural ending is wrongly attached to the accompanying number (**setti* instead of *sette*):

Learner	Error
MA	*gallina *gato *leone *asino *cane *male
MP	*setti pecora
SA	*gatte *gallini *asine *capri

An exercise set on 30 April requiring the provision of a plural noun accompanied by a number again gave a small error percentage, only one learner out of 14 producing two errors (*tre *limone, due *asino*).

The plural article was also introduced by means of a table and a series of examples (see Appendix C) on 10 May and practised in following lessons in combination with plural nouns and adjectives. Exercises again revealed a relatively low level of error production, considering the variables involved, as reflected in that set on 13 May (data collected from 16 learners):

(13 May)

Learner	Error
CL	*gli cavallo *gli asino *gli limone *gli gelato
DA FA	*le signori
FL	*l'ragazzi
HT	*gli ragazzi sono brutti *gli gelati è bianchi *le ragazzi
MW	*le signora
QS	*i luci

It would appear from the low error count that the structure was to a large extent assimilated, probably because learners could build on their knowledge of gender and

number established in the gradual sequencing of the teaching process. The exercises allowing learners to practise the above structures were strongly guided and, obviously, tasks which required the production of a longer text and which were more open-ended provoked a higher number of errors, as did a dialogue and a composition on pets on 5 and 10 February (see Appendix C). Most of the errors concern noun-adjective and noun-article agreement, as illustrated in the compositions below which mirrored the attention paid to the model:

(5 February)

Learner	Composition
LJ	Il mio pesce *rossa si chiama Wanda *e piccolo e timido.
MA	Il cane è *grillo e *secembra stanco. Lui è grande e forte e è a letto.
MP	Il mio gatto è grigio e bello. Lui ha dieci anni e si *chiamo Pipisi. Lui è piccolo. Amo il mio gatto.

What is interesting about the above is that they contain a lower percentage of errors than in A3, a comparison with A1 being impossible since the only free composition ever set for that class was completed by a small number of learners and their work consisted mainly in assembling rote-learned phrases. This is not to deny that rote-learning does not affect B1 to a certain extent as well. Expressions learnt as unanalysed chunks are those relating to personal identification and basic classroom language introduced in the very early stages. This is exemplified by the problems experienced by the same learners with passing from *Come ti chiami?* and *Mi chiamo . . .* to the third person singular *Come si chiama?*

From the data collected from B1 it would seem that, although not optimal, the instruction programme -- with its emphasis upon the sequencing of items and their

accurate mastery -- does not favour the formation of errors. The application of the scheme proposed in 2.5.2 might therefore suggest that errors are largely (although not uniquely) due to learner factors, that is IDs determine both the amount and type of error produced by a single learner. As observed in the previous section, the most serious fault with the approach in B1 seems to be the limited attention paid to the use stage, that is to the learner's ability to use the items mastered for personal meaning.

3.4.5 Materials: B3

A coursebook was also extensively used for B3. The book is *Ciao!* (Secondo libro) which, again, is topic-based and which covers a range of areas relevant to the GCSE examination including personal information, shopping, eating out and holidays. In the area of grading, two main shortcomings appear: an excessive amount of new vocabulary is introduced in many units and the sequencing of structural items appears to be random. As far as vocabulary is concerned, in Unit 4, for example, fourteen ice-cream flavours are introduced of which only two (*caffè* and *banana*) are known to the learner and, in Unit 8, the names of fourteen school subjects are introduced at the same time. Moreover, since most topics are not related to each other, and each of them therefore requires new vocabulary specific to itself, there are very few opportunities offered for revision and excessive demands can be placed on memory.

The grading of structures is also open to criticism. The first and second person singular of common verbs in the present tense, for example, are focused on after reflexive verbs, after such irregular verb as *dovere* and *fare* and after the third person plural form, even though they are the most frequent forms to appear in the text. The agreement of adjectives in the plural is introduced after more difficult forms of

agreement, such as the possessive adjective and pronoun, and the preposition *di* +

definite article. Moreover, while the 'grammar section' relating to each unit (found at

the end of the volume) contains both explanations and exercises, the latter often do not

provide sufficient practice. For example, the pronouns *lo, la, gli, le* are practised in two

exercises, only one of which requires production, and only four exercises are devoted

to all six reflexive pronouns.

Most units are introduced by a list of phrases relevant to the topic. Although

this is against the tenets of the Communicative Approach, the list can be interpreted as

an invitation to memorize its contents and the instructions given do suggest that the list

can help to understand the language used in the unit, i.e. knowledge of vocabulary is

a pre-requisite rather than an outcome of communicative activities. The inadequate

grading in terms of structures noted earlier is also reflected in the range of tasks

carrying the learners from the practice to the use stage. Progression from the former to

the latter does not always occur, as in Unit 9 which contains only guided practice

activities, nor within the use stage itself. Communicative exercises seem to have been

designed without taking into account which structures are known by the learner. In Unit

4, devoted to shopping for food, two cued dialogues about changing money are

introduced out of the blue and 'motivated' on the basis that, in order to shop in Italy,

one needs to change money.[25] Both dialogues contain only the cashier's lines and the

learner is expected to supply the customer's part without ever having been exposed to

any model. The topic has little relevance to the interests and experience of a high school

pupil, and the lack of a model to complete the task does not make it any more

attractive.

3.4.6 Sources of written errors: B3

The written work undertaken by B3 closely followed *Ciao!* There was a certain amount of copying, but less than in B1 as the learners could take their book home, and a range of practice activities which often became open-ended. An example of this is the use of the preposition *di* + definite article which was examined in researcher-administered tasks. The pattern was first introduced on 24 November as a copy-writing exercise and then formalized on chart form in a lesson three days later:

(27 November)

I drink some coffee.
Bevo del caffè.
Bevo della cioccolata.
Prendo dello zucchero.
Cucchiaino = teaspoon.
di + il = del
di + la = della
di + lo = dello
Prendo dei biscotti.
il = i
di + i = dei
di + gli = degli

While the structure is incomplete (*delle* and *dell'* are missing), it was rehearsed on five more occasions,[26] and while some exercises focused on it involved only copying, four were more demanding and required the learners to fill in blanks and describe a set of pictures. In the two fill-in-the-blanks exercises, error percentages were 12.22% for the one completed in class and 34.37% for the one completed as homework (as collected from nine and eight learners, respectively). Considering the small size of the sample, only tentative conclusions can be drawn from such results. It would seem, however, that error percentages tend to increase over the two years and when the task is performed at home, presumably without any help from classmates. The increase in error

percentages between B1 and B3 would seem to point that there are weaknesses in the approach adopted by the teacher in School B which will appear more clearly in the analysis of the researcher-administered tests in Chapter Four.

Perhaps an important factor here is that poor grading in terms of the transition from practice to use stages compels learners to undertake tasks for which they are not fully prepared. An example of this was the occasion where learners were asked to write a description of a house at the end of a lesson in which the 'House' topic had been introduced. Such a task, after a very brief exposure to the vocabulary and structures necessary for its completion was obviously a breeding ground for overgeneralization errors. Moreover, the fact that the description was prompted by illustrations of English houses, which contained features for which there is no Italian equivalent (and therefore word) created a typical context for transfer errors as well. While both can be detected below, however, their cause lies in teacher-led decisions regarding presentation and practice of new items:

(2 February)

Learner	Composition
FR	*La villino un piano da solo è bella, *tetto è *roso, ha balcone, *chinque camere da *lette. *Spiace 1500 metri. Un giardino grande e *bella. Si trova vicino al mare. La casa è nuova e moderna.
HS	Questa case *e vilino *e due piani con mansarda tetto ha *rossa. Ha giardino con *fioro è piccolo *ha tapparelle è bianca e moderna.
MD	Questa casa è *l'appartamento, *Victorian, due piani, due *camera, due *e sogiorno, *è moderna cucinine, ha doppia finestra, si trova in periferia.

Learner	Composition
MS	Una *famigliar casa, tre piani, cinque *camera da letto, due bagno e *bella giardino e grande garage. La casa è *moderno è bella.
QM	È un appartamento da *sola, *uno bello camera di lette, è *moderna cucina, grande giardino, in campagna.

It might be noted, however, that the production of B3 mirrors IDs, and some of the better learners made very few, or no errors at all as in the following two examples:

Learner	Composition
BM	La casa ha tre piani. Questa casa è da sola. È nuova e grande. È bianca con tetto rosso. *È ha un grande giardino. Si trova in campagna.
TN	Questa casa ha due piani, è a schiera. È bianca con tetto *rossa. Si trova al centro.

3.4.7 Assessment: B1 and B3

One form of tests, used for both groups, was that of oral tests in the class. Learners were asked to read a conversation from the coursebook which at times was taped and then evaluated by the teacher with the help of the whole class. The teacher placed great emphasis to pronunciation and supra-segmental features and sometimes recorded learners' performance. Both performing and monitoring helped in developing awareness of pronunciation and intonation. Oral skills in B1 were also measured in listening comprehension exercises which were taken from *Avanti!*, are mainly multiple-choice and not very demanding. Oral tests did not even attempt to measure the speaking skill. As observed in sections 3.4.3 to 3.4.6, learners in School B were seldom given the opportunity for free expression, or if they were, it was often at the wrong stage in a given unit.

The emphasis on accuracy can also be seen in the more formal tests administered to B1 and B3. The first formal test given to B1 occurred on 20 January, was taken from the *Avanti!* textbook and contained four exercises:

1. description of six characters using two adjectives from a list;

2. filling in the blanks with three given forms of the verb *essere*;

3. filling in the blanks with various words; and

4. translation of five sentences from English into Italian.

Even though the exercises did not measure a learner's ability to express himself without props, they did test knowledge of structure and were therefore more valid than the tests administered in School A. A similarly well-structured test, based around a listening comprehension taken from *Ciao!*, was administered to B3 on 1 February.

The end-of-year tests are very similar to those administered during term. In the case of B1, the test was taken from the *Avanti!* workbook and it consisted mainly of fill-in-the-blanks, multiple choice and matching exercises. An exercise which required the production of gender endings (*La port . . . è piccol . . .*) resulted in an error percentage of 11.4%. The end of year test administered to B3 included: picture matching, two reading comprehension exercises requiring answers in English, a multiple choice exercise requiring the provision of a plural or singular form of the present tense, and a fill-in-the-blanks exercise for which learners had to provide an article and an ending to the adjective. In the article they produced 18.7% errors and in the adjective ending 28.2%. There is an apparent paradox in the difficulty level in the two end-of-year tests, since the one administered to B1 required greater productive use of the language than that administered to B3. As learners become more proficient in the FL, fewer demands

seem to be made upon them, whereas, according to logic, the opposite should be normal practice.

3.5 CONCLUSIONS

Our survey of error sources in a formal environment has revealed that a surprisingly high number of errors are due to faults with input in School A, i.e. to teacher factors. The same does not apply to School B since the teacher is a NS. More research is needed in this area since, even if the number of input errors found in School A is above average, our findings are likely to be replicated, although on a smaller scale. In fact, in British high schools most teachers usually have to teach two foreign languages, and it is an arduous and time-consuming task to keep both of them in good working condition.

As for the relationship between teaching approach and errors, there are a number of points common to instructional practices and procedures used in the two schools. In both cases lessons are teacher-centred and often focused on vocabulary without a well thought-out progression in tasks from controlled to free practice. However, there are salient differences in the extent and ways in which learners are made aware of structure.

In School A very little practice is focused on form and lessons are mostly based on choral repetition of set phrases. Other activities, when carried out at all, are not graded. Assessment concentrates mainly on vocabulary, and knowledge of TL structures is not tested. In School B greater attention is paid to grading, structural practice and rehearsal of previously studied forms, especially in B1, although learners are not often really helped to draw generalizations but rather exposed to the 'ready-

made' rule. Assessment is also sometimes aimed at testing 'knowledge about language' rather than its use. These differences are reflected in the researcher-administered tasks discussed in the following chapter.

Disparity in outcomes between the two Schools is, however, already apparent from the analysis of written work carried out in the present chapter. Differences concern not only quantity but also origin of error. In School A, both appear to be linked to teaching factors to a considerable extent, whereas in School B they account for a smaller number of ungrammatical items and learner factors come more to the fore as an error source. A comparison is not strictly possible in this case, since data from exercise books concern different structures, but the large number of errors produced by A1 learners in a + definite article and the small number of errors in gender produced by B1 learners seem to reveal a correlation between teaching factors and error. Not surprisingly, it would appear that if a structure is introduced too early and too little practised, it may generate a high number of errors, whereas a greater amount of practice, although often limited to drills, of a structure which is within the learner's grasp would seem to result in a higher level of accuracy. The same considerations apply to the other written work in B1.

It may be tentatively concluded that among teaching factors the quantity and quality of input and practice will show the most salient link with error production. The use stage has not been investigated as planned because A1 did not provide any data. The evidence from B1, however, seems to indicate that an earlier focus on form has a beneficial effect on semi-free or free uses of the TL in that it allows the learners to apply transfer and overgeneralization strategies in an educated way, i.e. not just to adapt material practised by rote but to create, within their limited knowledge of the TL, new

combinations. In FLL it would appear that the application of transfer and overgeneralization strategies is influenced, as every other aspect of the learning process, by teaching factors which can guide them in the right direction or let them free in their development.

In the case of A3 and B3, there seems to be a similar link between teaching factors and error production as in A1 and B1, although the picture is more complex. In the preposition + article structure, the superiority of the approach adopted in School B seems clear. In the case of other patterns, such as that of gender, this seems to hold true as far as oral rehearsal of the structure is concerned but not in free written production, where a more complex set of skills is required and where errors appear in larger numbers.

The example quoted in 3.4.6 under 2 February would seem to indicate that there are some weaknesses with the approach adopted in School B. Attention to form seems restricted to 'simple' structures, such as those presented in Year 7 and, as the language presented becomes more complex, instructional practices and procedures become progressively inadequate. Moreover, the fact that learners are given rules rather than being allowed to induce them from data, and are increasingly asked to carry out tasks for which they have had inadequate practice, also may contribute to the increase in errors among older learners. It should be stressed, however, that the scarcity of appropriate materials, especially for Italian, makes a teacher's task more difficult and the latter has to work within the constraints of the GCSE examination which is functionally-, rather than structurally-,based.

From the evidence gathered, it would appear that the teaching programme has to provide a 'baseline', in terms of help towards clarification and manipulation of

structure, for efficient learner strategies to emerge. The outcomes of their application will be dependent on IDs only to the extent that the teaching programme allows it. The conclusions drawn by Scarpa (1990) on the application of transfer and overgeneralization strategies are not, at this stage, confirmed by our results. A number of similarities, instead, seem to emerge between some of the learners' production and the results obtained by Schumann (1974, 1976, 1978b) in his studies on pidginization. It is argued here, however, that we are dealing with similarities at a linguistic level and not at a causal level. A 'classroom pidgin' emerges as a result of certain tasks for which learners have not been adequately prepared, such as the description of a house quoted in 3.4.6 above. In other words, simplification of TL input is a strategy that appears to emerge as a consequence of what have been labelled here teaching factors.

As for research question one, i.e. whether findings on errors based on evidence from SLA can be applied to the classroom context, it would appear that the picture is indeed far more complex than that suggested by most published studies. Contextual variables would seem to influence error production to a large extent, and variation in the factors involved can produce a number of different situations which can give rise to different learning outcomes and error patterns.

Notes to Chapter Three

1. 'The analysis of errors should start from pedagogic factors (method used, textbooks, motivation, global amount of study hours, weekly study hours, etc.).'

2. Bilingualism is conceived of in rather broad terms, as exemplified by Tables 3.1, 3.2, and 3.5. The assumption is that any level of knowledge of a community language could offer an advantage in FLL at school.

3. This refers to the pupils' time of entry in the school, i.e. September 1991.

4. Pupils themselves were asked to estimate their proficiency in the relevant 'community' language on their arrival at the school.

5. This refers to the pupils' time of entry in the school, i.e. September 1988.

6. Error in the substitution table mentioned. The same error is repeated for the remaining items.

7. A complete transcript of the lesson from where this example has been taken is in Appendix B.

8. A complete transcript of the lesson from where the present and the following examples have been taken is in Appendix B.

9. A complete transcript of the exercise is available in Appendix C.

10. The errors made in written work were replicated in a researcher-administered test analysed in Chapter Four.

11. It should be stressed again that the above errors were produced by some of the better motivated pupils, i.e. those who kept on doing their homework until the end of the year. In fact interest in the FL decreased towards the end of the summer term, probably also as a result of the frequent cancellation of lessons due to GCSE exams and other activities.

12. Despite the poor results in some parts of the aptitude test, MC can be considered one of the best students on her group on the basis of our analysis of her written work and of her teachers' opinion.

13. The only reason that springs to mind is a growth of familiarity in the course of the conversation, which seems rather improbable.

14. In a number of cases an error can be ascribed to more than one category. Some of the forms listed, although grammatical in other linguistic contexts, are not so in the context offered by the worksheets, some of which can be found in Appendix C.

15. The teacher in School A also teaches French.

16. Example from a list of dates phrased according to the model given.

17. The combination of preposition + *lo* is not used in the worksheets, even when it should be, as in *sullo scaffale* ('on the shelf') (see Table 3.4).

18. This is confirmed by the researcher-administered tasks discussed in Chapter Four.

19. Cultural differences add to the difficulty of the task. In some cases English nouns have no Italian equivalent and a paraphrase is necessary. This observation also applies to B3.

20. Languages Development Centre. St. Martin's College, Lancaster. Graded Proficiency Tests in Modern Languages. Level One: Italian.

21. The languages are French, German and Italian.

22. This refers to September 1992.

23. This was especially true for the Swedish Test administered as part of the present research. Learners took the task seriously and some of them showed considerable concern about the results.

24. The lesson is reported in full in Appendix C.

25. Moreover, they assume a familiarity with norms and procedures for changing money adopted in Italy some time ago (and no longer valid at the time the text was used).

26. The dates are: 7 December, 5 January, 25 January, 29 January, 2 February.

Chapter Four

QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter reports on the tests and questionnaires administered by the researcher as part of the present study. As stated in Chapter Three, its first aim is to ascertain whether a study of errors in the classroom context can yield results similar, or comparable, to those obtained in studies conducted in informal or mixed settings.[1] Its second aim is to investigate the correlation between instruction and learning outcomes or, more precisely, how differences in instruction affect error development.

One difficulty with putting our design into practice has been the choice of two schools with relevant instructional differences in Italian as a foreign language. There are a number of constraints on a teacher's favoured methodological approach, including the school FL policy and scheme of work, materials, GCSE syllabus, and more recently, the National Curriculum. The constraints indirectly imposed by the GCSE seemed to weigh more than any other factor examined, at the time when the study was conducted. Although the GCSE syllabus -- as a testing syllabus -- does not dictate methodology, it does in practice lead schools to place a stronger emphasis on learning set phrases for predictable contexts of use rather than on developing generative competence. For these reasons, the contrast between the two schools was not radical, i.e. they both had to work within the constraints of the GCSE and this imposed a common methodological framework on them. As observed in the previous chapter, however, there were a number of differences in the methodology adopted by School A and B which are relevant to our enquiry.

4.1 MATERIALS: BACKGROUND TESTS AND QUESTIONNAIRES

The present section aims at illustrating and discussing the attitude and motivation questionnaires distributed, respectively, to parents and pupils and the aptitude tests distributed to pupils and supported by background in the form of the subjects' reading ages as measured on entry to the school in Year 7 (see Appendix J). As regards the latter, the schools used two different tests, Vernon-Warden Group Reading Comprehension Test B-1955 (School A) and GAP (School B). The scores were accepted as being equivalent, and an analysis of the relative merits of the tests was not considered pertinent to the present study.

4.1.1 Motivation questionnaire

A questionnaire on motivation was administered to the four groups at the beginning of the study. It is in fact claimed by Gardner (1979, 1983, 1985) that there is a positive correlation between motivation and learning outcomes and the primary aim of the questionnaire was to compare the two schools in terms of such a variable. It was decided that the design of the questionnaire should not be too demanding, given the young age of some of the subjects, and it was resolved to restrict it to eleven statements (see Appendix D) exploring instrumental and integrative factors in pupil attitudes towards FLL in general and Italian lessons in particular and the relation of such attitudes to achievement. The results are summarized in Table 4.2 and given in full in Appendix J.

A secondary aim of the questionnaire was to gather data to compare with the results of a similar questionnaire distributed to parents at the end of April (see Appendix G) which sought to assess attitudes to FLL, particularly Italian, experience of travelling abroad and knowledge of an L2/FL. It was predicted that a positive attitude on parents' side would correlate positively with the child's motivation pattern. The results of this comparison are reported in 4.3.1.

4.1.2 Aptitude tests

In addition to the motivation questionnaire, two aptitude tests were administered to the four groups. To the best of our knowledge, no aptitude test for Italian was available, so one had to be devised. The test (see Appendix E) given to A1 and B1 is an adaptation of the German Aptitude Test by the Oxford Educational Research Group, BP Modern Languages Project (Miller 1982), and is based on the same rationale. Both the original and the Italian version are divided into four parts: Verbal Memory, Intonation and Stress, Plural and Singular and Grammar. As Miller points out:

> We chose to investigate four particular areas that we felt to be relevant to language aptitude: memory, the ability to interpret stress and intonation patterns, the ability to process aural information, and facility in abstracting grammatical rules out of a corpus of sentences. (Miller 1982: 1)

The Verbal memory test contains sixteen nouns of objects. These were chosen so as to satisfy three requirements: they had to be unknown to the subjects, easy to represent by means of a simple picture and capable of offering a varied sample of phonological features. The first stage of the test involved listening to the sixteen nouns

and memorizing them with the help of a worksheet which contained the nouns illustrated by a picture. The subjects were then given two minutes to study the nouns.

In the second stage, which followed immediately, subjects were given a second sheet, containing the illustrations in a different order, each marked with a letter, and a list of numbers, from one to sixteen. The subjects were asked to listen to the same nouns again, in a different order, and to match nouns and illustrations by writing the letter referring to the picture next to the number of the noun. Stage two was repeated after two weeks in order to test long-term retention.

The Intonation and Stress test is divided into a preliminary part and the test proper. In the preliminary parts five sentences were read four times each and, at this stage, subjects were merely asked to identify one sentence, in a group of four which had a different intonation or stress pattern from the other three, e.g.:

(1) Mia sorella è a Milano.
    Mia sorella è a Milano.
    Mia sorella è a Milano.
    Mia sorella è a Milano.

The test proper consists of one example, followed by eight sentences related to a conversation, which are connected by narrative parts. Each sentence was read three times with a different intonation, only one of which was appropriate to the context. The subject was provided with a worksheet containing the narrative parts, and asked to tick the relevant box.

While the German Aptitude Test only tested the feminine form, both masculine and feminine nouns were included in the Plural and singular test. The subjects were given a worksheet on which they could see a set of six pictures referring to three nouns in singular and plural forms. After listening to the words being read out on tape, they

were then asked to listen to them again, either in the singular or plural form, and to match the noun with one of two pictures, one containing one or two items of the same object, i.e. they heard the word *monete* ('coins') on the tape and they had to match it choosing between a picture of one coin and another of three coins. Subjects were then asked to repeat the exercise with a further list of seven mixed singular and plural nouns which they had not heard before. The second part of the test substitutes singular and plural verbs, in the third person form, for the nouns, but follows the same procedure, i.e. it starts with an example, then some sentences in the example are tested, finally new sentences are tested.

The fourth part of the aptitude test seeks to measure sensitivity to grammar rules. Five sentences illustrating the use of the auxiliaries *ha* and *è* in the third person singular of *Passato prossimo* are provided as an example:

Giulio è arrivato   questa mattina.
Giulio has arrived this morning.

On the basis of the rule they have inferred from the examples, the subjects are then requested to fill in the blanks of a number of further sentences with the correct form of the auxiliary verb. These sentences include some using the same verbs as in the examples and some using a number of unknown verbs. All sentences are accompanied by English translation.

This last test proved the most difficult for the pupils of both groups and the points scored are in many cases probably due to random guessing. In the German Test *ihn* and *ihm* were contrasted. A similar pair does not exist in Italian so it was decided to use *ha* and *è* as auxiliaries in the *Passato prossimo*, contrasting transitive verbs, (which require *ha*) with verbs of motion which generally require *è*.[2] Understanding their

use involves making a connection between the two parts of the verb: the choice of the auxiliary in fact depending on the meaning of the main verb. This may have caused the problem subjects had with the test.

The aptitude test administered to A3 and B3 (see Appendix F) is the Grammatical analysis section of the York Language Aptitude Battery. The test was chosen since it taps relevant skills, such as the ability to detect structural patterns, and concerns a language, Swedish, which no pupil had any familiarity with, either through schooling or family connections. The test is structured as groups of examples, with English translations, and blanks to be filled. As it becomes more complex, it introduces singular and plural nouns, the definite article, personal pronouns and the present tense in the first 32 items. Finally it requires the translation of 10 sentences into or from the Swedish (structures and words being provided in the test itself).

4.1.3 Procedures

Both the motivation questionnaire and the aptitude tests were administered in February during Italian periods. A3 and B3 were given fifteen minutes for the completion of the motivation questionnaire and ten more minutes were given to A1 and B1. Answers were scored on a scale from one to four (where four stands as high). The Italian aptitude test was administered over five weeks each of the four parts required a different amount of time, from thirty to ten minutes. One point was given for each correct answer. Subjects were given a whole period to complete the Grammatical analysis section of the York Language Aptitude Battery. The test was scored as follows: one point was given for each correct answer in the first section, and one for

each correct subject, verb, and object provided in the second section (which involved translation).[3]

4.2 MATERIALS: ELICITATION TASKS

Two elicitation tasks were used with A1 and B1 and two with A3 and B3 (see Appendix H). The structures to be tested were chosen from among those common to the syllabuses of the two groups in the same year, and, in one case, common to the four groups. An effort was made to give tasks to the year groups in the same month, when that did not clash with the timing of instruction in the items tested.

One exception had to be made for the second task used with A3 and B3. A3 were taught the 'Holidays' topic and then tested in May 1992. In the following year B3 were not taught the same topic. The Italian teacher in School B confirmed, however, that her pupils had been taught the relevant structures and vocabulary through other topics, with the exception of the past perfect. It was therefore decided to administer an adapted version of the second task to B3 on the grounds that this would also give some indication of the effects of instruction, although from a different perspective, i.e. the extent to which B3 pupils would be able to transfer structures and vocabulary acquired in one topic to another.

Although the structures sampled were fundamentally the same for the four tasks, certain adjustments were made in order to maintain a consistent level of difficulty in the task. In the first batch of tasks, for example, where subjects are required to produce a complete sentence, the prompts chosen were at times different so as to repeat the linguistic items already covered in the syllabus. Each task, apart from the second one

administered to the third year groups, is preceded by examples, and items in it are ordered according to gender and article agreement.

4.2.1 The Structures Tested

The elicitation tasks concerned the following rules, which are here given at the level of complexity reached by the subjects:

1. noun: the more common endings are *-o* for the masculine singular, *-i* for the plural, *-a* for the feminine singular and *-e* for the plural. A number of nouns ending in *-e* can be either feminine or masculine and their plural ending is *-i*.

2. indefinite article: *una* is the only form for the feminine and it becomes *un'* before a noun beginning with a vowel. *Un* and *uno* are the masculine forms. *Un* is used in most cases, *uno* before a noun begining with *z* or *s* followed by another consonant;

3. definite article: *la* is the only form for the feminine singular, *il* and *lo* for the masculine. *L'* is used before any noun beginning with a vowel, either masculine or feminine. *Le* is used for the feminine plural, *i* and *gli* for the masculine. *Gli* is used before a noun beginning with a vowel.

4. preposition + article: a number of monosyllabic prepositions, when followed by the definite article, join it in a *preposizione articolata* ('preposition + article'). The process is obligatory for the following prepositions: *di, a, da, in, su*. The rules for agreement are the same as for the definite article. The preposition + article combinations tested in the study are summarized in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 *A and di + the singular forms of the definite article*

	il	l'	la
a	al	all'	alla
di	del	dell'	della

4.2.2 The first set of elicitation tasks

The four groups were first tested in March. The tasks sought to elicit the article or a preposition + article and to test both gender agreement and accuracy in use of the above forms. All tasks involved completing a sentence by pairing the same verbal clue with a noun from a list provided. If the same nouns practised in class had been used, it would have been impossible to discriminate between rote-learned pairs and ability to apply a generalization. It was therefore decided that the nouns would be new to the subjects in order to:

1. measure their ability to apply rules to unknown items; and

2. avoid the confounding effects of rote-learning.

