

ON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND LANGUAGE
LEARNING:
A Field Study at the Schools of Basra

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Abstract

Traditionally, it was believed that language acquisition and language learning were two different processes, but this study hypothesizes that they are more or less similar at certain age stages, depending on language universals and universal linguistics. The advocates of the former point of view are those like Krashen, Wilkins, Schutz, and Asher, who distinguish between language acquisition and language learning. They state that language acquisition requires natural communication in which speakers are concerned with the messages they are conveying and understanding, not with the form of what they produce. Whereas language learning concentrates on form rather than communication.

Depending on language universals and Chomsky's Universal Grammar, the researcher has chosen a number of different private primary schools, at Basra, teaching English at early stages, and examined the accomplishments of the pupils both in English and Arabic. The results have shown that the learning accomplishments of the pupils in English are more or less similar to those of acquiring Standard Arabic which is more or less the origin or cover umbrella of Basra Arabic.

Statistics have been applied to both of the English performance and the Arabic performance, and so the results have strongly supported the researcher's hypothesis.

1.0 Introduction:

It is commonly believed that the controversy amongst psycholinguists, concerning the source and methods a child acquires her/his first language, originates from the controversy amongst philosophers concerning the acquisition of language by man. Some philosophers believe that a child, since birth, owns the fundamentals of knowledge, including language knowledge, of course, and the role of the environment is very limited in exploring those fundamentals. These are the advocates of language universals and universal linguistics. Chomsky (Allen & Buren 135) illustrates the concept of this trend as follows:

rationalist speculation has assumed that the general form of a system of knowledge is fixed in advance as a disposition of the mind, and the function of experience is to cause this general schematic structure to be realized and more fully differentiated.

Other philosophers suppose that the acquisition of knowledge comes as a result of the environment of the child, whose brain, before that, is just like a white sheet and every thing would be printed on it from the environment. This doctrine is called "empiricism" or behaviorism (Lyons 113).

Psycholinguists differentiate between these two concepts, but under different names, such as "nativism", i.e. mentalism, and "environmentalism", i.e. behaviourism (Wallwork 5-6; Gas & Selinker 90).

This paper hypothesizes that language learning has a lot to do with language acquisition pending that the teaching and learning conditions are reasonably efficient, and the acquisition criteria (viz., time, place and human resources) are sufficiently available. Secondly, one has to make a compromise between the methods and approaches of teaching/learning according to the teaching and learning situation (in our case, it seems more successful to be much more eclectic than sticking to one method, only), although the researcher tends, elsewhere, to be much more on the side of the mentalist's views rather than those of the eclecticists'. This is because most of the recent approaches in language teaching and learning (viz. The communicative approach, the natural approach and the interactive method) depend, in large, on the mentalists' views rather than the behaviorists', which are limited, to some extent, to drills, repetitions and exercises (90).

2.0 Behaviourism:

2.1 The Concept of Behaviorism:

The behaviourists argue that there is no theory of language learning; instead, they believe in the application of the general principles of learning. For them a language is a skill or a set of skills. Learning a language is said to be more like learning to ride a bicycle which is, according to them, conditioned by the surrounding environment (Wilkins: Linguistics 164; Gas & Selinker 92). "As long as individuals are subjected to the same conditions, they will learn in the same way" (Wilkins 162). Variation in language learning is the result of different learning experiences (162).

Naturally, at the age of about eighteen months, infants are in a state of readiness to acquire language, but it may

happen that extraordinary circumstances may hinder this ability as in the following case:

Geine a Californian teenager who from the age of twenty months had been confined to one small room, and had been physically punished by her father if she made any sounds.

Obviously, she was totally without speech when she was found (Yule 171; Aitchison 150).

A child is also able to acquire more than one language depending on the external environment, so for example, if a child is brought up in a bilingual environment, then s/he will acquire the two languages of that environment simultaneously (Wilkins: Second Language Learning 127).

