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L2 Learners' and L2 Teachers' Stated L2 Beliefs

Zehra Ergüdenler Gabillon

Thèse de Doctorat

Langues/littératures anglaises

avec mention *très honorable*

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L2 Learners' and L2 Teachers' Stated L2 Beliefs

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Résumé de Thèse (français)

Nom du candidat : Zehra ERGUDENLER GABILLON

Directeur de thèse : Richard DUDA

Discipline : Anglais

Titre de la thèse : (anglais) L2 Learners' and L2 Teachers' Stated L2 Beliefs

Ce mémoire est une étude exploratoire des représentations d'un groupe d'étudiants universitaires, relatives à l'apprentissage de l'anglais. Dans cette étude, les apprenants sont des étudiants de DUT donc la vocation est de devenir techniciens en Réseaux et Télécoms. L'étude s'est déroulée à l'IUT de Mont de Marsan qui fait partie de l'université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour. Dans ce travail, nous nous sommes également attachés à étudier les représentations des enseignants dans le but de détecter des inadéquations entre les représentations des apprenants et celles des enseignants. Dans le but d'explorer le phénomène des représentations de différentes perspectives, nous avons utilisé diverses approches méthodologiques et théoriques. Nous avons utilisés des questionnaires (pour les étudiants et pour les enseignants), et des entretiens individuels (d'étudiants et d'enseignants). Nous avons ainsi pu rassembler des données à la fois quantitatives (issues des questionnaires) et qualitatives (issues des entretiens) que nous avons alors triangulées afin de pouvoir expliquer les données obtenues. Un des principaux résultats de cette étude fût de mettre en lumière que les représentations fondamentales des apprenants énonçaient que l'apprentissage d'une langue devait se concentrer sur la communication (compréhension et expression). Cette étude a aussi montré qu'il existait des liens entre les représentations des apprenants, leurs attentes et le type de leur motivation (intrinsèque ou extrinsèque). La plupart du temps, cette étude n'a pas montré beaucoup de différences entre les représentations et les pratiques des enseignants d'une part et les représentations et les attentes des apprenants d'autre part.

Résumé de Thèse (anglais)

Nom du candidat : Zehra ERGUDENLER GABILLON

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This study was an exploratory study which was designed to explore a group of university students' statements of their L2 beliefs. In this study the learners were the students who were studying at a two-year technical university program to become technicians. The study took place at the IUT (Institut Universitaire de Technologie) de Mont de Marsan (Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour). The researcher also attempted to explore the teachers' stated L2 beliefs to detect discordances between the teachers' and the learners' stated L2 beliefs. In order to be able to investigate the belief phenomenon from different perspectives this research study used diverse methodological approaches and theories. The researcher used both online questionnaires (teacher and learner) and individual interviews (teacher and learner) to triangulate the data obtained. One of the major findings of this research work was the learners' common belief about the importance of listening and speaking skills and communication based learning. This study also suggested links between the learners' beliefs and their goals, expectations and types of motivational orientations (intrinsic vs. extrinsic). On the whole the results did not indicate significant discrepancies between the teachers' and the learners' stated L2 beliefs.

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To my family...

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Beliefs play a critical role in education. It is commonly argued that the beliefs that learners develop and hold to be true about their capabilities and skills they possess have an immediate impact on their learning behaviors (Pajares 2001; Wenden 1995). Pajares and Schunk (2002) suggested that research should focus on students' beliefs in order to understand why students choose to do certain activities and avoid others, and why they achieve and why they fail to achieve. Zeldin and Pajares (2000) asserted that learners who believe that they do not have the required skills will not engage in tasks in which those skills are required and these beliefs about their competencies will affect "the choices they make, the effort they put forth, their inclinations to persist at certain tasks, and their resiliency in the face of failure." (Zeldin & Pajares 2000: 215). Learners who believe that language learning requires a special ability, which they lack, would naturally not be motivated towards learning a foreign language. Second language learning (SLL) and foreign language learning (FLL) research has demonstrated that learners are motivated to learn what they perceive as significant for them. Learners from different social, educational backgrounds and with different expectations, interests, and goals might possess different beliefs about the purpose of learning a particular second/foreign language. Thus, subscription to any of these core-beliefs would directly influence learners' expectations from learning a particular foreign language and the importance they give to learning different language skills/components. Thus, learners will assess the value and significance of the language activities used in their classrooms

as regards the core-beliefs linked to their aims of learning that particular L2¹. Riley (1997) maintained that although some SLL/ FLL specialists may consider some of these beliefs ‘wrong’, they are still meaningful because they reflect the ‘subjective reality’ from the learners’ point of view (Riley 1997).

However, psychological and neurophysiological research has shown that individuals’ statements of their beliefs are not (at least not always) the exact reflection of what they really experience, think or believe (Channouf 2004). According to LeDoux (2003) who individuals are is mostly based on memories learned through personal experiences including both conscious (or explicit) memories and unconscious (or implicit) memories. LeDoux (2000, 2003) also insists on the influence of emotional memories on individuals’ descriptions of events/their experiences. This view is also shared by some psychologists and neurophysiologists (e.g. Channouf 2004; Damasio 1995).

Festinger and Carlsmith (1959) emphasized another dimension of beliefs. According to cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger 1957 cited in Festinger & Carlsmith 1959), there is tendency for individuals to seek consistency among their cognitions (i.e. beliefs, opinions, attitudes). When there is an inconsistency between beliefs and behavior (when there is a dissonance-- discord between behavior and belief), the individual feels that s/he needs to eliminate the dissonance (Festinger & Carlsmith 1959). Thus, in case of a discrepancy between beliefs and behavior it is assumed that the belief changes to accommodate (to accord with) the behavior (or vice versa). This explains the dynamic aspect of beliefs, and/or the tension between beliefs and/or

¹ L2: Foreign or second language (in this study L2 represents English as a foreign language)

discordances² between beliefs individuals hold, and it also explains the ever-changing aspect of beliefs. Most importantly, the theory explains individuals' search for consonance (concordance) with what they believe and what they do (Brehm & Wicklund 1976).

The interest in beliefs about second/foreign language learning began in the 1980s and gained impetus starting from the late 1990s. Interest in language learners' beliefs can be attributed to the research done in cognitive psychology. With the influence of research in cognitive psychology, SLL/FLL paradigms shifted from 'the teacher and teaching' to 'the learner and learning'. Hence, SLL/FLL researchers and specialists began to show interest in 'what's going on in the L2 learner's mind' and 'how these processes might contribute to the L2 learner's learning'. Primarily, it was within this cognitive psychological framework that the L2 learner's beliefs were perceived to be significant and worthy of investigating (see Sections 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5).

With the influence of research in educational psychology, research into teachers' beliefs and teachers' pedagogical knowledge has also gained significance in SLL/FLL (e.g. see Borg 1998a, 1998b, 1998c, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 2001, 2003a, 2003b; Brown 1990; Chacón 2005, M. Ellis 2006; Freeman 2002; Gatbonton 2000; Kennedy, C. & Kennedy, J. 1996; Levine 2003; Todd 2006). There is now substantial evidence to claim that what teachers believe and do affect what happens in the classroom and consequently what students learn. Williams and Burden (1997) asserted that teachers' beliefs about learning and teaching, whether explicit or implicit, would affect

² Throughout this dissertation the term discordance will be used to refer to disagreement between teacher and learner perspectives (e.g. stated beliefs) and disagreement between stated beliefs within teachers and learners.

everything that they do in their classrooms (see Sections 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12).

Milner (2005) stated that teachers' beliefs are not always concordant with the experiences and beliefs of their learners and this causes gaps (discord) between teachers' and students' learning/teaching agendas, which inevitably influence students' learning negatively. Empirical studies done in educational psychology provide us with wealth of evidence demonstrating existence of gaps between teacher and learner perspectives, and how these gaps impact negatively on learning/teaching environments (e.g. Entwistle 1987, 2003; Entwistle *et al.* 2002; Prosser & Trigwell 1999). Similarly, SLL/FLL literature also provides us with an abundance of anecdotal, experiential and empirical evidence on the existence of differences between learner and teacher beliefs (e.g. approaches to learning vs. approaches to teaching; perceptions of learning vs. perceptions of teaching; styles of learning vs. styles of teaching; and learner vs. teacher agendas and so forth) (see Sections 2.14, 2.15). The research findings on discordances between learner and teacher perspectives and the negative effects these have on educational instruction have led educationalists to search answers to the problem. Regarding the issue, educationalists suggest that: a) both teachers' and learners' opinions should be consulted and their beliefs should be explored; b) both teachers' and learners' beliefs should be considered in educational planning; c) both teachers' and learners' dysfunctional beliefs should be mediated through training.

The belief construct involves a multitude of complex and interacting agents. Understanding this complexity, regarding learners' and teachers' beliefs, necessitates going beyond mainstream L2 teaching/learning theories. Pedagogical implications drawn from recent research studies on student learning (research done in educational

psychology), SLL/FLL and SLA all indicate invaluable advantages of consulting learner/teacher beliefs in order to be able to enhance student learning (see Sections 2.11, 2.27.2, 2.27.4, 2.29). Recent theories in psychology have also been supportive of the significant influence beliefs have on individuals' attitudes, motivations and consequently on their actions (see Sections 2.20, 2.21, 2.22, 2.23). Many theories of learning, especially the ones which emerged from conceptual frameworks for the study of: *human cognition* (e.g. Flavell's metacognitive theory--see Flavell, 1979); *social representations* (e.g. Moscovici's social representations theory--see Moscovici 1976, Moscovici & Duveen 2000); *expectancy-value model of attitude and behavior theories* (e.g. Fishbein and Ajzen's theory of reasoned action-- see Fishbein and Ajzen 1975; and Ajzen's theory of planned behavior --see Ajzen 1991); *attitudes and motivation* (e.g. Socio-educational model of Gardner & Lambert--see Gardner & Lambert 1972); *expectancy-value model of attributional theories* (e.g. Weiner's attributional theory of achievement motivation--see Weiner 1986); self-referent beliefs such as self concept, self perception, and self efficacy (Bandura's socio-cognitive theory, self-efficacy theory--see Bandura 1986, 1997, 2006a, 2006b; Pajares & Schunk 2002) all utilized beliefs to comprehend human behavior (see Sections 2.18, 2.19, 2.20, 2.21, 2.22, 2.23).

1.2 Purpose of the study

This study is based on the premise that understanding of learner and teacher beliefs is crucial to successful planning and implementation of foreign/second language instruction (Benson & Lor 1999; Castellotti & Moore 2002; Horwitz 1988, 1999; Richards & Rodgers 2001; Riley 1997; Sakui & Gaies 1999; Savignon 2002; Wenden 1999). This study was designed to investigate learners' and the teachers' statements of their beliefs in order to be able to gain insights about the teachers' and the learners'

interpretations of the English language instruction at the IUT (Institut Universitaire de Technologie) de Mont de Marsan (Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour) and in the light of the data obtained help enhance learning conditions in this institution. In order to be able to identify different belief types and understand how different beliefs function, this research addressed the following theories of learning: social representations theory, theory of planned behavior (TpB), attribution theory, self-efficacy theory and research done on SAL (Student Approaches to Learning) (see Part 3). The study also focused on how different L2 belief types influenced learners' L2 attitudes and motivation. Finally, various principles and procedures which correspond to the recent SLA (second language acquisition) research findings (see Part 4) were consulted to interpret the learners' and the teachers' stated beliefs as regards their functionality in second/foreign language learning and teaching.

This work is based on the following assumptions:

- stated beliefs are not merely conscious cognitions and they bear some subliminal elements.
- individuals' stated beliefs are meaningful because they reveal individuals understandings and interpretations of events from their perspective.
- beliefs have impact on individuals' attitudes, motivations and consequently on their behavior;
- beliefs are context-dependent and they cannot be looked into without considering the context in which they are formed and manifested;
- beliefs should be examined as regards the individual's past and present experiences;

- beliefs are dynamic, developmental and changeable; thus, they can be influenced and mediated;
- some beliefs can be more resistant than others
- beliefs are both personal (cognitive & emotional—explicit & implicit) and social.

Conducting L2 learner belief research proved to pose some problems as regards the research methodologies used. Some SLL/FLL scholars have been highly critical of using questionnaires and quantitative means of data analysis in this area (e.g. Alanen 2003; Barcelos 2003; Benson & Lor 1999; Dufva 2003). Thus, many scholars recommend the use of various research tools and both qualitative and quantitative means of data analysis. This study used mixed-methods (various types of instruments and analysis methods) to explore different aspects of learner and teacher beliefs. That is, the study employed both questionnaires (student and teacher questionnaires) and interviews (student and teacher interviews). The researcher complemented the quantitative (questionnaire) data with qualitative interview data to triangulate and explain the results.

The study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What types of L2 beliefs do the learners' statements point to (e.g. self-referent beliefs, control-beliefs etc.)?
2. Are there differences between the learners' stated beliefs regarding their prior and present L2 experiences?
3. What relations are there between the learners' stated beliefs and their L2 attitudes, motivations, attributions?
4. Are the learners' stated beliefs functional?

5. What types of beliefs do the teachers' statements point to?
6. Are there discordances between the teachers' and the learners' stated beliefs?

The study employed five objectives from different theoretical and methodological perspectives:

1. *Exploratory*: to explore what the learners claim to have as their L2 beliefs.
2. *Comprehensive*: to understand and define the learners' stated L2.
3. *Developmental*: to explore if the learners' stated L2 beliefs indicate any change concerning their present and past learning experiences.
4. *Normative*: To evaluate if the learners' stated beliefs conform to recent SLL/FLL research (whether these stated beliefs are functional or dysfunctional).
5. *Comparative*: to see if the learners' and the teachers' stated beliefs are in concordance with each other.

1.3 Research context

The IUT campus is located in Mont de Marsan, a small French town in the south-west of France. The IUT consists of three departments: a) diplômé universitaire de technologie (DUT³) réseaux et télécommunications (R&T); DUT génie biologique (GB); and c) DUT sciences et génie des matériaux orientation bois (SGM). Like in all the other public French universities, at the IUT de Mont de Marsan English is a compulsory part of the curriculum.