With the intention of giving the tasks a 'familiar air' it was also decided to choose nouns which belonged to the topic with which the structure had been introduced and this occasionally meant that the choice was restricted to low-frequency terms.

Nouns were arranged in groups according to gender and according to the different forms of the article, or preposition + article, they required. The first task given to A1 and B1 involved the subject in the completion of two exercises on the article. The first one is based on the clue *Dov'è?* ('Where is?') and a list of ten nouns referring to place. The subjects were asked to form ten complete sentences starting with *Dov'è?* and

followed by each of the nouns in order to elicit production of the definite article. The second exercise requires ordering one drink and one snack from each of the two menus provided. The first includes only masculine and the second only feminine nouns, in order to elicit production of the indefinite article.

The first task given to A3 and B3 also consists of two parts. The first requires the production of six indefinite and six definite articles on the basis of model sentences and verbal prompts. The second part of the task has the same structure, consists of twelve items and requires the production of a preposition + article combination. However, there are some differences between the A3 and the B3 versions. A3 had been presented with *a* + definite article in connection with travel, whereas B3 had been presented *di* + definite article in connection with shopping. Since the rules to be applied are the same, the two groups were tested by means of two similar tasks. A3 was required to produce sentences of the type *Mario è andato al ristorante* ('Mario has gone to the restaurant') and B3 of the type *Mario compra del vino* ('Mario buys some wine'). Obviously, the only part to be provided by the subjects was the preposition + definite article combination.

4.2.3 The second set of elicitation tasks

The groups were given a second task in May, with the exception of B1, which were tested in June because of syllabus constraints. In the case of A3 and B3 the aim, looser in structural terms than in task 1, was to measure the comprehension and production of the basic vocabulary and structures learnt in the 'Holidays' topic. The task involved subjects in answering questions graded in decreasing order of difficulty on a series of ten pictures. First an open-ended question was asked and, if the subject

could not answer it, he was asked a question using two alternatives, which he could more easily answer by repeating one of them. Finally a yes-no question was put to those subjects who could not provide an answer to the first two questions. For A3, the present perfect tense was used and for B3 the present tense, as explained in section 4.2.

A1 and B1 were tested a second time, at the end of June and in May respectively. Subjects were provided with a series of eight pictures of vegetables each with the corresponding name in the singular form. On the basis of the examples provided, they were required to ask for the price of vegetables and then order a kilo of each. The aim of the task was to elicit the plural form of the noun and article in relation to vocabulary items unknown to them.

4.2.4 Procedures

The tasks consisted of a worksheet with either visual and/or verbal clues, and were introduced by directions and examples. Each subject was tested individually, either at the back of the classroom, when the lesson allowed it, or in a nearby room. The subjects were tested orally and tape-recorded according to the following procedure: the worksheet was handed to the subject, who was then invited to look at the tasks, given further explanations about the task itself if he required them and then tested when he was ready.

Tasks were transcribed and then scored for the relevant structure/s and, where appropriate, for gender. The second task for A3 and B3 was not scored for verb accuracy, since A3 were expected to use the past perfect and B3 the present. However, a missing verb was considered an error for both groups. The task was scored according

to the ratio of error to number of words. Further details of the scoring system are given in Appendix I.

4.2.5 Analyses

The assumptions for the t test were not met by any of the sets of scores as they were not normally distributed and the variances were not equal. It was therefore decided to use the Mann-Whitney U Test, whose requirements were satisfied by the data. Mean rank comparisons were calculated. Since there was no previous empirical evidence on the correlation between the variables studied, the null hypothesis of no difference between group means were adopted. The significance level was set at $\alpha < 0.5$.

4.3 RESULTS

4.3.1 Results from motivation questionnaire and aptitude tests

The results obtained from the motivation questionnaire and in the single parts of the Italian Aptitude Test administered to A1 and B1 are presented in Appendix J. Table 4.2 reports the means obtained by the four groups and the results of the Mann-Whitney U Test which revealed significant differences in aptitude, but not in motivation. Both groups in School B appear to have a better language aptitude than the two corresponding groups in School A although, it might be noted, this difference is not reflected in reading scores obtained in the two schools. As regards parents' questionnaires, the responses from both schools were somewhat unsatisfactory although

School B tended to outperform School A, i.e. 73% of parents in B1 returned the form and 39% of parents in B3 compared with 51% of parents in A1 and a mere 25% of parents in A3. Each of the four groups was divided into two subgroups, according to whether their parents had returned (subgroup (1)) or not returned (subgroup (2)) the parents' questionnaire. If it is assumed that the completion of the questionnaire coincides with a positive attitude to FLL, which is borne out by an analysis of the comments made,[4] then data analysed with the Mann-Whitney U Test (Table 4.3) seem to highlight a positive correlation between the two variables.

Table 4.2 *Mann-Whitney U Test: motivation questionnaire and aptitude tests*

	Motivation	Aptitude	Corrected for Ties 1-tailed P	
	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Motivation	Aptitude
A1	22.13	18.46	.2034	.0012
B1	25.45	30.66		
A3	21.70	15.70	.1608	.0441
B3	18.07	21.98		

Table 4.3 *Mann-Whitney U Test: motivation questionnaire (parents'questionnaire subgroup (1), non parents' questionnaire subgroup (2))*

	Subgroup (1)	Subgroup (2)	Corrected for Ties 1-tailed P
	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	
A1	14.54	13.42	0.3568
B1	11.50	6.75	0.0516
A3	9.63	7.41	0.1946
B3	11.17	12.54	0.3161

4.3.2 Results from elicitation tasks

The results of the Mann-Whitney U Test are reported in Tables 4.4 for A1 and B1, and Table 4.5 for A3 and B3 (see Appendix K for raw scores) so as to highlight differences between the groups compared. The null hypothesis was rejected for the comparison between A1 and B1 scores for all tasks. While B1 performed better than A1, however, the data seem to suggest a trend towards a reduction in the gap between the two groups over time. The results from the second tasks on the plural noun, definite article and gender reveal an improvement in the performance of A1 although, on closer analysis, it emerged that this depends to a large extent on the performances of four pupils. A more complex pattern emerges from the analysis of A3 and B3 scores. B3 performed better on the definite article, preposition + article and gender, whereas A3 performed better on the indefinite article and 'Holidays' topic.

Table 4.4 *Mann-Whitney U Test: A1 and B1 scores*

Structure tested	Group	Mean Rank	Corrected for Ties 1-tailed P
Definite article	A1	16.39	.0000
	B1	33.61	
Indefinite article	A1	17.96	.0002
	B1	31.37	
Gender	A1	16.43	.0000
	B1	33.55	
Plural noun	A1	18.70	.0017
	B1	30.32	
Plural def article	A1	20.50	.0343
	B1	27.76	
Gender plural	A1	18.57	.0011
	B1	30.50	

Table 4.5 *Mann-Whitney U Test: A3 and B3 scores*

Structure	Group	Mean Rank	Corrected for Ties 1-tailed P
Definite article	A3	18.47	.3165
	B3	20.17	
Indefinite article	A3	24.03	.0161
	B3	16.54	
Article + preposition	A3	11.97	.0003
	B3	24.41	
Gender	A3	17.97	.2448
	B3	20.50	
Holidays topic	A3	30.93	.0000
	B3	12.04	

4.3.3 A comparison of monolinguals and bilinguals

Data from bilinguals and monolinguals in the same group were analysed separately using the Mann-Whitney *U* Test. The results are contradictory and, on the whole, neither group seems to emerge as superior. These conclusions must clearly be very tentative given the limited number of bilingual subjects and considering that the term bilingual here has been used in a broad, and rather imprecise, sense. The letters M (monolinguals) and B (bilinguals) have been added to the symbols A1, A3, B3 to identify the subgroups, i.e. MA1 means monolinguals in A1 and so on.

From the data summarized in Table 4.6 it would seem that bilinguals tend to score higher in motivation and aptitude, in three out of four cases. Bilinguals in A1 tend to perform better in the tasks administered by the researcher in four measurements out of six. In A3 (see Table 4.7) bilinguals performed better on the indefinite article and 'Holidays' topic, in B3 only on the former (see Table 4.8).

Table 4.6 *Mann-Whitney U Test: motivation questionnaire and aptitude tests. Bilinguals and monolinguals*

	Motivation	Aptitude	Corrected for Ties 1-tailed P	
	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Motivation	Aptitude
MA1	14.24	12.87	.4033	.1263
BA1	16.69	13.44		
MA3	7.55	8.23	.2539	.3718
BA3	9.25	7.38		
MB3	11.47	11.74	.3762	.2624
BB3	13.50	12.75		

Table 4.7 *Mann-Whitney U Test: scores of monolinguals and bilinguals in A1*

Structure tested	Group	Mean Rank	Corrected for Ties 1-tailed P
Definite article	MA1	14.71	.2040
	BA1	12.31	
Indefinite article	MA1	12.34	.0427
	BA1	17.94	
Gender	MA1	13.34	.2471
	BA1	15.56	
Plural noun	MA1	13.03	.1580
	BA1	16.31	
Plural def article	MA1	13.61	.3441
	BA1	14.94	
Gender plural	MA1	14.29	.3805
	BA1	13.31	

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Table 4.8 *Mann-Whitney U Test: scores of monolinguals and bilinguals in A3*

Structure	Group	Mean Rank	Corrected for Ties 1-tailed P
Definite article	MA3	8.77	.1254
	BA3	5.88	
Indefinite article	MA3	7.68	.2922
	BA3	8.88	
Article + preposition	MA3	8.68	.1629
	BA3	6.13	
Gender	MA3	8.55	.2159
	BA3	6.50	
Holidays topic	MA3	7.14	.1066
	BA3	10.38	

Table 4.9 *Mann-Whitney U Test: scores of monolinguals and bilinguals in B3*

Structure	Group	Mean Rank	Corrected for Ties 1-tailed P
Definite article	MB3	12.21	.4000
	BB3	11.42	
Indefinite article	MB3	11.91	.4572
	BB3	12.25	
Gender	MB3	12.65	.2184
	BB3	10.17	
Article + preposition	MB3	13.38	.0474
	BB3	8.08	
Holidays topic	MB3	12.09	.4581
	BB3	11.75	

4.3.4 A comparison of continuative or non-continuative subjects in A3

The data from A3 subjects who studied Italian on a continuative (A3CO) or non-continuative (A3NC) basis have given mixed results, as in the case of bilinguals.

Whereas A3CO have better scores in both aptitude and motivation (see Table 4.10) and achieve higher scores in those tasks related to the indefinite article and 'Holidays' topic, A3NC are superior in two task scores related to the definite article and article + preposition. The two groups obtained the same score in gender.

Table 4.10 *Mann-Whitney U Test: aptitude tests and motivation questionnaire in A3 subjects (continuative and non-continuative)*

	Motivation	Aptitude	Corrected for Ties 1-tailed P	
	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Aptitude	Motivation
A3NC	5.75	6.17	.0970	.0551
A3CO	9.50	9.22		

Table 4.11 *Mann-Whitney U Test: scores of A3 subjects (continuative and non-continuative)*

Structure	Group	Mean Rank	Corrected for Ties 1-tailed P
Definite article	A3NC A3CO	9.67 6.89	.1113
Indefinite article	A3NC A3CO	6.29 8.72	.1796
Article + preposition	A3NC A3CO	9.58 6.94	.1306
Gender	A3NC A3CO	8.00 8.00	.5000
Holidays topic	A3NC A3CO	5.75 9.50	.0551

The results of the present comparison would seem to contradict the assumption made by the Head of Languages in School A (see 3.3). Lack of continuity in Italian teaching may contribute to explain their inferior performance of A3 to B3 in most scores. This would seem to confirm our hypothesis that there is a correlation between

school organization and learning outcomes although, it should be noted, any

conclusions drawn must be very tentative on account of :

    1. the small number of subjects involved in the present comparison; and

    2. the lower scores obtained by the non-continuous group in the motivation

questionnaire and aptitude test, which suggest the possible intervention of

variables other than lack of continuity in instruction.

4.3.5 Error analysis: A1 and B1

The most salient features to emerge from the task-related data of A1 and B1 is

the high percentage of omission errors in the production of articles by A1 pupils (see

Table 4.12). While this tends to decrease over time, as revealed in the results of the

second task and those obtained by A3, the process from omission to the provision of

the correct form is relatively slow and seems to pass through the use of a deviant form.[5]

Error percentages would seem to indicate that B1 undergoes a similar process to that

of A1 -- i.e. from omission to correct form via an erroneous one -- but at a much faster

pace. This is true not only in terms of the production of articles but also of plural nouns

(see Table 4.13) where they also outperform A1.

Table 4.12 *Correct and deviant forms in the definite and indefinite article: A1 and B1*

Structure	Group	Correct	Deviant	Omission
Definite	A1	18.14	8.14	73.70
article	B1	35.78	44.21	20.00
Indefinite	A1	33.33	26.85	39.81
article	B1	51.31	36.84	11.84
Plural	A1	34.72	45.37	19.90
definite	B1	62.50	30.26	7.23
article				

Table 4.13 *Correct and deviant forms in the plural noun: A1 and B1*

Group	Correct	Singular	Other
A1	10.87	80.55	8.56
B1	50.34	39.14	10.52

A tentative explanation for this difference is that form-focused instruction seems to speed up the progression towards accuracy and that the nature and amount of input and controlled practice prove to be important factors in determining error production. As argued in Chapter Three, in School B input includes more often than not the direct presentation of structures and their analysis, practice is more varied and more focused on form than in School A (see 3.3.2 and 3.4.2). While in EA the category of 'simplification of TL input' would be used to label errors such as omission and the use of the singular for the plural form of a noun, this in itself is inadequate in explaining the differences in the results obtained by the two groups. These differences are more effectively explained by the model proposed in 2.5.2, which takes into account teacher, teaching and learner factors as contributing to error formation in FLL.

Table 4.14 *Errors in the singular definite and indefinite article: A1 and B1*

Correct form	Deviant form A1	B1
il	1 la	4 la, 2 le
l' (m)	3 il, 2 la, 1 un	24 il, 2 la, 2 le
la	6 il, 3 al	18 il
l' (f)	4 il, 1 la, 1 al	23 la, 9 il
un	1 il	6 una
una	27 un, 1 un la	22 un

Pedagogic factors seem useful in explaining not only the rate of progress of the two groups towards accurate use of the items in question but also the types of deviant

forms created *en route*. The latter, at least in terms of the definite and indefinite article, are reported in Table 4.14. The main difference in the first task appears to be the tendency of A1 pupils to supply forms such as *al* (a preposition + definite article), the conjunction *e*, or an indefinite article for a definite and vice-versa. B1 pupils, on the other hand, seem to have a better understanding of the boundaries between definite and indefinite articles and their errors seem to be more educated, i.e. less random than those of A1 and based upon some appreciation of gender. In the case of *l'* (masculine), for example, they provided a masculine form (*il*) in twenty-four cases out of twenty-eight. Given the small number (7) of 'idiosyncratic' errors made by A1, it may be inappropriate to make strong claims for a significant difference in error type and to seek to relate this to differences in pedagogy. The case appears somewhat stronger, however, if A1's output is scrutinized in more detail. As observed earlier, a smaller percentage of errors in A1 data is compensated for by a large number of omissions in the case of the indefinite and singular definite article. However, data in table form does not show that a number of pupils actually provided only one form of the definite and indefinite articles. Their final score masks a lack of attention to the gender and/or initial letter of the relevant noun. The same applies to A3 and B3.

In the case of the plural definite article in the second task, error types are similar (see Table 4.15) and, although percentages have been calculated to arrive at a clearer picture of the error ratios, no clear pattern seems to emerge. It is noticeable, however, that B1 reach a better approximation to gender in the feminine (47.6% *la*) and A1 to number (27% *i* and 52% *le*). It would seem that A1 have been able to build on the basis of their knowledge of the singular article to arrive at better results in the plural. Their

progression towards accuracy in the plural article, however, is not matched by a similar level of accuracy in respect of plural noun formation, where scores are lowest.

Table 4.15 *Error percentages in the plural definite article: A1 and B1*

Correct form		Deviant form A1	B1
le			
	e	25.0	28.5
	i	27.0	14.2
	il	29.1	9.5
	la	18.7	47.6
i	e	18.0	48.0
	il	22.0	8.0
	la	8.0	4.0
	le	52.0	28.0
	lo		12.0

While some errors in the plural noun cannot easily be classified[6] (see Table 4.16), most of them can be divided into three categories. The first error type consists in the singular ending of the wrong gender being given: *caroto, *patato, *melanzano, *cipollo, *pomodora, *cetriola, *pisella, *porra. The second error type is characterized by the plural ending of the opposite gender: *melanzani, *cipolli, *pomodore, *cetriole, *piselle, *porre. While these two error types are common to both A1 and B1, a third category is present only in the production of B1 and can be explained as an unsuccessful overgeneralization from the examples provided in the worksheet.

In terms of the latter category, the two examples, *zucchina* → *zucchine* for the feminine and *fagiolo* → *fagioli* for the masculine, are at the basis of the following errors: *patatine, *carotoline, *melanzanine, *cipolline, *pomodorine, *cetrioline, *piselline, *piselloli, *carotoli, *porroli. Some subjects in B1 did not correctly discriminate between the stem and the ending of the nouns given as examples and used

Table 4.16 *Errors in the plural noun (other than singular): A1 and B1*

Correct form	Deviant form	
	A1	B1
patate	1 pesche	1 patato
		1 patatine
		1 patatina
carote	10 caroto	2 caroto
	2 carrot	1 carotoline
		1 carotoli
melanzane	2 melanzani	1 melanzani
	4 melanza	1 melenzanine
	3 melanze	
	1 melanzano	
cipolle	2 cipolli	1 cipolli
	1 cipollo	1 cipollo
	1 cipollale	2 cipolline
pomodori	2 pomodora	2 pomodora
	2 pomodore	1 pomodorine
cetrioli	1 cetriola	1 cetriola
	1 cetriole	2 cetriole
		1 cetrioline
piselli	1 pisella	1 pisella
	2 piselle	1 piselloli
		1 piselline
		1 pisellini
porri	1 porre	2 porra
		3 porroli
		1 porroe
		2 poroto

-ine and *-oli* as plural endings, with some gender confusion as well, since *-ine* was added to both feminine and masculine nouns. Two more errors, **patatina* and **pisellini*, could also be included in this category, the first derived from *zucchina* and the second from *zucchine* plus the masculine ending *-i*.[7] Again, given the small amount of errors of this type there are no grounds for any claims. On the whole, data seems to

confirm that B1 subjects are more familiar with grammar tasks, pay attention to examples and draw conclusions from them.

4.3.6 Error analysis: A3 and B3

Differences between group A3 and B3 in percentages of correct and deviant forms and omissions are not large in the case of the definite and indefinite article. A wider gap exists in the case of preposition + definite article (see Table 4.17) which would seem to confirm the tentative conclusions drawn in 4.3.2 concerning the rate of development of learners in the two schools. Although B1 score better than A1, however, the gap narrows over time and is even reversed in one case by A3 in comparison with B3. Form-focused instruction, even with the limitations of School B pedagogy, would seem to speed up the acquisition of correct forms whereas a less explicitly form-focused approach, as in School A, delays the acquisition of such forms.

Table 4.17 *Correct and deviant forms in the definite and indefinite article, and preposition + definite article: A3 and B3*

Structure	Group	Correct	Deviant	Omission
Definite	A3	74.44	20.00	5.55
article	B3	77.09	16.66	6.25
Indefinite	A3	84.44	8.88	6.66
article	B3	69.56	19.56	10.86
Preposition +	A3	45.55	41.11	13.33
def art	B3	64.49	30.07	5.43

The second task, on the 'Holidays' topic, revealed a significant difference between the two groups in favour of A3, especially with regard to comprehension. Each B3 subject was asked 6.91% second (or third) questions against 1.8% in A3. For both groups the high number of omission errors can be ascribed to simplification of TL input (see Table 4.19) according to EA whereas according to the theory proposed in 2.5.2

Table 4.18 *Errors in the singular definite and indefinite article: A3 and B3*

Correct form	Deviant form	
	A3	B3
il	7 la, 1 e la, 1 e, 1 e, 2 un	15 la, 1 lo, 1 un 1 una
la	5 il, 1 una	5 il
un	3 una	16 una
una	5 un	11 un
al/del	7 il, 4 alla, 3 a 1 la	7 dello, 3 della
all' (m)/ dell' (m)	6 il, 5 alla, 3 l', 1 a	10 della, 3 dello, 3 delle
alla/della	4 al, 2 la, 1 a, 1 e 1 una	7 delle, 3 del
all' (f)/dell'(f)	31 alla, 2 la, 1 il,	44 della, 3 delle

teaching variables should be called in to explain the large number of omission errors and exchanges like the following:

Q: Dove ha alloggiato?
A: *Campeggio.

Q: Cosa ha fatto il terzo giorno?
A: *La spiaggia.

Q: Come è stato il tempo?
A: *Il sole.

Classroom observation, in fact, has revealed that neither group is guided to the use stage in a systematic and principled way. Oral work mainly consists in answering display questions, and written work, while it does sometimes allow for more open-ended practice, is not set within a well-designed sequence of tasks. If the nature and amount of practice are taken into account, there would seem to be an apparent connection between pedagogy and omission errors. An incident which happened in School A is quite revealing in this respect. One of the subjects in A1 saw the task

administered to A3 and asked to be tested herself. Her performance was scarcely

different from that of pupils with two more years of exposure to the TL, i.e. she could

understand the researcher's questions and answer by naming the objects present in the

picture. This seems to point to a lack of effectiveness in the instruction programme in

terms of progression towards both accurate and fluent use of the TL. Learners do not

seem to develop an IL, let alone learn how to express themselves fluently and

accurately. They rather develop a 'classroom pidgin', and a rather elementary one.

Apart from omission, in the case of A3 a number of errors may be ascribed to

other categories (see Appendix L). Gender errors could be explained as a result of

transfer from English for, in fact, while in Italian articles agree with the noun gender,

the same does not hold true in English:

Error	Correct form
*La duomo	Il duomo
*La campeggio	Il campeggio
*La mercato	Il mercato
*La gelato	Il gelato
*Il discoteca	La discoteca
*Il automobile	L'automobile

Other errors can be defined as interlingual, as in the following examples on deviant past

participle forms:

Error	Correct form
*Peda	Ha preso
*Andare	È andata
*Fare	Ha fatto
*Visitare	Ha visitato
*Ballare	Ha ballato
*Visiti	Ha visitato

In both cases, however, given the faults found with the instruction programme in

School A, it would seem that a portion of transfer and overgeneralization errors could

be ascribed to teaching factors, especially to the nature and amount of input and practice. Gender errors, in particular, could in the case of School A be linked to the unprincipled (i.e. random) way in which vocabulary is inputted and to a certain lack of attention to the issue from the first year of instruction.

In the case of B3, omission of constituents seems to be a characterizing feature (see Table 4.19 below and Appendix L). A large percentage of answers were reduced to a content word and, in many cases, no structure words were provided even by way of imitation of the researcher's question. A smaller number of answers consisted of two-word utterances. Probably as a result of the lack of instruction in the 'Holidays' topic, B3 pupils also had more comprehension problems than A3 pupils, as observed earlier, and the gap separating the more proficient from the less proficient pupils in the group was surprisingly narrow. Typical exchanges with B3 subjects were the following:

Q: Mangia il gelato o la pasta?
A: *Gelato.

Q: Cosa fa il terzo giorno?
A: *Discoteca.

When the teacher from School B listened to the recording of the second task, she was surprised at the poor performance of her pupils. Their lack of fluency, however, could be related to the limited amount of time allocated to free practice in the Italian lesson. As observed in Chapter Three, neither teacher actually measures the effectiveness of her teaching through reasonably demanding achievement tests, and the lack of feedback from pupils helps to perpetuate the status quo and to allow teachers to persist in practices which do not seem to be very productive in terms of free expression.

Table 4.19 *Rank order of errors in the 'Holidays' topic: A3 and B3*

	Number of errors	
	A3	B3
Gender		
Participle ending	3	
Article	2	
Preposition + article	1	1
Input Error		
Ufficio Informazione	15	
Faceva il sole	1	
Number		
	i for il 3	
	e for i 1	
	è for ci sono 1	
Omission		
Auxiliary verb	10	0
Definite article	15	16
Indefinite article	2	2
Noun:		
Ufficio	3	14
Gradi	7	8
Preposition	12	53
Preposition + article	6	32
Verb	51	49
Wrong constituent		
Article for preposition + article	37	1
Article for preposition	10	
Definite article for indefinite article	2	
Preposition + article for preposition	1	
Preposition + article for article	1	
Preposition for preposition + article	1	
Wrong form		
Participle		
Preposition	4	
Verb	4	
Preposition + article	1	
Tense		
Present tense for past tense	6	

4.4 DISCUSSION

4.4.1 Discussion of results of motivation questionnaire and aptitude tests

The results of the motivation questionnaire were similar across the four groups and there was often a discrepancy between pupils' own self-evaluation and their behaviour during the language lessons and their results. A number of low-achievers overestimated their performance whereas high achievers underestimated it. Two items on self-evaluation, in particular, 'I understand most things in the language lesson' and 'I am quite good at Italian', proved tempting for some over-confident as well as modest pupils.

Although the results are similar for the four groups, they are not confirmed by classroom observation. As pointed out in Chapter Three, for example, A3 did not show much interest in the lessons and did not complete a large proportion of their assignments. As a group, the motivation mean score should then be lower than that actually obtained in comparison, say, with groups in School B. The discrepancy between classroom behaviour and questionnaire results could be explained in more than one way since only one item, 'I enjoy other lessons more than language', was directly linked to classroom instruction. It could be hypothesized that pupils did not interpret the questionnaire as related exclusively to their experience of FLL at School A or it could be concluded that instructional practices and procedures in A3 do not capitalize on motivated pupils.

As for the parents' questionnaire, response was not satisfactory since many were either indifferent to it or misunderstood it. The most relevant factor to emerge from it lies in the number of questionnaires returned to the researcher. This confirms the general impression that School B pupils and their families had a more positive attitude to learning Italian and were more cooperative with data collection. The observed disparity in the percentages of questionnaires returned in favour of first-year pupils, in both schools, seems to confirm the generally accepted belief that motivation for FLL is highest in the first year of study and then diminishes in the following years. Data analysis has confirmed the hypothesized correlation between parental attitudes and learners' motivation.

As regards the Aptitude Test the better results obtained by B1 can probably be explained as an outcome of instruction which focuses, more than in School A, on structural properties. Since the test was given five months after the beginning of the academic year, it is likely that the differences in the instruction received by the two groups were mirrored in the test, since both groups achieved similar scores on the reading test. As observed in Chapter Three, B1 had also had more experience with similar exercises, for both practice and testing, which may have contributed to the results.

The same considerations can apply to the difference in the results of the aptitude tests administered to A3 and B3 (see Table 4.2 and Appendix J). A second observation which remains to be added is that the aptitude test also seemed to work as a measure of motivation and, as observed earlier in note 23 to Chapter Three, B3 concentrated on the task and most pupils completed it in the prescribed forty minutes. A3, on the other

hand, did not devote as much attention to the test and many pupils did not complete it, probably because of lack of motivation or aptitude.

4.4.2 Discussion of results from elicitation tasks

The comparison between the first-year groups revealed that B1 learners reached a higher level in every structure tested and on the Aptitude test. Since the mean reading ages of the two groups were similar, the main difference observed between them was in the nature of the instruction they received. It would therefore seem reasonable to suggest that there is a significant relation between instruction and learner performance and that the view of applied linguists such as Ellis (1993: 4) that 'ultimately what is learned is controlled by the learner and not the teacher, not the textbooks, not the syllabus' does not seem to be confirmed. It is only by taking into account the importance of teacher-led decisions[8] that the differences between the two groups in the tasks and also in the Aptitude test, which was administered -- as indicated in 4.4.1 above -- after five months' instruction in Italian and whose results are likely to have been influenced by instruction, can be explained.

It would seem that the instructional practices and procedures in School A fail to develop the linguistic skills that on average pupils do possess on entry to the school, an observation which also applies to both groups studied. It can be concluded that form-focused activities would seem to correlate positively with accuracy in performance. This observation must obviously be restricted to the ability measured in the tasks, i.e. that of applying generalizations to new verbal contexts in a form-focused activity. Instruction mainly centred, as in School A, on rote-learning of set-phrases

would seem to impede learners from drawing relevant generalizations from input and extending them to new contexts.