2.2 Arguments for Behaviourism:

Out of the study of the literature of behaviourism, one can put down some facts indicating the behaviourists' views:

1- The behaviourists emphasize the notion of stimulus-response, i.e. each utterance is produced as a response to the existence of a certain stimulus. A stimulus can either be 'verbal', or 'internal', like, "I would like a glass of water". Such an utterance represents a response to the internal stimulus which is 'thirst' (Wilkins: Linguistics 162).

2- Reinforcement and Repetitions: Any utterance by a child has to be reinforced, whether by her/him teacher or parents. An utterance which is not reinforced will not be learned. Thus a child will learn the correct utterances and neglect the incorrect ones (162). "A person is often reinforced when s/he behaves as others are behaving because conditions are then favourable for reinforcement" (Skinner 208).

The idea of repetition seems quite reasonable to the behaviourists; for an utterance which is repeated twenty times is better learned than that which is repeated ten times, but what is important is reinforcement, otherwise, learning will be extinguished (Wilkins: Linguistics 162).

3- Generalization and Analogy:

It happens that a child, when learning some knowledge or rules of her/his own language tries to generalize those rules, for example, having learned that the past tense of 'fill' is 'filled', she/he may overgeneralize and apply it to 'sell', and produce the form *'selled'. "The ability to make analogies is taken as given by behaviourists and it applies to non-linguistic forms of behaviour too" (163).

2.3 Behaviourism in Language Teaching and Language Learning:

Behaviourism can offer some help in language teaching and language learning, especially the spoken form of the language. For example, a teacher would apply the idea of repetition. The learner may repeat the new items in addition to the items already given. This notion corresponds to the idea of cyclic syllabuses (c.f. Corder, 1973). Through practice, the learner will learn more quickly as drills represent practice in addition to exercises which are considered as forms of tests. Moreover, immediate reinforcement can highly be employed in the drilling of a laboratory. Each pupil is able to hear a stimulus-response reinforcement. Since a pupil can work individually, then each one can judge or evaluate her/his performance and provide her/his own reinforcement. Analogy, on the other hand, is applicable here, too. This can be done by the arrangement of drills repetition so that the pupil can arrange

her/his responses in the same way. Each stimulus has its own response (Wilkins: Linguistics 166).

From what has been mentioned above, behaviourism emphasizes the form of language structure rather than meaning. One of the arguments raised against behaviourism is: How the pupil acquires meaning?

The behaviourists' answer is, since each stimulus has its response, then the child will learn meaning adequately through use; but if we look at language closely, we find that language is more than this sort of relationship in its natural use. The pupil might succeed in mastering the forms of language by the devices advocated by the behaviourists, but s/he can hardly learn to respond to stimuli in an acceptable way. The stimulus-response relationship is relevant to meaning only in the form of the capacity of specifying the stimulus before uttering anything which is, in reality, completely impossible (168).

Finally, we can say that behaviourism and the audiolingual method of teaching English has their defect in their little focus on meaning, or language for communication. Therefore, more attention should be paid to meaning in curricula and text-book designing, which have to be planned carefully and not be taught according to the stimulus-response relation. Yes, we can use questions and answers (as a non-technical term for stimulus-response relations) to help use language for communication, but not just for parroting.

3. Mentalism:

3.1 The Concept of Mentalism:

The mentalists suggest that a child is born not only with the capacity of acquiring a language, but also with a special capacity to invent it when necessary. If two children

were put together with no contact with society, they would be able to invent a linguistic means of communication of their own (Bolinger 274).

This view, however, is not the opinion of all mentalists; most of them, namely those who are called 'nativists' agree with the idea that producing and using language exists in children since birth and that the child inherits some grammatical patterns according to which s/he shapes her/his own language (270).