³ DUT (Diplôme Universitaire de Technologie): The DUT is a two-year higher diploma course in technology at an IUT (Institut Universitaire de Technologie).

Two hundred and eight students (i.e. preliminary research $n=62+n=8$; and main research $n=119 + n=19$) and four teachers participated in the study. The participant learners in the study, except for two students, were all French and were studying to become technicians. The participant learners' average age was 21 and they had an average of 9 years of English language learning experience. The participant teachers were four female *vacataires*⁴ (part-time language teachers) who had main employments at French secondary/high schools (3 teachers) and at a French primary school (1 teacher). The teachers had language teaching experience ranging from 9 to 17 years. All of these four teachers responded to the teacher questionnaire and participated in the interviews.

1.4 Significance of the study

Prior to the main study, the researcher employed two preliminary studies: a) an exploratory learner belief study; and b) a belief study based on eight students' attributions about L2 learning. These two studies provided the researcher with some preliminary data on the learners' salient beliefs. The researcher considered the findings obtained in these two preliminary research studies when designing the main study.

The results of these two studies suggested that these learners' attitudes and orientations of motivation were directly linked with their beliefs (beliefs about goals, expectations etc.). The data obtained via these studies indicated that the majority of these learners had lower motivations and mainly extrinsic motivational orientations towards learning English. The findings illustrated that these learners expected to see

⁴ In French educational system the term *vacataire* is used to describe a temporary employee-- equivalent of either a supply (Br) or substitute teacher (USA), or a part-time lecturer (at the university).

language tasks directly linked to their goals (e.g. technical learning materials) and only very few were interested in learning English for intrinsic purposes. Another significant outcome of these studies was the participants' core belief about the importance of listening and speaking skills, which they also perceived as difficult skills to acquire. In addition to the above findings, the attributional belief study, which was based on eight learners' interviews, discovered four major attributions that had influence on these eight learners' beliefs about learning English. The learners who expressed dislike towards L2 learning attributed their dislike to lack of L2 ability and dislike for the L2. The learners who expressed like for L2 learning, on the other hand, attributed their liking to the relevance of L2 learning practices and intrinsic interest in the L2.

These findings inspired the researcher to further investigate these learners' self-reported beliefs: to explore the areas these two research studies did not cover; and to obtain additional and more in-depth information. Thus, the research instruments used in these preliminary studies were revised and the improved versions were used to obtain more detailed information about these learners' stated beliefs.

In this research study learner beliefs constituted the primary focus of attention. However, teachers' self-reported beliefs were also investigated to detect discordances between the learners' and the teachers' stated beliefs. In other words, the teachers' stated beliefs were looked into from 'the learner' and 'learning' perspective rather than from 'the teacher' and 'teaching' perspective. In this study the teachers' stated beliefs were investigated: a) to obtain the teachers' opinions about their L2 practices; b) to compare the teacher's self-reported beliefs with the learners' self-reported beliefs to detect discordances (if any); and finally; c) to see if the teachers' stated beliefs corresponded to the L2 practices suggested by recent L2 research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Part 1: L2 Learner and Teacher Beliefs

2.1 Introduction

Teaching and learning are assumed to be complex interacting systems, which are shaped by the interplay between teacher and learner beliefs and their corresponding classroom actions. Duda described this complex system as “...any language learning/teaching system is based explicitly or not on a set of assumptions or preconceptions about language and communication, teaching, learning, learners and possibly culture and society at large.” (Duda 1993: 72).

It is commonly acknowledged that the language teacher’s job does not only involve possessing the necessary competence and/or the necessary teaching skills, and/or having the necessary experience, but it also involves understanding non-linguistic aspects of teaching and learning such as, understanding the learners, their psychological needs, and their beliefs. Today learners’ are no longer viewed as ‘empty vessels’ to be filled with information (as in some methods/approaches which have considered learning as a one-way information transfer), but as individuals who have their own personal understandings of the world around them. In language classrooms humanistic approaches contributed to a shift toward the learner and his/her needs as a learner [see Section 2.27.2 for more information about humanistic approaches]. This new approach, therefore, put the learner and his/her needs in the forefront. In Carl Rogers’ humanistic movement, the self is considered the central aspect of personality (Rogers 1979). From this perspective, understanding the learner necessitates, above all, considering the learner a *whole person*, and recognizing the individual learner’s search

for personal meaning (Williams and Burden 1997). In short, understanding learners necessitates accepting the fact that learners are different, and perceive and conceptualize learning/teaching differently. This humanistic perspective in language learning led L2 specialists and teachers to search for classroom tasks and activities that appeal to learners' needs, expectations and interests.

Williams and Burden (1997) enunciated that the influence of humanistic movements does not subsume only the L2 learner but also the learning materials/methods and teaching/learning approaches used. Moreover, humanistic approaches addressed not only learners and their needs but also teachers' and their needs as professionals. This new perspective towards the learner and the teacher brought different aspects of '*personal-meaning*' construct under inquiry and examination.

However, real interest in research into beliefs (both into learner and teacher beliefs) gained ground with the development of cognitive approaches (see Section 2.27.4 for cognitive perspective]. Beliefs from cognitive viewpoint emphasize internal processes involved in the individual's belief construction. That is, cognitive approaches view beliefs mainly as products and properties of individual minds. However, this cognitive perspective does not deny the influence of environment on peoples' beliefs. Second language learning (SLL) and foreign language learning (FLL) research has shown that different learners may perceive the same setting in a variety of ways, and may prefer teaching/learning of different kinds (Dickinson 1990; Duda 1995, 2001; Narcy 1991). That is learners from different social/cultural settings (milieu) (Gardner 2001a); with different conceptions of learning and different preferred approaches to learning, (Benson & Lor 1999); with different levels of background learning (Prosser &

Trigwell 1999), may perceive the same context in different ways. In the same vein, teachers, as well as their learners, may conceptualize teaching and learning differently from each other and have their preferred approaches to teaching. Briefly stated, both teachers' and learners' beliefs are assumed to be shaped by their perceptions of and exchanges with the world around them. Thus, now it is commonly believed that like learners, teachers have their own beliefs about learning and teaching which guide them in their actions and expectations (Borg 1999c; Entwistle 2003; Freeman 2002; Williams & Burden 1997). Williams and Burden (1997) called attention to the fact that what teachers believe does not comprise ready-made facts but involves understanding and constructing personal meaning. Pajares (1992) postulated that teacher beliefs have far more greater influence on the way teachers practice their teaching than the formal knowledge they have about teaching. Many other scholars (e.g. Borg 2003a; Hall 2005; Peacock 2001a) support this view. Borg (2003a) asserted that teacher cognition (stores of beliefs, assumptions, and perceptions) play a crucial role in teachers' lives. He noted that teachers have beliefs about all aspects of their work, such as beliefs about themselves as teachers, about their students and about learning. Thus, both teachers' and learners' personal experiences--which are formed as a result of the interplay between their past/present experiences and social and contextual factors--are viewed to be central in informing their beliefs and, therefore, their conceptualization of learning and teaching. Teacher and learner beliefs, in return, are postulated to impact on teaching-learning environments and learning outcomes. Kagan (1992a), Hall (2005), and Peacock (2001a) emphasized the importance of teachers' prior beliefs. They claimed that beliefs which are acquired earlier in life tend to be fairly stable and resistant to change and. formal teacher education programs might fail to reshape such beliefs successfully. In the

same vein, Borg (2003a) claimed that unless teacher education programs consider these prior beliefs they will be less effective in shaping teachers' classroom practices.

Influenced by social psychological and sociocultural approaches the individual's beliefs have been considered to be carrying social/cultural benchmarks of the society the individual belongs to. It is presumed that beliefs, which are sometimes referred to stereotypes, cultural beliefs, representations, images, attitudes, and prejudices, are partly shaped by media, literature, and various kinds of publicly available sources of information (Beacco 2001; Castellotti 2001; Castellotti & Moore 2002; Moscovici & Duveen 2000; Zarate 1993). According to Duveen (2000) these beliefs (representations) take shape in our everyday discussions with our friends, families, colleagues and so forth. There is a growing body of research evidence indicating that teachers' and learners' beliefs are closely linked to their cultural/educational backgrounds and teaching/learning contexts (for cultural issues see Byram 1997, 1998; Byram & Planet 2000). These beliefs (representations), which are part of individuals' lives and conversations, therefore, may end up in language classrooms as part of learners' L2 belief repertoires (see Gabillon 2005; Williams & Burden 1997). Horwitz (1988) stated that many of these common (cultural) and sometimes contradictory notions about language learning may have strong influence on learners' attitudes and conceptions of language learning.

It is also postulated that teacher and learner beliefs are mutually informing and encompassing many perspectives and aspects of teaching and learning. However, despite this flow of mutual exchange, the relevant literature suggests that in some cases, serious discordances may appear between the ways teachers and learners think about teaching and learning (Entwistle 2003). Richards and Lockhart (1996) maintained that

although the aim of teaching is ‘learning’ it is never the ‘mirror image’ of teaching. They claimed that learners’ beliefs --attitudes, goals, expectations, decisions etc—, which they bring to their learning situations, influence how they approach their learning and therefore, what they learn. In some cases, teachers’ approaches to teaching and their expectations from their learners may be significantly different from their students’ L2 expectations and ways of learning. As a result, serious discordances may appear between what the teacher expects from his/her students and what learners actually do. Hence, understanding teacher and learner beliefs are considered crucial to the understanding of teaching and learning acts, and consequently enhancing learning/teaching situations (Entwistle 2003). Beliefs, which are non-linguistic outcomes of L2 learning, therefore, are considered as crucial as linguistic outcomes to the understanding of L2 learning (Gardner, MacIntyre, & Lysynchuk 1990).

2.2 Why are L2 learners’ beliefs important?

It is commonly argued that understanding language learners’ beliefs is vital in order to be able to adopt appropriate language education policies and plan and implement consistent language instruction (Benson & Lor 1999; Castellotti & Moore 2002; Horwitz 1988, 1999; Richards & Rodgers 2001; Riley 1997; Sakui & Gaies 1999; Savignon 2002; Wenden 1999). Horwitz (1988, 1999) maintained that classroom realities that contradict learners’ expectations about learning may lead to disappointment and ultimately interfere with learning. She suggested that teachers draw on research findings to enhance current instructional planning and implementation. She also added that classroom practices that take learners’ beliefs into account have the potential to change learners’ (dysfunctional/incorrect) beliefs.

The interest in beliefs about second/foreign language learning began in the 1980s and gained impetus starting from the late 1990s. Interest in language learners' beliefs can be attributed to the research done in cognitive psychology. With the influence of research in cognitive psychology, second language learning (SLL) and foreign language learning (FLL) paradigms shifted from 'the teacher and teaching' to 'the learner and learning'. Hence, SLL/FLL researchers and specialists began to show interest in 'what's going on in the L2 learner's mind' and 'how these processes might contribute to the L2 learner's learning'. Primarily, it was within this cognitive psychological framework that the L2 learner's beliefs were perceived to be significant and worthy of investigating. Nevertheless, recent studies have also shown interest in the cultural/social aspect of L2 learner beliefs. Belief research, from this perspective adopted sociocultural and/or sociocognitive approaches and viewed beliefs as both social and cognitive (personal) phenomenon (e.g. see Kalaja & Barcelos 2003). This viewpoint, therefore, added (the missing) social aspect and complemented cognitive approaches.

2.2.1 Influence of self-beliefs on L2 behaviors

It is commonly argued that the self-beliefs that learners develop and hold to be true about their capabilities and skills they possess have an immediate impact on their learning behaviors (Pajares 2001; Wenden 1995). Pajares and Schunk (2002) suggested that research should focus on students' beliefs in order to understand why students choose to do certain activities and avoid others and why they achieve and why they fail to achieve. Zeldin and Pajares (2000) asserted that learners who believe that they do not have the required skills will not engage in tasks in which those skills are required and these beliefs about their competencies will affect "the choices they make, the effort they

put forth, their inclinations to persist at certain tasks, and their resiliency in the face of failure.” (Zeldin & Pajares 2000: 215). Similarly, Wenden (1995) maintained that learners refer to their self-concept beliefs and their perception of the task demands before engaging in a learning activity. She sustained that learners choose to engage in activities when they perceive that they have sufficient competence to fulfill the task requirements. Learners who believe that language learning requires a special ability which they lack, for example: “Some people have a good ear for languages, they just pick them up, but I’m not one of them” (Riley 1997: 134); or “I’m not gifted for languages” (Riley 1989: 70), would naturally not be motivated towards learning a foreign language. Riley (1997) stated that adoption of any of these beliefs will have a direct consequence on the way learners learn. He maintained that although some SLL/FLL specialists may consider some of these beliefs ‘wrong’, they are still meaningful because they reflect the ‘subjective reality’, the ‘truth’ from the learners’ point of view (Riley 1997).

2.2.2 Influence of beliefs on L2 expectations, conceptualization of learning, and learner strategies

White (1999) asserted that language learners’ expectations which are developed prior to their experiences are also influenced and shaped by their beliefs. According to White these expectations influence how individuals react to, respond to and experience a new environment. SLL/FLL research has demonstrated that learners are motivated to learn what they perceive as significant for them. Learners from different social, educational backgrounds and with different expectations, interests, and goals might perceive language learning for different purposes. In other words, learners’ beliefs, which are formed through their experiences (prior to their L2 learning), guide them in

their conceptualizations of language learning (Gremmo 1993a) and influence the approaches they adopt to L2 learning (see Benson & Lor 1999) [see Section 2.23 for learner approaches to learning]. For instance, some learners may believe that the major aim of language learning is to produce language learners who could read and write well in an L2 (with perfect grammatical competence). Some may believe that the general aim of language learning is to be able to communicate. Some may perceive L2 learning as just another school subject to learn. Some may see learning a particular L2 instrumental in getting a job. Alternatively, some may simply expect to be able to understand the L2 well. Thus, subscription to any of these core-beliefs would directly influence learners' expectations from learning a particular foreign language and the importance they give to learning different language skills/components. Thus, learners will assess the value and significance of the language activities used in their classrooms as regards the core-belief (representations) linked to their aim of learning a particular L2. Consequently, depending on their expectations and conceptualization of L2 learning, learners will adopt strategies that they think would best serve them as tools to fulfill language-learning requirements and, therefore, will reject strategies that do not correspond to their beliefs. For instance, if they believe that languages can only be learned through translation and explanation, they will expect the language instruction to be based on translation and explanation and will reject any approach adopted by the teacher that does not correspond to this expectation. If they believe that languages are learned by memorizing and reproducing, they will adopt strategies to memorize vocabulary items and grammar rules to reproduce these whenever required (quantitative/surface approach to learning) [see Section 2.23 for quantitative/surface vs. qualitative/deep approaches to learning]. If they believe that understanding the meaning and the communication is

important, they will adopt strategies to absorb the language in its natural context (qualitative/deep approach) (Benson & Lor 1999).