The results of the comparison between A1 and B1 are, however, complicated by the outcomes of the second comparison. B3 performed better on three measures and A3 on the remaining two. B3 achieved higher scores on a structure, the preposition + definite article, which had been introduced in the weeks preceding the administration of the task, and on the definite article itself, which is closely related to it. The gender score was, for two thirds, based on the two previous measures. These results can be explained by taking into account the limitations with the form-focused approach in School B. As observed in the introduction to the present chapter, the constraints posed by the GCSE syllabus in particular have a powerful influence on teaching styles. The teacher in School B had to overcome the difficulty of harmonizing a form-focused approach with topic-focused materials and syllabus. The blend was not entirely successful, as we have observed in Chapter Three, and the balance often shifted towards vocabulary memorization, which the GCSE syllabus would seem to encourage.

One further limitation of the approach adopted in School B would seem to concern grading. While B1 were helped to access a wide range of structures in a carefully sequenced way, the progression seemed rather slower in B3 who were often limited to revising structures introduced in earlier years. Moreover B3 were seldom given the opportunity to pass from the practice to the use stage through increasingly open-ended activities, as proposed, for example by Littlewood (1981b) in his discussion on the relationship between pre-communicative and communicative activities. The second task administered to B3 highlights these limitations clearly when most pupils revealed themselves unable to make sense of common structure words such as *quando*

(when) and *come* (how) outside their original context of use. Their ability to transfer structures and vocabulary learned in one topic to another appeared to be rather limited.

The most salient trait of the IL of A3 and B3 is the amount of one-word or two-word utterances, usually consisting of article + content word. Omission of the verb is very frequent in both groups and that of the preposition in B3. It would appear that most, if not all, subjects in B3 cannot go beyond this stage unless they are helped by instruction in the specific topic which gives them a repertoire of set-phrases. The same may hold true for A3, although no data was collected in this respect. The subjects' IL ultimately fits in with Hammerly's (1991) definition of 'classroom pidgin'.

The varied outcomes of the comparison between the four groups seems to indicate that the initial advantage of B1 pupils is not entirely maintained and is limited to the context in which the structure is taught. An explanation may lie in the inconsistent application of a form-focused approach in School B and, probably, in the limited opportunities learners have for applying such structures across a range of topic areas to generate new meanings.

The comparison of our findings with those of previous studies is rather difficult. As often stated here, most of the literature on errors does not follow a similar approach, i.e. it does not take into account the variables included in the current analysis. Moreover, to the best of our knowledge, there are only four studies on errors in the acqusition/learning of Italian by Anglophones. The first (Katerinov 1975) was conducted at the University of Perugia where the subjects were university students of Italian and data was gathered by means of exam papers and essays. Katerinov's results are organized as a rank order of errors which presents some similarity with the results of the present study. Azzaro (1987) collected a sample of 500 errors from university

students of Italian. He concentrates mainly on transfer and suggests that this concerns different syntactic items to a different extent.

Already reviewed in Chapter Three, Scarpa's (1990) study claims that CA is a good predictor of learner's errors, which was not confirmed by present results. Carroli (1992) chose as subjects a group of Australian university students of Italian background and studied their errors in a written essay where she claims to have found the highest number of errors in syntax, followed by morphology. None of the four studies can offer any support for the results of the present study since:

1. both the context of the experiment and the factors studied are different; and

2. instructional practices and procedures were not investigated.

It is to be noted, however, that Azzaro expresses doubts on the effectiveness of the current tolerant attitude towards errors and recommends that instructional practices and procedures should aim at reducing error formation:

> Yet any FL student must know that there is a strict norm of the language(s) s/he is learning and therefore more attention should be paid to the detection and overcoming of all errors, not in a reactionary and prescriptivist way, but with broad linguistic awareness, as some teachers are proposing (cf. for Italian the current debate on the negative effects of the post-60's schooling, with its permissiveness in respect to the teaching of traditional spelling, punctuation and grammar). (Azzaro 1987: 50)

Our conclusions seem to be supported by a number of studies conducted in Canadian schools, which point out the need of form-focused instruction, even in an immersion context (Spada 1986, 1987; White, Spada, Lightbown and Ranta 1991).[9] Their analysis of the relationship between instructional differences and variation in learners' improvement seems to reveal a positive correlation between focus on code and structured activities on the one hand, and accuracy on the other. Again from an immersion perspective, Harley (1993) advises that attention to form is particularly

beneficial in a number of cases, among which she includes features which 'do not carry a heavy communicative load' such as gender, one of the structures we tested.[10]

Although Harley's data comes from a different TL (i.e. French), in a different context (L2 v. FL), the results are, to a certain extent, comparable to ours. Harley points out that gender is (and remains over the instruction period) a problematic issue for English speakers learning French for two main reasons: lack of communicative function and L1 interference. The trend, visible in our data, towards the use of only one form of both the indefinite and definite article seems to be rather common:

> There is still massive adherence to a single definite article (approximately *le*) and a single indefinite article (usually *un*) for most nouns, suggesting that even for distinctions of sex in humans, noun gender is far from established after 4-5 years of immersion. (Harley 1993: 253)

The frequency of omission errors produced by pupils both in School A and B would point to a parallel with Schumann's (1974, 1978b) account of SLA as a pidginization process. However, while Schumann explained his results in terms of social and psychological distance, in the present study outcomes seem to be due to instructional variables, rather than social and learner-related ones. As argued in Chapter Two, social factors do not seem to have a strong influence on FLL, a process which takes place in an artificial environment as opposed to the natural one where the TL is spoken. Segregative and integrative orientation are less relevant, culture shock is mitigated and factors peculiar to the formal environment come to the fore in terms of determining outcomes. It is not denied that attitude does not have any weight in the process (see 2.3.1.1) but its influence appears to be less than teaching factors.

4.5 CONCLUSIONS

Although results seem to indicate that there is a positive correlation between form-focused instruction and achievement, this claim must be made tentatively for a number of reasons. The sample size was small and the study took place over a short period of time. Classroom observation focused on specific aspects of classroom interaction, i.e. input, practice and use, thereby neglecting a number of other aspects which may have a correlation with accuracy.

More data needs to be gathered on the relationship between instruction and learning outcomes. Ideally the study should be replicated in the form of an experimental design, with a larger number of subjects and conducted over a longer period of time. This would reduce problems of generalizability and doubts on the long-term effects of instructional differences. The opportunity of manipulating the independent variable of instruction seems of primary importance in such a design in order to arrive at a clearer picture of the relative effects of form-focused and function-focused approaches on learners' achievement. This was impossible in the present small-scale, exploratory study.

Despite the limitations listed above, results point tentatively to the fact that a form-focused approach does help learners to develop a generative skills and prevent the formation of 'classroom pidgin' encouraged by 'roughly-tuned' input. A focus on form is not sufficient in itself, however, and depends upon:

1. how consistent it is; and

2. how it translates in pedagogical terms.

The poorer performance of A1 learners, and, to a lesser extent of A3 and B3, seems to indicate that not only a focus on form is required but that inadequate sequencing and

grading in input, and/or inadequate practice of the item in question in ever more open-ended contexts, are crucial to developing a generative command of the TL.

Notes to Chapter Four

1. A mixed setting involves both instruction and informal exposure.

2. *Essere* (to be) is used with most intransitive and impersonal verbs, and all reflexive and pronominal intransitive verbs. *Avere* (to have) with transitive and some intransitive verbs.

3. The scoring method is not the same as suggested by the test correction sheet, where two points are given for each correct sentence, and one point for each sentence with one error.

4. This was most typically expressed in the response of parents in B1 where five parents out of thirteen stated that they were learning Italian from their children and most stressed their child's enjoyment of FLL. Some of them, who expressed satisfaction with their child's choice of learning Italian -- it is an option in School B -- showed evidence of high instrumental and integrative motivation.

5. The deviant transient forms in the production of articles by A1 learners might be tabulated as follows:

Error	Correct form	Error	Correct form
il	l'	la	le
la	l'	e	i
una	un		
un	una		

6. Again, the majority of 'idiosyncratic' errors were provided by A1, a fact which seems to confirm their slower rate of approach to correct forms.

7. Accidentally, *patatine* and *cipolline* are correct plural nouns, being diminutive forms of the nouns which should have been provided. However, they have not been considered correct in the present context.

8. It is worth noting that the interviewer was even more critical of the efficacy of teaching and expressed the need to get completely away from 'those lesson plans where an obligation at the end of the hour or so . . . to have the students producing a particular language structure or function with varying degrees of success' (Ellis 1993: 4).

9. It might be noted that immersion programmes are relatively acquisition-rich environments in which learners have considerable contact with the TL and numerous contextual clues to its meaning. The fact that it is increasingly recognized that a focus on form is necessary to overcome fossilization would apply doubly in an acquisition-poor environment.

10. Harley lists two sets of conditions for a form-focused approach: '1. *The compensatory salience principle.* As a supplement to a principally experiential approach, analytic teaching in a school-based SLA context is needed for those features of the L2 system that (a) differ in non obvious or, for the learner, unexpected ways from the L1, and/or (b) are irregular, infrequent or otherwise lacking in perceptual salience in the L2 input, and/or (c) do not carry a communicative load. 2. *The barrier-breaking principle.* Of those features mentioned in Principle 1, major emphasis should be given to (a) problematic L2 features where misanalysis or lack of analysis by the learner blocks entry to a major subsystem of the L2 code, and (b) to those differences from the target language that tend to create confusion in interpretation or negative attitudes among native speakers' (Harley 1993: 251).

Chapter Five

CONCLUSION. A SYNTHETIC APPROACH TO FLT

The aim of the present chapter is to outline a number of guidelines on classroom practices and procedures based on the analysis of SLA/FLL done in the first two chapters and on the study reported in the latter two. We start by summarizing the points previously made on the effects of instruction on SLA/FLL and on the characteristics of the formal environment to arrive at a review of the Communicative versus Grammatical approaches. The review suggests that, far from being mutually exclusive, they complement or, perhaps, even imply each other. The implication of the above review and of the results of the present study for FLT are then discussed. Last some observations are made on the difficulties of applying the findings of the present study to the particular case of England and Wales given the constraints exerted by the GCSE examination.

As observed in Chapter One, the cognitive approach to SLA has brought about a radical change of attitudes towards errors. Within this framework, they are no longer judged deviations from the TL but a natural product of the process of L2 acquisition and tolerated as such with the belief that, in due course, they will disappear very much in the same way as they arose, i.e. naturally. This view has, in turn, had a major influence on the Communicative Approach (especially on its strong version, see 2.4.1) to language teaching both in a host and a foreign environment. It is reflected in Widdowson's earlier view that 'usage' (i.e. structural accuracy) will be acquired as a natural by-product of 'use' (i.e. the learner's attempt to use the language for

communicative goals). As he put it: 'the teaching of use, however, does seem to guarantee the learning of usage since the latter is represented as a necessary part of the former' (Widdowson 1978: 19). Widdowson's view typifies, in many ways, a general assumption on which the Communicative Approach is based, and which has, as in the case of Prabhu, assumed even more extreme formulations:

> Given the strong plausibility of the interlanguage hypothesis . . . one can no longer expect language pedagogy to benefit from a planned linguistic progression, preselection of language for particular activities or language practice as such. The only important requirement is that language data be made available continually. (Prabhu 1985: 169)

Prabhu's views are possibly relevant in a context where the TL is a *lingua franca*, as English is in India, but are hardly applicable in a FLL context as it is assumed by other applied linguists from Newmark and Reibel (1968) to Krashen (Krashen and Terrell 1983).[1] It is ironical, however, that it is precisely these views that, albeit in a diluted form, underpin FLT in UK schools today, and which is partly structured and maintained through the teaching of the GCSE syllabus.

A certain lack of confidence in the above dictum has been, however, increasingly voiced, on the basis of empirical evidence showing that 'use' does not necessarily lead to 'usage'. As early as 1980, Canale and Swain (1980) warned against a 'blind faith' in replicating practices and procedures of L1 acquisition with adults in the SLA classroom since grammatical accuracy may not develop as a by-product of meaningful interaction. On the contrary, they stress, errors produced as a lack of initial focus on form will tend to fossilize, thereby giving rise to a classroom IL which is different from the TL. It is a similar argument to that advanced by Hammerly who highlights the dangers in neglecting the difference between a child acquiring his L1 and one learning a FL. As he points out, the idea that FL students can test out linguistic hypotheses the

same way that young children acquire their NL -- i.e. through 'unrestrained conversation' -- is simply unproductive:

> For the latter [i.e. FL student] to get feedback useful to hypothesis testing, this feedback must come primarily from the teacher, not from classmates who make the same errors. Cognitively mature learners can test hypotheses much more effectively if guided systematically and overtly by a knowledgeable teacher through one hypothesis at a time than by unconsciously riding linguistically in all directions at the same time and not getting (because it *can't* be given) effective, specific feedback. (Hammerly 1991: 75)

Higgs and Clifford go even further, hinting that the Communicative Approach may be effective in teaching learners enough transactional language at the survival level, but is ineffective in preparing them for more complex forms of communication. As they suggest:

> Broadening the range of language proficiency expected from our students absolutely changes the rules of the game. Paralinguistic communication strategies become inefficient and counterproductive, and speakers whose communication repertoires are thus limited are rendered incapable of efficient or even marginally successful communication. (Higgs and Clifford 1982: 61)

5.1 THE EFFECTS OF INSTRUCTION ON SLA/FLL

The belief that L1 acquisition and SLA/FLL are one and the same process is at the root of the strong version of the Communicative Approach. This belief is based on the claim made in the morpheme studies (see 1.2.3) that there exist invariant routes of acquisition common to L1 acquisition and SLA/FLL. As Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) point out, however, the claim is not grounded in an analysis of the variables involved in the process but rather on a series of inferences.[2] In particular, they argue, researchers claiming invariant routes have failed to look at instructional practices and procedures and have concentrated exclusively on learning outcomes.

On the basis of evidence of invariant routes some applied linguists have come to the conclusion that formal instruction has a limited beneficial effect on SLA/FLL; and this assumption has then been formalized in teaching methods, which range from the extremely inductive views of Krashen and Terrel's (1983) Natural Approach, to the slightly less inductive views of Brumfit and Widdowson. The soundness of this argument has justly been likened by Larsen-Freeman and Long 'to claiming that because some plants will grow in a desert, watering the ones in your garden is a waste of time' (1991: 304).

As the strong version of the Communicative Approach was investigated in a series of process-product studies (Mitchell 1981; Spada 1986, 1987; Lightbown and Spada 1990; Doughty 1991), however, the assumptions on which it is based began to appear rather spurious. Empirical evidence from the studies listed supports the hypothesis that instructional differences result in differences in learning outcomes and, more specifically, that focus on form has a positive correlation with accuracy, which is not a by-product of communicative activities. Even studies on the outcomes of immersion programmes (Spilka 1976; Adiv 1980; Harley and Swain 1978, 1984; Pellerin and Hammerly 1986) tend to conclude that their subjects do not score high on accuracy even though immersion is the closest a classroom can get to natural exposure.[3] In her comparative study of students in immersion programmes and mother tongue children, Spilka (1976) reports that the former made little progress towards accuracy in six years of instruction (from Grade 1 to 6) and that in some structures, their IL contained increasing error percentages over the years:

> The performance of non-native speakers varies more widely, revealing numerous errors of omission and addition, interaction with the mother tongue,

and frequent failure to effect proper differentiation when French calls for fine distinctions ignored in English. (Spilka 1976: 553-4)

Spilka's conclusions are replicated by Adiv (1980) who, paradoxically, attributes the lack of accuracy in her subjects' performance to pressure to communicate, while, according to Widdowson and Prabhu, it should be the trigger for SLA and ultimately lead to the elimination of errors.[4] What Adiv points to is a mismatch between the ability to manipulate the code and the communicative tasks set to the learner, an issue that will be explored later. The same conclusions are drawn by Bibeau (1984) who deplores the poor performance of immersion students:

> When it comes to expressing themselves and demonstrating their knowledge in an active fashion, they hesitate, speak in incomplete sentences, produce stereotype utterances, avoid 'difficult' structures by using overly complex sentences, have a strong foreign accent and make numerous errors in grammar and vocabulary. (Bibeau 1984: 45)

The results achieved by immersion programmes are also discussed by Pellerin and Hammerly who argue that errors do not seem to disappear, but rather to fossilize:

> Ces constatations soulignent une des faiblesses de l'enseignement immersif: l'impossibilité de recréer en salle de classe les conditions d'acquisition d'un langage second en milieu naturel; on n'y retrouve ni l'apport de nombreux exemples provenant de l'extérieur ni l'interaction avec de multiple usagers du langage, qui aident l'apprenant à formuler et à assimiler inconsciemment les règles de la nouvelle grammaire. (Pellerin and Hammerly 1986: 600)

Pellerin and Hammerly's conclusions are similar to those of the present study and it may be noted that they are based on studies of immersion programmes, which are probably the closest replica of the natural in the formal environment. More recently Hammerly, on the basis of eight studies, strongly emphasizes the lack of accuracy of French immersion students:

> To say that immersion students 'do not perform at native-like levels' of proficiency is therefore a misleading understatement. These students' speech and writing are very far from native-like -- nowhere near it. Theirs is a terminal

> classroom pidgin -- 'Frenglish' in Canada (and 'Spanglish' in the U.S.). They make frequent errors of the most basic kind: the wrong gender with very common nouns; misuse of *tu/vous* (this distinction can be imparted in 15 min of direct instruction); incorrect auxiliaries and verb forms; wrong prepositions; and so on throughout the language (Hammerly 1992: 215)

The failure of immersion courses to develop accuracy would seem to contradict the belief that errors are a temporary problem which disappear as a result of verbal interaction, without any need to focus on form to eradicate (or prevent) them.

5.2 A 'POVERTY OF THE STIMULUS' PROBLEM IN THE FORMAL ENVIRONMENT

The tolerant attitude to error suggested by the Communicative Approach is ultimately based on a failure to recognize the peculiar features of an instructed as opposed to a non-instructed environment. As discussed in Chapter Two, there are fundamental differences between the two which concern first and foremost the quality and quantity of input and output:

> Specifically, social context, those situations in which language is *used*, has an impact on quality and quantity of language interaction(s), be it in the realm of input that the learner is exposed to or the output of the learner himself or herself. (van Patten and Lee 1990a: 241)

The opportunities for hearing a given structure are manifold in the informal environment where it can occur in a range of verbal and situational contexts, used by a variety of speakers. Repetition of, and variety in, the use of a structure may allow a learner to form hypotheses since, it is commonly assumed, SLA is a matter of hypothesis testing. Moreover, opportunities for production are higher in a natural context and a learner can put to the test the hypotheses he has formed and progressively adjust them until he reaches a repertoire which matches his needs.

There is no agreement as to the frequency or effect of correction in either environment (see 2.1.2.2 and 2.3.2.6), although it is traditionally believed that a learner has more opportunities for correction in a formal context. On the other hand, an informal context offers more ample opportunities for feedback, both verbal and non-verbal, direct and indirect. This may not necessarily result in error-free performance but will probably lead the learner to a level of accuracy that allows him to fulfil his communicative needs. Finally, it may be noted, SLA is initiated and sustained by a genuine need to 'get things done' which can prove a powerful incentive to improve proficiency.

The formal environment, instead, offers less in terms of opportunities, models and contexts at each stage of the learning process, that is, what might be called input, production and feedback. It often happens that a structure is presented in only one unit and that the learner has therefore to make the best of his opportunity to internalize the form focused upon. If he is absent for a number of periods of instruction, his contact with a new structure will often depend very much on his personal initiative. Production is limited, as are therefore also the opportunities for testing hypotheses. Interactions may concern topics which are not within the learner's range of interests and, indeed, classroom discourse is not usually initiated or sustained by a communicative need, which may make the whole process seem less relevant to learner needs. The same applies to the relevance of correction, which may often concern abstract issues such as morphology.

The focus on the message proposed by the strong versions of the Communicative Approach as the best way of achieving linguistic proficiency does not seem to be appropriate at a theoretical or at an empirical level. It may be true, as

Widdowson (1990) suggests, that , in a natural context, the child acquires language as a by-product of communicative interaction. In a classroom, however, where opportunities for such interaction do not exist and where the learner does not have a natural 'intention to mean', it would appear to be illogical to assume that a similar process can occur. Moreover, the recommendations regarding authenticity of input made by proponents of the Communicative Approach overlook the fact that roughly-graded input does not allow the average learner, in the limited contact time available, to infer rules and may not contain the range of structures, notions and functions which form a basic repertoire. As observed by Swain: 'certain uses of language may simply not naturally occur, or may occur infrequently in the classroom setting. When the main source of second language input is the classroom, this problem is particularly serious' (Swain 1988: 71).[5]

A 'poverty of the stimulus' problem therefore seems to exist in an instructed environment, a factor of which pedagogy should not lose sight and which operates at a variety of levels. It is not only that learners do not have a natural 'intention to mean' in the artificial confines of the classroom, but that the lack of communicative interaction decreases the opportunities to use/practise the TL and removes those contextual props that are often crucial (in a natural environment) to understanding its meaning.

5.3 A SYNTHESIS OF THE ANALYTIC AND EXPERIENTIAL IN FLT

Three points emerge from the above analysis:

1. there are a number of constraints on the recreation of the natural environment in the classroom, and what holds true for the former may not for the latter;

2. the supposed similarity between SLA and FLL does not have a firm empirical basis, and the important differences between the two have major implications for the Communicative Approach, which is based on the assumption that the two are similar; and

3. the notion that in the formal context errors disappear in time as a result of verbal intercourse is not supported by empirical research, and indeed the opposite would seem to be the case.

Precisely because the learner does not have constant exposure to the TL the aim of pedagogy should be to support ('scaffold') his attempt to perceive significant generalizations through the careful selection, sequencing and grading of input. This may not automatically lead to error-free performance, but it would certainly reduce the number of deviations from TL forms and restrict the latter to informed choices rather than random guesses, thereby allowing the teacher to intervene only in certain problematic areas. As Larsen-Freeman and Long point out, the aim of pedagogy is to improve on natural processes:

> While the desert may provide the minimum conditions for a plant to grow, watering it may help it grow faster, bigger and stronger, that is, to realize its full potential. So with language learning: while comprehensible input may be necessary and sufficient for SLA, instruction may simplify the learning task, alter the processes and sequences of acquisition, speed up the rate of acquisition and improve the quality and level of ultimate SL attainment.
> (Larsen-Freeman and Long 1991: 304)

5.3.1 The revival of analytic activities

The movement for the application of analytic activities in the classroom has received a new momentum from a number of studies (some of which are quoted in 5.1) showing the positive correlation between accuracy and focus on form, among which the DBP (Development of Bilingual Proficiency)[6] studies stand out. As Lightbown argues, the DBP studies show that whether students have many hours contact with the TL (as in immersion programmes) or only a few hours (as in normal FLL contexts):

> It is important that some attention be given to teaching the language itself, to providing some formal, analytic teaching that can help students see where their use of the target language differs from that of native speakers. Such findings tend to be supported by other research, both empirical and theoretical, that lacking such guided instruction, learners may develop fossilized interlanguage when they become able to communicate fairly successfully.
> (Lightbown 1990: 91)

This does not imply that the attention to notions and functions characterizing the Communicative Approach is to be rejected,[7] but rather that the semantic and the structural approaches to syllabus design should be combined so that the learner can learn to use the TL both accurately and appropriately. The integration of structural and semantic, analytic and experiential is by no means easy to accomplish and demands innovations in syllabus design and classroom methodology.

Accordingly, in the light of the 'poverty of the stimulus' problem discussed in 5.2, it would seem that FL instruction must improve on natural acquisition processes, which are often slow and inefficient in the natural environment itself, and even more so in the formal environment. At the appropriate times, this can be done by means of form-focused activities without any unjustified embarrassment at their inevitable artificiality. As Swann has pointed out in his critique of the Communicative Approach:

None the less, the classroom is not the outside world, and learning language is not the same as using language. A certain amount of artificiality is inseparable from the process of isolating and focusing on language items for study, and it is a serious mistake to condemn types of discourse typically found in the classroom because they do not share all the communicative features of other kinds of language use. (Swan 1985(2): 82)

5.3.2 How to integrate analytic and experiential activities in the FL classroom

Under the analytic label Stern (1990) lists not only grammar, but also 'any other aspect of the language that can be identified and isolated, phonological, lexical, semantic, discoursal, and sociolinguistic', thereby including components that are more closely related to the functional aspect of language (see Table 5.1). In other words, he suggests that an analytic approach can be beneficial also in the development of communicative competence, which, according to CAN supporters, can be acquired only though experiential activities.

One of the first proposals for the integration of the two approaches under the label of a 'variable-focus curriculum' came from J. Allen (1980, 1983, 1984) who recommends a curriculum including structural, functional, and experiential components in a cyclical programme. The focus of activities in this model shifts from one to the other, starting at level one, with changes in emphasis according to the learner's needs and circumstances (see Table 5.2). The three types of practice are not intended as separate, but any of them can intervene to support another.

It is noticeable in Allen that the relation between the analytical and experiential uses of language is almost the reverse of that in a SLA environment. Whereas in the

Table 5.1 *Experiential and analytic features* (Stern 1990: 106)

Experiential features	Analytic features
1. Substantive and motivated topic or theme (topics are not arbitrary or trivial).	1. Focus on aspects of L2, including phonology, grammar, functions, discourse, sociolinguistics.
2. Students engage in purposeful activity (task or projects), not exercises.	2. Cognitive study of language items (rules and regulations are noted; items are made salient, and related to other items and systems).
3. Language use has characteristics of real talk (conversation) or uses any of the four skills as part of purposeful action.	3. Practice or rehearsal of language items or skill aspects.
4. Priority of meaning transfer and fluency over linguistic error avoidance and accuracy.	4. Attention to accuracy and error avoidance.
5. Diversity of social interaction.	5. Diversity of social interaction desirable.

Table 5.2 *Three levels of communicative competence in second-language education.* (J. Allen 1983: 36)

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Structural	*Functional*	*Experiential*
Focus on language (formal features)	Focus on language (discourse features)	Focus on the use of language
(a) Structural control	(a) Discourse control	(a) Situational or topical control
(b) Materials simplified structurally	(b) Materials simplified functionally	(b) Authentic language use
(c) Mainly structural practice	(c) Mainly discourse practice	(c) Uncontrolled, free practice

latter 'structural control' is acquired as a by-product of 'situational' or 'topical control', in the former the internalization of such structures is seen as a pre-requisite for social interaction. This reversal can also be seen reflected in Rivers' (1968, 1983) distinction between 'skill-getting' and 'skill-using', that of Littlewood (1981b) between

'pre-communicative' and 'communicative' and that of Dodson (1978) between 'medium-oriented' and 'message-oriented' activities. It is also at the basis of Roberts' (1992b) more recent model where the initial conscious attention to language form only becomes spontaneous use via a series of problem-solving activities in which the emphasis shifts ever more to non-linguistic goals. This gradual shift from an emphasis upon the medium to that of the message is expressed, in Roberts' model, in a series of interlinked dichotomies:

1. system and function. In natural language acquisition, the child develops a mastery of the language system as a by-product of functional use, i.e. propositional meaning encoded in that system is accessed via illocutionary meaning in achieving interpersonal goals. Such a process is reversed in a FLL process precisely because the same opportunities for communicative interaction do not exist. In a situation where there is no genuine intention to mean, the learner's attention is focused initially on the propositional meaning encoded in language form which only gradually assumes illocutionary force;

2. accuracy and fluency. In natural language acquisition, the use of language is unplanned and contextual clues to meaning overcome linguistic distortions in the message; it is largely because communication is not impaired that adults focus on the correction of semantic rather than syntactic errors. In a FLL process, however, where extra-linguistic clues to meaning are reduced and language becomes its own context, such errors assume a different role. If meaning is dependent on the accurate use of language, such errors have proportionately more potential for distorting the message and the focus initially therefore has to be on accuracy rather than fluency; and

3. meaning and sense. In natural language acquisition, communication depends on shared meanings and the child only achieves this through a series of gradual approximations in which the 'sense' (i.e. context-embeddedness) of lexical items gives way to their meaning (i.e. socially-accepted identity). In FLL, once again, this process is reversed in that the learner's well-developed conceptual repertoire allows him to access the social meaning directly and it is only gradually, by the recycling of the item across a range of contexts, that he is able to enrich it and develop a growing appreciation of its sense.[8]

Some applied linguists, such as Widdowson (1990) have argued against this reversal of structural practice and functional use by claiming that it runs counter to the learners' natural experience of language. As he puts it, 'having been trained to direct what they do in the service of knowledge, they have difficulty in reversing the dependency and so to direct what they know in the service of doing'. Widdowson's point is useful in explaining the problems many learners have in terms of converting an initially conscious focus on form to spontaneous use but is hardly valid as a critique of such a process. On the contrary, the reversal between skill and knowledge is an inevitable function of a learning as opposed to an acquisition process and applies not only to FLL but to all areas of the curriculum.