Aitchison (126) mentions that Chomsky elaborates that a child has also the unconscious "knowledge" of the deep and surface structure for each sentence, and it is this knowledge which makes her/him unconsciously aware of the abstract deep structure of the language, and that "children, somehow, know universal constraints on linguistic rules" (126). But it should be understood that the 'innatists'- those who believe in innateness- advocate that language acquisition takes place without any linguistic stimulation (126).

Kess (54) states that linguistic stimuli only provide the raw material upon which children organize certain principles which can normally operate in language acquisition.

3.2 Arguments for Mentalism:

Throughout the description of the theory of mentalism, one can infer some facts which indicate their views:

1- There is a little difference in language acquisition between "ignored" children and those who find some people who talk to them (say parents) (Liles 270).

Children acquire language in approximate rates in spite of the fact that linguistic situations differ "radically" from one child to another, and it should not be forgotten that language is acquired by almost every individual in the world

except in the most extreme cases (270), when language acquisition occurs with less influence of cultural circumstances so that "psycholinguistics deals with it if it were clearly separable from sociolinguistics" (Raffler-Engel 321).

2- A child through exposure to language tries to build up hypotheses about the structure of that language. These hypotheses are checked through her/his production of language. Whenever "s/he finds that these hypotheses do not suit the data, s/he modifies her/his hypotheses and checks them again" (Wilkins: Linguistics 169).

3- Stages of acquisition and development are arranged and are relatively clear-cut in every child. Progress from one stage to another may not need any practice, especially in the early stages (Bolinger 276).

4- The ability of vocalizing exists in early childhood even in deaf children. This vocalization is possible for children of deaf parents. Moreover, many diseases which are able to affect acquiring some mental skills do not affect or even delay language acquisition (276).

3.3 Mentalism in Language Teaching and Learning:

Basically, we cannot separate language teaching and language learning from linguistics in general or even a theory of language. Any teacher ought to know about language for s/he cannot get information or facts without a theory. If we apply the above mentioned theory (i.e. mentalism) to language teaching, we can say that the mentalists refuse the idea advocated by the behaviourists which claims that learning is conditioned by external factors, or environment. Reinforcement is rejected, too, since learning will take place whether with or without reinforcement (Wilkins: Linguistics 172).

The mentalist emphasize the "adequate exposure" to the target language. A learner induces rules of that language by data and uses those rules to produce new samples of that language. The material of teaching ought to be samples of natural life and not limited structures (172).

Imitation has also been rejected because the mentalists urge that a child may construct correct forms of language under controlled conditions. Yet, if s/he is put in free situations, it has been discovered that s/he cannot master the rules of that language (174). Rivers (76) mentions that Chomsky was struck by the way children "rapidly internalize a highly complicated system of grammar" which enables them to produce and understand novel sentences. Chomsky believes that it is impossible for a child to acquire such a system by the process of imitation.

4.Universal Grammar (UG) and Second/Foreign Language (L2) Learning:

Cook and Newson (292-293) clarify the relationship between L2 learning, and UG, and L1 learning by stating that "L2 learners may employ the principles of UG and set the parameters without any reference to their L1 values". L2 speakers may have parallel competences in L1 and L2- which are two instantiations of UG. This is the direct access to UG, as the relationship between it and L1 learning leads to L1 competence, and the relationship between it and L2 learning leads to L2 competence.

If L2 learners have an identical access to UG as L1 children, "L2 speakers should possess the same linguistic competence as L1 adults" (293). The poverty-of-the-stimulus argument applies to L2, if L2 speakers could not

learn from the environment. Then their learning must be a property of the human mind.

The indirect access to UG takes place as L2 learning might also take the L1 instantiation of the UG steady state as a spring board and use the principles and parameters in the same way in the new language as in the first. L2 learning has access to L1 competence, which was virtually based on UG. "L2 competence will only reflect those parts of UG that are made use of in the L1. In indirect access, L2 knowledge is tied into L1 knowledge" (293). L2 learners might start from scratch like L1 learners (131), and if the two languages have the same settings, L2 learning would resemble L1 learning...(131). One can learn an L2 while the L1 acquisition is still incomplete (125).