In L2 literature L2 learners' approaches to learning have been mainly viewed under the rubrics of learner styles, cognitive styles (see Duda 1995, 2001; Duda and Riley 1990; Narcy 1991; Oxford 1994) and learner strategies and beliefs (see Cotterall 1999; Horwitz 1988, 1999; Sakui and Gaies 1999; Wenden 1986a, 1986b, 1987, 1995, 1998, 1999 and many more). The relevant SLA (second language acquisition) research has demonstrated that learners' beliefs about 'how best to learn a language' provide learners with the basis on which strategies to use. It is commonly believed that learner beliefs and the approaches they adopt affect learners' choices of language learning strategy use (Wenden 1998). Similarly, different SLL/FLL research studies also demonstrated that there are consistent relationships between learners' beliefs and the strategies they adopt to learning (Horwitz 1999; Sakui & Gaies 1999; Wenden 1995, 1998, 1999; White 1995; Yang 1999). Horwitz (1988) claimed that some preconceived beliefs limit the range and quality of learner strategies. Significant links between strategy use and L2 achievement were also observed in many SLL/FLL contexts (Peacock 1998). Edge (1993) argued that beliefs the learner holds about L2, L2 learning and about himself/herself as a learner can tell us if the learner is a successful one. Edge (1993) claimed that good learners, who have positive self beliefs; positive attitudes and strong motivations about learning, use various kinds of well-constructed language learning strategies. Thus learners' positive self-referent beliefs are also postulated to be influencing learners' use of effective language strategies. Yang (1999) investigated the relationship between college EFL (English as a foreign language) students' beliefs about language learning and their use of learning strategies. This study found that language

learners' self-efficacy beliefs about learning English were directly linked to the types of learning strategies they used.

Benson and Lor (1999) maintained that language teachers need not only know what beliefs learners hold about learning but they also need to know whether these beliefs are 'functional' or 'dysfunctional' in order to be able to influence learners' attitudes and behaviors. In the same vein, R. Ellis (2001) maintained that it is important to identify learners' beliefs which relate to successful learning and beliefs which have a negative impact on language learning. He suggests that these beliefs be used to develop self-awareness in learners. Holec (1999) suggested that learners' beliefs should be taken into account when introducing innovation into teaching/learning systems. He claimed that, when new language learning resources are introduced, learner training (and teacher training) needs to be integrated within the project. Thus, understanding language learners' beliefs is claimed to be vital to understanding learners and their approaches to language learning in order to be able to adopt appropriate language education policies and plan and implement consistent language instruction (Benson & Lor 1999; Castellotti & Moore 2002; Horwitz 1999; Riley 1997; Sakui & Gaies 1999; Yang 1999; Wenden 1999; Zarate *et al.* 2004).

2.2.3 Influence of beliefs on L2 attitudes, and motivation

Beliefs and attitudes are two interwoven constructs. The literature provides many examples of cases in which they are used interchangeably and/or confounded with one another (see Castellotti & Moore 2002). Attitudes are considered to be closely linked to individuals' beliefs and to be based upon their experiences. Attitude is usually regarded as a positive or negative disposition toward an object, situation, or behavior. According to Ajzen, attitude refers to the degree of the individual's favorable or

unfavorable evaluation of the behavior in question (Ajzen, 2001, 2002). Thus, it is assumed that aggregates of negative beliefs, as a rule, lead to negative attitudes and aggregates of positive beliefs lead to positive attitudes towards the behavior or object in question. According to the expectancy value models, attitude towards a behavior is determined by the accessible behavioral beliefs. It is assumed that the individual's accessible beliefs--together with the subjective values attached to these beliefs--determine the individual's general attitude toward a given behavior (see Ajzen 2001). Simply put, attitude concerns individuals' evaluation of their experience or the learning situation/outcome before they actually engage in the learning experience. Briefly, the relationship between beliefs and attitudes is causal; that is, negative beliefs, as a rule, lead to negative attitudes and positive beliefs lead to positive attitudes towards the behavior or object in question (however, it should be noted that attitude is not observable. Observable manifestation of attitude is behavior. See Section 2.20 for further information).

Research findings have demonstrated that beliefs that language learners hold about a target foreign language and its culture affect their attitudes towards that language and together with other variables play a role in their L2 motivations (Csizér & Dörnyei 2005; Gardner 2001a, 2001b; Gardner *et al.*, 2004; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). In the same vein, Castellotti and Moore (2002) claimed that social groups' shared images (representations) about other languages and learning these languages can influence learners' attitudes towards other languages and finally their interest in learning these languages. According to Andersen's nativization model social distance between the L2 learner and the L2 community is the central predictor of the degree of success of L2 learning.

L2 learners' attitudes toward the L2 speakers/community have been one of the central constituents in Gardner's motivation theory (Gardner 2001b). His research studies, especially his early works, included a part to examine the learners' beliefs about and attitudes toward members of the L2 community and the L2 itself. Gardner's socio-educational model of motivational research studies have examined L2 learner beliefs and their consequent attitudes under the following rubrics: a) *integrativeness*; and b) *attitude towards the learning situation*, c) *attitudes towards L2 speakers/community* (see Gardner, 2001a, 2001b; Gardner *et al.*, 2004; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). The model deals with the impact of societal forces like cultural beliefs, group attitudes, and familial influence on the language learning process (MacIntyre 2004). Gardner's and his associates' studies provided evidence that attitudes and their underlying beliefs are key constituents of the L2 motivation construct. In Gardner's motivational research the *integrativeness* construct reflects the L2 learner's positive beliefs and outlook on the L2 and its culture (Csizér & Dörnyei 2005). The term *integrative motivation* assumes that the learner's past experiences, family and cultural background have impact on the learner's beliefs and; therefore, on their L2 learning and L2 outcomes. It is postulated that in some extreme cases the individual may even want to integrate himself/herself into the L2 culture and become similar to the L2 speakers (see Csizér & Dörnyei 2005). Many other empirical investigations have also found statistically significant connections between positive beliefs towards the L2 culture and various aspects of L2 learning motivation (Csizér & Dörnyei 2005). Gardner and MacIntyre's (1991) empirical studies illustrated that both integrative and instrumental motivations influence the rate of L2 learning. Csizér & Dörnyei (2005) asserted that learners' expectations of an L2, in most cases, are directly linked to practical benefits such as better job prospects. Dörnyei & Kormos (2000) claimed that incentives such as traveling, making foreign friends,

understanding songs, and so forth, which go beyond pragmatic goals of getting a job or accessing university education, were not covered by this traditional *instrumental* label. They, therefore, proposed the label *incentive value* to refer to this motivational dimension. Dörnyei and Csizér (2005) used an expanded version of the instrumentality label to apply to pragmatic incentives such as perceived importance and status of a particular L2.

Gardner's model is grounded in *social milieu* (Gardner 2001a). He defined social milieu as the cultural background of the individual and his/her family, and the social dynamics of the learner's immediate social environment. Similarly, Csizér & Dörnyei (2005) defined milieu as the social influences stemming from the immediate environment; such as perceived influence from the significant others, such as parents, family and friends. Csizér & Dörnyei (2005) also noted that the common conception of milieu encompasses only the civil sphere, and does not take in educational influences such as the role and influence of the teachers. Gardner (see 2001a) described this social aspect of motivation within the *social milieu* component and used the term *cultural beliefs* to summarize the beliefs that are circulated within the milieu the individual is part of. He claimed that these cultural beliefs such as "...learning languages is very difficult, or one must have an aptitude for languages to be able to learn a second language, or that learning the language leads to a loss of identity..." (Gardner 2001a: 77) are reflected in the L2 learner and have significant influence on his/her L2 motivation and consequently L2 learning. He explained that when these background beliefs are "...conducive to learning, then learning will be facilitated. When they are detrimental, learning will be hampered." (Gardner 2001a: 75). He asserted that if the learner's culture and/or family view language learning as useful and indispensable and/or if everyone within this milieu is expected to learn more than one language or/and

if most members of the family can speak a foreign language then it will be likely for the individual to engage in successful language learning.

Csizér & Dörnyei (2005) used the term *cultural interest* to refer to appreciation of cultural products associated with the particular L2 and its community. They stated that cultural interest reflects the appreciation of cultural products, such as films, music, video, TV, magazines, books and so forth, associated with the particular L2 and conveyed by the media. They explained that, in certain L2 learning environments, although direct contact with L2 speakers is minimal, L2 learners may still know the L2 community through indirect contact with the culture; that is, through their exposure to a range of L2 cultural products and artifacts (films, songs, the Internet etc).

Another important concept, which concerns learners' beliefs, attitudes and motivation, is '*Vitality of L2 Community*'. This concept concerns the perceived importance, status, prestige and wealth of the L2 community in question (Csizér & Dörnyei 2005). This notion has been traditionally used in motivational studies that took place in multicultural L2 contexts. Recently, especially through the L2 research studies conducted by Dörnyei and his associates, the notion has been added to the L2 literature to incorporate unicultural contexts, as well (see Csizér & Dörnyei 2005; Dörnyei 1994; MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels 1998). It is assumed that if the learner perceives the status of the L2 and the L2 community important and prestigious, he will be more motivated to learn. If s/he perceives the status of the L2 inferior to his/her L1⁵, s/he will be less motivated to learn it.

⁵ L1: Mother tongue (in this study L1 represents French)

Orientation of motivation, which gives rise to people's actions, is considered to be inextricably linked with individuals' beliefs, attitudes, and goals (Oxford & Shearin 1994; Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons 1993). Ryan & Deci (2000) noted that beliefs, attitudes, and goals play an important role on the type of motivations people have. They stated that people have different amounts and different types of motivation. To define motivation, Deci & Ryan's self-determination theory (1985) offers two broad types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic (and amotivation). Both of these broad motivation types are determined by their underlying beliefs, attitudes, and goals. These two types of motivations are viewed on a continuum as self-determined intrinsic motivation, which refers to "... something which is inherently interesting and enjoyable." (Ryan & Deci 2000: 55), and controlled extrinsic motivation, which refers to doing something for its instrumental value such as to get good grades, a rise in a salary, a job and so forth. Educators have often viewed intrinsic motivation as an important phenomenon that acts as a catalyst resulting in high-quality learning. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, has been viewed as less efficient. Ryan and Deci (2000) noted that today certain forms of extrinsic motivation are considered to be dynamic and effective. Autonomous learning (learner-centeredness) is also associated with intrinsic motivation (Noels *et al.* 2001). Noels *et al.* claimed that learners' perceptions of their autonomy support feelings of intrinsic motivation; which in return sustains learners' effort at the learning task. Ryan and Deci (2000) explained that there are different types of extrinsic motivations and some do represent weak forms of motivation. They asserted that when learners' accept the value and usefulness of a task they could perform extrinsically motivated actions with an attitude of willingness. Deci and Ryan's conceptualization of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation bears similarities with Gardner's integrativeness and instrumentality concepts. Intrinsic and extrinsic constructs have also

been used in various second/foreign language research contexts (e.g. Noels, Clément, & Pelletier 2001). According to Noels *et al.* (2001) many researchers (e.g. Jakobovitz 1970; Kelly 1969; Dickinson 1995 cited in Noels *et al.* 2001), have viewed intrinsic and extrinsic orientations parallel to integrative and instrumental orientations. Noels *et al.*'s study (2001) found strong connections between integrative and intrinsic orientation. They also discovered significant links between perceived autonomy and competence, and intrinsic/integrative orientations to language learning.

2.2.4 Influence of beliefs on self-regulation and attributions

Learners' control-beliefs together with self-efficacy beliefs have also proved to play an important role in self-regulation during L2 learning process. Dörnyei and Otto (1998) in their process model of L2 motivation emphasized the importance of the belief dimension of the L2 learner motivation. They asserted that, especially during the intention formation stage (the stage in which learners evaluate task demands before engaging in a task) learners are highly influenced by their belief systems (see Dörnyei & Otto 1998). Dörnyei and Otto (1998) explained that during this intention formation stage the learner weighs the feasibility of his/her potential actions. During this stage learners assess their prior task outcomes by using the *expectancy of success* (see Section 2.20 and Section 2.21 for expectancy models) scale based on number of factors; such as self-efficacy beliefs, perceived goal difficulty, perceived anxiety, perceived L2 competence, and causal attributions about past experiences (failure and success). Dörnyei and Otto (1998) noted that, before the learner decides to act, s/he also judges the amount of control he could exert to perform the task. They asserted that the learner needs to believe that s/he has the sufficient control to exert the necessary effort before setting on an action (see also Ajzen 2001; 2002). Similarly, Ajzen (2001) explained that

according to the theory of planned behavior (TpB), individuals act in accordance with their intentions and perceptions of control over the behavior (see Ajzen's TpB in Section 2.20). Thus, the learner chooses to act or not to act on the basis of his/her outcome expectation (see also Section 2.22 and Bandura 2006a, 2006b; Pajares & Schunk 2002).