5.3.3 Selection, sequencing and grading

What is interesting in the above models, particularly those of Allen or Roberts, is the way in which the gradual shift from formal practice to functional use is matched over the given stages with different forms of linguistic activity and classroom organisation, as in Table 5.3. The input stage is the most significant and demands

careful judgement in the selection and sequencing of items. Roberts (1992a: 27) argues that the input stage is largely one where the learner's attention 'is initially focussed upon the language itself, i.e. upon using whatever extra-linguistic clues are available to form (and test out) hypotheses about how the patterned nature of speech encodes meaning'. The way in which the teacher can help the learner to form correct hypotheses is through the selection and sequencing of the data to which he is exposed. With regard to selection, Roberts observes that preference should be given to items that have 'high transfer value', that is, those whose underlying pattern permits the generation of meaning across a range of contexts rather than context-discrete (and unanalysed) chunks. Moreover, in the sequencing of such items, care should be taken to ensure that learners are aided not only to detect their underlying patterns but the way in which those patterns interlock with those of preceding items in order to reveal the TL as a 'system of systems' generating ever more complex meaning.

Table 5.3 *Grading in FLT* (Adapted from Roberts 1992b: 27)

L1 ←──────────────────────────────────────
──────────────────────────────────────→ FL

Input	Practice	Use
medium	medium/message	message
form	form/function	function
accuracy	accuracy/fluency	fluency
meaning	meaning/sense	sense
little context	more context	context-valid
teacher-dependent	less teacher-dependent	teacher-independent

To take an example, as was observed in Chapter Three, A1 were presented with the various forms of the definite article and the preposition *a* + definite article in the same unit. According to Roberts' model, introduction of the preposition should only have occurred after the learner had internalized the various forms of the definite article

and had an organizing principle for dealing with the new compound structure. Similarly, new structures should not be introduced with new vocabulary items but in a context of familiar vocabulary so as to focus attention on, and not detract from, the item being inputted.[9] As van Patten noted, 'simultaneous conscious attention to informational content and "meaningless" form in the input is difficult for the early stage and intermediate stage learner' and 'only when input is easily understood can learners attend to form as part of the intake process' (van Patten 1990: 296).

It is noticeable, however, that in Roberts (1992a, 1992b) as in Rivers (1968, 1983) and Dodson (1978), the emphasis is upon encouraging learners to take an active role in the discovery of language patterns rather than simply presenting them with the ready-made rule. If one of the weaknesses of School A was the neglect of pattern in the data presented, a corresponding error of School B was to present such patterns to the learner rather than allowing them to infer them from selected examples. It is only by allowing the learner to form and test hypotheses at the input stage that the ground can be set for more independent skill-based work at the practice and use stage where he: 'will have internalized the relevant language items and -- because s/he no longer has any need to pay more than a minimal attention to form -- can become involved in a range of activities in which s/he can focus ever more upon the extra-linguistic exchange of meaning' (Roberts 1992b: 29).

The ability to detect and progressively manipulate patterns is crucial if the learner is to develop a generative competence which will allow him -- at the use stage -- to convey personal meaning. Too often, as observed in the present study, the use of a semantic (i.e. notional-functional) syllabus undermines the development of such competence in favour of a repertoire of set phrases which can be used in relation to

given contexts but not outside them. Above all, as Swan was to observe, the fact that

there is no necessary relation between functional and structural progression means that

the focus on function ill-equips the learner to cope with the unpredictable at the use

stage:

> Students need to learn to say new things as well as old things. A learner of
> English may need to be able to say 'Could you check the tyre pressure?'; but
> he or she may also find it necessary to say 'The car makes a funny noise every
> time I go round a left-hand bend', or 'I nearly ran over a policeman just by the
> place where we had that awful meal with your hairdresser's boyfriend'.
> Sentences like these are not predicted by any kind of semantic syllabus; they can
> be generated only by constructing sentences out of lexical and grammatical
> building blocks in accordance with the various rules of phrase and sentence
> construction. (Swan 1985(2): 82)

The argument by writers such as Swan on the importance of helping learners to see the

form-meaning relation in the early stages is not an attempt to counterpose structure to

function. As Widdowson (1990) has argued, FLL is not an either/or process but one in

which the 'structural means of teaching' are a pre-requisite for 'the communicative ends

of learning'.

5.4 GCSE AND FLT

In the particular case of English and Welsh schools, the GCSE syllabus would

seem to be a powerful constraint upon the introduction of a *synthetic approach* in FL

instruction. Obviously, the GCSE does not dictate method but, given the current

emphasis on competitiveness among schools that is largely based on GCSE results,

there is a strong tendency towards training pupils to pass their exam as opposed to

teaching them the TL in a principled way. Graham and Powell suggest that the primary

fault of the GCSE lies in the fact that it 'seems to develop BICS to a large degree, with

its emphasis on functional, transactional, context embedded language' (Graham and Powell 1992: 63) rather than CALP, to use the distinction made by Cummins.

There is considerable truth in this although, at times, it is to be wondered whether the methodology encouraged by the GCSE develops either BICS or CALP. The introduction to the 'Structures and Grammar' section of the Italian NEAB syllabus may highlight the value of the ability to manipulate the language to convey meaning but the organisation and content of the syllabus would appear to contradict this.[10] In the first place, as a topic-based syllabus, grammatical structures are simply listed and no indication is given as to the most suitable way of sequencing/grading them. In the second place, the subordination of form to topic areas tends to favour an emphasis on context-discrete uses of language to 'get things done' and, since the learners are engaged almost exclusively in pseudo-communicative activities (dialogues, role-playing and information-gap activities), they do not learn to segment what they are practising and therefore have difficulties in communicating outside of the well-defined borders of their mental phrase-book. As Roberts argues:

> Isn't this the syndrome that has emerged with the GCSE where many pupils cannot transfer what they have learnt outside the context in which they learnt it? They may know how to ask where the nearest cafe is (*Est-ce qu'il y a un café près d'ici?*) but, because they have learnt this as a formulaic expression for a given task, are often unable to transfer the underlying pattern to ask if there is any cheese in the fridge (*Est-ce qu'il y a du fromage dans le frigo?*). (Roberts 1993b: 25)

In the third place, the fact that language is subordinated to context-related tasks means that items of grammar and vocabulary (which is often excessive) are never recycled from topic to topic and therefore the learner is denied any possibility of developing more complex uses of language.

The weaknesses of this approach -- in terms of developing communicative competence -- have been discussed throughout the current chapter. It might be equally useful, however, to draw attention to the psychological weaknesses of the approach, which can hardly motivate the average learner. The GCSE may seek to predict where the average learner will operate but, as Roberts (1993b) suggests, this can easily give way to the 'role-playing syndrome' where ordering hotel rooms, petrol or loaves of bread can appear so distant from his needs as to undermine 'any sense of personal involvement'. Salter (1989) was to put this somewhat differently when he rhetorically asked: 'What, I wonder, would a psychologist make of so many language-learning activities which build up expectations that are never fulfilled, which seem designed to create frustration?'

5.5 CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the evidence gained in the present study, supported by the studies and authoritative opinions quoted in the previous sections, it would appear that the counterposition of analytic and experiential activities is based on a false dichotomy. Rather than being counterposed, the two are complementary, or rather the first provides the foundation for the second. Obviously more work is necessary to define in detail what has here been called a *synthetic approach*. It would seem, however, that current practice in UK secondary schools -- based within the framework set by the GCSE -- contains a number of weaknesses in terms of the relation between input practice and use, weaknesses which make it ineffective in the development of communicative competence.

The value of the *synthetic approach* seems to lie in its balanced attempt to avoid the 'swings of the pendulum' which have characterized the field for a considerable time. Such an approach does not deny the importance of 'message-oriented' uses of language as a goal but merely suggests that achievement of that goal depends upon systematic attention to 'medium-oriented' activities as means. Interestingly enough, a survey conducted by Graham and Powell (1992) indicates that need for instruction focused on form is not just advocated by researchers but also by learners themselves. The majority of their subjects, who were all 'A-Level' students, showed agreement with the question 'I feel that I need to be taught grammar systematically, rather than as it just comes up in a text'.[11] It might be finally pointed out that the attempt to justify the initial emphasis upon form-focused activities is not only a pre-requisite for conveying personal meaning. It is also essential with a view to the long-term aims of education which, contrary to the unconscious processes advocated by the Communicative Approach, are based upon a conscious understanding of how language works.

Notes to Chapter Five

1. As Newmark (1973) was to put it the role of the teacher is 'to present instance of meaningful use' which the learner 'stores, segments and eventually recombines' to convey personal meaning.

2. 'Unfortunately, however, many of the conclusions about the limitations or inefficacy of instruction are *non sequiturs* or, at best, *inferences* which have looked not at the effects of instruction, but at similarities in the interlanguages of naturalistic and classroom learners. Yet it has been inferences, not research, which have in turn formed a large part of the basis for prescriptions for language teaching' (Larsen-Freeman and Long 1991: 302).

3. 'These programs are referred to by Krashen (1984) as "communicative programs *par excellence*" since the focus is almost exclusively on meaning through subject-matter instruction rather than on the form of the language itself' (Lightbown and Spada 1990).

4. 'The finding that there was little progress towards mastery of the grammatical features, other than the unmarked ones, seems to indicate that the learner continues to maximally reduce the burden of complexification in his interim grammar. This strategy may be accentuated in immersion settings where the learner is under constant pressure to convey meaning in a great variety of context' (Adiv 1980: 150).

5. Swain quotes two examples. The first is the low number of occurrences of *vous* used by teachers as a polite form. The second is non-TL frequency of verb tenses in learner's output: overuse of the *passé composé*, low occurrence of the imperfect with action verbs, provision of the conditional in only about half of obligatory contexts at Grade 10. This last finding correlates with teacher's use of verb tenses: three-quarters of verbs are in the present or imperative, 15% in the past, 6% in the future and 3% in the conditional.

6. 'The Development of Bilingual Proficiency (DBP) project consisted of a series of related studies in three major areas: the components of second language proficiency, the effects on classroom instruction on second language learning, and the relationship of proficiency to age differences and socio-environmental factors' (Long and Richards 1990: xi).

7. As Lightbown (1990) and Hammerly (1991) observe, experiential activities seem to correlate positively with fluency.

8. As Vološinov (1930/1973) points out, it is the enrichment of a given item by circulation across a range of contexts that transforms it from a 'signal' to a 'sign'.

9. The opposite appears to be the case for many coursebooks and syllabuses.

10. The syllabus is used in School A.

11. More precisely, out of 44 subjects, 28 expressed agreement, 11 were undecided, 3 showed disagreement, 1 answer was not applicable.

Appendix A. Syllabuses

A1 syllabus

UNIT ONE: PERSONAL INFORMATION

AIM :   To provide the basic linguistic skills and information necessary for a person to give information about himself/herself if separated from the group with which he/she is travelling.

OBJECTIVES:

1. The learner should be able to give his/her name, age, nationality and local address in Italian and respond to stimuli requesting the same.

2. The learner should be able to state to an Italian speaker that he/she is lost and to respond to a limited range of ensuing questions.

3. The learner should be able to give information concerning himself/herself by filling in a form on which the requests for information are written in Italian. Responses may be written in English.

CONTENT:

1. LISTENING AND SPEAKING

| Qual è il suo nome? |
| Come si chiama (Lei)? |

Mi chiamo . . .

Quanti anni ha (Lei)

Ho . . . anni

Lei è inglese?

Sì, sono inglese

| Qual è il suo indirizzo qui a . . . ? |
| Dove abita qui a . . .? |

Abito a . . .

| Che cosa c'è |
| Che c'è | ? |
| Cosa c'è |

| Mi sono perduto/perduta |
| Non so dove sono |

2. READING

Cognome; Nome; Data di nascita; Età; Nato a; Nazionalità; Professione; Indirizzo

UNIT TWO: FINDING THE WAY

AIM: To provide the basic linguistic skills and background information necessary for a person to find his/her way around a town if unaccompanied.

OBJECTIVES:

1. The learner should be able to ask the way to destinations listed under content.

2. The learner should be able to understand instructions given in Italian on how to reach his/her desired destination.

3. The learner should be able to understand written signs indicating the way to desired destinations.

CONTENT:

1. LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Asking the way

Giving the way

★
| Continui dritto |
| È dritto/diritto |

(Mi) scusi
| Signore |
| Signora |
| Signorina |
. . .

★ prenda la
| prima |
| seconda |
| terza |
strada a
| destra |
| |
| sinistra |

. . . per andare
| al |
| ai |
| allo |
| agli |
| alla |
| alle |
| all' |
. . . ?

| giri | | a destra | | il/lo/la |
| volti | | a sinistra | dopo | i/le . . . |

Dov'è
| la stazione |
| la spiaggia |
| il porto |
| il caffè |
| il bar |
| il centro (della città) |
| l'albergo della gioventù |
| la questura |
| l'ufficio informazioni |
| l'albergo |
| l'hotel |
| il viale |
| la piazza |
| la via |
| il cinema |
| la piscina |
| l'ufficio postale |
| il campeggio |
| il posteggio |
| la strada per . . . |

★
salga	la via . . .	
traversi		etc.
scenda	la viale . . .	

★ È laggiù
indietro	l'ufficio
davanti a	postale etc.
accanto	all'ufficio
vicino	postale etc.

★ È a circa cento metri etc. . . . .

Dove sono i gabinetti
| per piacere |
| per favore |
? Vada
| alla stazione |
| al caffè |
etc.

Non capisco
Più piano per piacere
(Lo) ripeta per piacere

READING -- All the places and addresses in the Listening and Speaking section should be understood by the learner when presented in written form, i.e. on signposts, in addition to the following:

P. & T. (Posta e Telegrafi)
F.S. (Ferrovia dello Stato)
(FF.SS.)
P. (Parcheggio)
W.C. (Gabinetti -- Signori/Signore)
C.I.T. (Compagnia Informazioni Turismo)

UNIT THREE: TRAVEL

AIM: To provide the basic linguistic skills and background information necessary for a person to travel independently by train or 'bus.

OBJECTIVES:
1. The learner should be able to ask the way to the 'bus stop and to the 'bus and train stations.
2. The Bus -- the learner should be able to:
   a) state his/her destination;
   b) ask the fare and understand the probable reply;
   c) visually understand the 24-hour timetable.
3. The Train -- the learner should be able to:
   a) buy a ticket or a book of tickets;
   b) find the way to his/her destination, including making any necessary changes;
   c) read and understand the essential signs in the train station.

CONTENT:

LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Dov'è?
la Ferrovia
la stazione
il capolinea di autobus
la fermata di autobus
l'orario degli autobus
l'orario dei treni

Dov'è il binario numero
uno
due
tre
etc.
?

Quale autobus devo prendere per andare a . . .?

LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Dov'è
l'uscita
la biglietteria
+ all locations
in Unit 2.
?

Dove vuole andare?   Vorrei andare a . . .

Dove esattamente?

È diretto

★ Scenda

a . . .
qui

Si deve cambiare?

Su quale binario?

★ Prenda

il numero
la linea numero
la direzione

Un biglietto	andata andata e ritorno ridotto/mezzo
	prima classe seconda classe

per piacere

Un abbonamento (di biglietti)

Quanto costa? Quant'è?	(Individual items) (Multiple items)	Money in lira Numbers 1- 100,000

READING -- The following words and terms should be read and understood

coincidenza	biglietti
entrata	orari
uscita	prima/seconda classe
linea	posto riservato
tariffa	stazione d'autobus
partenze	direzione
arrivi	biglietteria
informazioni	divieto d'entrata

vietato sputare
vietato fumare

fermata

obbligatoria
facoltativa

UNIT FOUR: AT THE CAFE

AIM: To provide the basic linguistic skills and background information necessary for a person to make himself/herself understood in an Italian café.

OBJECTIVES:
1. The learner should be able to call the waiter/waitress and make greetings.
2. The learner should be able to ask politely for items in the café and also ask the price of them.
3. The learner shoul be able to recognize, understand and respond to the waiter's remarks.
4. The learner should be able to read, recognize and understand the various titles and notices seen in the café.

CONTENT:

1. LISTENING AND SPEAKING

| Cameriere! | (to call the |
| Cameriera! | waiter/waitress) |

un caffè (caldo, freddo)/		
un capuccino/un espresso/		
un tè (ghiacciato)/		
un'aranciata/		
una birra/		
una limonata/		
un gelato/		
una coca (cola)		
una brioscia		
un panino	con formaggio	
	con prosciutto	
un crostino		
patate fritte		
una pasta		
un pacco di patatine		
una spremuta di limone		
un bicchiere di vino		bianco
		rosso
		martini
un aperitivo		
un amaro	con	ghiaccio

Desidera	
Cosa desidera	?
Che cosa prende	

Che sapore?

fragola	
vaniglia	(referring to ice-cream)
cioccolata	

* Non c'è (più) . . .

* Non ce n'è più

| Ancora una birra | . . . ? |
| Un'altra birra | |

È tutto?

Va bene?

| Quant'è | . . . ? |
| Quanto costa | |

In tutto costa . . . lire

Il conto, per favore

Dove sono i gabinetti,
per piacere/per favore?

In fondo a
Fuori
Accanto a
A destra
A sinistra
Davanti a

	Signore
Buon giorno	Signora
Arrivederci	Signorina
Grazie	Signore
	Signori

2. READING -- Under this heading we require all the vocabulary in the Listening and Speaking section, plus the following, to be recognized and understood:

Pizzeria	Gabinetti/W.C.
Ristorante	Servizio incluso
Trattoria	Servizio non incluso
Caffè-ristorante	Prezzo nettto/fisso
Bar	Lista/Listino prezzi
Tabacchi	Prezzi
Gelateria	Bibite

UNIT FIVE: SHOPPING

AIM: To provide the basic linguistic skills and background information necessary to enable a person to make purchases.

OBJECTIVES:

1. The learner should be able to go into shops and
a) ask politely for the items listed in the content of this unit;
b) specify quantities;
c) ascertain prices.
2. The learner should be able to
a) understand the probable replies to questions under 1.;
b) understand likely queries as to size and quantity;
c) understand and, where necessary, respond to other items of language likely to be encountered in a shopping situtation and specified in the syllabus.
3. The learner should be able to recognize the names of shops, signs and written instructions.

CONTENT:

LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Desidera Cosa desidera	?

(Niente) altro?

	uno/una come quello/quella	
Vorrei Desidero	biscotti caramelle cioccolatino cioccolatini arance pesche mele pere
Ha?	banane paste francobollo/francobolli (per l'Inghilterra) cartoline postali

★

Quanto Quanta Quanti Quante	?

50 grammi di 100 grammi di . . . chilo . . . chili mezzo chilo		
una	grande piccola	bottiglia di . . .
un una	grande piccolo/a	tavoletta di cioccolata pacchetto di caramelle

★ Non ne ho

★ | Eccolo
Eccola |

★ È tutto?   ★ Sì, è tutto grazie

Quant'è? Quanto costa? Quanto costano?

★ In tutto costa . . . lire

★ Ha | gli spiccioli
la moneta giusta | ?

Per fare un regalo (?)

Cosa?
Che cos'è?

★ Non si tocca
Va bene

Buon giorno	
Arrivederci	Signore
Sì	Signora
No	Signorina
Grazie	Signori/Signore
Prego	

2. <u>READING</u> -- In addition to items under Listening and Speaking, the learner should recognize and understand the following:

Panetteria
Pasticceria
Drogheria
Generi alimentari
Salumeria
Tabaccheria
Supermercato
Mercato
Prezzo fisso
Macelleria
Fruttivendolo
Frutta
Negozio abbigliamento

Commodity prices and markings

. . . lire

| al pezzo |
| al kg |
| all'etto |

aperto/chiuso
tirare/spingere
Self-service
Cassa
Vietato entrare
Uscita
Entrata

| | | SUMMARY OF SCHEME OF WORK | | LANGUAGE: Italian | |
| | | | | YEAR: 10 | |
TERM	NAME OF UNIT	TOPIC	GRAMMAR POINTS	NC AREA OF EXPERIENCE	TARGET
AUTUMN	HOUSE + HOME	Rooms in house/floors Furniture Position words Property advertisements Daily routine Revision of time Helping at home	Prepositions: sul/sulla etc. Agreement of adjectives Reflexive verbs Present tense Adverbs of time: spesso, sempre, mai, qualche volta FARE: present tense	A, C, E	Description of home with plan. Write an advert
	FAMILY	Revision of family members Animals/pets	Revision of possessives AVERE: Present tense ESSERE: Present tense	A, B	Record an interview about one's family
	GEOGRAPHICAL SURROUNDINGS	Weather Seasons Revision of months Compass points/areas of country	Revision of FARE	C, E	Write postcards To understand a weather forecast

SPRING	FREE TIME + ENTERTAINMENT	Hobbies
		Expressing opinions on TV/films
		Arranging to meet someone
		Using the telephone
		Revision of 24 hour clock/high nos
		Revision of days of the week
		Times of the day: - morning etc.
			Negatives: -
			non . . . mai
			   nessuno
			   niente
			   più
			Voglio
			Posso + INFINITIVE
			Devo
				A, E	Record a telephone conversation arranging to meet someone

	HOLIDAYS	Countries Directions Revision of weather/months Methods of travel Holiday destinations: mountains/country/seaside Tourist information: - Asking for maps, brochures, plans Tourist attractions in Italy Regions in Italy Amenities in London/hometown Advantages + disavantages of living in town Revision of directions	IN/A with countries/towns Perfect tense with ESSERE Comparison of adjectives/superlatives	A, C, D , E	Describe a recent holiday Write a letter to tourist information Make a brochure on things to do in hometown

B1 syllabus

VOCABULARY	LANGUAGE STRUCTURES		
CORE Sì No alfabeto sedia tavola banco porta gomma matita penna riga luce lavagna armadio libro quaderno compito classe casa numeri 1-12 Mi chiamo Come ti chiami? Signora/e Signorina ragazzo/a donna uomo bar caffè zucchero Grazie! Prego HIGHER Days of week Number 1-14	CORE HIGHER Buon giorno - sera - notte - Ciao Come ti chiami Mi chiamo Come stai? Bene - benissimo - molto bene - male - così così Io sono . . . Quanti anni hai?		
	<u>REVISION OPPORTUNITIES</u> N/A		
	DIFFERENTIATED ACTIVITIES		

	CORE HIGHER
	
	Give Italian names Introduce yourself
	Make up a cartoon A more complete
	                               booklet (agreement
	                               with nouns)
	Words learnt (classroom/
	colours/numbers) Make your own role-
	Copy role-play play about going into
	shopping a bar and ordering
	                               something		

	ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES A T LEVELS		
	Avanti stage 1 -- Tests 1 + 2 (List)		
	AREAS OF EXPERIENCE	MAIN	OTHERS
	A B C D	A C	B G

POS Pt 1   1 7 8 11 19 29 35 40 41 42 43 52 54 62 64

SKILLS DEVELOPED/CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
Pair work - Listening to tape/teacher/each other Geography of Italy/England + Europa
<u>RESOURCES/MATERIALS</u>   Avanti Book   -Tape - Song "Scuola, scuola" - Song "Il piccolo naviglio" (numbers) - Games - Sheet "Maps of Italy" - Slides

Right margin (vertical text):

YEAR: 7   GROUP: X-Y   TOPIC NAME: ITALIAN   TIME LIMIT: ONE TERM (Autumn term)   END OF UNIT GOAL:

MODERN LANGUAGES   NATIONAL CURRICULUM   KS 3   B.T.G

YEAR: 7   GROUP: X-Y   TOPIC NAME: Introducing oneself   TIME LIMIT: ONE TERM (Spring term)   END OF UNIT GOAL:

NC Unit one

VOCABULARY	LANGUAGE STRUCTURES	
CORE La mia famiglia mamma/madre papà/babbo/padre zia/zio nonna/nonno figlia/figlio cugina/cugino la nipote/il nipote marito/moglie albero della famiglia -- Mesi dell'anno gennaio febbraio marzo aprile maggio giugno luglio agosto settembre ottobre novembre dicembre -- Stagioni dell'anno primavera/estate autunno/inverno Numbers 14-50 **HIGHER** Money The house (in general) Each room Furniture of house Where is situated (in città -- al mare -- in campagna)	**CORE** Hai fratelli/sorelle? Quanti anni ha tua sorella/ fratello Come si chiama la tua mamma/ il tuo papà Quanti anni ha? Quanti fratelli/sorelle hai? Ho . . . Si chiama/chiamano Sono figlia/o unica/o Siamo una famiglia grande/ piccola	**HIGHER** Mi chiamo Si chiama/chiamano (Genere M + F also Plural of nouns + adjectives Pronouns: I -- you -- he -- she Adjectives: bello brutto grande piccolo alto basso cattivo buono

REVISION OPPORTUNITIES
Numbers (up to 50) Name -- age D. Article (sing. Only) -- Ind. Article "un -- una"

DIFFERENTIATED ACTIVITIES	
CORE Family tree with family photos Work in pair (role-plays) Display about imaginary people with description + agreement with nouns Listening from Avanti (multiple choice) Acting in class	**HIGHER** Prepare a role-play on tape Listening + understanding

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES		AT LEVELS
Avanti stage 2-5 (test from sheet)		
AREAS OF EXPERIENCE	MAIN	OTHERS

POS Pt 1   1   2   5   7   8   11   18   19   29   30   33   35   38   39   40   41   45   46   52   53   59   60   62   63   64   66   68   69

SKILLS DEVELOPED/CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
Family -- Family tree (History) -- Acting (Drama)

RESOURCES/MATERIALS
Book Avanti -- Sheet "Word search" -- Video about family life in Italy. Games Song: Xmas -- Avanti tape

VOCABULARY	LANGUAGE STRUCTURES	
CORE Che ora è? Che ore sono? È l'una/mezzogiorno Sono le . . . Meno un quarto -- e venti È un quarto -- Sono le due e mezzo -- meno venti -- È mezzanotte Le venti -- Le ventiquattro -- Food - Shopping for food Italian food Meals: Colazione -- pranzo -- merenda -- cena Daily routine Mi piace -- non mi piace Mi piacciono -- non mi piacciono Asking: un bicchiere di vino/acqua Un caffè -- una tazza di . . . -- una lattina di . . . una bottiglia -- Directions: dov'è, c'è un/una -- Scusi . . . A sinistra/a destra Clothes	**CORE** Time Che ora? È mezzogiorno Sono le otto Fraction of the hour Un quarto/mezzo Numbers 50-100 Italian food Buying food Verbs: presente 1st + 2nd pers. Question + answer	**HIGHER** Che ore sono? Sono le due/ Sono le 14.00 A che ora . . . 24 hour clock Mezz'ora Differences in the eating habits

REVISION OPPORTUNITIES
Numbers -- adjectives Possessive adject. (Only my -- your) to be -- have present only I + you -- he -- she (ho -- hai -- ha --sono -- sei -- è)

DIFFERENTIATED ACTIVITIES	
CORE Make you own clock Display of wall chart of food "Made in Italy" goods Make your own menu with prices Write "order slips" from a bar/ restaurant Make up your own shopping list List of drinks and snacks	**HIGHER** Work on your own/ with a partner Ordering Asking directions Role-play on tape

Continuing vocabulary column:

HIGHER

vestito -- cappotto
Mi piace . . . ma preferisco . . .
Questo/a quello/a
mio/a -- tuo/a

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES		AT LEVELS	

AREAS OF EXPERIENCE	MAIN	OTHERS

POS Pt 1	1 3 5 7 8 11 13 15 17 18 19 21 23 25 28 33 35 37 38 39 40 45 47 51 52 53 54 56 57 59 60 61 62 63 64 66 68 69 74 75 76

SKILLS DEVELOPED/CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
Time -- how to ask and say the time. The 24 hours clock -- Routine Food -- Differences. Italian/English + foreign food (Culture background) Directions -- Acting + Geography

RESOURCES/MATERIALS
Books: Avanti : Ciao -- Sheet: Map of street --Video: Places in Italy --Songs

Right margin (vertical text):

MODERN LANGUAGES   NATIONAL CURRICULUM   KS 3   B.T.G

YEAR: 7   GROUP: X-Y   TOPIC NAME: TIME LIMIT: ONE TERM (Summer term)   END OF UNIT GOAL:

B3 syllabus

Course Avanti/Ciao   unit 1-5   duration one term

<u>Topic/Vocabulary</u>   First acquaintances. Introducing oneself. Asking a person's name. Greetings. Weather. Asking how someone is. Saying goodbye. Numbers 1-100. Italian way of life. Asking and giving origins. Nationality.