5.The Practical Component:

Building upon the above theory the researcher hypothesizes that pupils at early stages can learn English while they are learning Arabic. Five private primary schools have been deliberately selected at the city of Basra where English and Arabic are, simultaneously, taught by the same teacher in each school. The same teaching material and text-books are used in all schools. The researcher has been following up the accomplishments of the pupils for three years (from Form 1 to Form 3). He has been visiting the schools regularly since the beginning of the academic year 2008-9, attending classes, and following up the English language, and the Arabic language teachings/learning (see Appendices 1 & 2, please).

The researcher has made an overall assessment to the whole process of learning English and Arabic throughout the three learning years, by the end of the 3rd year (nearly by Mid April 2011). For the following up

assessments he has selected the best 55 pupils from each school, but for some reasons of pupils' absence and school leaving the remaining total number has become 50 pupils in Form 3 in each of the five schools upon whom the assessments have been applied. The total number of pupils in the five schools under assessment has become 250 pupils. The assessments have been made to weigh the accomplishments of those pupils in English as a foreign/second language, and Arabic, the pupils' native language.

T-test and Anova-test have been applied, but the results have shown no significant differences between the achievements of pupils in English and Arabic. Consequently, this confirms our hypothesis that the difference between learning a foreign/second language and acquiring a native language is very minimal at the early stages of pupils' life, pending that all required conditions are met, as the statistical results show, below:

Table No.1

School No.1

Form No.3

**English performance vs. Arabic Performance, points
are out of 10**

Pupil No.	English (Points)	Arabic (Points)
1	8	7
2	9	8
3	7	8
4	7	7
5	8	7
6	8	8
7	9	9
8	8	7
9	8	8
10	7	9
11	8	8
12	7	7
13	8	9
14	9	8
15	8	8
16	7	8
17	8	8
18	9	9
19	8	8
20	8	7
21	8	9
22	9	8
23	8	9
24	8	7

25	9	8
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pupil No.	English (points)	Arabic (poits)
26	8	8
27	9	9
28	8	8
29	9	7
30	8	8
31	7	7
32	8	9
33	9	8
34	7	8
35	8	9
36	8	9
37	7	7
38	9	9
39	9	9
40	7	8
41	8	8
42	8	8
43	9	8
44	7	8
45	9	8
46	9	9
47	8	9
48	9	9
49	7	8
50	9	8

Table No.2
School No.2 Form No.3
English performance vs. Arabic Performance, points
are out of 10

Pupil No.	English (Points)	Arabic (Points)
1	7	8
2	8	9
3	8	7
4	7	7
5	9	8
6	8	8
7	8	9
8	9	8
9	7	8
10	8	7
11	9	8
12	8	7
13	9	8
14	7	9
15	9	8
16	8	7
17	8	8
18	9	9
19	9	8
20	7	8
21	9	8
22	7	9
23	9	8
24	7	8
25	8	9

Pupil No.	English (Points)	Arabic (Points)
26	8	7
27	8	8
28	8	7
29	8	8
30	8	9
31	8	8
32	8	9
33	7	8
34	8	9
35	8	7
36	7	8
37	8	7
38	9	7
39	8	9
40	7	8
41	8	8
42	9	8
43	8	9
44	9	9
45	7	8
46	9	7
47	9	8
48	7	9
49	8	8
50	9	9

Table No.3
School No.3 Form No.3
English performance vs. Arabic Performance, points
are out of 10

Pupil No.	English (points)	Arabic (points)
1	7	8
2	9	8
3	8	8
4	7	7
5	9	9
6	8	8
7	8	9
8	7	9
9	9	7
10	8	8
11	9	9
12	8	7
13	9	8
14	8	8
15	8	8
16	9	9
17	8	7
18	8	9
19	7	9
20	8	8
21	7	9
22	8	9
23	9	8
24	8	9
25	7	8