Dörnyei and Otto (1998) asserted that appraisal of one aspect of classroom learning can also be easily transferred to other aspects of classroom learning. They claimed that learners might generalize a failure in one classroom task to the whole language learning. It is assumed that learners' beliefs about their competencies affect the type of attributions they make; and the type of attributions they make affect their future outcome expectations (Ajzen 2002; Bandura 2006a, 2006b; Dörnyei & Otto 1998; Graham 2003). Dörnyei (2006) asserted that research has confirmed that failure that is ascribed to stable uncontrollable factors such as low ability hinders future achievement behavior; whereas failure that is attributed to unstable and controllable factors such as effort is less damaging in that it can be regulated. Dörnyei (2006) suggested that teaching/learning environments should work towards promoting effort attributions and prevent ability attributions as much as possible. Therefore, he suggested that in spite of hard work, if failure occurs inadequate strategy use should be emphasized. Dörnyei and Otto (1998) stated that perceived causal attributions of past successes and failures have powerful influences on the learner's future actions and expectations (see Weiner 1989 & 2000). They explained that after completion of classroom tasks learners' compare their initial expectations and the outcomes they have obtained. They explained that the learner's critical retrospections contribute to his/her internal repertoire as accumulated experiences. Graham (2003) studied an L2 learner's attitude towards learning French. The data she obtained suggested that this learner's

negative attitude towards French stemmed from low self-efficacy and a maladaptive attributional style. Graham emphasized the important role self-efficacy beliefs play on learning. She suggested that L2 learning/teaching environments should aim at constructing positive self-efficacy in language learners. William and Burden (1999) conducted a small-scale study about L2 learners' attributions of success and failure. In their study they aimed to investigate how the learners conceptualized 'doing well' when learning a foreign language and what they perceived as reasons for their successes and failures. Their research findings illustrated that many of these learners perceived external factors such as teacher approval and marks to be the major contributing factors to their successes.

2.2.5 Influence of beliefs on willingness to communicate

As an extension of motivational research recent theoretical and research studies have included the study of the L2 learners' willingness to engage in L2 communication (Dörnyei 2001). This concept, like many other concepts in motivational studies, emphasizes the significant role beliefs (especially self-efficacy beliefs) play in individuals' actions. MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1998) have attempted to conceptualize willingness to communicate (WTC) in the L2. The L2 WTC construct they conceptualized is consisted of several layers with various linguistic and psychological variables such as perceived L2 competence, integrativeness, intergroup attitudes, social situation, and experience. MacIntyre, *et al.* (1998) argued that the ultimate goal of any L2 learning situation should be to produce learners who seek out communication opportunities and who are willing to communicate in L2. Clément, Baker, and MacIntyre (2003) claimed that high perceived confidence (one's self-

efficacy belief that s/he can communicate appropriately in a given situation) and low anxiety⁶ promote willingness to communicate.

2.3 How are L2 learners' beliefs formed?

Various scholars, from different theoretical standpoints, have viewed 'how beliefs come into being' differently. To what extent beliefs are social and cultural but also mental and individual have been the major topics of debate in the social and cognitive psychological literature. The scholars taking social psychological and sociocultural standpoints claim that beliefs are constructed in a social context. They, therefore, consider it to be inconsistent (inexact) to talk about beliefs without referring to the context in which they are shaped. The scholars defending mainstream cognitivist viewpoints, on the other hand, have paid little or no attention to the context where beliefs are constructed. These scholars have considered beliefs to be *well-organized schema* (networks of connected ideas) and claimed that belief formation is an individual autonomous act and each belief bears the mark of the individual. Sociocognitive approaches viewed beliefs as being both personal and social. Their main emphasis, however, has been not on the knowledge which is acquired from the environment but rather on learners' acquired knowledge which is memorized and stored as the learners' knowledge reservoir.

Castellotti and Moore (2002) stressed the social nature of language learners' representations and claimed that these representations are constructed and shaped through interactions between groups in a society. Similarly, Gremmo (1993a) argued that the society's general vision about language learning, and the learner's educational

⁶ L2 anxiety: the term refers to fear associated to learners' actual or anticipated L2 communication.

past, and personal experiences influence the formation of learners' representations and language learning culture.

However, today, a cognitive perspective on the individuality of beliefs and sociocultural⁷ and social psychological perspectives on the social nature of beliefs are considered justifiable and complementary (see Sperber & Hirschfeld, 1999 for comparisons between cognitive and social approaches). This dual nature of beliefs (being both social and individual) is supported by most L2 researchers who based their research on sociocognitive or/and sociocultural approaches (see Alanen 2003; Dufva 2003).

2.4 Different approaches and methodologies used in L2 belief research

Substantial amount of research regarding language learners' beliefs (directly or implicitly) has been conducted in diverse SLL/FLL contexts (e.g. Alanen 2003; Barcelos 2003; Benson & Lor 1999; Castellotti 2001; Castellotti & Moore 2002; Cotteral 1995; Dufva 2003; Gardner *et al.* 2004; Horwitz 1987, 1999; Kalaja 2003; Levine 2003; Masgoret & Gardner 2003; Y. Mori 1999; Riley 1989, 1997; Sakui & Gaies 1999; Wenden 1986a, 1986b, 1995 1999; White 1999; Williams 2002; Williams, Burden, Pulet, & Maun 2004; Yang 1999, and more). Some of these studies looked for possible relationships between beliefs and L2 learners': a) expectations; b) motivational paradigms; c) readiness for autonomy; d) approaches to language learning; e) use of learning strategies (i.e. metacognitive strategies); f) attitudes towards language learning,

⁷ Sociocultural approaches, especially the ones which employ Vygotskian perspective, view beliefs as both individual and social (See Alanen, 2003; Sperber & Hirschfeld, 1999).

learning materials, learning tasks, teachers, language teaching, L2 and L2 culture, and use of L1; g) attributions; h) willingness to communicate and so forth.

Early research into language learners' beliefs and attitudes, can be traced back to the early 1970s within the motivational research studies of Gardner and his associates (for an overview see Gardner, 1979, 2001a, 2001b; Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant, & Mihic 2004; Masgoret & Gardner 2003). Gardner's research studies have looked into learner beliefs indirectly (always in association with learner attitudes) within the framework of L2 learner motivation.

Beliefs are very often associated with *self*. Interest in L2 learner, as a self, gained importance with the influence of Carl Rogers' humanistic approach [see Section 2.27.2 for humanistic approaches]. In Rogers' humanistic movement the self is considered to be the central aspect of personality. He claimed that an individual needs positive regard both from the self (positive self-concept, self-worth etc.) and from others in order for growth to take place (see Rogers 1979). In language classrooms humanistic approaches contributed to a shift toward the learner and his/her needs as a learner.

However, interest in learner thinking and learner beliefs has gained ground with the developments of cognitive psychology. As a result of the influence of cognitive psychology, language learners are today seen as active and responsible participants who learn from their own experiences, make their own choices and respond to events as they perceive them (Meskill & Rangelova 2000; Williams & Burden 1997). Gremmo and Riley (1995) claimed that both humanistic and cognitive psychology "...emphasize learning as a process resulting in extension of the range of meanings of which the individual is capable, as something learners do, rather than being done to them." (p.153). They also claimed that these two approaches (humanistic and cognitive

psychology) form the methodological basis for the communicative approach to language teaching (CLT) (the approach which is widely advocated by SLL/FLL specialists) [see Section 2.29.1 for CLT]. From this perspective, which still dominates SLL/FLL today, efficient learning could not be accomplished without understanding learners and their interpretations of their personal learning experiences (Meskill & Rangelova 2000).

Since the 1980s language learners' beliefs, with the influence of research in cognitive psychology, have received remarkable attention. These early studies mainly employed mainstream cognitive approaches as research orientations. Research studies using cognitive orientations considered beliefs an internal autonomous property of the mind, and investigated language learners' *higher order representations* (beliefs that the individual is aware of, conscious about) to establish links between learners' beliefs and L2 attainments.

L2 learners' beliefs have also been examined from social psychological, socio-cognitive and sociocultural perspectives. Research into learner beliefs from sociocultural and social psychological perspectives looked into learners' beliefs under the rubrics of representations (see Castellotti & Moore 2002; Zarate, Gohard-Radenkovic, Lussier & Pens 2004) and cultural beliefs and attitudes (see Gardner 1972, 1979, 2001a, 2001b; Gardner *et al.* 2004; Masgoret & Gardner 2003). Both social psychological and sociocultural theories have stressed the influence of external factors and beliefs which are acquired from the environment. Sociocultural approaches have tended to focus on how beliefs are (co)constructed, appropriated and mediated through social transactions. Sociocultural approaches, especially the ones mainly influenced by Vygotsky's constructivist model, have also stressed the part played by significant others

and artifacts (social tools) in belief-formation, with a special emphasis on the importance of ‘speech’⁸ in dialogic exchange (see Alanen 2003; Dufva 2003).

The SLL/FLL research provides us with a rich body of theoretical and empirical studies on learner beliefs. The SLL/FLL belief research has employed different theoretical view points depending on the aspect to be investigated. Research into beliefs in SLL/FLL can broadly be divided into two principal groups as regards the approaches they employ⁹: a) approaches based on mainstream cognitive orientations; and b) approaches based on sociocultural orientations (Dufva 2003).

However, these two groupings should be viewed with caution since there is not a clear-cut distinction between cognitive and sociocultural approaches and there is neither a single cognitive nor a single sociocultural approach (Alanen 2003). Thus, these two approaches should not be considered mutually exclusive but rather points on a continuum where classical cognitive orientations are placed at one end and sociocultural orientations at the other. However, here, for the sake of clarity, only the characteristics of these two orientations, which represent two opposite-ends, are illustrated on the continuum (see Table 2.1). The characteristics of sociocognitive and social psychological approaches, which are also assumed to represent points on the continuum, are not illustrated.

⁸ In Vygotskian thinking speech is an important element in knowledge construction. According to this view language users shape their ideas and construct knowledge while speaking (Alanen, 2003).

⁹ Some studies have used eclectic approaches which combined different research orientations.

Table 2.1 Approaches employed in SLL/FLL learner belief research

Classical Cognitive Orientations ←-----→ Sociocultural Orientations	
<u>Learners beliefs are viewed as:</u>	<u>Learners beliefs are viewed as:</u>
• Autonomous, personal • Occur in the mind • Representations or schemata stored in the mind • Stable • Context-free	• Both personal & social • Occur on mental & social planes** • Negotiated and expressed in communication with others (through scaffolding) • Stable & changeable • Context-dependent
<u>Research tools/methods (quantitative)</u>	<u>Research tools/methods (qualitative)</u>
• Surveys, questionnaires, interviews (e.g. descriptive statistics, statistics programs, factor analysis, correlations etc.)	• Ethnography, activity theory, social interaction, classroom interaction, interviews (e.g. discourse/conversation analysis, verbal protocols etc.)** • Mix methods (qualitative & quantitative)
<u>Research Data:</u>	<u>Research Data:</u>
• generalization/explanation	• non-generalizable, phenomenological
<u>Important questions:</u>	<u>Important questions:</u>
• What beliefs do learners' possess? • How do beliefs impact on learning? • How do beliefs regulate learning?	• What is the nature of beliefs?** • How are beliefs (co)constructed? • How do beliefs influence learners' behaviors? • How do beliefs regulate learning? • How can beliefs be mediated and appropriated?

Note: (Items bearing the mark ** are taken from Alanen, 2003, pp. 67-68)

The social psychological and sociocultural approaches seem to have a lot of similarities and their characteristics may overlap at some points. Hence, social psychological orientations are considered to be comprehensive within sociocultural approaches. Sociocognitive approaches on the other hand can be placed somewhere in the middle as they share some common aspects with both cognitive and sociocultural approaches.

2.4.1 L2 learner belief research based on cognitive approaches

As previously stated, the real interest in beliefs in SLL/FLL arose with research in cognitive psychology. From this cognitive perspective the language learner was viewed as an active participant in the learning process, using various mental strategies in order to sort out the system of the language to be learned (Williams & Burden 1997) [see also Section 2.27.4 for cognitive perspective on SLA]. This new conception of learning brought changes both into the language classrooms and the research done on language learning. Following cognitive assumptions, SLL/FLL researchers felt the need to access language learners' beliefs in order to understand how learners make use of their cognition to guide their cognitive activities in language learning.

According to the mainstream cognitivist viewpoint, all information-bearing structures (representations) are stored in the mind. These representations, or information units, are connected to one another to form a kind of network and can be accessed when required. From this standpoint, beliefs are considered to be (more or less) static, statable and individual. In this cognitive tradition, the roles of the external factors and the context within which the beliefs come into being have almost never been referred to (their major research scope has been to investigate the accessible beliefs which are stored in individual minds rather than how they are formed or how they are connected to one another)

Early references to learner beliefs focused on the content of learner beliefs (Riley 1989; Horwitz 1987, 1988; Wenden 1986a, 1986b). Riley (1989) referred to learner beliefs as representations and used Kreitler and Kreitler's 'cognitive orientation

model¹⁰, to categorize them under different headings such as *general beliefs*, *beliefs about self*, *beliefs about norms and rules*, and *beliefs about goals*. These early works contributed to the rise of interest in *learners' thinking* --a shift towards the learner and learning rather than the teacher and teaching. Later studies took this idea a step further and tried to find a correlation between language learners' beliefs and the possible influence these might have on their L2 attainments (e.g. Wenden 1995, 1998, 1999).

However, researching beliefs from a cognitivist perspective is regarded with criticism by some SLL/FLL researchers (Dufva 2003; Barcelos 2003; Benson & Lor 1999). Dufva (2003) sustained that mainstream cognitivist views emphasize the individuality of mental knowledge and see contextual influences as secondary. She added that research into beliefs from this perspective assumes that "...properties of the mind are not crucially dependent on the outside influences and forces once they have been acquired and established." (Dufva 2003:132). She also referred to the research methodologies used in these works with criticism. She commented that these studies employed surveys, questionnaires and quantitative means of data analysis and they aimed at explanation and generalization disregarding what each belief represents to each individual. In the same vein Benson and Lor (1999) stated that questionnaire data give only a 'snapshot' of learner beliefs and this would not be sufficient to understand the complexity of learners' beliefs. Alanen (2003) on the other hand, sustained that early cognitive approaches have contributed to the foundations of the methodological and theoretical framework of the study of metacognitive knowledge. She also asserted that cognitive and sociocultural approaches are not incompatible with one another and that

¹⁰ According to this model human behaviour is guided by one's cognitive orientation and 'beliefs are cognitive units of meaning embedded in networks of belief.' (Kreitler & Kreitler cited in Riley 1989: 68).

social aspects are being increasingly incorporated in contemporary cognitive psychology.