	Language Development	Extension Work
<u>Grammar</u>	Essere, sono, è, chiamarsi, stare. Use of subject pronouns (io-tu-lei). Preposition: di, a. Definite article: il, l', la. Presente of -are verbs, fare.	Preposition: di, a.
<u>Structures</u>	Come ti chiami/si chiama? È lei il signor . . .? Chi è? Di dove sei/è? Sono di . . . ma abito a . . . parla? Che cosa? Come mai è qui? È libero questo posto? È caldo, è freddo. Nevica. Tira vento.	Pronto, chi parla, Che cosa fai qui? Che tempo fa?
<u>Functions</u>	Being able to introduce oneself. Asking/giving one's name. Greetings. Being able to fill up a form. Talking about the weather.	

<u>Revision</u>

<u>Additional Resources</u>	Tape. Flash-cards. Slides.	Make their own cards on weather.

<u>Assessment</u>

Course Avanti/ Ciao   unit 6-10   duration one term

<u>Topic/Vocabulary</u>   Let's go for a drink, in a bar, pizzeria. Pizzeria with friends, ordering drinks, asking prices. How to tell the time. Buying food. Stopping conversation. Asking and giving quantities and prices. Somewhere to eat. Ordering food.

	Language Development	Extension Work
<u>Grammar</u>	Presente of verbs -ere -ire. Indefinite article. Plural of nouns. Avere, essere. Adjectives + agreement. C'è, ci sono. Negative	
<u>Structures</u>	Cosa prendi/prende? Sì, volentieri. No, preferisco . . . Facciamo la pizza? Cosa prendiamo? Mi dia . . . Quanto costa/quant'è? A che ora? Che ora è/sono?	Altro? Buon/o/issimo. È mezzogiorno/mezzanotte. Al supermercato. È tutto più caro.
<u>Functions</u>	Being able to ask for something. Ordering drinks. Asking prices. Asking quantities (un etto/un kg). Enquiring about somewhere to eat. Talking about food. Ordering food. Asking for the bill.	
<u>Revision</u>	Classroom tests. Role plays.	
<u>Additional Resources</u>	Avanti cassette. Video. Flashcards.	

<u>Assessment</u>

Course Avanti/ Ciao	unit 11-?	duration one term

Topic/Vocabulary — Hotels. In the hotel. Asking for hotel rooms. Asking/giving telephone numbers. In a foreign town, in the street/bus. Asking the way. Understanding/giving directions. Times and days of the week.

	Language Development	Extension Work
Grammar	C'è/ci sono. Adverbs of place. Prepositions of place. Possessive sentences with the infinitive. Interrogative and negative sentences.	
Structures	Vorrei una camera singola/matrimoniale/doppia, con doccia/con bagno. Vorrei telefonare. Qual è il prefisso? Com'è? Ideale, tranquilla, rumorosa.	A stasera. Vengo subito. Mi dispiace.
Functions	Being able to ask for a room. Booking a room. Asking and giving telephone numbers. Identifying specific accomodation features. Confirming something. Asking about transport. Understanding and giving directions.	
Revision	Classroom tests.	
Additional Resources	Cassette. Wall displays. Flash-cards. Pictures from magazines. Crosswords.	
Assessment		

Appendix B. Lessons transcripts

School A. A1

<u>(16 March) Revision lesson on 'At the cafe' topic. Learners practice a typical conversation and how to express likes and dislikes.</u>

[The lesson starts with the usual greetings.]
T: Buongiorno, ragazze.
LL: Buongiorno, signorina.
T: Come stai?
MC: Bene?
T: Come stai?
L: Molto bene.
L: Tu, come stai?
CF: Non molto bene.
T: Mi dispiace.
[After greetings, T announces test for the following week.]
T: Questa settimana, ??revisione. Cosa vuol dire?
L: Revision.
[T shows only one corner of a flashcard and girls have to guess what the card pictures.]
AM: Patatine.
T: Un pacchetto di patatine.
SS: Un cornetto.
BL: I don't know how to say it.
MD: Prosciutto.
T: Il panino al prosciutto. HG!
WE: Il panino al formaggio.
EE: Patatine fritte.
MV: Il panino.
T: No.
MV: Il toast.
RR: Hot-dog.
KR: *Il coca-cola.
T: Il è maschile, boy. La coca-cola.
[T prepares the tape recorder.]
T: C'è una conversazione in un caffè. Cosa vuol dire?
NV: A conversation at cafe.
T: Girls, write this down: What the lady is asking for. How much it costs. Where the toilets are.
[T writes on blackboard: 1) What she ate.
                            2) How much it cost.
                            3) Where the toilets are.
The tape-recorder plays a conversation between a waitress (W) and a customer (C):
C: Signorina, il conto per favore!
W: Allora, un hot-dog con patatine e un caffelatte. ??Costa 6.000 lire.
C: Ecco 6.000.

W: Grazie.
C: Scusi, dove sono i gabinetti?
W: I gabinetti? Lì, signorina.
Sono *lì* instead of sono *là*, to which learners had been exposed, causes some confusion.]
T: Come si dice caffè with milk?
L: Caffelatte.
T: Quant'è il conto? KL? PS?
VN: Mille lire.
KR: Seven thousand.
CF: Six thousand.
T: Dove sono i gabinetti?
MD: There.
T: Sono là o sono lì.
L: Miss, it should be in English. The questions are in English.
T: Cosa vuol dire ho fame?
DM: I'm very hungry.
T: Ho sete?
VN: OK.
T: Girls, repeat: Ho fame, ho sete!
LL: Ho fame, ho sete!
T: Mi piace molto. Cosa vuol dire? CF, MV?
CF: ?
MV: ?
T: I like it a lot. Il gelato, la pasta, la pizza.
[T writes on blackboard: Mi piace = I like.]
T: EE, ti piace il gelato alla cioccolata?
E: Sì, mi piace.
DM: No, non mi piace.
VN: Sì, mi piace.
T: AM?
AM: ?
T: Mi piace.
AM: Mi piace.
T: YT, ti piace ?
YT: Sì, mi piace.
T: ER
ER: No.
T: No, non mi piace.
MD: Sì.
T: Sì, mi piace.
[T writes on the blackboard: Ti piace il gelato? NV is asked to take on the teacher's role and ask her class-mates the same question.]
VN: Ti piace il gelato?
ER: *Non mi piaci.
BJ: Piace!
VN: Ti piace il gelato?
AM: ?

T: Mi piace.

VN: *Ti piaccia al cioccolato?

WE: No.

VN: *Piaccia limone?

WE: Sì, mi piace.

[A second learner, EE, is asked to take-over]

EE: *Ti piaccio il cornetto?

BJ: Sì, mi piace.

EE: *Ti piaccio il hot-dog?

MD: Sì.

EE: *Ti piaccio il patatine fritte?

DM: Sì, mi piace.

EE: *Ti piaccio il pacchetto di patatine?

KR: Sì.

[Girls are asked to do a conversation at the teacher's desk.]

NV: Dove sono i gabinetti? Disperata, disperata!!

YW: Ehm, . . . sono là, no in fondo, ehm . . . sono fuori.

T: Well done! SS and LL.

SS: Dove sono i gabinetti? Velocemente!

LO: Non lo so . . . sono fuori.

SS: Grazie.

T: Very good. Who is next? BA and BL.

BA: *Dove i gabinetti, per favore?

BL: Sono xx.

T: Good.

[T announces test on 23 March and writes numbers, drinks, snacks, ice-creams (test topics) on the blackboard. The lessons ends with the usual greetings.]

(7 May) <u>Lesson on the 'Travel' topic. Learners practise phrases connected with travelling by train and bus</u>.

[The lesson starts with the usual greetings.]

T: Buongiorno, ragazze.

LL: Buongiorno, signorina.

T: Come stai?

L: Bene?

T: Come stai?

LL: Non molto bene.

L: Mi dispiace. Tu, come stai?

L: Bene.

T: Quanti anni hai?

T: Chi ha 13/12/11 anni? *Leva la mano.

[LL lift their hands in groups.]

T: Se io voglio prendere il treno, dove vado?

[T sticks a picture of train, a ticket office and a platform on a felt board.]

MC: Alla stazione.

T: Prima di prendere il treno dove comprare il biglietto. Dove?
L: Biglietteria.
T: Che cos'è la biglietteria?
L: Ticket window.
T: Vorrei un'andata e ritorno per Roma.
BJ: A return to Rome.
T: Da quale binario parte il treno?
YT: Which platform.
T: Questo treno parte alle otto. SS?
SS: Leaves at nine.
BA: Un'andata, seconda.
T: Che cosa significa prima classe?
LL: First class.
T: Da quale binario?
L: Which platform.
[T puts up a picture of a station and of a bus stop with buses coming and going and points to one bus.]
T: L'autobus arriva o parte?
LL: Arriva!!
[T writes 'binario' on the blackboard.]
T: Prendere il quaderno. Quando si ha il quaderno si deve scrivere la data.
[T writes the date on the blackboard. And then adds: Which platform? Da quale binario parte il treno per Roma? Il treno parte dal binario sette. Then asks learnes to copy from the blackboard.]
T: La penna sul tavolo, per favore.
[T hands in grids with the destination of a train and the platform number to be used for a pair-work and then copied.]
T: Da quale binario? MD, sai che cosa significa binario?
MD: ?
BA: Platform.
[T demonstrates a pair work with a visiting teacher of Italian (T2).]
T: Da quale binario parte il treno per Roma?
T2: Il treno parte dal binario sette.
T: Da quale binario parte il treno per Milano?
T2: Il treno parte dal binario cinque.
[LL do the pair work then copy the forms. The lesson ends with the usual greetings.]

School A. A3

(10 March) <u>Excerpt from lesson on the 'Holidays' topic introducing the *Passato Prossimo*</u>

[The lesson starts with the usual greetings.]
T: Io l'anno scorso sono stata in Sicilia. Tu l'anno scorso, dove sei stata? In estate. Cosa vuol dire estate, estate?
L: Summer.
T: La scorsa estate.
[T writes estate on the blackboard and elicits translation.]
T: Tu l'anno scorso, in estate, dove sei stata?
CS: *Sono stata Olanda.
T: Sono stata in Olanda. Bene e tu dove sei stata l'anno scorso? L'anno scorso dove sei stata, JN, in vacanza?
JN: *Sono stata a Francia.
T: In Francia.
JN: Sono stata in Francia, a Parigi.
T: Dove sei stata l'anno scorso?
L: *Sono stata in francese.
T: No, non in francese. In Francia. Francese is French. Dove sei stata in vacanza?
L: In Spagna.
T: Bene, molto bello.
. . .

[T writes on the blackboard:

Il passato prossimo di essere
The perfect tense of essere

1) io sono stato/a   4) noi siamo stati/e
2) tu sei stato/a   5) voi siete stati/e
3) lui/lei è stato/a   6) loro sono stati/e]

HM: Can you write the meaning of that?
LR: Can you translate the third person singular?

[T adds translation. When LL have finished copying, she writes on the blackboard:

Il passato prossimo di andare
The present perfect of to go

Rule auxiliary Essere + past participle, i.e. io sono andato.

1) io sono andato/a   4) noi siamo andati/e
2) tu sei andata/a   5) voi siete andati/e
3) lui/lei è andato/a   6) loro sono andati/e]

T: There are two auxiliaries: avere ed essere. To form the past take the auxiliary and you add the past participle. Sono andata a ballare, al mare. You have been dancing.
L: Andare a ballare.
T: EM.
EM: *Tu sei andato ballare
T: Sei andato a ballare. How do you say you have been to Italy?
L: Tu sei andato in Italia.
T: Tu sei stato. It's the same.
L: *Stato a Italia.
T: You singular. Sì, tu sei stato in Italia. How do you say we have been to Sicily?
LL: Siamo stati in Sicilia.
T: How do you say we have been to the cinema?
LL: Siamo stati al cinema.
T: Benissimo. In order to produce the past tense what you do is you put the auxiliary verb, which is io sono, and then you put the past participle, which is andare, andato, mangiare, mangiato, uscire, uscita. Io sono andato, andata, io sono uscita. To construct the past what you do is you take the present tense of the verb to be and you go: io sono, the participle, andare is andato, io sono andata. How do you say, SP, they went to the restaurant last night?
SP: Loro sono andate al ristorante.
T: Molto bene, CS, come si dice: I have been to the cinema?
CS: Io sono stata.
T: Andare. Tu sei andata al cinema ieri sera?
CS: *Io sono andato al cinema.
T: Sì, io sono andata al cinema ieri sera.
T: NB, ascolta. Tu sei andata al ristorante ieri sera?
NB: Io sono andata al ristorante.
. . .

(12 March) <u>Lesson on the 'Holidays' topic including a revision of how to talk about the weather</u>

[The lesson starts with greetings and roll-call. There is some confusion.]
T: Come stai? Roll call, per favore rispondete all'appello. Chi è malata? CD sta male? AV, spegni la luce per favore? Che buio!
·· [T puts various pictures on OHP and asks alternative questions.]
T: Questo è andare al ristorante o andare a ballare?
[CD turns up. T talks to her about her being late.]
T: Venite più vicino.
[Talks to AV and GC who are chatting at the back. They move to the front desk.]
T: Questo è andare in spiaggia o visitare i monumenti?

. . . [See page 184 for excerpt]

T: Piove o c'è il sole?
NJ: C'è il sole.
T: Andare in aereo o andare in barca?

JC: Andare in barca.

T: Fare i bagni o abbronzarsi?

NS: Swimming.

T: Fare i bagni. Tu sei in spiaggia in vacanza, tu entri splash, poi esci. Fare il bagno. Andare in barca ieri. Lei è . . . in barca ieri. È andata, andare diventa andata. Lei è andata in barca ieri. Lei ieri è. Ascolta. Oggi io vado al ristorante. Ieri io sono andata. Are diventa -ata, capisci. Andare diventa andata. Io sono andata/o o per un ragazzo.

[T writes Io vado oggi on the blackboard.]

T: Ieri sono andata.

[T write the following on the blackboard: sono andata. L'anno scorso lei è . . . in aereo. L'anno scorso?]

L: Last year.

T: L'anno scorso lei . . .

NS: *Sono andata.

T: No, io sono, lei?

NS: È . . . andata.

[T writes on the blackboard l'anno scorso = last year. And points to sono andata.]

T: Questo quando è successo? Ieri, è il passato. È molto importante, senza il passato non si parla.

L: What is il passato?

T: The past. È molto importante. Sono andata in aereo, in barca. Cosa vuol dire, NS?

T: Ieri sono andata in barca.

NS: *Last year.

T: Ieri, non l'anno scorso.

NL: Yesterday.

T: Yes. Ieri sono andata in barca.

NL: Yesterday I went sailing.

T: Sì.

L: A Londra?

T: No, a Londra non è possibile, e dove, sul Tamigi?

PU: Are we going to write these things down?

T: Yes.

[T puts the phrase 15 giorni on OHP.]

T: Questa ragazza è andata in vacanza per quanti giorni? CD. Per, quanti giorni?

CD: Per . . . quindici . . . giorni.

[Lights are turned on. Some confusion ensues.]

T: AV, sei andata in vacanza l'anno scorso?

AV: No.

T: Sei rimasta a Londra. Che tempo ha fatto? C'è stato il sole, ha fatto caldo? Che tempo ha fatto l'anno scorso? Così così.

[T writes on the blackboard: Ha fatto bel tempo/caldo + c'è stato il sole.]

T: Cosa vuol dire c'è stato il sole l'anno scorso?Ha fatto caldo?

L: Warm.

T: Che cosa vuol dire l'anno scorso c'è stato il sole?

RL: ?

T: Che cosa vuol dire l'anno scorso c'è stato il sole?

RL:?

T: No, non è una domanda. Che cosa vuol dire l'anno scorso c'è stato il sole?

RL: It was sunny.

T: MH, sei stata in vacanza l'anno scorso?

MH: ?

T: Sei stata in vacanza l'anno scorso?

MH: No.

T: Sei rimasta a Londra. Che tempo ha fatto a Londra l'anno scorso? C'è stato il sole, ha fatto caldo? Tu sei stata in vacanza l'anno scorso?

GC: Sono stata in Austria.

T: Dove sei stata?

GC:?

T: Sei stata in vacanza per quanti giorni?

GC: Ventun giorni.

T: Tre settimane.

[T writes tre settimane on the blackboard.]

T: Che tempo ha fatto?

GC: *Fa molto caldo.

T: Ha fatto.

GC: Ha fatto molto caldo.

T: Sì, bene. Fa diventa ha fatto. Oggi non fa caldo. Ieri non ha fatto caldo. Fa/ha fatto. Vediamo, chi non ha parlato? NS. L'anno scorso sei stata in vacanza? L'anno scorso sei stata in vacanza?

NS: Sì.

T: Dove sei stata in vacanza l'anno scorso?

NS: . . . A Malta.

T: Sei stata a Malta. Che bello! Che tempo ha fatto? Ha fatto freddo, ha fatto caldo.

NS: Ha fatto caldo.

T: C'è stato il sole? Per quanti giorni sei ??andata in vacanza?

L: Caldo is not cold, is warm.

T: Sì, strano, vero?

NS: Per 15 giorni.

T: Per favore. Scrivete! *Che cos'è la data oggi?

[T writes the following on the blackboard:

Che tempo ha fatto?
What was the weather like

1) ha fatto bel tempo = it was nice weather
2)   caldo =
3) c'è stato il sole =

T: Ascoltate. Fa caldo. Ha fatto caldo. Fare?

L: Do.

[T write the following on the blackboard. Proverbio (old Italian proverb)

Rosso di sera, bel tempo si spera. = hope
sperare = hope.]

T: In inglese è 'Red at night, shepheards' delight'. In italiano è 'Rosso di sera, bel tempo si spera'. Bene. Vorrei i compiti. [T collects homework. Some girls have not done it. The lesson ends with the usual greetings.]

School B. B1

(18 January)

<u>Lesson based on exercises from *Avanti!*: 36, on adjectival agreement.</u>

[The lesson starts with the usual greetings.]
T: OK, pagina trentacinque. Avete finito la trentacinque? Have you finished?
LL: Trentasei.
T: OK, siamo a pagina trentasei. OK, I want those questions to be answered with the word molto. So, if I say Faye è timida? Sì, è molto timida. So we start with Laura è bella? Laura è bella.
L: Sì, è molto bella.
T: OK, SA, the second one. Kevin è stanco?
SA: *Molto stanco.
T: Sì, è molto stanco. Ripetilo.
L: Excuse me, miss, how did you find out?
HT: Miss, miss, how did you know that Kevin was stanco?
T: Because they give you the example at the beginning and they want you to repeat, yes he is very tired.
SA: Oh, and you say: Sì, è molto stanco.
T: Stanco or stanca depending on whether you are referring . . . OK, ripetiamo, SA, Kevin è stanco?
SA: *Sì, è Kevin molto stanco.
T: Allora, sì, è molto stanco. If you want to use the word Kevin, then you say: Sì, Kevin è molto stanco.
SA: That's what I said.
T: No, you didn't.
L: You said *Kevin molto è stanco.
T: Be careful next time.
L: Miss, Kevin is intelligente.
T: It doesn't matter, non ha importanza. Vediamo HT, numero tre. Angela è contenta?
HT: Sì, è molto contenta.
T: Sì, è molto contenta. QS, Dario è simpatico?
QS: Sì, è molto simpatico.
T: FA, Giorgio è bugiardo?
FA: Which one?
T: Numero cinque.
FA: Cinque. Oh, this one, miss? OK. Sì è . . . molto . . . *Giorgio molto bugiardo.
T: Cosa significa bugiardo?
LL: Liar.
T: Sì, liar. Vediamo, MW. Dario è intelligente?
MW: Sì, è molto intelligente.
T: Sì, è molto intelligente. OK, let's start again. L, Laura è bella?
L: Sì, è bella.
T: Sì, è molto bella. QT, Kevin è stanco?

QT: Sì, è molto stanco

T: Sì, è molto stanco. HM, Angela è contenta?

HM: Sì, è molto contenta.

T: Sì, FL, Dario è simpatico?

FL: Sì, è molto simpatico.

T: Sì, è molto simpatico. ML, Giorgio è bugiardo?

ML: *Sì, Giorgio molta è bugiardo.

T: CL, tu sei Lisa-Ann e ML dietro è Lisa. OK. Dario, è intelligente.

CL: Sì, è molto intelligente.

T: OK. Now listen what I am going to say. L, CM, L è italiano?

CM: *Sì, è molto italiana.

T: No [laughter from LL]. OK, now, correct yourself. How should you say? Sì, L è italiano, non *molto italiano [laughter from LL]. Vediamo, DA. SA è bella?

SA: Sì.

T: I don't mind, I just asked a question.

DA: *SA è molto brutto.

T: Brutto?

DA: Brutta.

T: SA, DA è intelligente?

SA: *No, è stupo.

T: È stupido.

SA: Stupido.

T: OK, vediamo, FA, sei inglese?

FA: *Si, è inglese.

T: Sì, sono inglese. Vediamo un po', L, sei francese?

L: No, non sono francese.

T: Non sei francese. Lei è italiana?

L: No non è italiana, è inglese.

T: Non è italiana. PJ, sei inglese?

PJ: Sì, sono inglese.

T: FL, sei alto?

[T makes gesture with her hand to signify tall and short.]

T: Sei alto? No, sono . . . sono?

L: Piccolo?

T: Sono piccolo. FL, sei biondo? Sì, sono biondo. MP, sei bruno?

MP:?

T: No, sono biondo. MW, sei bello? Sì, sono bello e modesto, su, ripeti.

MW: *Sono bella e modesto.

L: Bello.

T: Bello e modesto, modesto, OK. Now, SA è bello, è giusto?

SA: No, è bella.

L: È brutta.

SA: *Non è brutto.

T: L è brutto.

LL: Sì!

T: Molto brutto.

LL: Sì. Molto, molto, molto.

T: Esercizio numero due, NF. Now we look at the picture, stanco. Che significa stanco?
LL: Tired.
T: Contenta, bella, intelligente, forte, piccolo, timida.
[After each adjective LL provide correct translation.]
T: Now, the same as before. We start with numero uno, no prima con l'esempio, modello. Giorgio è forte, Giorgio è molto forte. Numero uno. Fra Martino è . . . ?
LL: Molto stanco.
T: Molto stanco. Incominciamo con QS. Laura . . .
QS: Laura è molto in ritardo.
T: È molto in ritardo. Va bene. QT, Kevin . . .
QT: Kevin è molto intelligente.
T: È molto intelligente. PJ, Angela . . .
PJ: Angela è molto contenta.
T: È molto contenta, va bene, numero cinque, OT.
OT: Dario è molto piccolo.
T: È molto piccolo. SA, numero sei.
SA: Laura è . . .
QS: È molto bella.
SA: È molto bella.
T: È molto bella, sì. Numero sette, HM, Faye . . .
HM: *Faye è molto timido.
T: Timido?
LL: Timida.
T: Molto timida. Allora, ora, very quickly then, ML, numero uno, Fra Martino . . .
ML: *Fra Martino è stanco . . .
T: Molto stanco. L, numero due.
L: Laura è molto in ritardo.
T: DA, what number?
DA: Three.
T: OK, then, read it.
DA: Kevin è molto intelligente.
T: Kevin è molto intelligente. SA.
SA: Do you have to do three or four?
T: Four.
SA: Angela è molto contenta.
.,T: Angela è molto contenta. FL, cinque.
FL: Dario è molto piccolo.
T: Dario è molto piccolo. MA? Il sei.
MA: Laura ['ɔːɾə] . . .
T: Non ['ɔːɾə], Laura.
MA: Laura è molto bella.
T: Laura è molto bella. MW, Faye . . .
MW: Faye è molto timida.
T: Faye è molto timida. Now, very quickly, E and F both on your exercise book.
LL: Now?
[LL do the same exercises in writing and when they have finished they show their work to the teacher. They are remarkably fast. The lesson ends with the usual greetings.]

(26 April)

Lesson on the plural of nouns

[The lesson starts with the usual greetings.]
T: We are doing the plural of nouns. Cominciamo con il titolo. Il titolo è: Plurale dei nomi, which means plural of nouns. OK. What is a noun? Can you give an example?
LL: Person, place.
T: It can be a person, it can be an object, a place. Can you give me an example? What is this?
LL: Pen.
T: La penna, so it's a noun. Exercise book, il quaderno. OK, è un nome, la gomma è un nome, la bambina, la maestra, la porta. So we know what it's a noun. The plural of nouns. Now I'm going to write down, una porta, then I'll give you a little rule, then I'm giving you a little exercise to see if you understood. Una porta, this is feminine, right or wrong? OK. If I want to say, two three, ten, dieci, now porta changes the *a* into *e* italiano. In English you put an *s*.
L: Is the *e* the *s*?
T: Yes, but in Italian you have to think there is masculine and feminine. If it's feminine the *a* turns into an *e*, if it's masculine the *o* turns into an *i*. So we've got un bambino, tre . . .
L: Bambini.
T: That's right. Una penna. If I want to say three pens?
LL: Tre penne.
T: Va bene. HM, una matita, ten pencils, come si dice?
HM: ?
T: HT?
HT: *Dieci matiti.
T: E, matite. *A* becomes *e*, *o* becomes *i*. CL, un quaderno o, cinque . . . changes into an *i*, un quaderno . . . cinque quaderni. Una gomma, LJ, sei . . .
LJ: Gomme.
T: Va bene. Una bottiglia, OT, due . . .
OT: Bottiglie.
T: Va bene, un ragazzo, FA, two boys?
FA: Due ragazze.
T: Due ragazzi. Una classe, due classi, *e i*, masculine or feminine turns into *i*. You want to ask me something. Do we have any word in the singular ending in *i*?
LL: Giovedì.
T: Yes, but it does not change in the plural.
T: Maschile singolare *o* plural becomes *i*, femminile *a* plural becomes *e*, we have maschile, femminile, ends in *e* and the plural is always *i*. You can copy it in your exercise book. [T writes the following on the blackboard

	maschile	femminile	maschile/femm
singolare	o	a	e
plurale	i	e	i]

T: FL, tell me, what is this?

FL: Una penna.

T: And these?

FL: *Duo penne.

T: What?

FL: Dua?

T: HT, due . . .

HT: Penne.

T: Non duo, due penne. Don't change me the numbers, the numbers stay as they are. Due penne. AF, una ragazza, due . . .

AF: Ragazze.

T: Vediamo un po', MA, un ragazzo, due . . .

AM: Ragazzi.

T: Bene, vediamo QS, una porta . . .

QS: Due porte.

T: Due porte, va bene. Vediamo un po', NF, window . . .

NT: Una finestra.

T: Cinque . . .

NF: Finestre.

T: Va bene, allora. In italiano? Maschile, PJ? [T points to book.]

PJ: Libro, *due libre.

T: Libri. QT, una. [T shows an eraser.]

QT: Una gomma.

T: Due

QT: Due gomme.

T: Una, L. [T shows a pencil.]

L: Una matita.

T: Conta. [T shows six pencils.]

L: Sei matite.

T: Sei matite, va bene, vediamo un maschile, quaderno. HM, un, cos'è questo? Who can help him? No non è un libro, un quaderno.

PJ: Due quaderni.

T: Va bene, vediamo ancora. Vediamo un po'. . . un caffè, this is an exception. We do not say due caffì, we keep it the same, so due caffè. It is an exception to the rule. Due caffè. In brackets we write eccezione. Can you put down the examples? Esempi. Can you write down these examples? Then when you've finished them you can . . . take your books at page . . . a pagina 29.