Pupil No.	English (Points)	Arabic (Points)
26	8	7
27	8	9
28	8	8
29	8	7
30	9	9
31	9	8
32	8	9
33	9	9
34	8	7
35	7	7
36	9	9
37	8	8
38	9	9
39	8	9
40	9	8
41	9	8
42	7	8
43	8	8
44	9	8
45	7	9
46	9	8
47	8	8
48	7	7
49	9	8
50	9	9

Table No.4
School No.4 Form No.3
English performance vs. Arabic Performance, points
are out of 10

Pupil No.	English (points)	Arabic (points)
1	7	8
2	9	8
3	8	7
4	7	8
5	8	9
6	9	9
7	8	9
8	7	7
9	8	8
10	8	8
11	9	8
12	8	8
13	7	8
14	9	8
15	8	8
16	8	8
17	9	8
18	8	9
19	8	9
20	9	8
21	9	9
22	9	9
23	7	9
24	9	9
25	8	9

Pupil No.	English (Points)	Arabic (Points)
26	9	8
27	8	8
28	7	7
29	7	8
30	9	8
31	8	9
32	8	9
33	8	9
34	9	8
35	7	7
36	7	9
37	7	7
38	9	8
39	9	8
40	9	8
41	7	7
42	7	9
43	9	9
44	7	8
45	8	9
46	9	8
47	9	8
48	9	8
49	9	9
50	9	9

Table No.5
School No.5 Form No.3
English performance vs. Arabic Performance, points
are out of 10

Pupil No.	English (points)	Arabic (points)
1	7	8
2	9	8
3	8	7
4	7	8
5	8	9
6	9	9
7	8	9
8	7	7
9	8	8
10	8	8
11	9	8
12	8	8
13	7	8
14	9	8
15	8	8
16	8	8
17	9	8
18	8	9
19	8	9
20	9	8
21	9	9
22	9	9
23	7	9
24	9	9
25	8	9

Pupil No.	English (Points)	Arabic (Points)
26	9	9
27	8	9
28	7	7
29	9	8
30	8	8
31	8	8
32	8	9
33	8	9
34	7	8
35	8	7
36	8	8
37	7	8
38	9	8
39	9	8
40	9	8
41	7	7
42	8	9
43	8	9
44	7	8
45	8	9
46	7	8
47	9	9
48	9	9
49	9	8
50	9	9

6.0 Results and Descriptive Statistics:

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Standard Error of Mean; mean shows no significant difference (Nd):

حساب الوسط الحسابي والانحراف المعياري والخطأ المعياري للوسط الحسابي
Nd ويلاحظ ان الأوساط الحسابية كلها متساوية/متقاربة

Variable	N	Mean	StDev	SE Mean
E1	50	8.100	0.735	0.104
A1	50	8.100	0.707	0.100
E2	50	8.060	0.740	0.105
A2	50	8.060	0.712	0.101
E3	50	8.160	0.738	0.104
A3	50	8.200	0.728	0.103
E4	50	8.160	0.817	0.116
A4	50	8.2400	0.6565	0.0928
E5	50	8.120	0.824	0.117
A5	50	8.2000	0.6999	0.0990

1) The difference between the means of the English points (E), and the Arabic points (A) for each school:

(١) اختبار الفرق بين وسطي درجات الانكليزي (E) ودرجات العربي (A) لكل مدرسة من المدارس:

Two Sample T-Test and Confidence Interval:

School No.1: No significant difference, because

$\alpha = .05$ which is $< P=1.0$

المدرسة 1 : لا توجد فروق جوهرية بين الوسطين الحسابيين وذلك لأن

$P=1.0 > \alpha = .05$

Two sample T for E1 vs A1

	N	Mean	StDev	SE Mean
E1	50	8.100	0.735	0.10
A1	50	8.100	0.707	0.10

95% CI for mu E1 – mu A1: (-0.29, 0.29)