2.4.2 L2 learner belief research based on social psychological, sociocognitive and sociocultural approaches

Gardner and his associates' motivational studies, based on Gardner's socio-educational model, can be considered to be the earliest research activities which viewed language learners' beliefs as a social psychological phenomenon (For an overview see Gardner, 1979, 2001a, 2001b; Gardner, *et al.*, 2004; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). However these empirical studies have examined language learners' beliefs implicitly within comprehensive motivational research studies and have not offered a paradigm or approach on how to deal with these beliefs (attitudes) to the advantage of the learner.

Beliefs as a social and cultural phenomenon, have been the foremost standpoint for some European and especially for some French L2 scholars (e.g. Beacco 2001; Castellotti 2001; Castellotti & Moore 2002; Zarate 1993, Zarate *et al.* 2004). These scholars have emphasized the important influence representations (social/cultural beliefs) have on language learners' attitudes (e.g. towards the target language and its culture) and their interest in learning foreign languages. This social psychological viewpoint claims that these representations are generated through transactions between individuals and between groups in a society. Zarate *et al.* explained that "...Our vision of the world and our ways of thinking develop from our contact with others and shape our cultural representations." (Zarate *et al.* 2004: 29). It is presumed that these representations, which are sometimes referred to as stereotypes, attitudes, and prejudices, are partly shaped by media, literature, and various kinds of publicly available sources of information (Beacco 2001; Castellotti 2001; Castellotti & Moore

2002; Duveen 2000; Moscovici 1984, 1998; Zarate 1993). In the latest version of his socio-educational model of second-language acquisition research study Gardner (2001b) also referred to the influence of similar sort of social/cultural beliefs. Gardner claimed that the personal family background and the sociocultural milieu and "...a complex of social and personal variables that the individual brings with him or her..." can influence second language acquisition (Gardner 2001b: 4).

The SLL/FLL researchers who have adopted a sociocultural perspective for the study of beliefs about language learning have mostly employed socio-constructivist, and dialogical, discursive approaches (see Alanen 2003; Barcelos 2003; Dufva 2003). Dufva (2003), who approached language learners' beliefs as a situated phenomenon, claimed that analyzing beliefs without considering the social/cultural context they occur in would be a mistake. In her research she was inspired by Vygotsky and Bakhtin's dialogical philosophy of language, and analyzed language learners' beliefs as subjective experiences. Dufva (2003) considered voice to be important and used it as a methodological tool to analyze 'what subjects say and how they say it'. She criticized mainstream cognitivist research orientations (quantitative means of analysis and positivist philosophy) and, therefore, used interviews, group discussions and written narratives to collect data. During the interviews she used a negotiative technique where the interviewer was not an outsider but a partner who also expressed his/her personal opinion (objectivity was not her goal).

Alanen (2003) investigated a group of young language learners' beliefs from a sociocultural perspective. Her aim was to devise a theoretical and analytical framework appropriate for the study of 'how L2 learners' beliefs come about'. In her small-scale empirical study she used longitudinal interviews to gain insight into the process of

belief formation. Through these longitudinal dialogical exchanges she observed how a group of young learners' beliefs were mediated through transactions with others.

Some sociocultural, social psychological and sociocognitive standpoints, although they have slightly different perspectives, share some major claims that:

- a) beliefs are context-dependent and that they cannot be looked into without considering the context in which they are formed;
- b) beliefs should be examined as regards the individual's past and present experiences;
- c) beliefs are formed through transactions with others;
- d) beliefs can be both static and dynamic;
- e) beliefs are flexible and changeable; thus, they can be influenced and mediated;
- f) beliefs are both personal and social

2.4.3 Research methodologies used in belief research

Conducting L2 learner belief research proved to pose some problems as regards the research methodologies used. Some SLL/FLL scholars have been highly critical of using questionnaires and quantitative means of data analysis in this area (e.g. Alanen 2003; Benson & Lor 1999; Dufva 2003). These scholars maintained that questionnaires ask participants to choose from ideas which are not theirs. According to these scholars research based on questionnaires and surveys aim at explanation and generalization and would not be sufficient to understand the complexity of learners' beliefs and what each belief means to each individual.

Thus many scholars recommend use of various research tools and both qualitative and quantitative means of data analysis. Sakui and Gaies (1999) claimed that

the questionnaire data provides limited information on learners' beliefs and should be complemented with qualitative research tools. Thus, Sakui and Gaies investigated the value of interviews to complement and explain the questionnaire data. They discovered that the interviews allowed the learners to reveal the reasons behind their beliefs which were not addressed in the questionnaire. They also asserted that the interview data complemented the questionnaire data and provided them with the necessary data triangulation.

2.5 L2 learner belief terminology

In the SLL/FLL literature, influenced by different theories and conceptualizations, language learners' beliefs have appeared under different rubrics and categories. Barcelos (2003) summarized L2 belief terminology that appeared between the mid 1980s to the late 1990s (see Table 2.2).

However, a broader review of literature provides us with further L2 belief terminology which has been commonly used in many SLL/FLL studies. Some of the terms are: a) beliefs; b) metacognitive knowledge; c) self-referent beliefs such as self-perception, self-concept beliefs, and self efficacy beliefs; d) control-beliefs, such as self-regulatory beliefs, locus of control beliefs; e) attributions; f) cognitions; g) strategies; h) conceptions and; i) representations.

These terms originate from different theories and conceptualizations. Thus, some definitions seem to overlap and some terms (although defined differently) appear to be used interchangeably. At this point it may be useful to refer to the SLL/FLL literature to sketch some different conceptualizations of L2 beliefs which have been of interest to many SLL/ FLL researchers.

Table 2.2 Some terms and definitions used in L2 learner belief research (source: Barcelos 2003: 10)

Terms	Definitions
Folklinguistic theories of learning (Miller & Ginsberg, 1995)	“Ideas that students have about language and language learning.”(p. 294)
Learner representations (Holec, 1987)	“Learners’ entering assumptions about their roles and functions of teachers and teaching materials.” (p. 152)
Representations (Riley, 1989, 1994)	“Popular ideas about the nature of language and languages, language structure and language use, the relationship between thought and language , identity and language, language and intelligence, language and learning, and so on.” (1994, p.8)
Learners’ philosophy of language learning (Abraham & Vann, 1987)	“Beliefs about how language operates, and, consequently, how it is learned.” (p. 95)
Metacognitive knowledge (Wenden, 1986a)	“The stable, statable although sometimes incorrect knowledge that learners have acquired about language, learning and the language learning process; also referred to as knowledge or concepts about language learning or beliefs; there are three kinds: person, task and strategic knowledge.” (p. 163)
Beliefs (Wenden, 1986)	“Opinions which are based on experience and opinions of respected others, which influence the way they [students] act.” (p. 5)
Cultural beliefs (Gardner, 1988)	“Expectations in the minds of teachers, parents and students concerning the entire second language acquisition task.” (p. 110)
Learning culture (Riley, 1997)	“A set of representations, beliefs and values related to learning that directly influence [students’] learning behavior.” (p. 122)
Culture of learning languages (Barcelos, 1995)	“Learners’ initiative implicit (or explicit) knowledge made of beliefs, myths, cultural assumptions and ideals about how to learn languages. This knowledge, according to learners’ age and social economic level, is based upon their previous educational experience, previous (and present) readings about language learning and contact with other people like family, friends, relatives, teachers and so forth.” (p.40)
Culture of learning (Cortazzi & Jinn, 1996)	“The culture aspect of teaching and learning; what people believe about ‘normal’ and ‘good’ learning activities and processes, where such beliefs have a cultural origin.” (p. 230)
Conceptions of learning and beliefs (Benson & Lor, 1999)	“Conceptions of learning are concerned with what the learner thinks the objects and processes of learning are”; beliefs [...] are concerned with what the learner holds to be true about these objects and processes given in a certain conception of what they are”. “...conceptions of learning characterize learners’ thinking at a higher level of abstraction than beliefs.” (p. 464)

2.5.1 Some commonly used terms and their origins

2.5.1.1 L2 learner beliefs

In mainstream L2 learner belief research the term *L2 learner beliefs* have been used as a generic terminology to encompass and take in various definitions and labels which originate from diverse disciplines. Some of such terms which are dealt with under the rubric of *L2 learner beliefs* are: L2 learners' perceptions; expectations (e.g. White 1999); attitudes (e.g. Sakui & Gaies 1999; Yang & Lau 2003); language strategies (e.g. Sakui & Gaies 1999; Yang 1999); conceptions of language and language learning (e.g. Benson & Lor 1999); and so forth.

However, in spite of conceptual differences and theoretical perspectives most researchers have described beliefs as 'psychologically held views about the world that individuals feel to be true' (e.g. Benson and Lor, 1999; Pajares and Schunk, 2002; Williams and Burden, 1997; Zeldin and Pajares, 2000). A review of the learner belief literature indicates that learner beliefs are 'context-based'; therefore, they should not be viewed independently of context (see e.g. Alanen, 2003; Benson and Lor, 1999; Dufva, 2003; Wenden, 1999; White, 1999). It is also maintained that learners' beliefs are shaped by their 'prior experiences' (Benson and Lor, 1999; White, 1999). Learner beliefs are identified to be either 'functional' or 'dysfunctional' (see Benson and Lor, 1999), or either 'correct' or 'incorrect' (see Horwitz, 1988; Riley, 1997). According to Wenden (1999) beliefs are 'value-related' and are 'held tenaciously' (Wenden, 1999, p. 436). However, recent L2 belief research studies (which have examined L2 learner beliefs mostly from sociocultural perspectives) have shown that learner beliefs can also be 'flexible; therefore, they can be mediated' (e.g. Alanen, 2003; Dufva, 2003).

Horwitz's Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) studies (see Horwitz 1987, 1988, 1999), which marked the beginning of systematic L2 learner belief research, used the term L2 learner beliefs (language learning beliefs) as a general term (see Kuntz 1996 for Horwitz model). Hence, many SLL/FLL belief research studies that used Horwitz's BALLI followed the same tradition and used the term 'L2 learner beliefs' as a general term. Horwitz's BALLI contains thirty-four items on a Likert type scale¹¹, and evaluates learner beliefs in five major areas: (1) difficulty of language learning; (2) foreign language aptitude; (3) the nature of language learning; (4) learning and communication strategies; and, (5) motivations and expectations (see Horwitz 1988, 1999; Kuntz 1996). The studies that used Horwitz's BALLI model more often organized their data by using factor analysis. Then, depending on the nature of the belief categories emerged, each belief group was interpreted by using corresponding theoretical perspectives and terminology.

2.5.1.2 Metacognitive knowledge

The term metacognitive knowledge (see Section 2.18 for metacognitive theory) has been one of the most commonly used terms in SLL/FLL. Metacognitive knowledge has been in the literature since the 1980s (see Wenden 1986a, 1986b). Since then the term has been widely referred to in various belief studies in the SLL/FLL literature (e.g. Alanen 2003; Dufva 2003; Graham 2003; Sakui & Gaies 1999; Yang, 1999; Victori & Lockhart 1995; Wenden 1995, 1998, 1999; 2002 and many others). Victori and

¹¹ Likert scale questionnaires use unidimensional scaling methods. They are commonly used in belief and attitude research. Likert scales use a variety of response scales: a) odd scales (e.g. 1-to-7, 1-to-9, 0-to-4 etc) which have a middle value; or even number scales (e.g. 1-to-4, 1-to-6 etc) which use forced-choice response scales to see whether the respondent lean more towards the 'agree' or 'disagree' end of the scale.

Lockhart in their commonly cited paper (1995) viewed metacognitive knowledge as a broad term. Thus, in their definition they described metacognitive knowledge as a kind of belief store that embraces all aspects of L2 learning/teaching such as the learners' beliefs about themselves, others (teachers and other learners etc.), the language they are learning; their assumptions, and attributions and so forth. In their paper Victori and Lockhart defined metacognitive knowledge as:

“What a person believes about his or her cognitive processes has been referred to as metacognitive knowledge. Applied to second language learning, metacognitive knowledge refers to the general assumptions that students hold about themselves as learners, about factors influencing language learning and about the nature of language learning and teaching.” (Victori & Lockhart 1995: 224).

Wenden (1999) referred to beliefs as a subset of metacognitive knowledge. Although she acknowledged that the terms metacognitive knowledge and beliefs are used interchangeably, she claimed that “...beliefs are distinct from metacognitive knowledge in that they are value-related and tend to be held more tenaciously.” (Wenden 1999: 436). However, many scholars now agree that the importance does not lie in the fact that knowledge differs from beliefs, but that beliefs themselves constitute a form of knowledge. The term metacognitive knowledge has also been used interchangeably with learner cognitions, learner perceptions, and learner representations and some of these terms have also been used interchangeably with L2 beliefs in various research contexts by some SLL/FLL scholars (e.g. Bada & Okan 2000; Dörnyei 2003; Wenden 1998). Rivers (2001) explained that the terms cognition and metacognitive knowledge should not be mixed up with each other. He claimed that metacognition is separate from cognition. He explained that metacognition consists of both *self-assessment* and *self-management*. Wenden's L2 learner strategy research (2001)

revealed strong links between the learners' metacognitive knowledge and self-regulation of learning. She asserted that metacognitive knowledge is a prerequisite to the use of self-regulatory processes leading to autonomy. However, Wenden (1998) reviewed selected theoretical and research literature on metacognition, and she stated that the literature on metacognitive knowledge has not been explicit about the function of this knowledge in language learning.

2.5.1.3 Self-beliefs

Bandura's self-efficacy theory (see Section 2.22) and his self-referent belief terminology such as self-perception, self-conception, and self-efficacy beliefs, have been widely referred to by many SLL/FLL scholars. Ideas and concepts used in Bandura's self-efficacy theory have also complemented various theoretical articles and research studies (e.g. Chacón 2005; Dörnyei 1994; Dörnyei & Otto 1998; Ehrman 1996; Ehrman, Leaver & Oxford 2003; Ehrman & Oxford 1995; Gabillon 2005; Manolopoulou-Sergi 2004; Y. Mori 1999; Noels, Pelletier, Clément & Vallerand, 2000; Oxford & Shearin 1994; Sakui & Gaies 1999; Tremblay & Gardner 1995; Wenden 1995, 1998; White 1995; Yang 1999 and many more).