[T writes the following on the blackboard:

un libro	due libri	una penna	due penne
un quaderno	due quaderni	una gomma	due gomme
un caffè	due caffè (exception)		

Learners copy from the blackboard. The lesson ends with the usual greetings.]

School B. B3

(19 January)

Excerpt from lesson on *di* + article

[T writes the following table on the blackboard. The parts on the right hand side of the equal sign are added on as the explanation goes on.

    some any   del = o-e (m)   della = a-e (f)
                    dello = z-s+c   dell' = a-e (f)
                    dell' = m-f]

T: Let's start with Vorrei del formaggio, della frutta, dell'uva.
[T writes the following sentences on the blackboard. As the explanation goes on di + il/la/l' are added.

    di + il   di + la   di + l'

Vorrei del formaggio, Vorrei della frutta, Vorrei dell'uva.]

T: You have got three examples. From there you should already know the rule. We have been doing it, but not with the rule. Which article do you use for formaggio? Do I say la formaggio, lo formaggio, il formaggio?
LL: Il.
T: Il formaggio. If I say frutta, what would you use in front of frutta?
LL: La.
T: If I say uva, what little word do I use?
LL: La.
LL: L apostrophe!
T: L apostrophe. Why?
BM: Two vowels next to each other.
T: OK, when I say I want some cheese, some is di + il = del. Do you understand that? Di + la becomes della. HK do you understand? FR? Are you sure? I don't mind repeating it. SM? Allora, vorrei pane, pane is masculine. Del is with words ending in *o* or *e* if they are masculine. Dello, we haven't talked about dello, we'll talk in two minutes. Dell' vowel, masculine or feminine starting with vowel. We use del if the words end in *o* or *e* masculine, we use dell' when, can you tell me? HK?
HK: ?
T: TN, can you tell me when?
TN: When there are two vowels.
T: Fine, now we go on to the other side. We use della when? When it is ending in *a* or *e* and it is feminine, when it is dell' the same, but it is feminine and it starts with a vowel. OK? BM, words can end in *o* and they are masculine, *a* and they are feminine, *e* and they can be either masculine or feminine. A masculine noun, padre, ends in *e*, we know it is del, pane ends in *e*, I'm telling you it is masculine, so we use del. Do you

understand? So we go back to HK, vorrei some pane. Could you tell me the little word I put between? I am telling you pane is a masculine noun.

HK: Vorrei del pane.

. . .

[The lesson continues with some drilling. T says a word and LL have to supply *di* + article for a total of six words. Drilling is mixed to some more explanation in case correction is needed.]

T: Can you please put your hand up if you still haven't understood that? Tutti? Now, there is only one which we have not mentioned, we have used del, della and dell'. We haven't used dello. Look, I'll give you an example.

[T writes on the blackboard: Vorrei dello zucchero.]

T: We use dello, why, can anybody remind me?

LL: Because it's a *z*.

T: Because the word begins with a *z*, what is the other little word?

LL: *S*.

T: Not just *s*, *s* followed by consonant.

[T edits the previous table on the blackboard and adds the plural form of *di* + article as the explanation goes on.

del = dei   della = delle
dello = degli   dell' = delle
dell' = degli]

T: Can you look at the blackboard? Del, the plural is dei, dello, degli, dell' in the masculine form is degli. Della, I wonder if anybody can help me tell the plural of della.

LL: Del.

LL: Delle.

T: Delle. Now, vorrei libri, BM I would like some books.

[A second series of drilling follows with the 15 nouns practised in the lesson.]

(1 March)

Lesson on a listening comprehension exercise from *CIAO!*

T: Today is the day which is different from any other day, remember. Primo marzo, compito di classe. Write again nome e cognome, lavoro, posizione della casa, abitazione, giardino, famiglia, animali, interessi that's as far as you go. We do the same as we did on Friday, we listen to the tape and then we fill it in. There are only five, we've already done two. We have been listening to a tape of somebody looking for an exchange guest from Italy, no from England. So they'll say their name, what kind of work they do, they might say the work, they may not say it, they may say they are students, the position where the house is, in periferia, nel centro della città, al mare, in campagna, we have done these words. Abitazione, what kind of place it is, if it's a house, un appartamento, una casa a schiera, una villa, una casa da sola. Poi, se la casa ha un giardino, if they don't mention it, il giardino non c'è. La famiglia, I might say I'm on my own, I haven't got a family, marito, moglie, husband, wife, figli, so you write

down uno, due, tre, they might mention nonna or nonno, if they live with them, so you write down figlio, figlia, nonno, nonna. If they have any pets, so when you spend your time with a family and you hate dogs or cats, you don't want to chose a family that, like me, has a lot of cats zooming the house. Io ho tre gatti e 65 uccelli. Sì, è vero, not pidgeons, CP, non ho pigeons. Interessi, what kind of hobbies, interessi a person has got. If, DE, you like tennis, calcio, surf?

DE: Windsurf.

T: Windsurf, you want to find a family which has got the same interests as yours. Are we ready now?

HK: No, miss.

T: Come on HK, you did write that one before. Allora, incominciamo con il numero tre because number two we did last Friday. Quiet.

[The tape from *Ciao!* is played. T prepares a grid with the following headings on the blackboard:

Nome e cognome, lavoro, posizione della casa, abitazione, giardino, famiglia, animali, interessi

Mi piacerebbe stare con . . . perché ho . . . anni e mi piace . . .

As the exercise is being corrected, T completes the grid with the solutions.]

T: OK, we repeat a second time and then we ask around. The name is already there because it is quite difficult.

[T has written the name of the person who is talking on the tape.]

T: OK, incominiciamo con BM. Che tipo di lavoro fa?

BM: Studente.

T: È studente. Has everybody got that? What does it mean?

LL: Student.

T: Did you get what he is studying?

LL: Languages, English.

T: Did you get what university?

L: Italian.

BM: Bologna.

T: Bologna, that's it, well done, l'Università di Bologna. Well done, girls and boys. OK, numero due, posizione della casa.

LL: Rimini centre, station.

T: Vicino alla stazione, that's right allora, sarà centro di Rimini, I just write centro Rimini, if you can, put vicino alla stazione.

L: Can I put Rimini?

T: Rimini is a big place, so it has to be Rimini centro. In fact he talks about what, did anybody hear it?

L: Station.

T: Station. Easy for everybody to go around, poi, che tipo di abitazione?

L: Appartamento.

T: Appartamento. What did you understand about this flat?

L: ?

T: No. anybody else? In un palazzo vecchio, he says in an old building, he says palazzo,

it is a not palace, but it is block of flats. No, he doesn't mention garden, because it's a block of flats, it's very difficult. Famiglia?

L: Da solo.

T: Da solo. Vive da solo. Animali?

LL: No.

T: No. Interessi?

LL: Discoteca!

T: Well done, cinema e discoteca. Have you written down this? So, I'll rub it off and we do number two.

LL: Number four!

T: Number four, OK, number two today.

L: ?

T: Yes, again, carry on copying.

[LL copy the grid from the blackboard.]

T: Finito? Pronti?

L: No.

T: I'll write the name on the blackboard. Comiciamo?

[The tape is played.]

T: We'll listen to it again. In this case he doesn't say what work he does, he talks about the family, he talks about the house, he talks about the garden, he talks about animals. He doesn't talk about interests but he says he would like to have somebody who loves . . . Can we listen to it again?

[The tape is played again.]

T: OK, nome e cognome: Emanuele Spartaro. Lavoro? Does he mention it anywhere?

LL: No.

T: No. Posizione della casa. He went on a bit, but I wonder if anybody has . . . The house is where?

L: Twenty kilometers.

L: Outskirts of Rimini.

T: OK, outskirts of Rimini. Suburb. What did he say in italiano?

L: Periferia.

T: OK. Periferia di Rimini.

[This is wrong as the person in the tape says he lives in Santarcangelo, a little town near Rimini.]

T: What kind of a house he lives in?

L: Familiare.

T: Familiare. Che cos'è? È sola, è a schiera, è . . . nobody? Sorry?

BM: Bifamiliare.

T: Bifamiliare which is semidetached. C'è un giardino? Piccolo giardino? Ha famiglia?

BM: Moglie?

T: He mentioned moglie, so he has family. He did not mention children. He is not on his own like the one before. He's got somebody. He also gives the name of his wife.

BM: Francesca.

T: Francesca, that's right. Animali?

L: Due gatti.

T: Due gatti, well done. Does he mention any interest?

LL: ?

L: Someone who loves animals.

T: Someone who loves animals. So, he would like to have a student who loves or doesn't mind animals. Qualcuno che ama gli animali. OK? Have you done that?

L: Next?

T: Next. Start again, write again.

L: What's that again, miss?

T: Qualcuno che ama gli animali. Somebody who loves animals.

L: xx

[The tape is played.]

T: OK, now we go back, we listen to it again.

[The tape is played again.]

T: Nome: Simona Caniati. Do they mention any work, lavoro?

LL: No.

T: No. Posizione della casa?

LL: Periferia Rimini.

T: Periferia Rimini. OK, dove abita? Appartamento? Ditemi.

LL: Secondo.

T: Secondo piano, yes it's a modern builiding. Una palazzina. Now giardino, do they have one?

LL: No.

T: Sì, un piccolo giardino di nostra proprietà.

L: On the second floor?

T: It's like an estate, where there is a a garden which can belong to some of them or whoever. Un piccolo giardino. Now famiglia?

LL: ?

L: Quindici anni?

T: Quindici anni? Chi era? No one understood? Quiet. Could you please try to pick up. She is introducing somebody at the beginning of the conversation, then she says there is somebody, not a friend, but who? And also there is another person living with them. [The tape is played again.]

T: Now?

L: Quindici anni.

T: Claudia ha 15 anni. So, they have got a daughter, her name is Claudia. Marito, that's another one. So, she's got a husband, figlia, 15 anni, and who else?

L: A student.

T: Yes, they would like a student. But . . . Nobody got it? . . . Nonna.

L: I got that!

T: Why didn't you say it?

T: Interessi?

LL: Ginnastica, windsurf.

T: Especially the daughter. Now, I'll give you a few seconds to go through them and I want you to give me yourself, mi piacerebbe, I'd like, stare, to stay, con and give me the name of the family because I am 15, 14 what you want to say e mi piace andare in discoteca, il windsurf. This is the example and you fill in the missing word. You've also got last Friday's. Make up a full sentence and I'll ask you. Fill it up and then you tell me why you like to stay. I would like to stay with Simona Caniati because . . . ho 15 anni e mi piace la ginnastica e il windsurf.

[LL do the exercise.]

L: Miss, can we choose one from the first two?

T: Yes, you can.

L: Miss, finished!

T: Vediamo YR. With whom would you like to stay?

YR: Figlia!

T: What? What do you want to say? There is a full sentence which means I would like to stay with . . . because . . .

YR: I have done that. I can't read that word.

T: Piacerebbe, means I would like, you can use vorrei, if it's difficult.

YR: *Mi piacerebbe stare con figlia, perché ho 14 anni e mi piace lo windsurf.

T: So, you want to stay with her daughter, not with her.

[LL laugh.]

T: I'm only saying what you wrote. Is that being silly or being clever? I wonder. OK, sentiamo DE.

DE: Mi piacerebbe stare con Simone . . . Simona, Simona Caniati, perché *mi piace ginnastica e windsurf.

T: Well done. Vediamo BM.

BM: Mi piacerebbe stare con Emanuele, perché mi piacciono i gatti e il cinema.

T: Sentiamo HK. CP!!

HK: Mm, Mi . . . , whatever the word is . . .

T: No, you try to read it. Piacerebbe, can you? HK, please . . .

T+HK: Piacerebbe . . .

HK: . . . stare con Gabriella, how do you read the surname?

T: Gabriella Gheri.

HK: Gheri, perché ho . . .

T+HK: . . . quattordici anni e

HK: Mi piace il cinema e il windsurf.

T: OK, sentiamo WK.

WK: ?

T: Mi piacerebbe . . . can you repeat the word? Pia-ce-reb-be.

LL: Piacerebbe.

T: If it's difficult, vorrei, which has got the same meaning. OK, WK.

WK: Vorrei stare con Gabriella, perché ho cinquant'anni e mi piace il windsurf.

T: Ho cinquant'anni e mi piace il windsurf. You are cinquant'anni, va bene, cinquantenne, ciao, nonno. HS.

HS: Vorrei stare con Gabriella, perché ho quindici anni e mi piace il windsurf.

T: OK, sentiamo L.

L: Vorrei stare con Francesca, perché ho quattordici anni e mi piacciono gli animali.

T: Va bene, vediamo CP.

CP: Vorrei stare con Simona, perché mi piace il calcio, tutti gli sport.

T: Sentiamo DL.

DL: Mi piacerebbe stare con Elisa Santo Stefano, perché ho quattordici anni e mi piace *la sporta e gli animali.

T: Gli animali?

DL: Gli animali. *Non mi piace ginnastica.

T: Well done.

T: GA, read yours.

GA: Mi piacer . . .

T: What? Vorrei . . .

GA: Vorrei stare con Simona, perché mi piace il windsurf.

T: OK, MM.

MM: Vorrei stare con Emanuele, perché mi piacciono gli animali e la natura.

T: Well done. Chi rimane? MU.

MU: Vorrei stare con lo studente, perché mi piace la discoteca.

T: FP.

FP: Mi piacerebbe stare con Simona, perché mi piace Claudia.

T: Well done, it's a change in the story, not because he likes windsurf, but because he likes Claudia. Who is left? AS, AJ, and TN. Sentiamo TN.

TN: Vorrei stare con Emanuele, perché *mi piace animali.

T: AS.

AS: Vorrei stare con Simona, perché mi piace lo sport.

T: AJ.

AJ: Vorrei stare con Simona, perché mi piace il windsurf.

T: GR, who else, please let's finish.

GR: Vorrei stare con Francesca, perché mi piacciono gli animali.

T: MQ?

MQ: Vorrei stare con Elisa, perché mi *piace *la calcio e tennis.

T: SM?

SM: Vorrei stare con Simona, perché mi piace la ginnastica e lo *sporto e perché lei mio chiami, mi piace *la cinema.

[The bell rings. Almost every L has gots a turn.]

Appendix C. Materials and written work

School A. A1

<u>Samples of materials</u>

(15 November)

P 50 m → ✉ = Il parcheggio è vicino all'ufficio postale

I davanti FS =

H 50 m → ～ =

FS → △ =

(21 November)

A + IL → AL
A + LA → ALLA
A + I → AI

<u>Esempio</u>

1. Il mercato è vicino alla stazione
2. La piscina è di fronte al parcheggio
3. Il parco è accanto ai gabinetti

(20 January)

a + il = al
a + la = alla

a + il limone = ...
a + la menta = ...
a + la cioccolata = ...
a + la vaniglia = ...

Vorrei + V + 🍓

Vorrei + V + 🍋

Vorrei + V + ☕

(12 February)

a + il limone =   a + la questura =

a + la piscina =   a + il porto =
a + il centrocittà =   a + l'ufficio informazioni =
a + il cinema =   a + la banca =
a + la stazione =

Samples of errors in written work

(20 January)

Learner	Error
AM	*Vorei un galato al coffee
	*un le gelato allo fragola
CF MD MV YT	*un al caffè
CF MV YT	*un al limone
	*un alla fragola
DF	*un il gelato al cafe
DM	*un il gelato alla caffè
	*un il gelato alla limone
	*un il gelato alla pragola
HG	*il galato al lemone
	*al galato alla fragola
HG VN	*un caffè
LL RR	*un il gelato al caffè
	*un il gelato al limone
	*un il gelato alla fragola
VN	*un limone
	*un fargola

(3 February)

Learner	Error[1]
BJ DF DM HG KL LL MC MV PS RR SL SS TC VN	il panino al *for maggio
BJ MV SL TC	*il patatine fritte
DM LL MC SS TC VN YW	*il hot-dog

HG	il *prosiutto
	*il patine fritte
LL	le *patantine

(6 July)

Learner	Number error
EE YW	un chilo *di mela
HZ	una chilo de *mella
	due *fragola
	una chilo de *limone
	due cheli din *banana
	una chilo de *melone
	una chilo *arrancia
	tre chili *pera[2]
MV	*una mele
	*una arance
RR	due *banana
	due *pesca
	tre *pera
TC	un chilo di *fragola
WE	un chilo *de pera

Learner	Gender error
BJ	*un pesca
EE	*una chilo di pere
	*una chilo banane
	*una chilo di arance
	*una chilo di pesche
ER	*una melone
	due *ananae
MV RR	*una limone
	*una melone

School A. A3

Samples of materials

(26 November)

THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

ma sono già le sette e la sveglia suona.

va nel bagno

e fa colazione

poi si veste

Nico scende dal letto

Scende in cucina

Nico dorme tranquillo

è l'ora di svegliarsi

fa velocemente una doccia

prende dall'armadio il suo ... mensile, po...

si ricorda ... è domenica!
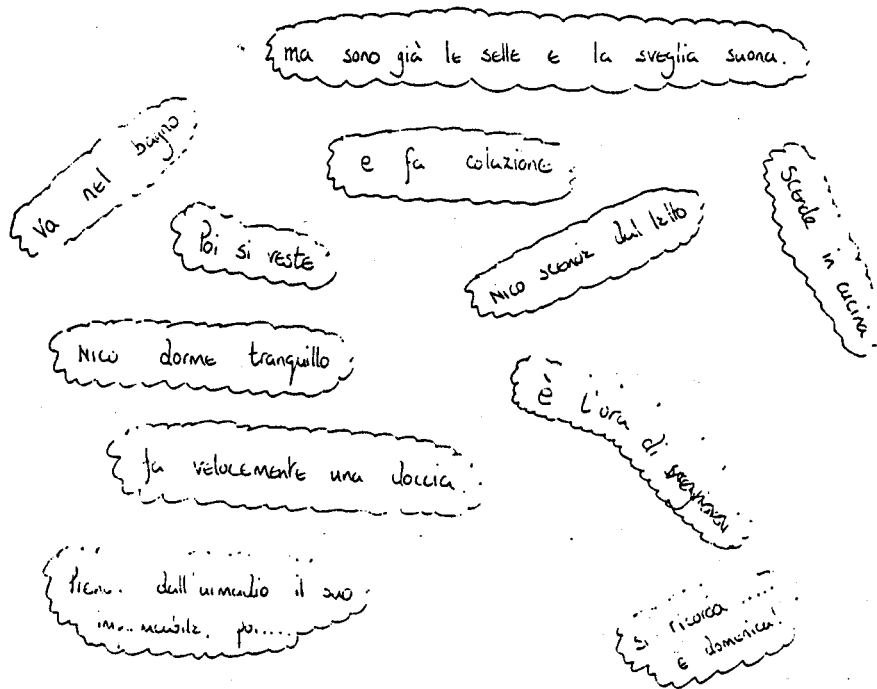
(17 July)

[¶ Moving in

Imagine that you are now moving into the flat. Tell the removal men where to put your furniture. Work in pairs choosing an item each, in turn, until they are all used up:

THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

(11 February)

DOVE E A CHE ORA?

Dove ci troviamo? Where shall we meet?
Ci troviamo   davanti a . . . In front of
               dietro a . . . . behind
               accanto a . . . in the corner
               vicino a . . . near

A che ora ci troviamo? At what time shall we meet?
Ci troviamo alle 21.00 We shall meet at 9 pm.

Il compito

Ci incontriamo

1.   Max said to meet him   Marsha, ci troviamo al cinema
      him at the cinema at   delux alle ventuno e non alle
      8:30 tonight   venti e trenta. Va bene. A Presto
                                Max

                              20.30 → 21.00 so from 8.30 to 9.00

a. the times have changed from 8:30 to 8:00 according to Max.

2.   Thank God they didn't   SCUOLA ITALIANA SCI
      forget!   CLASSE 2 MAESTRO: PIERO
                                Martedì 17/2 ci incontriamo
                                davanti all'hotel Cristallo alle 9.15.

Marsha missed her ski class yesterday: this note tells her where and when the class are meeting today.

a. they are to meet in front of the 'Cristallo' hotel.
b. they have to meet at 9.15 (alle nove e un quarto).

3. Write a note to a friend to tell him/her where and when you are going to meet.

4. Write three conversations as in the example

Example:

♡?   ♡✗
CINEMA   CINEMA
Ti piacerebbe andare al cinema?   Non mi piacerebbe andare al cinema.

♪♫☺♯♭?
Ti piacerebbe andare a ballare?

♪♫☺♯♭✓

⌂?
Dove ci troviamo?

⌂ DISCO
☺☻

☻?
A che ora ci troviamo?

🕑 21.00
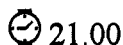
(26 November)[3]

The Perfect Tense

The perfect tense describes an action which has happened in the past. To form this tense in italiano, two things are required.

① the appropriate part of avere.

② the past participle.

It is very important to learn the verb avere off by heart.

AVERE - To have

Ho - I have	Abbiamo - We have
Hai - You have	Avete - You have
Ha - He/she/it has	Hanno - They have

The past participle

The past participle of verbs are formed according to the group they belong to.

① Are verbs. Remove 'are' from the infinitive and add 'ATO'

      eg guardare → guard<u>ato</u>

② Ere verbs. Remove 'ere' from the infinitive and add 'UTO'

      eg vendere → vend<u>uto</u>

③ Ire verbs. Remove 'ire' from the infinitive and add 'ITO'

      eg finire → fin<u>ito</u>

(10 March)

The Past tense

It is very important to learn to change verbs into the past tense so that you can talk about things that you have done, for instance, on holiday last year. The past 'Perfect' tense in Italian is 'Passato Prossimo'

eg   (Past Participle)
ANDARE = io + verb 'essere' → sono + andato

io	sono	andato/a (feminine)
tu	sei	andato/a
lui/lei	è	andato/a
noi	siamo	andati/e
voi	siete	andati/e
loro	sono	andati/e

eg   'L'anno scorso sono andata in Francia'
        = Last year I went to France.

        'Ieri sono andata a scuola'
        = Yesterday I went to school.

        'Venerdì sono andata a ballare'
        = Friday I went dancing.
        (io sono → past = io sono stato)

Samples of errors in written work

(11 February)[4]

JC   *davanti a discoteca

MH   *a cinima
                                *la cinima

MH SC   *al balare

NB   *al discoteca

School B. B1

<u>Samples of materials</u>

(26 April)

sin		pl
m	o	i
f	a	e
mf	e	i

gatto	→	gatti
capra	→	capre
cane	→	cani
lepre	→	lepri

(10 May)

il	→	i
lo	→	gli
l'	→	gli
la	→	le

il libro	i libri
lo zucchero	gli zuccheri
l'armadio	gli armadi
la porta	le porte

<u>Samples of errors in written work</u>

(5 February)

Learner	Composition
NF	Il mio leone è arancione, grande *è molto forte. Si chiama Leo. Amo il mio Leo. Il mio asino è grigio, è timido. Si chiama Dario. Amo il mio asino.
QS	*Me cane si chiama Bruno. Lui è molto bello e è marrone e giallo. Lui è carino ma birichino.
SC	*Il gatta. *Nome Tina. *Mio gatta è bianca e *nero. Ha sei anni. Amo *il mio gatta.

(10 February)

Learner	Conversation
CM	M - Ciao C, hai un animale a casa? C - Sì, ho un *coniclio, e tu. M - Sì, ho uno *pesce rosso C - Come *ti chiami il tuo pesce? M - Si chiama Sammy *è tu? C - La [unfinished]
FA	A - Ciao HM. Hai un animale a casa? M - Ciao FA. Sì ho un gatto. E tu? A - Ho un cane, si chiama Lassie. M - È grande *e piccolo? A - È medio. M - *Colori. A - Molti colori. Nero bianco, giallo, marrone. E tu? M - È bianco, marrone. M - Arrivederci! A - Ciao
HM	A - *Chio, M, hai un *animali *è casa? M - *Chio, sì ho *un gatta. E tu? [unfinished]
HT MP	P - Ciao HT hai un animale a casa? T - Ciao MP. Si, dieci *cane. P - DIECI! T - Si, *uno cane e nove *cucciolo.
LJ MD	J - Ciao, hai un animale? F - *Sei, *io ho e è * gatto. J - È piccolo o grande? F - È piccolo e *non grande. J - *Che colori [unfinished]
QS	A - Buongiorno S hai *una animali a casa? S - Buongiorno A sì *lo *hai un cane. Lui è molto bello e grande. A - *Che colori è? S - Lui è giallo e marrone. A - Come si *chiamo? S - Lui *è chiamo Bruno. A - Hai un *animali a casa? S - No, ciao. A - Ciao.

School B. B3

<u>Samples of written work</u>

(5 October)

Learner	Composition
AS	HK ha 13 anni. Ha una sorella e tre fratelli *si chiama Jay, Roberto, Sarah e Keith, Jay *e ha dodici anni, Roberto *e ha diciassette anni, *Sarah è ha sette e Keith e ha quattordici.
LD	FR ha una sorella e due *fratteli. Il *frattelo si *chiama FP e FL, la sorella si chiama Siobhan. Ha *anni tredici, dieci, otto anni.
FR	*DL ho 13 anni. Ha quattro sorelle. *Come ti chiamosorello e Patricia, Clare, Fiona an Maria. *Quanti anni hai 6, 19, 23, 25.
HS	KG ha un fratello e *non sorelle. FP ha due sorelle e un fratello. *Ho venticinque e ho undici, e ho ventiuno. HK ha una sorella e tre fratelli *la fratelli si chiama Robert ha *dicasette, Sarah ha *sette, Keith ha *quattordici, Jay ha *dodici.
QM	WK ha 13 anni. Ha un fratello e *uno sorella, si *chiama Antonio e Rebecca. FP ha 13 anni. Ha un fratello e una sorella, si *chiama FL e FR e Siobhan.
WT	FR ha 2 fratelli e *un sorella. *Il fratelli si *chiamo FP ha 13 anni e FL ha 10 anni. *Un sorella si chiama Siobhan ha 8 anni. WK ha *un sorella e un fratello. *Un sorella si chiama Rebecca ha 13 anni. *Un fratello si *chiamo Anthony.

(2 February. Esercizio 4 *Ciao!* (Secondo libro): 108)

Learner	Error
AS	*della aranciate *dell fragole *delle gelati *dell pesce *dell pesche *dell pane
DL	*del pomodori *del pesche

DL FR HS	*del fragole
DL FR HS QM	*del zucchero
DL HS	*del gelati
FR	*della spaghet *della pomodori *del pesche *della gelati
HS	*dell spaghetti *dell pomodori *dell pizza
MM	*pesce
QM	*della spaghetti *delle pomodori *della pesche *del gelati *delle pesce
WT	*delle pesce

(22 February)

Learner	Composition
AS	Questa casa è da sola ha due piani. E molto grande ha sei camere. Si trova *e in *campange è medio-evale. è ha *una bella giardina. La zona è molto *bello!
CP	*Questo casa è a *schira, tre *pani, *camere cinque, giardino e un grande garage.
DE	Clapham. A schiera, tre piani. Questa casa è vittoriana. due camere da *lette. *Moderna bango. *Moderna cucina. Balcone due *minute dalla metropolitana. Al centro Putney. Al centro. A schiera, due piani, tre *camera da letto, cucina, *colazione letto. Giardino.
HK	Questa casa è a schiera ha un grande *giardini, ha tre camere una moderna cucina si trova al centro.

Notes to Appendix C

1. A1 learners produced the following errors when copying from the blackboard. *Il hot-dog* is an input error.

2. The sentences also contain a number of other errors: gender, *chilo* is masculine and agrees with *un*, spelling, **de* and **din* for *di*, **arrancia* for **arancia*, **cheli* for *chili*, and omission, *di* before *pera* and **arrancia*.

3. This and the following worksheet, apart from generally oversimplifying the structure involved and presenting only few examples, do not make any mention of how to match the auxiliary (*essere* or *avere*) with the verb. Indeed, they completely neglect the issue.

4. Errors are few because: the exercises were short, their level of difficulty was low and only a few samples were available, either because the exercise was missing or the exercise book itself was not shown to the researcher. The structure had not been mastered, as shown in the researcher administered test.

Appendix D. Motivation questionnaire

LANGUAGE QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME_____ CLASS _____

INTRODUCTION

THIS IS NOT A TEST

In these sheets are some questions asking you how you feel about learning languages. This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers and no-one else in the school will see what you have written. We just want to know what you think about learning languages.

Here are some statements about language.

FIRST, read each statement carefully.
NEXT, decide whether you agree or disagree with the statement.
THEN, put a tick in one of the boxes opposite to show how much you agree or disagree with the statement.