T-Test mu E1 = mu A1 (vs not =): T= 0.00 **P=1.0** DF= 97

Two Sample T-Test and Confidence Interval:

School No.2: No significant difference, because

$\alpha = .05$ which is $< P=1.0$

المدرسة 2: لا توجد فروق جوهرية بين الواسطين للسبب أعلاه نفسه

$P=1.0 > \alpha = .05$

Two sample T for E2 vs A2

	N	Mean	StDev	SE Mean
E2	50	8.060	0.740	0.10
A2	50	8.060	0.712	0.10

95% CI for mu E2 – mu A2: (-0.29, 0.29)

T-Test mu E2 = mu A2 (vs not =): T= 0.00 **P=1.0** DF= 97

Two Sample T-Test and Confidence Interval

School No.3: No significant difference, because

$\alpha = .05$ which is $< P=1.0$

المدرسة 3: لا توجد فروق جوهرية

$P=1.0 > \alpha = .05$

Two sample T for E3 vs A3

	N	Mean	StDev	SE Mean
E3	50	8.160	0.738	0.10
A3	50	8.200	0.728	0.10

95% CI for mu E3 - mu A3: (-0.33, 0.25)

T-Test mu E3 = mu A3 (vs not =): T= -0.27 **P=0.79** DF= 97

Two Sample T-Test and Confidence Interval

School No.4: No significant difference, because

$\alpha = .05$ which is $< P=1.0$

المدرسة 4: لا توجد فروق جوهرية

$P=1.0 > \alpha = .05$

Two sample T for E4 vs A4

	N	Mean	StDev	SE Mean
E4	50	8.160	0.817	0.12
A4	50	8.240	0.657	0.093

95% CI for mu E4 – mu A4: (-0.37, 0.214)

T-Test mu E4 = mu A4 (vs not =): T= -0.54 P=0.59 DF= 93

Two Sample T-Test and Confidence Interval

School No.5: No significant difference, because

$\alpha = .05$ which is $< P = 1.0$

المدرسة 5 : لا توجد فروق جوهرية

$P = 1.0 > \alpha = .05$

Two sample T for E5 vs A5

	N	Mean	StDev	SE Mean
E5	50	8.120	0.824	0.12
A5	50	8.200	0.700	0.099

95% CI for mu E5 - mu A5: (-0.38, 0.224)

T-Test mu E5 = mu A5 (vs not =): T= -0.52 P=0.60 DF= 95

Two Sample T-Test and Confidence Interval

2) The difference between the means of (E) and (A) for all five schools is not significant:

(٢) اختبار الفرق بين متوسطي درجات الانكليزي ودرجات العربي للمدارس مجتمعة الفرق غير معنوي

Two sample T for C12 vs C13

	N	Mean	StDev	SE Mean
E	250	8.120	0.767	0.048
A	250	8.160	0.699	0.044

95% CI for mu C12 - mu C13: (-0.169, 0.089)

T-Test mu C12 = mu C13 (vs not =): T= -0.61 P=0.54 DF= 493

One-Way Analysis of Variance (Anova-Test)

3) The differences between the means of the (E) points for all five schools,

using F-test : There are no significant differences:

(٣) اختبار الفروق بين متوسطات درجات الانكليزي لكل المدارس [استخدام اختبار F

لا توجد فروق جوهرية

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	4	0.360	0.090	0.15	0.962
Error	245	146.040	0.596		
Total	249	146.400			

Individual 95% CIs For Mean

Based on Pooled StDev

Level	N	Mean	StDev	-----+-----+-----+-----
E1	50	8.1000	0.7354	(-----*-----)
E2	50	8.0600	0.7398	(-----*-----)
E3	50	8.1600	0.7384	(-----*-----)
E4	50	8.1600	0.8172	(-----*-----)
E5	50	8.1200	0.8241	(-----*-----)
				-----+-----+-----+-----
Pooled StDev =		0.7721		7.95 8.10 8.25