In SLL/FLL self-beliefs such as self-perception, self-conception and self-efficacy beliefs have been used to refer to learner's judgments about their L2 abilities. However, slightly differently from self-perception and self-conception, self-efficacy beliefs are often viewed as an integral part of learners' self regulatory systems, which also covers self assessment and self management. Most of the time, self efficacy beliefs are investigated in relation to the learners' use of learning strategies and their attributional styles. In some cases, the terms perceived control (see below and Section 2.20 for details about 'control beliefs') and self-efficacy belief are both used to refer to

perceived ease or difficulty in performing a language activity. In some other cases self-efficacy beliefs are used to refer to the learner's perceived L2 competence.

2.5.1.4 Representations

The term representations, which originates from Moscovici's social representations theory (see Section 2.19), has been widely referred to (mainly by French scholars) in many epistemological and empirical works which looked into language learners' beliefs (e.g. Castellotti & Moore 2002; Zarate 1993; Zarate *et al.* 2004). More often the term representations has been used to refer to common knowledge or cultural beliefs such as stereotypes, attitudes, prejudices, images and so forth (Beacco, 2001; Castellotti, 2001; Castellotti & Moore, 2002; Zarate, 1993).

Narcy-Combes (2005) emphasized both individuality and collectivity of representations. He argued that, although primarily the inner organization of representations is individual, representations involve sharing and transmission. He added that collective preservation of representations is sustained in the form of knowledge, or tradition, or in the form of collective representations. Gremmo also emphasized the role played by culture and society and claimed that the aggregate of representations that learners hold about languages and learning (e.g. the idea that languages are learned through imitation, memorization and so forth) constitute their 'language learning culture', which, in return, guides learners' language learning behaviors (see Gremmo 1993a).

Zarate *et al.* (2004) stressed the influence of positive and negative representations on learners' behaviors. They explained that "...positive representations lead to xenophile attitudes which are generally expressed by a behavior and practice of

openness to the ‘Other’, while negative representations lead to behavior that is displayed through xenophobic rejection and refusal of the Other.” (p. 27). Castellotti and Moore (2002) asserted that representations are neither ‘wrong’ nor ‘correct’ nor ‘permanent’. They sustained that representations vary depending on the macro-context (curricular options, teaching orientations and relationships between languages in society as a whole and in the classroom), and micro-context (directly related to classroom activities, and the attitudinal and classroom dynamics).

2.5.1.5 Learner conceptions and student approaches to learning

Oxford (2003) stated that learners’ global styles of learning and learner strategies can be defined as their approaches to learning (see Section 2.23 for more information about learner approaches). In the SLL/FLL literature learner conceptions of learning and learner approaches to learning have usually been referred to under the following labels: learning styles, cognitive styles and learning strategies (see Càrdenas Claros 2006; Duda 1995, 2001; Duda & Riley 1990; Ehrman, Leaver, & Oxford, 2003; Ehrman & Leaver 2003; R Ellis 1989; Oxford 2003 and many more). These concepts, although they are different, are also used interchangeably in the SLL/FLL literature (see Càrdenas Claros 2006 for different definitions of learning styles and cognitive styles).

2.5.2 Terms borrowed from expectancy-value models

Motivational studies into L2 and L2 attitude research studies have borrowed a great deal from expectancy-value models. The terms used in these expectancy-value models have become part of the L2 literature. Some of the most commonly used terms are control belief, perceived behavioral control, normative beliefs, intention formation [see Section 2.20 for definitions and explanations about Ajzen’s & Fishbein’s theory of

reasoned action (TRA); Ajzen's theory of planned behavior (TpB)]; locus, control, attributions; and locus of control [see Section 2.21 for Weiner's attribution theory]. In belief and motivational research studies above mentioned terms have been commonly used by SLL/FLL scholars (see Dörnyei, 2000; Dörnyei & Otto 1998; Clément, Baker & MacIntyre 2003; Kennedy & Kennedy 1996; MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Conrod 2001; MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei & Noels 1998; Manolopoulou-Sergi 2004; White 1999).

2.5.2.1 Attributions

In the SLL/FLL literature the term 'attributions' is used to refer to learners' interpretations of the causes of events that happen to themselves (and others) (Weiner 1986). Weiner's attribution theory (see Section 2.21) offers a pertinent framework for investigating learners' beliefs about their achievement or lack of achievement in language learning. L2 teachers' belief and attitude research from this perspective has also offered useful insights into classroom practices. Thus, attributional theory of achievement motivation has been one of the most referred theories in L2 learner/teacher motivation, belief and attitude studies and the terms generated within this framework are now well-established and widely used key concepts in the SLL/FLL literature (Dörnyei 1994, 1997, 2003, 2006; Dörnyei & Otto 1998; Gardner & Tremblay 1994; Masgoret & Gardner 2003; Oxford & Shearin 1994; Williams & Burden 1999; White 1999; Williams, Burden & Lanvers 2002). Causal attributional frameworks have been found to be linked to learners' attitudes and achievements (e.g. Graham 2004). L2 research findings have demonstrated that students who attribute success to effort, high ability, and effective learning strategies have higher levels of achievement (Dörnyei 2006) (see also 'locus of control' in Section 2.5.2.2 below).

2.5.2.2 *Self-regulation and control beliefs*

In SLL/FLL the term self regulatory beliefs (or self-regulation) has been used to describe the types of control mechanisms (or orientations) that learners believe to be effective in regulating their L2 activities. Wenden (2001) viewed self regulatory beliefs (and self- regulation) as an integral part of metacognitive knowledge.

Control-beliefs, with all their varied forms, have increasingly been gaining ground in the SLL/FLL field (e.g. Dickinson 1995; Dörnyei & Otto 1998; White 1999). The term control belief is an important component in Ajzen's theory of planned behavior (TpB--see Section 2.20) but different versions of the same concept also appear in Weiner's attribution theory as locus and control, and in Bandura's social cognitive theory as a self-regulatory belief, and self efficacy belief (see Section 2.22 for Bandura's social cognitive theory). Dörnyei and Otto (1998) referred to the term 'control beliefs' as "perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior" (Dörnyei & Otto 1998: 56). In the SLL/FLL field the term control beliefs is, in general, used to refer to the L2 learner's perceived control over L2 activities. Control-beliefs are considered to play a role in self-regulation and to have an important impact on learning outcomes (see Dörnyei & Otto 1998; White 1999). It is assumed that learners who believe that they have sufficient control over the outcome exert effort towards achieving a behavior. Dörnyei and Otto stated that there is significant evidence to show that "failure that is ascribed to stable and uncontrollable factors such as low ability hinders future achievement." (Dörnyei & Otto 1998: 61).

In the SLL/FLL literature the other most commonly referred control belief is *locus of control belief*. The concept *locus of control* was first introduced by Rotter in 1960s. Locus of control-beliefs are individual's beliefs about whether outcomes of an

action are within their personal control (*internal locus of control*) or whether these events happen because of some external causes outside their personal control (*external locus of control*). These beliefs, in turn, guide what kinds of attitudes and behaviors people adopt in their future actions. In various research contexts different variations of control beliefs have been used to explain different control aspects regarding the L2 learner's L2 practices. Weiner's attributional theory of achievement motivation defined and explained locus and control as separate items (see Section 2.21 for Weiner's attributional theory).

White (1999) referred to locus of control construct to explain the type of control orientations L2 learners use to regulate their L2 activities. She defined the term as:

“Locus of control is the orientation of an individual towards what determines their success or failure: a belief in one's ability to shape events is referred to as internal locus of control, while a belief that outside forces control performance is referred to as external locus of control.” (White 1999: 452).

2.6 Why are teacher beliefs important?

Teaching is viewed as a dynamic, multifaceted and a complex phenomenon that requires teachers to draw on knowledge and skills in making on-line decisions. This dynamic process, requires on-the-spot decision making and acting according to the needs of the learners and other teaching/learning related requirements. However, these decisions are often viewed as reflections of teachers' beliefs, and not necessarily the mirror reflection of their pedagogical theories and/or the official theory adopted by their institutions. Williams and Burden (1997) asserted that what individuals understand and know, differ from individual to individual. Borg (1999c) affirmed that teachers' tend to use their personal theories to guide them in their teaching practices when instructional

contexts are not well defined. Relevant literature in this domain (especially research done in educational psychology) clearly demonstrated that teachers' beliefs about learning/teaching often lead them to modify the 'official theory' and adopt approaches that are compatible with their beliefs.

Williams and Burden (1997) asserted that teachers' beliefs about learning and teaching, whether explicit or implicit, would affect everything that they do in their classrooms. Miller (2005) argued that teachers' beliefs and practices were linked explicitly to their interactions and experiences with diverse individuals and contexts. There is now substantial evidence to claim that what teachers know and believe-- instructional decisions teachers' make, the way they assess students' learning etc-- impact what happens in the classroom and consequently what students learn.

2.7 How do teacher beliefs come into being?

Teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices are assumed to be interacting and informing one another (see Borg 2003a, 2003b; Entwistle 2003; Entwistle, McCune, & Hounsel 2002; Flores & Day 2006; Freeman 2002; Gathbonton 2000; Hall 2005; Milner 2005; Prosser & Trigwell 1999; Warfield, Wood & Lehman 2005; Williams & Burden 1997). Borg (1999a) asserted that traits such as store of beliefs, knowledge, assumptions, theories and attitudes teachers hold about themselves and their teaching practices inform teachers' teachings; therefore, these traits have significant impact on teachers' teaching.

There is now a consensus that teachers acquire their experiential knowledge through their classroom practices, past learning and life experiences. This experiential knowledge, therefore, can be viewed as accumulated stores of beliefs--in the form of

perceptions, assumptions and so on-- which teachers use as references when practicing their work. Similarly, Williams and Burden (1997) claimed that individual's construction of his/her world is mainly the result of his/her previous experiences. They claimed that these previous experiences influence the individual's future goals and expectations. Teacher's beliefs have also been described through 'psychoanalytic' explanations (see Ainscough 1997). Wright and Tuska (1967 cited in Ainscough 1997) asserted that "early relationships with significant others are the prototypes of subsequent relationships throughout life and the kinds of teachers that education students become." (Ainscough 1997: 573). In the same vein, Borg (2003a) asserted that research in teacher beliefs (cognitions) provided evidence that teachers' personal experiences as learners inform their beliefs and influence their teaching experience throughout their careers. Hall (2005) argued that teachers' pedagogical and subject matter knowledge have impact on shaping their beliefs. She claimed that the knowledge that teachers have on the subject matter, teaching methods, student learning guide them to determine which approaches to teaching/learning to be employed and therefore, how and what students should learn. To sum up, Borg (2003a) considered the following three main factors which have impact on teachers' belief formation: 1) prior language learning experience; 2) teacher education; 3) classroom practice. Thus, Borg (2003a), after having a thorough review of both educational and the SLL/FLL literature, suggested that teachers' own educational backgrounds (including schooling and professional education), teaching practice and their teaching/learning contexts are interacting and influencing factors in shaping teachers' beliefs about teaching (see Figure 2. 1).

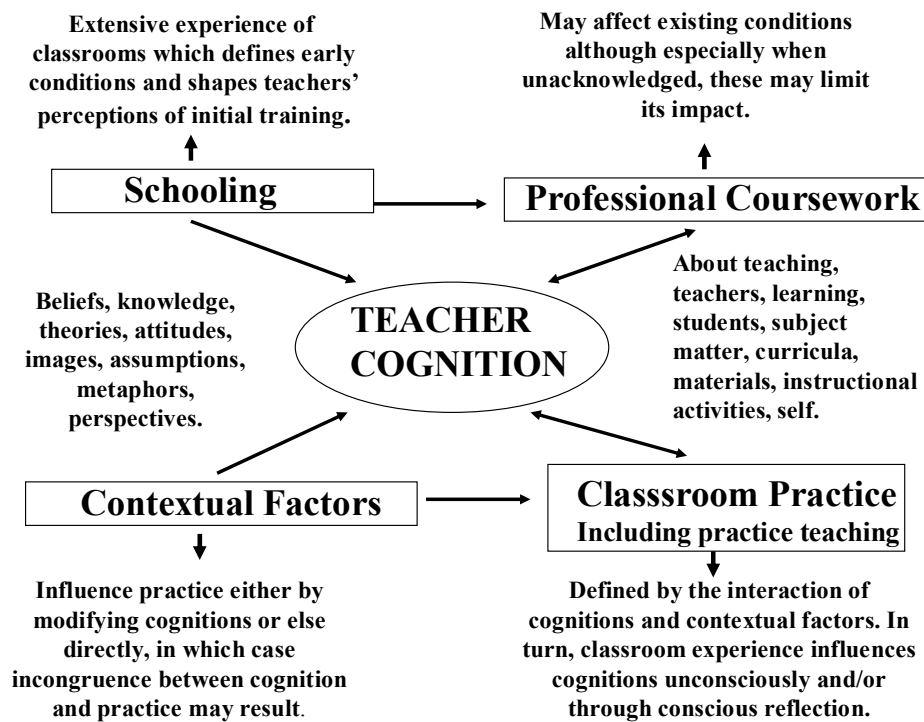


Figure 2.1 Teacher cognition, schooling, professional education, and classroom practice
(Source: Borg 2003a: 82).

Borg (2003a) further claimed that teacher education programs that do not consider teachers' prior beliefs would be less effective in shaping teachers' classroom practices/behaviors. In the same vein, Williams and Burden (1997) asserted that teachers' deep-rooted beliefs about language learning will infuse into their classroom performances more than a particular methodology they have learnt during their teacher education programs. Relevant educational and the SLL/FLL literature on this topic provides us with evidence that the teaching/learning context plays a central role in shaping teachers' beliefs and therefore their classroom implementations. Borg (2003a) asserted that the context determines the extent to which teachers' are able to implement their teaching compatible with their beliefs. In the same vein, Flores and Day (2006)

highlighted the strong influence of personal histories and the contextual factors of the workplace.