The following example shows you what to do.

Example:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree
Foreign language lessons are usually interesting		✓		

In this example pupil AGREES that language lessons are usually interesting and so ticks the box labelled "Agree".

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree
I am glad I am learning Italian				
I would like to stay with an Italian familiy				
I understand most things in the language lesson				
Italian will be useful to me after I leave school				
I am better at languages than at other subjects				
My parents think learning is a waste of time				
I am not interested in going to Italy				
I enjoy other lessons more than languages				
I would like to make friends with some Italian people of my age				
Learning foreign languages is a waste of time				
I am quite good at Italian				

Appendix E. Aptitude test (Italian)

<u>Test 1. Memory Test</u>

You are going to hear 16 Italian words. As you hear each word, look at the picture which tells you what it means. You will hear each word twice, and then you will have two minutes to look through all the words.
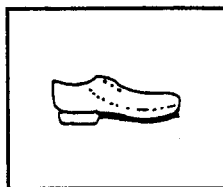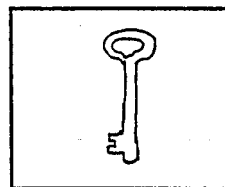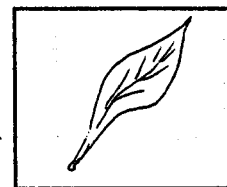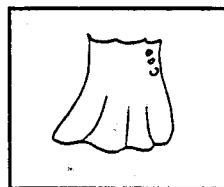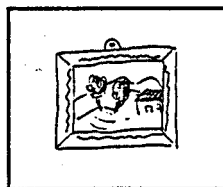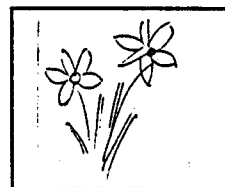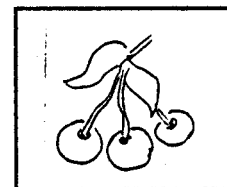
fata candela zappa uva ghiacciolo scarpa chiave foglia gonna quadro fiori ciliegie pesce cuore mosche palla

Now you will hear the words again, in a different order. When you hear word number one, write the letter of the picture that you think goes with it beside number one. When you hear word number two, write the letter of the picture that goes with it beside number two, and so on.

1. uva	5. palla	9. fiori	13. ciliegie
2. mosche	6. scarpa	10. ghiacciolo	14. gonna
3. cuore	7. chiave	11. candela	15. zappa
4. fata	8. quadro	12. foglia	16. pesce

<u>Two weeks later</u>

You are going to hear the words that you learned two weeks ago to see how many of them you can remember. When you hear word number one, write the letter of the picture that you think goes with it beside number one. When you hear word number two, write the letter of the picture that goes with it beside number two, and so on.

1. cuore	5. scarpa	9. foglia	13. fiori
2. palla	6. candela	10. gonna	14. pesce
3. quadro	7. fata	11. ghiacciolo	15. chiave
4. mosche	8. zappa	12. ciliegie	16. uva

<u>ST 1 Pupil's sheet (i)</u>

You are going to hear sixteen Italian words. As you hear each word, look at the picture which tells you what it means. You will hear each word twice and then you will have two minutes to look through all the words.
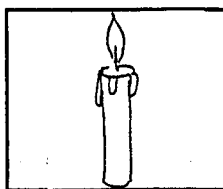
fata	candela	zappa	uva
ghiacciolo	scarpa	chiave	foglia
gonna	quadro	fiori	ciliegie
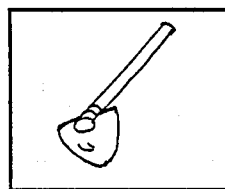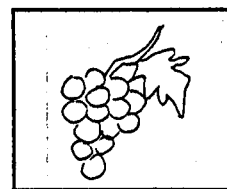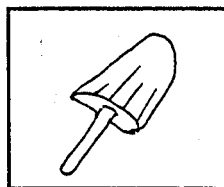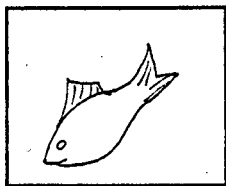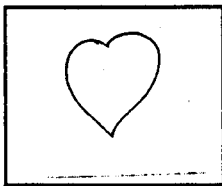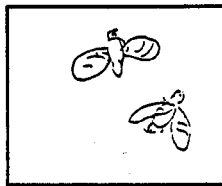
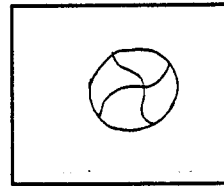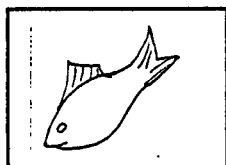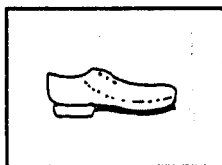| pesce | cuore | mosche | palla |

<u>ST 1 Pupil's sheet (ii)</u>   Name_____

Now you will hear the words again, in a different order. When you hear word number one, write the letter of the picture which you think goes with it beside number one, and so on.
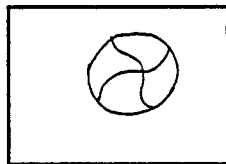

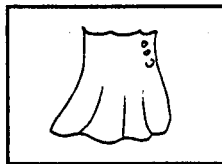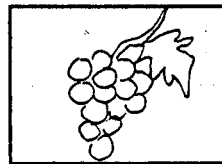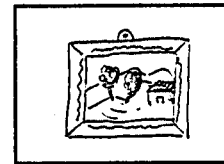| (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |

| (e) | (f) | (g) | (h) |

| (i) | (j) | (k) | (l) |

| (m) | (n) | (o) | (p) |
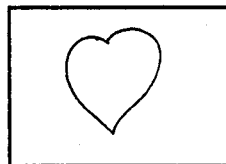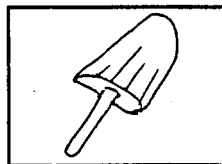
Write your answers here

1.....	5.....	9.....	13.....
2.....	6.....	10.....	14.....
3.....	7.....	11.....	15.....
4.....	8.....	12.....	16.....

<u>ST 1 Pupil's sheet (iii)</u>   Name_____

Now you will hear sixteen Italian words. When you hear word number one, write the letter of the picture which you think goes with it beside number one, and so on.

| (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |

(e)   (f)   (g)   (h)
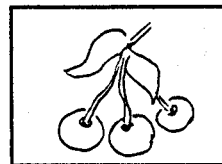
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(m)   (n)   (o)   (p)
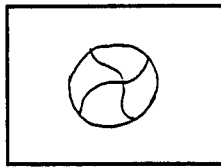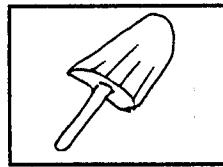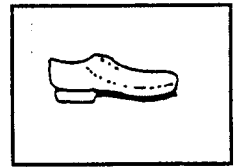
Write your answers here
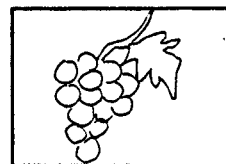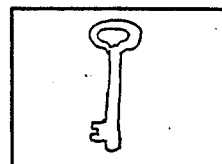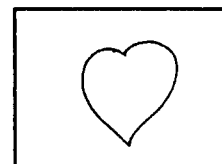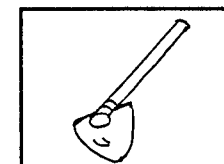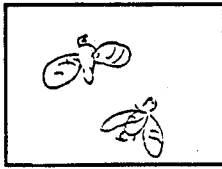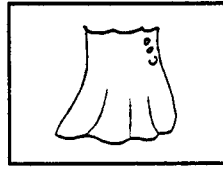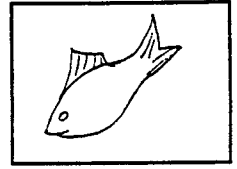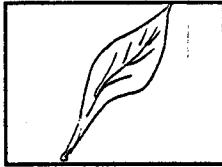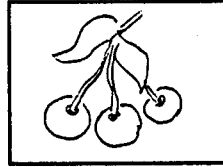1. . . . .   5. . . . .   9. . . . .   13. . . . .
2. . . . .   6. . . . .   10. . . . .   14. . . . .
3. . . . .   7. . . . .   11. . . . .   15. . . . .
4. . . . .   8. . . . .   12. . . . .   16. . . . .

Test 2. Preliminary Items (Tape)

Listen to these two English sentences: My sister's in London.   My sister's in London.

The same sentence can have a different meaning if it is said differently. The same thing happens in Italian. You are going to hear an Italian sentence said four times, but one of the four times it will be said in a different way. Listen carefully and see if you can tell when it sounds different.

Mia sorella è a Milano.

Mia sorella è a Milano.

Mia sorella è a Milano.

Mia sorella è a Milano.

It was said differently the third time, and so you would tick the third box. Now see if you can pick out the sentences which are said differently.

(1) Mia sorella è a Milano.

Mia sorella è a Milano.

Mia sorella è a Milano.

Mia sorella è a Milano.

(2) Mia sorella è a Milano.

Mia sorella è a Milano.

Mia sorella è a Milano.

Mia sorella è a Milano.

(3) A Milano?

A Milano?

A Milano. (Statement)

A Milano?

(4) A Milano.

      A Milano? (Outrage)

      A Milano.

      A Milano.

(5) A Milano. (Exasperation)

      A Milano. (Statement)

      A Milano.   "

      A Milano.   "

Test 2. Intonation and Stress. (Tape)

Luigi and Marco are Italian boys. They went for a car trip to France. At the border a customs officer stopped them. Now they are being questioned by him. We want you to listen very carefully to how they might say certain things in Italian. Here is an example:

The officer asks Luigi if the car is his. But it isn't – it's his father's. Do you think Luigi replies:

(a) L'auto è di mio padre.

(b) L'auto è di mio padre.

(c) L'auto è di mio padre.

The answer here is (b) – L'auto è di mio padre – and so you would tick box (b).
Now listen to some more examples, and tick box (a), (b) or (c) for each question.

No. 1. The officer asks Luigi how old he is. Luigi says that he is eighteen (diciotto). How does he say it?

(a) Diciotto? (question)

(b) Diciotto. (statement)

(c) Diciotto? (outrage)

No. 2. The officer asks Luigi if he is sure that he is eighteen. Luigi is always being asked this and is getting tired of it. How does he tell the officer that he definitely is sure?

(a) Sì. (uncertainty)

(b) Sì? (question)

(c) Sì. (emphasis and exasperation)

No. 3. The officer asks Luigi where he was born. Luigi says that he was born in Rome (Roma). How does he say this?

(a) A Roma. (statement)

(b) A Roma? (question)

(c) A Roma? (surprise and disbelief)

No. 4. Luigi and Marco are going to France. The officer asks Luigi if he speaks French (francese). How does he ask this?

(a) Parli francese. (statement)

(b) Parli francese! (exclamation)

(c) Parli francese? (question)

No. 5. Luigi says no, but Marco does. How does he say this?

(a) No, io no. Marco parla francese.

(b) No, io no. Marco parla francese.

(c) No, io no. Marco parla francese.

No. 6. The officer is very surprised at this, because he thinks that Marco looks rather stupid. How does he show that he is surprised? Does he say . . .

(a) Marco parla francese? (matter-of-fact question)

(b) Marco parla francese. (statement)

(c) Marco parla francese? (great surprise)

No. 7. The officer asks Luigi when he will be returning to Italy, and Luigi replies 'l'otto d' aprile' (on the eighth of April). The officer wants to make sure that he has heard the <u>month</u> correctly: does he say . . .

(a) L'<u>otto</u> d'aprile?

(b) L'otto d'<u>aprile</u>?

(c) L'otto d'aprile? (expressing surprise)

No. 8. The officer now lets them go, Luigi is feeling fed up with the delay and says to Marco 'at last!' (finalmente). How does he say it?

(a) Finalmente. (statement)

(b) Finalmente? (question)

(c) Finalmente! (exasperated relief)

<u>ST 2 Pupil's sheet</u>   Name_____

<u>Example</u>

The officer asks Luigi if the car is his. But it isn't -- it's his father's. Do you think Luigi replies . . .

☐ (a)   ☐ (b)   ☐ (c)

The answer here is (b) -- L'auto è di <u>mio padre</u> -- and so you would tick box (b).

Now listen to some more examples, and tick box (a), (b) or (c) for each question.

No. 1. The officer asks Luigi how old he is. Luigi says that he is eighteen (diciotto). How does he say it?

☐ (a)   ☐ (b)   ☐ (c)

No. 2. The officer asks Luigi if he is sure that he is eighteen. Luigi is always being asked this and is getting tired of it. How does he tell the officer that he definitely is sure?

☐ (a)   ☐ (b)   ☐ (c)

No. 3. The officer asks Luigi where he was born. Luigi says that he was born in Rome (Roma). How does he say this?

☐ (a)   ☐ (b)   ☐ (c)

No. 4. Since Luigi and Marco are going to France, the officer asks Luigi if he speaks French (francese). How does he ask this?

☐ (a)   ☐ (b)   ☐ (c)

No. 5. Luigi says no, but Marco does. How does he say this?

☐ (a)   ☐ (b)   ☐ (c)

No. 6. The officer is very surprised at this, because he thinks that Marco looks rather stupid. How does he show that he is surprised?

☐ (a)   ☐ (b)   ☐ (c)

No. 7. The officer asks Luigi when he will be returning to Italy, and Luigi replies 'L'otto d'aprile' ('On the eighth of April'). The officer wants to make sure that he has heard the month correctly: does he say . . .

☐ (a)   ☐ (b)   ☐ (c)

No. 8. The officer now lets them go. Luigi is feeling fed up with the delay and says to Marco 'Finalmente!' ('At last!'). How does he say it?

☐ (a)   ☐ (b)   ☐ (c)

Test 3. Plural and Singular (Tape)

In this exercise you will see that sometimes two words sound almost the same, but they mean different things. Think of the difference between the two English words 'woman' and 'women'.
You are going to hear some Italian words. As you hear each word, look at the picture which tells you what it means.

(1) moneta (2) monete (3) zaino (4) zaini (5) albero (6) alberi

Now listen to some of the words again, in a different order, and tick the picture that you think goes with each word.

(7) zaini (8) albero (9) monete

Listen to some words which you have not heard before, and see if you can decide which pictures they should go with.

(10) torta (11) guanti (12) lampade (13) chiesa (14) porte (15) vasi (16) sigaretta

Look at pictures (17) to (22). If we want to describe what happened in picture (17), we would say <u>Taglia il fiore</u>. for picture (18) we would say <u>Tagliano il fiore</u>.

Listen to how we would describe what happened in pictures (19) to (22).

(19) Rompe la tazza.

(20) Rompono la tazza.

(21) Disegna il gatto.

(22) Disegnano il gatto.

See if you can work out which picture is being talked about in these sentences.

(23) Rompono la tazza.

(24) Disegna il gatto.

(25) Taglia il fiore.

Listen to some sentences that you have not heard before, and try and decide which pictures they describe.

(26) Rompono il vaso.

(27) Disegnano i fiori.

(28) Taglia la banana.

(29) Uccide le zanzare.

(30) Chiudono le porte.

(31) Dipinge la porta.

(32) Visitano la chiesa.

ST 3 Pupil's sheet   Name_____
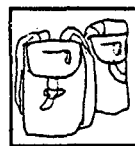
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7   8
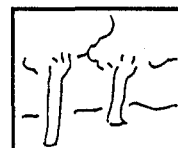
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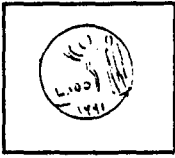
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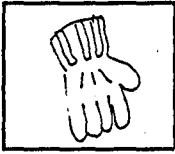
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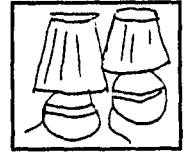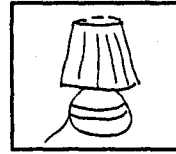
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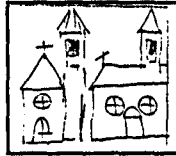
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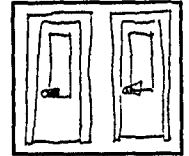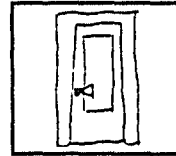
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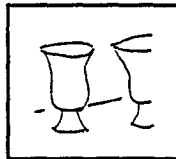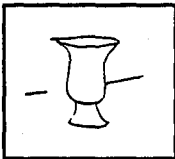
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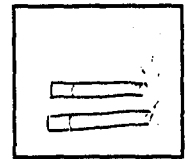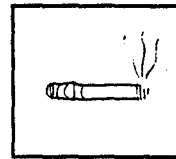
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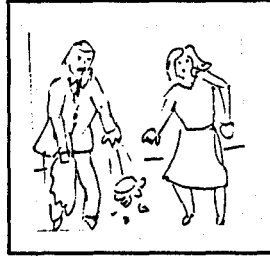
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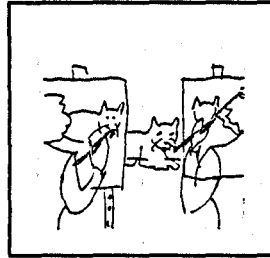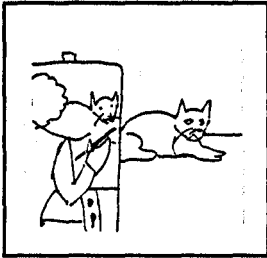
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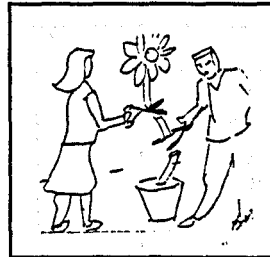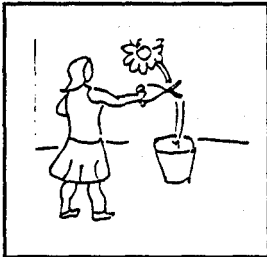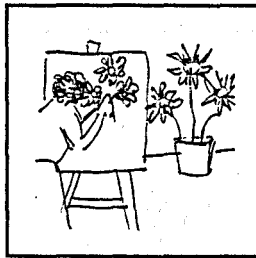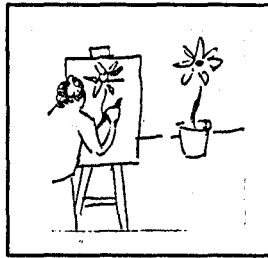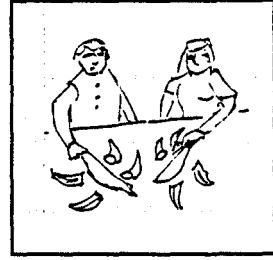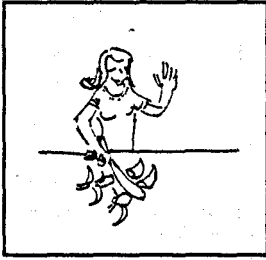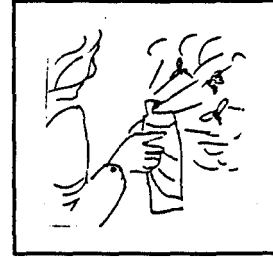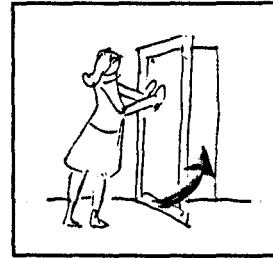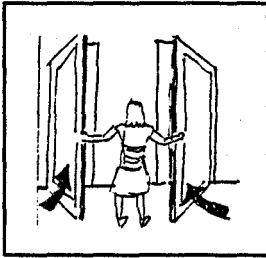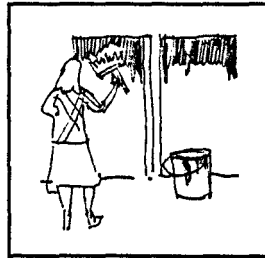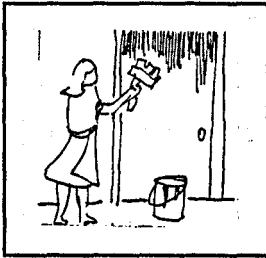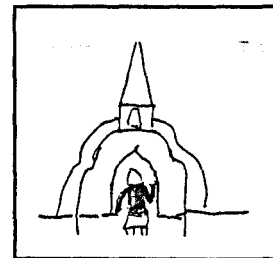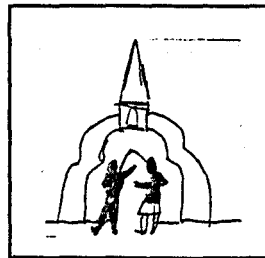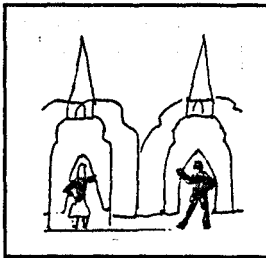
ST 4 Pupil's sheet   Name_____

Here are sentences describing past actions. In some of them

the word **ha** (has) is used, in some others **è** (is).

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN IT SHOULD BE **ha** AND WHEN IT SHOULD B **è**?

Look at these sentences and see if you can work it out.

Giulio è arrivato questa mattina.
Giulio has arrived this morning.

Marco ha mangiato un panino.
Marco has eaten a sandwich.

Marina è tornata molto tardi.
Marina has returned very late.

Giovanna ha comperato un regalo.
Giovanna has bought a present.

Mario è caduto in giardino.
Mario has fallen down in the garden.

Now see if you can put the missing words into these sentences
(Don't guess -- try and work out what the rule is.)

Mario _____ arrivato molto tardi.
Mario has arrived very late.

Giulio _____ comperato un panino.
Giulio has bought a sandwich.

Marco _____ tornato questa mattina.
Marco has returned this morning.

Giovanna _____ caduta.
Giovanna has fallen down.

Now see if you can use the rule with some new words.

Laura _____ scappata via.
Laura has run away.

Tommaso _____ bevuto una coca-cola.
Tommaso has drunk a coke.

Silvia _____ partita per il mare.
Silvia has gone to the seaside.

Paola _____ letto il libro.
Paola has read the book.

Alberto _____ uscito.
Alberto has gone out.

Michele _____ entrato adesso.
Michele has come in now.

Luigi _____ visto sua madre.
Luigi has seen his mother.

Appendix F. Aptitude test (Swedish)

Name_____

Most English nouns form their plural by adding -s, e.g. book - books, but there are several other ways of forming the plural in English, e.g. child - children, ox - oxen, mouse - mice, sheep -sheep.
In Swedish there are several different ways of forming the plural of nouns, some of which are shown below. Read carefully through the tables and see if you can fill in the missing words in the spaces opposite the arrows.

1.

a girl	en flicka	three girls	tre flickor
a pencil	en penna	three pencils	tre pennor
a picture	en tavla	three pictures	tre tavlor
a lamp	en lampa	three lamps	

←

2.

a dog	en hund	three dogs	tre hundar
a sock	en sock	three socks	tre sockar
a spoon	en sked	three spoons	tre skedar
a knife	en kniv	three knives	

←

3.

a house	ett hus	three houses	tre hus
a leg	ett ben	three legs	tre ben
a glass	ett glas	three glasses	tre glas
a table	ett bord	three tables	

←

Page score____

4.

a bee	ett bi	three bees	tre bin
a reed	ett rö	three reeds	tre rön
a mare	ett sto	three mares	tre ston
a moth	ett fly	three moths	

←

5.

| a car | en bil | three cars | |

←

6.

| a nest | ett bo | three nests | |

←

7.

| a letter | ett brev | three letters | |

←

8.

| a stocking | en strumpa | three stockings | |

←

"The" is not a separate word in Swedish but an ending added to the noun. Read through the examples in the tables below and try to fill in the missing words in the spaces opposite the arrows.

9.

a book	en bok	the book	boken
a chair	en stol	the chair	stolen
a spoon	en sked	the spoon	skeden
a cat	en katt	the cat	

←

10.

a pencil	en penna	the pencil	pennan
a lamp	en lampa	the lamp	lampan
a picture	en tavla	the picture	tavlan
a girl	en flicka	the girl	

←

Page score____

	a bridge	en bro	the bridge	bron
	a cloud	en sky	the cloud	skyn
	a shoe	en sko	the shoe	skon
11.	a village	en by	the village	

	a leg	ett ben	the leg	benet
	a glass	ett glas	the glass	glaset
	a letter	ett brev	the letter	brevet
12.	a house	ett hus	the house	

13.	a hand	en hand	the hand	
14.	a cow	en ko	the cow	
15.	a tape	ett band	the tape	
16.	a stocking	en strumpa	the stocking	

The ending meaning "the" is different when the nouns is plural. Study the examples given and then try to supply the missing words.

	a girl	en flicka	the girls	flickorna
	a lamp	en lampa	the lamps	lamporna
	a picture	en tavla	the pictures	tavlorna
17.	a pencil	en penna	the pencils	

Page score____

	a dog	en hund	the dogs	hundarna
	a sock	en sock	the socks	sockarna
	a spoon	en sked	the spoons	skedarna
18.	a knife	en kniv	the knives	

	a table	ett bord	the tables	borden
	a leg	ett ben	the legs	benen
	a house	ett hus	the houses	husen
19.	a glass	ett glas	the glasses	

	a bee	ett bi	the bees	bina
	a moth	ett fly	the moths	flyna
	a reed	ett rö	the reeds	röna
20.	a mare	ett sto	the mares	

21.	a nest	ett bo	the nests		←
22.	a stocking	en strumpa	the stockings		←
23.	a car	en bil	the cars		←
24.	a letter	ett brev	the letters		

In English we say "I sit", "they sit" but she sits". Look at the Swedish examples and fill in the missing words.

| 25. | I sit
she sits
they sit | jag sitter
hon sitter
de sitter | I play
she plays
they play | jag leker
hon leker | ← |

| 26. | I speak
she speaks
they speak | jag talar
hon talar
de talar | I draw
she draws
they draw | jag ritar
hon ritar | ← |

| 27. | I am
she is
they are | jag är
hon är
de är | I live
she lives
they live | jag bor
hon bor | ← |

28.	I write	jag skriver	they write		←
29.	she washes	hon diskar	I wash		←
30.	I have	jag har	she sees		←
31.	they see	de ser	she has		

| 32. | I am writing
she is washing
they are playing
I am sitting | jag skriver
hon diskar
da leker | | ← |

You have now studied quite a lot of Swedish nouns and verbs and can try to put some sentences together. You should, of course, look back to find the words you need. Two examples are done for you.

Hon bor i London.

She lives in London. ←

Flickan ritar med en penna.

The girl is drawing with a pen. ←

Ketten leker med en sko.

33. ←

Flickorna bor i byn.

34. ←

Stolarna är i huset.

35. ←

Jag diskar glasen.

36. ←

Bordet har tre ben.

37. ←

The girl is in the house.

38. ←

They have three cars.

39. ←

I am writing a letter.

40. ←

They see a cow.

41. ←

I am playing with the dogs.

42. ←

end of test

Appendix G. Parents' questionnaire

1. Can you speak any foreign language?   YES   NO

  IF YES

  What language? _____

  How did you learn it? _____

  Do you use it at work?   YES   NO

2. During the last five years have you travelled anywhere?

  IF YES

  A. Did you go on holiday?   YES   NO

  Where to? _____

  How long did you stay? _____

  B. Did you go on business? _____

  Where to? _____

  How long did you stay? _____

3. Has your child ever been abroad?   YES   NO

  IF YES

  Where to? _____

  How long did she/he stay? _____

  Who did she/he go with? _____

4. Do you learn any Italian from your child? YES   NO .

5. Please comment on your child learning Italian.

  _____

  _____

  _____

  _____

  _____

Appendix H. Elicitation tasks

Task 1 (B1 and B1)

WHERE ARE THEY?
Ask where the following places are. Start by saying: Dov'è . . . ?
Example: a. circo   Dov'è il circo?
              b. scuola   Dov'è la scuola?

  1. Campo sportivo (sports ground)
  2. Municipio (town-hall)
  3. Centro (town centre)

  4. Aereoporto (airport)
  5. Oratorio (chapel)

  6. Pizzeria (pizza restaurant)
  7. Discoteca (discoteque)
  8. Trattoria (restaurant)

  9. Arena (arena)
  10. Osteria (pub)

Second part. Version administered to A1

AT THE CAFE
Order one drink, one snack, and one ice-cream from the first menu. Start by saying:
Vorrei . . .
Example: cappuccino   Vorrei un cappuccino.

            pasta   Vorrei una pasta.