4)The differences between the means of the (A) points for all five schools, using F-test : There are no significant differences:

٤) اختبار الفروق بين متوسطات درجات العربي لكل المدارس لا توجد فروق جوهرية

One-Way Analysis of Variance

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	4	1.160	0.290	0.59	0.670
Error	245	120.440	0.492		
Total	249	121.600			

Individual 95% CIs For Mean

Based on Pooled StDev

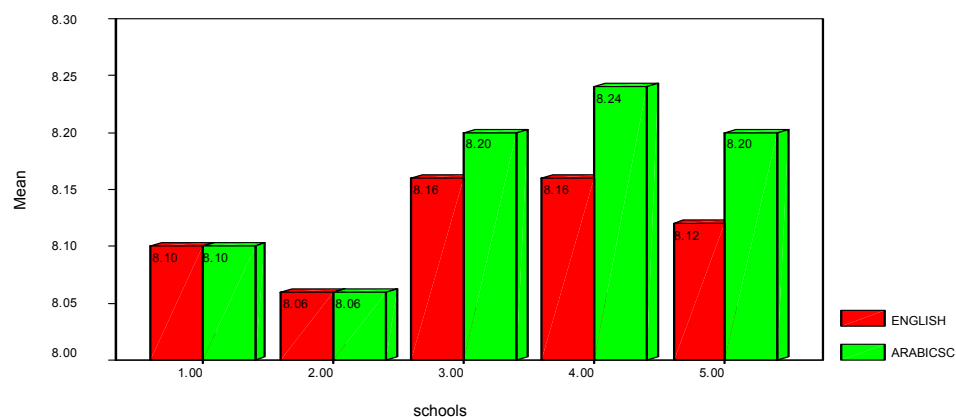
Level	N	Mean	StDev	-----+-----+-----
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A1	50	8.1000	0.7071	(-----*-----)
A2	50	8.0600	0.7117	(-----*-----)
A3	50	8.2000	0.7284	(-----*-----)
A4	50	8.2400	0.6565	(-----*-----)
A5	50	8.2000	0.6999	(-----*-----)

Pooled StDev = 0.7011

8.00 8.16 8.32

Graph



7.0 Conclusion

A good teacher should set up a compromise and make use of various theories and apply them to language teaching rather than indulging her/himself in the dispute of these theories. S/he should innovate out of these theories something useful and apply it to teaching. That is s/he should be a producer rather than a consumer (c.f. James 5-8). A teacher who teaches within a limited framework of one theory will get bored and his pupils will get bored, too. Innovation is a sort of entertainment which pupils wish for, all the time since it stimulates them towards a better understanding. A good teacher should encourage her/his pupils all the time even when they fail; s/he should apply the trial and error technique in correcting them. S/he should

make her/his pupils feel that they are not far away from the right track, and their standard is improving gradually. Such feelings will have good results.

Since we cannot have the ideal teacher, so we have to look for a reasonable model who would be imitated by her/his own pupils. This imitation is a leap towards improvement. **Improvement is a motto** which should be raised by both teachers and pupils.

8.0 Views and Suggestions

Looking at language acquisition and language learning from the point of view of the mentalists we can proceed to establish a view of language learning through and for communication. In doing so, we follow the communicative approach, which has been established and followed in teaching and learning for some years, now. But to use this approach alone seems less realistic than expected in our schools for creating the natural situation in the classroom or the laboratory in addition to the difficulties in finding efficient teachers. Hence, if we look at the literature established and developed by Wilga Rivers (1987) at Harvard University, and Claire Kramsch (1981) at the MIT, and their views on second and foreign language teaching and learning; viz., the 'Interactive Method', we will find a satisfactory answer to our search for a compromise between some methods and the mentalists' hypotheses.