It is also assumed that teachers' beliefs, like all other beliefs in general, also have a cultural aspect (see Williams & Burden 1997). Thus beliefs are considered to be formed early in life, to be culturally bound and to be resistant to change. In other words, these collectively created beliefs that reflect views of the society the individual has been brought up in, form a kind of base on which s/he further constructs other beliefs. Williams & Burden 1997 stated that teachers' beliefs about any issue are related to one another and are linked to other more central aspects of their personal belief systems (e.g. their attitudes, and values about the world and their place within it)

2.8 The nature of teacher beliefs

Teacher beliefs are considered *personal and social/cultural; context driven; implicit; theoretical and practical; and resistant and dynamic; systematic*; in short, *complex* entities involving many facets.

2.8.1 Teachers' beliefs are both personal and social

Teacher beliefs are mainly viewed as personal entities. Borg (1999a) defined teacher cognition (beliefs) as a set of personally defined understandings of teaching and learning. In the same vein, a significant body of research has also emphasized the personal aspect of teacher beliefs (e.g. Cabaroglu & Roberts 2000; Flores & Day 2006; Pajares 1992). It is commonly stated that teachers' beliefs are personal because each teacher's understanding of his/her situation is unique emerging from influences of his/her past experiences as learners and as teacher trainee and also from their

past/present classroom practices (Borg 2003a; Chacón 2005; Kagan 1992a, 1992b; Mok 1994; Prosser & Trigwell 1999; Williams & Burden 1997 and many more).

Although these unique experiences are viewed as personal, it is also commonly accepted that these experiences bear highly the benchmarks of the teacher's cultural, social and contextual environments: thus making it legitimate to consider teacher beliefs both personal and social artifacts. In general, the fact that teachers' beliefs are both personal and social is commonly accepted; however, different scholars have put different degrees of emphasis on personal, contextual and social aspects of teacher beliefs. Chacón (2005) viewed teaching context as of primary importance and stated that within the complex process of teaching teachers' actions are mainly the function of the interplay between their beliefs—perspectives, perceptions, and assumptions—and their contexts of teaching

2.8.2 Teachers' beliefs are context driven

Role of contextual factors (teaching context and cultural/social environment) on teacher belief construction has also been repeatedly referred to as factors influencing teacher beliefs and their conceptualization of teaching and learning. Flores and Day's longitudinal research (2006) revealed how the interplay between contextual and cultural factors influenced the teachers' thinking. Similarly, Cabaroglu and Roberts (2000) emphasized both personal and social aspect of teacher beliefs by stating that teacher beliefs are developed through non-stop interaction between *personal meaning-making* and *social validation* and *invalidation* of these meanings. Ainscough (1997) emphasized the role of 'apprenticeship observation'. She claimed future teachers internalize the teaching models they have been observing as learners. In the same vein Lortie (cited in Ainscough 1997) highlighted the importance of prior observations as social learning

artifacts: "...the activation of this latent culture during formal training and later school experience is a major influence on shaping teachers' conceptions of the teaching role and performance." (Ainscough 1997: 573).

By and large, it has been widely stated that teachers' pedagogical knowledge' (ensemble of theoretical and practical beliefs) is the result of the interaction between the teachers' past and present experiences within the social/cultural environments they belong to. That is, teachers past schooling experiences; their present teaching contexts, and the theoretical professional education they have received directly influence their approaches to teaching (Borg 2003a; Freeman 2002; Hall 2005; Mok 1994).

2.8.3 Teacher beliefs are implicit

The literature on teacher beliefs provides us with abundance of evidence indicating that teachers' belief systems are implicit (subconscious, difficult to articulate) (see. Ainscough 1997; Borg 2003a; Breen 1991; Burgess & Etherington 2002; Freeman 1993). Ainscough (1997) argued that teachers' beliefs form their 'subconscious schema'. Kagan (1992b) defined teacher beliefs as being mostly tacit and often unconsciously held assumptions about teaching, students, learning, learning materials and so forth. In the same vein, Clandinin's study (1989) indicated that teachers' personal practical knowledge is: partly in the form of non-propositional images that cannot be expressed explicitly by relating them directly to rules or principles; and that they have experiential origins and moral and emotional dimensions.

2.8.4 Teacher beliefs are the blend of both practical & theoretical knowledge

Teachers' beliefs are also considered practical entities rather than being purely theoretical reflections of their professional education. Clandinin (1985) claimed that

teachers develop and use a special kind of knowledge (a kind of belief/image/knowledge repertoire). He referred to this special kind of teacher knowledge as ‘personal practical knowledge’. He asserted that this knowledge is neither merely theoretical, as regards theories of learning, teaching, and curriculum, nor can it be merely practical but composed of both kinds of knowledge, blended by the personal background and characteristics of the teacher (see also Clandinin 1989; Connelly & Clandinin 1996). Milner (2005) on the other hand, stated that teacher beliefs are practical. He explained his view as follows:

“What teachers know and believe impact what students have the opportunity to learn in school. In a sense, *knowledge is practice* in that what teachers know or come to know influences what happens in the classroom—the curriculum and instructional decisions they make, how they interact with students, how they manage the classroom, and how they assess their own and their students’ learning and progress.” (Milner 2005: 769)

2.8.6 Teacher beliefs can be both dynamic & resistant

The issue ‘whether teacher beliefs are stable or dynamic’ has long been a topic in teacher belief studies. However, results obtained via different research studies presented different and often contradictory findings concerning teacher belief change. It is commonly stated that teachers’ thinking and beliefs are influenced by experience and are ever changing. Ainscough (1997) claimed that teacher beliefs (teachers’ personal theories) “...are subject to an ongoing reappraisal of the teaching context in which they are engaged...teachers vary in the degree to which they introspect on experience, a reflective teacher monitors his or her own and others’ behavior.” (Ainscough 1997: 574). This on-going professional experience through interaction with the immediate learning, teaching context (learners, teaching materials, teaching, school traditions and so on) leads teachers to assess and fine-tune their beliefs and their personal theories

about teaching. Some research studies, done on teacher beliefs and thinking, have illustrated this dynamic nature of teacher beliefs.

The studies done by Clandinin (1989), and Cabaroglu and Roberts (2000) indicated that pre-service teachers' beliefs are developmental, dynamic and not stable. Similarly, Flores and Day's longitudinal study (2006) illustrated an example of how new teachers' beliefs were shaped and reshaped over time. Flores & Day (2006) discovered that teachers' personal and professional histories, pre-service training and school culture were mediating influences determining stability or dynamism in teachers' pedagogical beliefs. They noted that stability and dynamism of beliefs are determined by the degree of impact individuals' personal experiences have on them. Kagan's study, which was based on a historical record of one teacher's beliefs (1992b), illustrated an example of a change process. His study showed how this teacher's beliefs evolved over a year time. Milner's research results (2005) suggested that teachers' beliefs and practices develop and change through their interactions and experiences with different individuals. Freeman's study (1993) also provided some evidence on the dynamic aspect of teacher beliefs. His study demonstrated how a group of foreign language teachers incorporated new ideas in their thinking. The analysis of his research data looked into the ways the teachers reconstructed their classroom practice through assigning new/different meanings to their actions. He noted that during the belief change process teachers use specific mechanisms to construct new understandings of their teachings.

However, we also know that some teacher beliefs (especially key beliefs or core beliefs) can also be resistant to change. Peacock's longitudinal study which investigated a group of trainee ESL teachers' beliefs (2001a), provided evidence of stability in some

key beliefs about language learning (such as beliefs about the importance of learning a lot of vocabulary and grammar rules; and the belief that people who speak more than one language are very intelligent and so on). Kagan (1992b) stated that there is lack of substantial direct evidence regarding the processes that influence change in teacher beliefs concerning the effects of teacher education on teacher beliefs. Kagan (1992a) stated that teachers use the theoretical information given in teacher education programs to confirm their pre-existing beliefs. She expressed her views as follows:

“...personal beliefs and images that preservice candidates bring to programs of teacher education usually remain inflexible. Candidates tend to use the information provided in coursework to confirm rather than to confront and correct their pre-existing beliefs. Thus, a candidate's personal beliefs and images determine how much knowledge the candidate acquires from a preservice program and how it is interpreted.” (Kagan 1992: 154).

Hall (2005) claimed that it is more difficult to change beliefs that have been held for a long time (see also Macaro 2001). Hall explained that teacher beliefs which were formed by the influence of their previous experiences as former learners are comparatively more difficult to change than newly formed ones that are still developing (See also Section 2.19 for Moscovici's representations theory). However, she acknowledged that it is never impossible to change teachers' knowledge and belief systems if these are approached to with productive ways that challenge them (see Ajzen's TpB in Section 2.20).

2.8.7 Teacher beliefs are systematic

Research on teachers' beliefs has primarily focused on relationships among teachers' beliefs and their practice. The results obtained, in general, have revealed a strong relationship between teachers' beliefs and their practices asserting the idea that

teachers' beliefs are systematic and are organized in some way. O'Loughlin (1989) stated that teachers' cognitive structures are organized in some form of system, network, or patterns that teachers use to guide their actions. He asserted that teachers' actions are directly linked to their belief system. He explained that teachers who believe teaching to be a didactic and authoritarian activity appear to teach in a way quite consistent with this belief system. Some research studies also studied possible correlations between different belief factors. Many of these studies illustrated that teachers' beliefs are mainly clustered around themes and that there is a correlation between these themes and teachers' beliefs and therefore the way they teach (e.g. Tercanlioglu 2005; Peacock 2001a).

2.8.8 Teacher beliefs are complex systems

Borg (2003b) defined teacher beliefs as complex personalized pedagogical systems. Similarly, Flores and Day (2006) stated that to become an effective teacher is a long and complex process and emphasized the multi-dimensional, idiosyncratic and context-specific nature of teaching and the complex interplay between different (sometimes) conflicting teacher perceptions, beliefs and practices. Similarly, Freeman (1993) stated that teachers use specific mechanisms to construct new meanings and asserted that this complex mechanism has not yet been well understood. Freeman's longitudinal study (1991) examined teacher thinking and perceptions focusing on how teachers modified and improved what they did through formal education. He stated that the use of shared professional discourse in this formal education program contributed to the increase of the complexity of the teachers' thinking about their teaching. Basturkmen, Loewen, & R. Ellis's study (2004) indicated a weak relationship between the teachers' practices and stated beliefs regarding focus-on-form (the need to focus on

form arises out of meaning-centered activity during the performance of a communicative task) [see Section 2.29 for more information about ‘focus-on-form’ vs. ‘focus-on-forms’]. In the same vein, Breen, Hird, Milton, Oliver, & Thwaite’s study (2001) discovered a very complex relationship between teachers’ beliefs and their classroom practices.

2.9 L2 teacher belief research terminology

Philip Jackson ("Life in classrooms" 1968) was the first to introduce the notion that teaching is not simply the transmission of knowledge but is also a socialization process, which involves norms, beliefs, and socially approved knowledge. To explain this phenomenon he coined the term ‘hidden curriculum’ (Jackson cited in Morine-Dershimer 2006; Freeman 2002). Educational literature provides us with different terms and explanations of the same phenomenon. Freeman (2002) referred to this issue as ‘teachers’ mental lives’ and ‘hidden agendas’. Freeman stated that teachers' mental lives (teacher’s beliefs, attitudes, and their interpretation of official theory) represent the hidden side of teaching. Biggs (1994) explained this notion by using the terms ‘*espoused theory*’¹² [teachers’ formal (theoretical) knowledge about ‘what’ and ‘how’ to teach] and the *theory-in-use* [what teachers actually do] (see also Williams & Burden 1997). Biggs claimed that teachers, influenced by their beliefs, interpret and modify the official theory (official curriculum, theories of teaching/ learning etc) to adjust it to their

¹² According to Argyris and Schön’s theory of action (cited in Smith 1974) espoused theory’ is what individuals explicitly say what they do (what they think they should do). Theory in-use on the other hand is in the form of implicit knowledge and it refers to individuals’ actual behaviors. According to the theory of action individuals have mental maps that guide them in their actions. It is assumed that it is these mental maps that guide people’s actions rather than the theories they explicitly hold (espoused theory) (Smith 2001).

beliefs. That is, with the influence of teachers' beliefs, their espoused theory becomes the theory-in-use and it guides both the teacher and the learners in the teaching/learning process (Biggs 1994). According to Argyris and Schön's theory of action (cited in Smith 2001) outcomes of people's actions become more effective when there's congruence between the espoused theory (inner feelings, explicit beliefs) and the theory in-use (the individual's actual actions). Smith (2001) noted that theory in-use draws mainly on implicit knowledge and many people are not really aware of the gap between these two theories. Thus Williams and Burden (1997) asserted that the degree of concordance and discordance between the espoused theories and the theories in-use necessitates teacher awareness to enable them to understand how their classroom actions influence their students' learning.

Eraud (Eraud 1994 cited in Ainscough 1997) refers to the same notions as 'public theory' and 'private theory'. Ainscough explained that teacher education programs aim to build in 'public theory', "...systems of ideas published in books, discussed in classes and accompanied by critical literature ..." (Ainscough 1997: 573). Ainscough referred to the private theories as "...ideas in people's (teachers') minds which they use to interpret or explain experience." (p.573). She claimed that public and private theories interact with each other and should not be considered as separate entities. She, therefore, suggested that these two theories should be regarded as a complex accumulation of personal theories.

Borg (1999a) used the term 'teacher cognition' to refer to stores of beliefs, knowledge, assumptions, theories and attitudes teachers hold about themselves and their teaching practices. He explained that "...teacher cognitions consist of a set of personally-defined practically-oriented understandings of teaching and learning which

exert a significant influence on instructional decisions.” (Borg 1999a: 22). Borg (2003a) further described ‘teacher cognition’ as an unobservable cognition dimension of teaching. According to him, this unobservable dimension involves; what teachers think, know, and believe, and the relationships of these mental constructs to what teachers do in their language classrooms. He stated that teacher cognition is a multidimensional concept. He, therefore, noted that using notions such as ‘knowledge’ and ‘beliefs’ to explain this complexity of teachers’ mental lives would not be fitting.