First Menu

DRINKS:
            Crodino (Soft drink)
            Frullato (Milk shake)

SNACKS:
            Tramezzino (Sandwich)
            Saccottino (Danish)

Second Menu ..

DRINKS:
            Cioccolata (Hot chocolate)
            Gassosa (Lemonade)

SNACKS:
>
> Focaccia (Bread with olive oil)
> Pizza

Second part. Version administered to B1

AT THE CAFE
Order one drink and one snack from the first menu. Then order one drink and one snack from the second menu. Start by saying: Buongiorno . . .

Example: cappuccino   Buongiorno. Un cappuccino.

      pasta   Buongiorno. Una pasta.

First Menu

DRINKS:
>
> Crodino (Soft drink)
> Frullato (Milk shake)

SNACKS:
>
> Tramezzino (Sandwich)
> Saccottino (Danish)

Second Menu

DRINKS:
>
> Cioccolata (Hot chocolate)
> Gassosa (Lemonade)

SNACKS:
>
> Focaccia (Bread with olive oil)
> Pizza

Task 2 (A1 and B1)

Ask for the price of the vegetables below. Start by saying: Quanto costano . . .

Examples: zucchina   Quanto costano le zucchine?

fagiolo   Quanto costano i fagioli?

patata   carota   melanzana   cipolla

pomodoro   cetriolo   pisello   porro

Ask for a kilo of each vegetable. Start by saying: Vorrei un chilo di . . .

Examples: zucchina   Vorrei un chilo di zucchine.

fagiolo   Vorrei un chilo di fagioli.

Task 1 (A3 and B3)

MAIL ORDER SHOPPING

I. Cosa ordinano?

Esempi:

a) Maria/giacca (jacket)

(A3 version) Maria vuole una giacca.

(B3 version) Maria ordina una giacca.

b) Mario/completo (two piece suit)

(A3 Version) Mario vuole un completo.

(B 3 Version) Mario ordina un completo.

1. Cristina/pelliccia (fur coat)
2. Roberta/felpa (sweatshirt)
3. Monica/canottiera (vest)

4. Gianni/cappotto (coat)
5. Michele/berretto (cap)
6. Giuliano/montone (sheepskin jacket)

II. Mario, Maria and the others place orders for their clothes with the mail order firm *Vespro*. Unfortunately, their orders are mixed up at the warehouse and nobody receives their order.

Esempi:

a) Maria/completo

(A3 version) Maria ha ricevuto il completo.

(B3 version) Maria riceve il completo.

b) Mario/giacca

(A3 version) Mario riceve la giacca.

(B3 version) Mario riceve la giacca.

1. Cristina/berretto
2. Roberta/montone
3. Monica/cappotto

4. Gianni/canottiera
5. Michele/pelliccia
6. Giuliano/felpa

Task 2 (A3 and B3)

CHE COSA HANNO FATTO IERI?

Esempi: a) Mario/ristorante   Mario è andato al ristorante.

               b) Maria/pizzeria   Maria è andata alla pizzeria.

1. Luigi/museo (museum)
2. Marco/castello (castle)
3. Giulio/mercato (market)

4. Sergio/aereoporto (airport)
5. Carlo/oratorio (chapel)
6. Enzo/ospedale (hospital)

7. Marina/fiera (fair)
8. Laura/trattoria (restaurant)
9. Gabriella/cattedrale (cathedral)

10. Claudia/arena (arena)
11. Giovanna/osteria (pub)
12. Orietta/inaugurazione (private view)

Second part. Version administered to B3

CHE COSA COMPRANO?

Esempi: a) Mario/vino   Mario compra del vino.

               b) Maria/pizza   Maria compra della pizza.

1. Luigi/tacchino (turkey)
2. Marco/manzo (beef)
3. Giulio/vitello (veal)

4. Sergio/aceto (vinegar)
5. Carlo/arrosto (roast beef)
6. Enzo/ottone (brass)

7. Marina/grappa (liqueur)
8. Laura/margarina (margarine)
9. Gabriella/borraggine (herb)

10. Claudia/insalata (salad)
11. Giovanna/uvetta (raisins)
12. Orietta/acquavite (brandy)

Tasks 2 (A3 and B3)

Paola went on a holiday. These pictures are clues to the kind of holiday she had. Please describe her holiday.

PAOLA

5.7.91 1

2

3

4

5

6

7 DISCO

8

9 30°C

20.7.91 10
MILANO▷
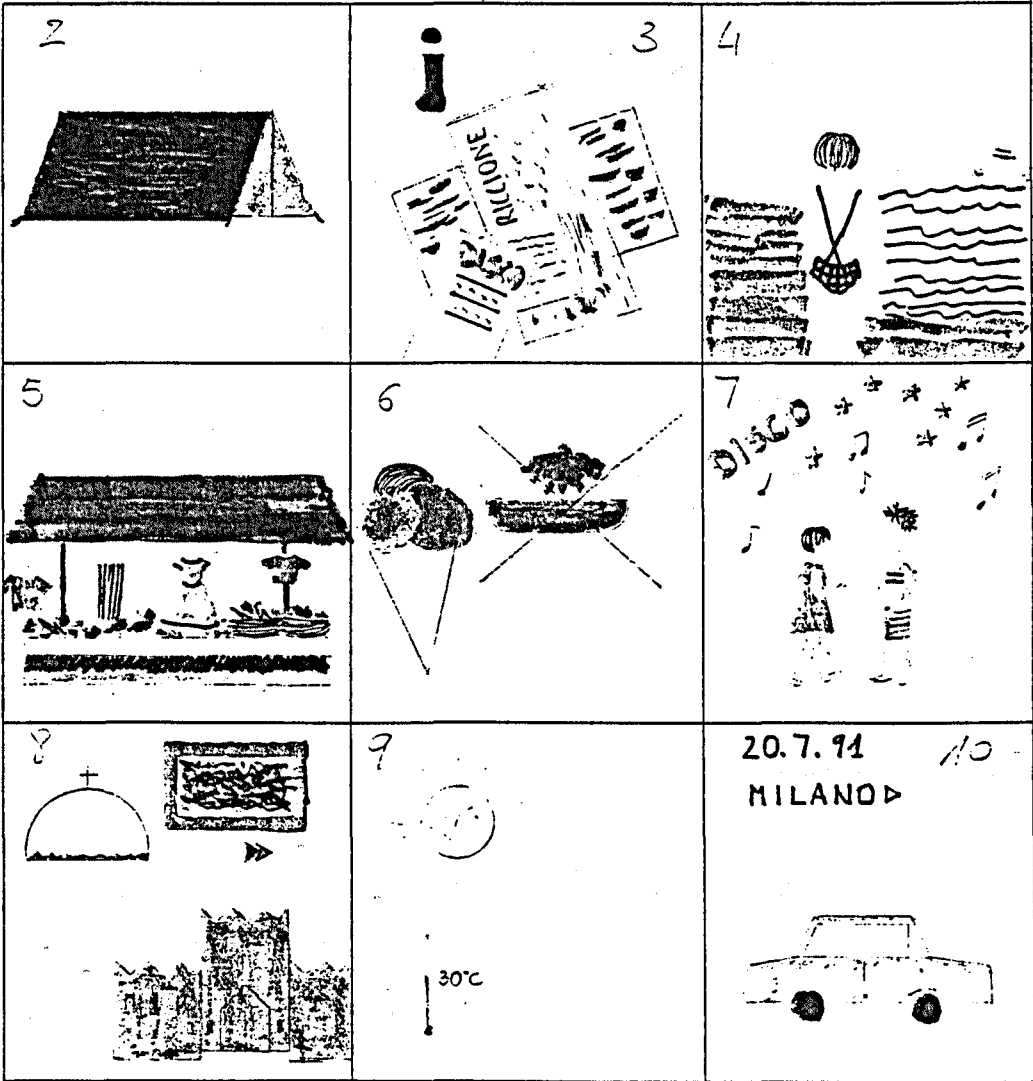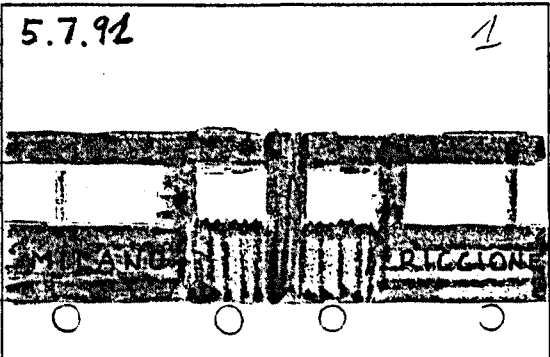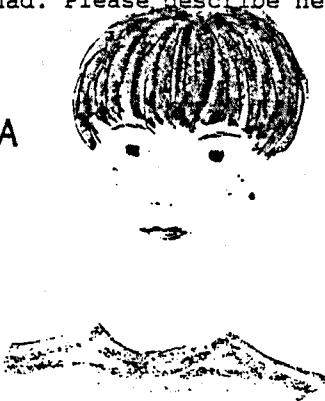
List of questions asked. Version administered to A3

Picture one: 1. Quando è partita per Riccione? 2. È partita il cinque giugno o il cinque luglio? 3. È partita il cinque luglio?

Picture two: 1. Dove ha alloggiato? 2. Ha alloggiato in albergo o in campeggio? 3.Ha alloggiato in campeggio?

Picture three: 1. Dov'è andata il secondo giorno? 2. È andata all'ufficio informazioni o in centro? 3. È andata all'ufficio informazioni?

Picture four: 1. Cosa ha fatto il terzo giorno? 2. È andata in spiaggia o al porto? 3. È andata al porto?

Picture five: 1. Cosa ha fatto il quarto giorno? 2. Ha comprato della frutta o dei vestiti? 3. Ha comprato della frutta?

Picture six: 1. Cosa ha fatto il quinto giorno? 2. Ha mangiato il gelato o la pasta? 3. Ha mangiato il gelato?

Picture seven: 1. Cosa ha fatto il sesto giorno? 2. È andata al teatro o in discoteca? 3. È andata in discoteca?

Picture eight: 1. Cosa ha fatto il settimo giorno? 2. Ha visitato dei monumenti o è andata in spiaggia? 3. Ha visitato dei monumenti?

Picture nine: 1. Com'è stato il tempo? 2. Ha fatto freddo o caldo? 3.Ha fatto caldo?

Picture ten: 1. Come ha viaggiato da Riccione a Milano? 2. Ha viaggiato in treno o in automobile? 3. Ha viaggiato in treno?

List of questions asked. Version administered to B3

Picture one: 1. Quando parte per Riccione? 2. Parte il cinque giugno o il cinque luglio? 3. Parte il cinque luglio?

Picture two: 1. Dove alloggia? 2. Alloggia in albergo o in campeggio? 3. Alloggia in campeggio?

Picture three: 1. Dove va il secondo giorno? 2. Va all'ufficio informazioni o in centro? 3. Va all'ufficio informazioni?

Picture four: 1. Cosa fa il terzo giorno? 2. Va in spiaggia o al porto? 3. Va al porto?

Picture five: 1. Cosa fa il quarto giorno? 2. Compra della frutta o dei vestiti? 3. Compra della frutta?

Picture six: 1. Cosa fa il quinto giorno? 2. Mangia il gelato o la pasta? 3. Mangia il gelato?

Picture seven: 1. Cosa fa il sesto giorno? 2. Va al teatro o in discoteca? 3. Va in discoteca?

Picture eight: 1. Cosa fa il settimo giorno? 2. Visita dei monumenti o va in spiaggia? 3. Visita dei monumenti?

Picture nine: 1. Com'è il tempo? 2. Fa freddo o caldo? 3. Fa caldo?

Picture ten: 1. Come viaggia da Riccione a Milano? 2. Viaggia in treno o in automobile? 3. Viaggia in treno?

Appendix I. Scoring system

Table I.1 *Maximum scores in motivation questionnaire, aptitude tests and researcher administered tasks*

A1 and B1	Points	A3 and B3	Points
Motivation	44	Motivation	44
Aptitude test	71	Apitude test	62
Definite article	50	Definite article	48
Indefinite article	20	Indefinite article	12
Gender	14	Gender	24
Plural definite article	40	Preposition + article	60
Gender plural	8	Holidays	100
Plural noun	64		

Table I.2 *Scoring system in researcher administered tasks. A1 and B1*

Task - Error type	Points	Task - Error type	Points
Gender	1	Omission	0
Definite article		*Plural definite article*	
Wrong type of article	1	*e*	1
Wrong number and gender	2	Wrong gender singular	2
Wrong gender	3	Correct gender singular	3
Wrong form	4	Wrong gender plural	4
Correct article	4	Correct article	5
Indefinite article		*Plural noun*	
Any form	1	Singular	0
Correct gender	2	Any change	1
Correct article	3	Opposite gender ending, singular	2

Table I.3 *Scoring system in researcher administered tasks: task 1. A3 and B3*

Task - Error type	Points	Task - Error type	Points
Gender	1	Omission	0
Definite article		*Preposition + article*	
e	1	Any form	1
Wrong form/number/type of article	2	Correct gender of article	2
Wrong gender	3	Any preposition + article	3
Correct article	4	Correct gender of preposition + article	4
Indefinite article		Correct preposition + article	5
Wrong gender	1		
Correct	2		

Task 2 (A3 and B3)

A 5 error penalty was given if the subject failed to answer a question. Penalties were added to the number of errors made by each subject. The score was calculated by means of the following formula:

Score = Total Penalties /Word output x 100

The maximum error ratio (441.66%) was then scored as 0. The lowest error ratio was fixed at 0% and given a score of 100. The remaining scores were then calculated as follows:
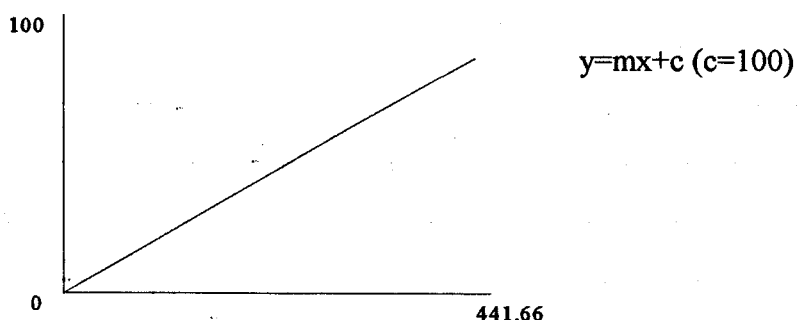
$m = y/x = 100/441.66 = - 0.226$

Score $= (- 0.226$ x error ratio$) + 100 = 100 - (0.226$ x error ratio$)$

Appendix J. Reading ages, scores in motivation questionnaire and aptitude tests

A1	Reading age	Motivation	Verbal memory	Verbal memory	Number	Intonation	Grammar	Total aptitude
1. AM pb	8.0	35	5	8	13	4	9	39
2. BA	11.6	25	8	9	14	5	4	40
3. BJ b	14.4	32	12	7	15	8	4	46
4. BL p	9.0	22	0	4	13	4	0	21
5. CF	15.8	37	12	6	16	3	9	46
6. DF p	5.8	32	9	1	8	4	4	26
7. DM	13.6	35	9	4	9	1	8	31
8. EE pb	12.0	36	11	8	14	4	6	43
9. ER	14.8	32	13	13	16	5	7	54
10. HG p	10.0	18	0	4	11	1	6	22
11. HZ b	10.6	38	6	6	17	4	6	39
12. KL	13.6	36	3	5	13	5	8	34
13. KR	13.0	34	10	5	7	2	9	33
14. LL p	13.6	34	8	5	13	6	0	32
15. MC b	15.0	33	1	0	18	4	6	29
16. MD p	9.0	30	3	6	12	4	8	33
17. MV p	13.6	39	0	5	13	6	0	24
18. PS b	12.6	24	9	5	7	4	8	33
19. RR p	14.4	38	14	11	11	3	7	46
22. SL p	12.0	34	9	9	14	3	8	43
21. SS	9.6	36	16	9	12	5	7	49
23. TC	11.8	32	14	6	12	3	9	44
24. VN pb	12.0	33	16	7	12	3	9	47
25. WE	9.6	36	8	2	13	4	5	32
27. YT p	7.4	40	9	4	10	4	0	27
26. YW pb	11.8	32	11	5	11	7	7	41

B1	Reading age	Motivation	Verbal memory	Verbal memory	Number	Intonation	Grammar	Total aptitude
1. CL p	--	37	14	10	11	3	3	38
2. CM	11.5	38	16	12	14	6	9	57
3. DA p	10.3	37	14	12	18	5	6	57
4. FA	11.6	27	16	9	16	7	4	52
5. FL p	11.5	29	10	8	15	3	8	44
6. HM p	12.6	39	13	5	14	7	6	55
7. HT	12.6	32	9	8	16	4	9	46
8. LJ p	10.1	35	10	6	13	3	4	38
9. MA p	12.6	32	13	6	17	3	4	43
10. ML	12.6	37	14	16	18	4	9	61
11. MP	10.6	27	12	7	13	5	9	46
12. MW p	11.6	36	8	7	18	4	5	42
13. NF p	11.0	34	16	16	19	5	8	64
14. OT	12.6	33	10	10	9	3	6	38
15. PJ p	11.6	33	11	5	11	1	7	35
16. QS p	12.6	39	14	14	18	4	10	60
17. QT p	10.7	35	5	8	15	25	5	35
18. SA	12.6	28	5	4	12	5	4	30
19. TD p	10.11	40	13	8	18	4	7	50

A1 - B1	Motivation	Verbal memory	Verbal memory	Number	Intonation	Grammar	Total aptitude
Maximum score	44	16	16	20	8	11	71

A3	Reading age	Motivation Max. 44	Aptitude Max. 62
1. AV	14.4	33	41
2. BN c	11.8	37	60
3. CD b	6.8	29	21
4. GC	15.8	31	39
5. JC bcp	--	39	38
6. ME	14.8	30	27
7. MH cp	12.6	25	56
8. MI	11.8	30	48
9. NJ cp	15.4	37	60
10. NL bcp	9.0	37	56
11. NS	10.6	31	24
12. PU bc	11.4	36	45
13. RL	14.4	37	30
15. SM c	13.6	39	51
14. SN c	15.4	31	19

B3	Reading age	Motivation Max. 44	Aptitude Max. 62
1. AJ b	12.0	33	52
2. AS bp	12.6	38	49
3. BM p	12.1	35	62
4. CP	--	37	56
5. DE	12.6	35	54
6. DL p	--	31	46
7. FP p	12.6	30	38
8. FR p	--	24	44
9. GA p	12.6	20	45
10. GR	10.2	29	26
11. HK	12.6	28	41
12. HS b	--	32	57
13. KG	10.10	34	48
14. MM p	12.6	35	62
15. MS b	11.5	33	56
16. MU	12.6	37	42
17. QM p	12.6	32	40
18. RT	11.2	33	43
19. TN	12.6	33	61
20. TY b	--	28	45
21. WK	12.6	28	54
22. WT p	12.6	33	61
23. YR b	--	35	40

Key   b = bilingual
         c = continuative teaching of Italian
         p = parents' questionnaire was returned

Appendix K. Elicitation tasks scores

A1	Definite article	Indefinite article	Gender	Plural definite article	Gender plural	Plural noun
1. AM bp	0	0	0	36	4	5
2. BA	0	0	0	14	3	14
3. BJ b	0	10	2	36	4	32
4. BL p	0	0	0	22	4	0
5. CF	0	10	0	35	5	0
6. DF p	34	10	8	0	0	16
7. DM	0	0	0	36	4	0
9. EE bp	0	7	1	0	0	0
8. ER	0	4	0	40	8	64
11. HG p	15	4	4	0	0	0
10. HZ b	5	6	3	8	0	0
13. KL	0	0	0	33	4	0
12. KR	5	8	3	30	3	3
14. LL p	41	8	8	36	4	2
15. MC b	0	5	1	40	8	55
16. MD p	16	8	6	20	4	8
17. MV p	25	10	4	4	1	2
18. PS b	0	10	2	27	3	5
19. RR p	0	0	0	36	4	5
20. SC	0	3	1	20	4	4
21. SL p	0	0	0	36	4	1
22. SS	26	10	6	40	8	61
23. TC	0	3	1	17	3	0
24. VN bp	38	10	11	30	6	27
25. WE	18	4	3	20	4	5
26. YW bp	0	10	2	28	2	3
27. YT p	0	0	0	7	0	0

B1	Definite article	Indefinite article	Gender	Plural definite article	Gender plural	Plural noun
1. CM	46	10	7	22	4	0
2. CL p	38	10	12	19	3	59
3. DA p	34	8	7	15	1	31
4. FL p	25	10	6	40	8	62
5. FA	46	10	12	40	8	56
6. HM p	27	11	9	36	4	50
7. HT	47	7	11	40	8	64
8. LJ p	41	10	9	15	3	20
9. ML	50	12	14	40	8	60
10. MP	41	5	10	40	8	14
11. MW p	33	10	6	21	7	30
12. MA p	38	10	7	38	8	0
13. NF p	5	8	3	40	8	34
14. OT p	0	0	0	35	7	40
15. PJ p	46	10	12	40	8	24
16. QS p	46	12	2	23	5	0
17. QT p	0	10	14	24	4	1
18. SA	48	12	14	32	4	64
19. TD p	38	10	7	24	8	64

A1 - B1	Definite article	Indefinite article	Gender	Plural definite article	Gender plural	Plural noun
Maximum score	50	20	14	40	8	64

A3	Definite article	Indefinite article	Preposition + article	Gender	Holiday topic
1. AV	24	11	49	20	85
2. BN c	19	12	57	19	88
3. CD b	19	11	45	14	81
4. GC	17	6	43	10	75
5. JC bcp	22	12	31	15	93
6. MH cp	23	12	53	22	60
7. ME	24	11	34	19	58
8. MI	24	12	57	24	74
9. NS	21	12	45	18	82
10. NJ cp	24	12	36	23	88
11. NL bcp	20	12	43	21	92
12. PU bc	22	12	36	21	74
13. RL	24	12	47	22	66
14. SN c	7	3	5	2	75
15. SM c	24	12	35	23	85

B3	Definite article	Indefinite article	Preposition + article	Gender	Holiday topic
1. AS bp	23	12	53	22	46
2. AJ b	23	11	56	20	45
3. BM p	24	12	57	24	59
4. CP	22	12	55	23	5
5. DE	24	12	53	23	1
6. DL p	24	12	45	23	46
7. FP p	23	11	54	20	39
8. FR p	12	0	56	9	40
9. GA p	21	8	54	17	0
10. GR	22	5	56	16	16
11. HK	21	9	51	16	3
12. HS b	23	9	46	19	3
13. KG	24	11	57	23	48
14. MS b	24	12	57	24	51
15. MM p	22	11	56	21	29
16. MU	21	10	58	20	31
17. QM p	24	10	57	22	56
18. RT	0	0	56	11	5
19. TY b	21	9	53	16	18
20. TN	24	12	56	24	56
21. WK	23	10	57	20	45
22. WT p	24	11	59	23	56
23. YR b	21	9	0	6	17

A3 - B3	Definite article	Indefinite article	Preposition + article	Gender	Holiday topic
Maximum score	48	12	60	24	100

Key   b = bilingual   c = continuative teaching of Italian   p = parents' questionnaire was returned

Appendix L. Errors in elicitation task2: A3 and B3

Table L.1 *Omission errors (A3)*

Error	Correct form	Error	Correct form
Article		*Verb and preposition*	
*5 luglio	il 5 luglio	*Piscina e	È andata in piscina e in
*museo	il museo	spiaggia	spiaggia
*castello	il castello	*Gelateria	È andata in gelateria
*sole	il sole	*Discoteca	È andata in discoteca
*duomo	il duomo	*Preposition and article*	
*passeggiata	una passeggiata		
*galleria	la galleria	*ufficio	all'ufficio
		informazione[1]	informazioni
Verb and preposition + article		*Verb*	
*Mare	È andata al mare	*Il duomo	Ha visitato il duomo
*Vestiti	Ha comprato dei vestiti	*Il castello	Ha visitato il castello
		*Il negozio	Ha visitato il negozio
Preposition		*Trenta[2]	C'erano trenta gradi
		*Il sole	C'era il sole
*automobile	in automobile	*In spiaggia	È andata in spiaggia
*campeggio	in campeggio	*Il mercato	È andata al mercato
*ballare	a ballare	*Negozi e vestiti	Ha visto negozi e vestiti
Auxiliary verb		*Gelato e	Ha mangiato il gelato
		spaghetti	
		*La discoteca	È andata in discoteca
*andata	È andata	*La spiaggia[3]	È andata in spiaggia
*visitato	Ha visitato	*Il/un gelato	Ha mangiato il/un gelato
*andato[4]	È andata	*In discoteca	È andata in discoteca

Table L.2 *Wrong constituent errors (A3)*

Error	Correct form	Error	Correct form
Article for preposition		*Article for preposition + article*	
*i campeggio	in campeggio	*l'ufficio infomazione	all'ufficio
*il automobile	in automobile		informazioni
*il campeggio	in campeggio	*il mercato	al mercato
*la spiaggia	in spiaggia	*Il mercato[6]	È andata al mercato
*un automobile	in automobile	*i vestiti	dei vestiti
*La discoteca	È andata in discoteca	*la duomo	al duomo
*La spiaggia[5]	È andata in spiaggia	*la campeggio	al campeggio
		*la mercato[7]	al mercato
Preposition + article for article		*Preposition for preposition + article*	
*al 5 luglio	il 5 luglio	*a mercato	al mercato

Table L.3 *Other errors (A3)*

Error	Correct form	Error	Correct form
Present for past tense		*Gender*	
*Mangia	Ha mangiato	*La duomo	Il/Al duomo
*Fa	Ha fatto	*La campeggio	Il/Al campeggio
*È	Era	*La mercato[8]	Il/Al mercato
Past perfect tense		*ia gelato	il gelato
		*il discoteca	la discoteca
		*il automobile	l'automobile
*Ha fatto mangiare	Ha mangiato	*Ha alloggiata	Ha alloggiato
*Ha fatto andare	È andata	*Andato[9]	È andata
Auxiliary		*Imperative for past tense*	
*Ha	È	*Visitate	Ha visitato
Past participle		*Number*	
*Peda	Ha preso	*i discoteca	la discoteca
*Andare	È andata	*i duomo	il duomo
*Fare	Ha fatto	*i castello	il castello
*Visitare	Ha visitato	*i campeggio	il campeggio
*Ballare	Ha ballato	*Redundant article*	
*Visiti	Ha visitato		
Preposition		*in una macchina in macchina	
*a piscina	in piscina	*Preposition + article*	
*a discoteca	in discoteca		
		*Di abbigliamento	dell'abbigliamento

Table L.4 *Omission errors (B3)*

Error	Correct form	Error	Correct form
Article		*Verb and preposition*	
*gelato *5 luglio	un/il gelato il 5 luglio	*Discoteca *Spiaggia	Va in discoteca Va in spiaggia
Verb and preposition + article		*Preposition and article*	
*Monumenti	Visita dei monumenti	*vesititi *monumenti *ufficio informazioni	dei vestiti dei monumenti all'ufficio informazioni
Prepostition + article and noun		*Verb*	
*informazioni	all'ufficio informazioni		
Verb and noun		*Il castello *Il gelato *Il museo	Visita il castello Mangia il gelato Visita il museo
*30	Ci sono 30 gradi		
Preposition		*Verb and article*	
*automobile *spiaggia *campeggio *discoteca	in automobile in spiaggia in campeggio in discoteca	*Gelato *Sole *Monumento *Castello	Mangia il gelato C'è il sole Visita un monumento Visita un/il castello

Table L.5 *Other errors (B3)*

Error	Correct form	Error	Correct form
Article for preposition and omission of verb		*Article for preposition + article*	
*La discoteca	Va in discoteca	*L' ufficio informazioni *Il mercato	All'ufficio informazioni Va al mercato

Notes to Appendix L

1. This one-word sentence also contains a spelling error *informazione* for *informazioni* which has been classified as an input error.

2. This one-word sentence also lacks the noun *gradi*.

3. In the last two items an article is used instead of a preposition.

4. The verb ending is in the wrong gender, it should be feminine.

5. The last two are one-word sentences, so they also contain a verb omission error.

6. This is another one-word sentence, so it also contains a verb omission error.

7. The last three items also contain a gender error.

8. The latter three items also contain a wrong constituent error.

9. The auxiliary verb is omitted.

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