Needless to elaborate upon the communicative approach in language teaching which means we use language as a tool and an aim at the same time, i.e. we can use texts, contexts and syllabi from real situations to communicate for the sake of learning. But when we apply the Interactive Method we apply a natural situation in which interaction takes place in every bit and aspect of the

process of learning in a natural way. This method can be applied in the classroom, laboratory, corridor, lobby, or on T.V. and radio programmes of language teaching and learning, or while dining, walking in the squares of the school, and inside university halls and places with everybody around us; students, teachers, assistants, other staff members and even cleaners (not necessarily to use full sentences), even to oneself on the mirror. One can use just signs and some gestures and nodding in addition to few common and understood words like (O.K., Yes!, etc.) at very preliminary stages of interaction. Just make it face-to-face interaction in a natural way, then one will succeed in her/his foreign language learning. But, here, we need to organize the stages of this process and monitor the performance; otherwise, the development will be chaotic and random. What we need here are highly qualified teachers and good teaching conditions. If these were not available, then we would have to modify our methods so as to make use of them in a reasonable manner.

One last point needs to be elaborated upon, here, that is "eclecticism". To make our teaching and learning more effective in this country (Iraq), we have to be eclectic in using the method or methods suitable for our teaching and learning situation. In fact, subjects vary from one another and so do parts of subjects. Time and place also vary, for what is suitable for teaching this year might not be suitable next year, and what is suitable for teaching in the south might not be suitable in the north. In addition, there are individual differences among teachers as well as students. Therefore, eclecticism is very important in second and foreign language teaching and learning.

Bibliography & Margins

** This is different from the natural approach developed by Krashen in which the mother tongue is used alongside the target language (in certain cases). For this, please see (Larsen-Freeman, 1986), and for the development of the theory of pragmatics and speech acts which can work for natural discourse interaction in English language teaching and learning, see (Kramsch, 1981).

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1-Appendix

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
جمهورية العراق

العهد: ١٨٠ / ٤٥١٧
التاريخ: ٢٠٠٩ / ١ / ٢٧

جامعة البصرة
عمادة كلية الآداب
الأفراد

الى / المديرية العامة للتربية / محافظة البصرة

م / تسهيل مهمة

تحية طيبة ...
يرجى التفضل بتسهيل مهمة الاستاذ المساعد الدكتور حميد مجيد الحمادي - لاجراء بعض الدراسات
الميدانية البحثية لبعض المدارس ورياض الأطفال .

مع التقدير

١ / ٢٧
فاطمة / هنا / ١ / ٢٧

نسخة منه الى /
الأفراد . التدريسين . مع الاوليات .
الصادرة

جامعة البصرة
عمادة كلية الآداب

١ / ٢٧
فاطمة / هنا / ١ / ٢٧

2-Appendix

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

المديرية العامة للتربية في محافظة البصرة
مديرية التخطيط التربوي

العدد / ٤٤٥
التاريخ / ١٩١٢ / ٩

جمهورية العراق
وزارة التربية

الى / ادارات المدارس الابتدائية ورياض الاطفال الحكومية والاهلية في المحافظة كافة
الموضوع / تسهيل مهمة

تتسبب تسهيل مهمة السيد الاستاذ المساعد الدكتور حميد مجيد الحمادي من جامعة البصرة / كلية
الاداب اثناء زيارته لمدارسكم وذلك لغرض اجراء بعض الدراسات الميدانية البحثية ... لاتخاذ ما يلزم
وتسهيل مهمته واعلامنا ... مع الشكر .

مكي محسن مهوس
المدير العام

نسخة منه الى /
مكتب معاون الفني / للعلم ... مع التقدير .
جامعة البصرة / كلية الاداب / كتابكم المرقم ١٨٠ في ٢٧ / ١ / ٢٠٠٩ ... للعلم ... مع التقدير .
مديرية الاشراف التربوي / لاتخاذ ما يلزم وتسهيل مهمة الدكتور حميد والتعاون معه .. مع التقدير .
التخطيط التربوي / مع الاوليات .

مس ٣ / ٢ / ٢٠٠٩ لم