Borg (2003a) reviewed 64 L2 teacher belief studies from the 1970s until the year 2002 and documented seventeen different key teacher belief terminologies that appeared in these studies (see Table 2.3). Borg (2003a) stated that many of these concepts were first introduced and employed in mainstream educational psychology. He explained that L2 teacher cognition research has been highly influenced by research done in mainstream educational psychology and has borrowed most of the key concepts and terminologies from this field. Because of this, diverse terminologies and concepts have been used to refer to teacher beliefs (cognitions, assumptions, perceptions and so forth). This diverse use of definitions and concepts has also created ambiguity and conceptual confusion. Borg (2003a) explained that in some cases, similar terms have been defined differently and different labels have been used to explain similar concepts (see Table 2.3).

Table 2.3 Terms in teacher cognition research (source Borg 2003a: 87).

Source	Term	Description
Borg (1998c)	Personal pedagogical systems	Stores of beliefs, knowledge, theories, assumptions and attitudes which play a significant role in shaping teachers' instructional decisions
Breen <i>et al.</i> (2001)	Pedagogical principles	Shaped and generated by underlying and more abstract beliefs, these service to mediate between belief and on-going decision-making in particular instructional contexts
Burns (1999)	Theories for practice	The thinking and beliefs which are brought to bear on classroom processes
Crookes & Arakaki (1999)	Routines	Habitualized patterns of thought and action which remove doubts about what to do next, reduce complexity, and increase predictability
Freeman (1993)	Conceptions of practice	A set of ideas and actions teachers use to organize what they know and to map out what is possible; they guide individual action but are also affected by new situations
Gatbonton (1999)	Pedagogical knowledge	The teacher's accumulated knowledge about the teaching act (e.g. its goals, procedures, strategies) that serve as the basis for his/her classroom behavior and activities
Golombek (1998)	Personal practical knowledge	A moral, affective, and aesthetic way of knowing life's educational situation
	Image	A personal meta-level, organizing concept in personal practical knowledge in that it embodies a person's experience; finds expression in practice; and is the perspective from which new experience is taken
Johnson (1992b)	Theoretical beliefs	The philosophical principles, or belief systems, that guide teachers' expectations about student behavior and the decision they make
Johnson (1994)	Images	General metaphors for thinking about teaching that not only represent beliefs about teaching but also act as models of action
Meijer <i>et al.</i> (1999)	Practical knowledge	The knowledge teachers themselves generate as a result of their experiences as teachers and their reflections on these experiences
Richards (1996)	Maxims	Personal working principles which reflect teachers' individual philosophies of teaching
Richards <i>et al.</i> (1992)	Culture of teaching	The nature of teachers' knowledge and belief systems, their views of good teaching, and their views of the systems in which they work and their role within them
Richards <i>et al.</i> (1998)	Pedagogical reasoning	The process of transforming the subject matter into learnable material
Sendan & Roberts (1998)	Personal theories	An underlying systems of constructs that student teachers draw upon in thinking about, evaluating, classifying, and guiding pedagogic practice
Spada (1992)	Specific pedagogical knowledge	Knowledge related specifically to the teaching of a particular subject
Woods (1996)	BAK	A construct analogous to the notion of schema, but emphasizing the notion of beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge are included

2.10 Research on L2 teacher beliefs

Teacher belief research is proved to be crucial in comprehending the schemes teachers' use to understand, organize and implement their teaching. Teachers' beliefs and their impact on teaching and learning have been a significant issue for educational inquiry for more than a quarter of a century. Research in this area has focused on: a) teachers' stated beliefs and their practices; b) teachers' philosophies and theories of teaching (approaches to teaching); b) teachers' understanding of teaching and learning processes; c) teachers' beliefs about their students; c) teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacies in their teaching practices; d) teachers' instructional decisions; e) teachers' belief change and professional growth and so forth.

With the influence of research in educational psychology, research into teachers' beliefs and teachers' pedagogical knowledge has also gained significance in SLL/FLL (e.g. see Borg 1998a, 1998b, 1998c, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 2001, 2003a, 2003b; Brown 1990; Chacón 2005, M. Ellis 2006; Freeman 2002; Gatbonton 2000; Kennedy, C. & Kennedy, J. 1996; Levine 2003; Todd 2006).

In language teacher education and SLL/FLL, teacher belief research (beliefs, teacher thinking, assumptions, perceptions etc.) gained ground starting from the early 1990s and it has gained impetus in the late 1990s (see Borg 2003a; M. Ellis 2006; Freeman 2002). Freeman (2002) explained that until the mid 1970s teachers were generally not considered having 'mental lives'. He stated that before the 1970s, SLL/FLL teacher research was based on process-product paradigm¹³. From this

¹³ The process-product paradigm, assumes that teaching is a linear activity. This paradigm views teacher behavior as the cause and student learning as the effect. It under estimates the role of individual

perspective SLL/FLL teaching was viewed as merely mastering the content on the linguistic and meta-linguistic levels, practicing classroom methodologies and techniques, and learning theoretical principles. Freeman (2002) divided research on teacher thinking into three progressive periods. He viewed 1970s to 1980s as the decade of change. He claimed that this decade marked a turning point in how research viewed teachers' mental lives. That is, the SLL/FLL research until up to the mid 1970s regarded the teacher as a performer and skill learner, someone who was reciting other people's ideas. Freeman (2002) considered the years from the 1980s to 1990s a decade of change. He added that this period was marked in reconceptualization of teachers' work and their mental lives. Freeman (2002) explained that it was during this period that the idea that teachers' have complex mental lives was fully accepted and the central attributes were studied under different names such as teacher 'assumptions', 'beliefs' 'conceptions' 'principles' and so forth. Differently from Freeman, Borg viewed the period from 1990 to 2000 as the decade of change, as regards research into L2 teacher cognition – Borg (2003a) revisited the research done on language teacher cognition and listed sixty-four research studies from the 1970s to 2002, forty-seven of which were done after 1995. Freeman, acknowledged the 1990s up to 2000s as the period of consolidation as regards the changing views of teacher teaching and thinking processes. Freeman (2002) noted that, during this period of consolidation, research paradigms

differences and personal judgments of teachers and views teaching as sets of isolated teacher behaviors. This view assumes the role of a teacher as one of technician (Showler 2000).

shifted to the postmodern¹⁴ perspective. He explained that postmodern view holds that knowledge and thinking are relative to the person and different individuals understand and think the same things differently (Freeman 2002). From this perspective, it is assumed that teachers will understand and perceive their classrooms realities differently from others. Thus, teachers' thought processes and beliefs from this perspective are assumed to be shaped by their personal point of views and positions they take. Postmodern perspective holds that teachers' thought processes are dependent on the context they live in and the experiences they go through. In other words, teachers' way of thinking is considered to be the function of their backgrounds, experiences and their social contexts (Freeman 2002; Hall 2005, Flores & Day 2006). Freeman pointed out that "...knowledge in the classroom is widely networked and; it brings together past experiences and future goals within the context of present activity and interaction...This blending past present raises the issue of how prior knowledge fits into this new landscape." (Freeman 2002: 9).

Borg (1999a) stated that instructional practice should not be merely perceived as simple cause and effect relationship resulting from behavioral products of teaching. He argued that understanding teachers' psychological attributes-- which are implicit in their teaching practice—and the role these attributes play in teachers' classroom practices are crucial in understanding teachers' teaching. Borg postulated that research on teacher cognition provides useful insight into teaching. Through reviewing relevant literature on

¹⁴ In postmodernism knowledge is considered to be functional (knowledge is acquired to use). It is also acknowledged that knowledge is not only characterized by its utility but that it is also distributed, stored, and arranged differently in postmodern societies (Sarup 1993). From postmodern perspective "...any knowledge depends on plurality of views and reflects a relativity of position in establishing those views, and can be promoted or 'silenced' depending on how power is used." (Freeman 2002: 8).

the topic, he proposed various research applications of teacher cognitions; for teachers, teacher educators, and policy makers (see Table 2.4).

Table 2.4 Application of research on teacher cognition (Borg 1999a: 23).

Insight to teacher cognition allows us:

- to understand discrepancies between theoretical recommendations based on research and classroom research and classroom practice and hence to attempt to explain the lack of influence on practice of educational innovation (Clark and Peterson, 1986),
 - to provide quality portraiture of teaching in all its complexity (Clark and Lampert, 1986),
 - to provide policy makers in education and teacher education with the basis for understanding how best to implement educational innovation and promote teacher change (Butt *et al.*, 1992),
 - to engage teachers in a form of reflective learning, by making them aware of the psychological bases of their classroom practice; to help teachers understand their mental lives, not to dictate practice to them (Clark and Lampert, 1986),
 - to understand how teachers develop (Tobin and LaMaster, 1995),
 - to develop a new conceptualisation of teaching which supports and improves the quality of teachers' professional practice (Calderhead, 1987),
 - to provide the basis of effective pre- and inservice teacher education and professional development (Goodman, 1988).
-

Many research scholars have expressed that teacher beliefs provide significant sources of information to understand complex issues concerning classroom realities. Research done in various L2 contexts, therefore, has attempted to understand what beliefs guide L2 teachers' classroom practices (e.g. Johnson 1994; Tercanlioglu 2005). Most scholars have also viewed teacher beliefs as resources for self-reflection and self-development (see Borg1998b; Farrell 1999). In the same vein, Day (2006) claimed that coping with the demands of teaching is a continual process of analysis of one's own beliefs and practices and this reflective process leads to self-development.

Recent L2 research studies have used teacher beliefs for testing educational innovation and planning language instruction. In some contexts L2 teacher beliefs and teachers' understanding of innovation have been investigated indirectly under the topic of 'testing an innovation'. In such research studies teacher beliefs have constituted subsequent research outcomes (see Carless 2003; G. Ellis 1996). Some others, on the other hand, based their assumptions on the significant role teacher beliefs and understandings played in such innovations and implemented innovation through consultation of teacher beliefs (see Todd 2006). Carless (2003) stated that most of the time teachers are asked to implement educational innovations developed by external agents who are not always familiar with local teachers' viewpoints and/or with their teaching contexts in which innovation is to be implemented. He noted that implementing an innovation is a demanding matter that requires change and adaptation. Thus, he argued that unless teachers' perspectives are taken into account, implementing something new may be quite distressing (Carless 2003; Todd 2006). It is widely argued that consulting teachers' beliefs when testing or implementing an educational innovation increases the sense of teacher ownership and promotes professional growth (Carless 2003; G. Ellis 1996; Todd 2006). Todd sustained that obtaining information on teachers' beliefs when implementing an innovation facilitates management of change and promotes an ongoing teacher development.

Teacher belief studies have also sought to understand discrepancies between theoretical recommendations based on research and classroom practices (see Borg 1999c). According to Borg such research studies are mainly concerned with how theoretical recommendations are interpreted and reflected in teachers' classroom practices. L2 Teacher belief studies have also investigated relationships between teachers' stated beliefs and their actual classroom practices. These studies have aimed at

discovering possible discordances and/or concordances between the teachers' stated beliefs and their classroom practices (see Basturkmen *et al.* 2004; Chacón 2005). In the same vein, some other studies have tried to establish links between teachers' classroom performances and their explanations of rationale behind these practices (see Borg 1998a; 1998c; Breen, Hird, Milton, Oliver, & Thwaite 2001). Some longitudinal beliefs studies have also sought to understand whether it is possible to change teachers' preconceived beliefs (see Peacock 2001a).

2.10.1 L2 teacher belief studies which investigated the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices

Basturkmen, Loewen, & R. Ellis (2004) investigated the relationship between three teachers' stated beliefs about and practices of focus-on-form¹⁵ in ESL communicative lessons (see also Section 2.29 for more information about 'focus-on-form' vs. 'focus-on-forms'). The study tried to explore the consistency between the teachers' personal statements of belief about focus-on-form and their actual implementation and management of focus-on-form during their communicative teaching lessons. The results illustrated some inconsistencies in the teachers' stated beliefs in two areas: 1) their stated beliefs and preferred error correction techniques, and 2) their stated beliefs on when it is best to take time-out from a communicative activity to focus on issues of form and their actual practices. The research findings obtained by Basturkmen *et al.* indicated a weak relationship between the teachers' practices and stated beliefs regarding focus-on-form.

¹⁵ Basturkmen, Shawn & R. Ellis (2004) defined 'focus-on-form' as incidental time-outs taken by students or/and teachers to deal with linguistic forms during communicative lessons. Ellis R. (2003) defined 'focus-on-form' temporarily switching the attention from meaning to a linguistic form during a communicative activity.

Breen *et al.* (2001) looked into 18 ESL teachers' beliefs as regards their classroom practices and the underlying principles directing these classroom practices. The main objective of the study was to discover what kind of relationship the teachers identified between their teaching principles and classroom practices. To obtain the data the researchers used qualitative/interpretative research methodologies such as classroom observations following teacher interviews and elicitation techniques. The objective of using these research tools were to help teachers describe their classroom practices and help them explain the rationale and the pedagogical beliefs guiding their classroom practices. The results they obtained illustrated diversity both in the principles the teachers adopted and in their classroom practices. Their research findings also showed that besides the existence of diverse teaching principles and their consequent practices, some commonly shared principles were also associated with different types of practices. Moreover, the results illustrated that a teaching practice, which was commonly used by the majority of the group members, was based upon diverse principles. However, Breen *et al.* stated that a closer examination of the whole group data revealed some regular patterns in the links teachers made between their practices and their underlying patterns.

Kennedy and Kennedy (1996) compared a teacher's stated attitudes with her observed attitudes towards error correction. Their observation illustrated that there was a discordance between the teacher's expressed attitude towards error correction and her actual behavior in classroom. The authors concluded that the attitude behavior relationship is more complicated than what people usually think of. Inspired by Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (TpB) they explained that attitude is not the immediate antecedent of a person's behavior (see Section 2.20 for Ajzen's TpB model). Using Ajzen's model they explained that the individual's behavior is determined by his/her intention and that the intention formation is the outcome of the interplay between,

attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Furthermore, they maintained that each of these three elements, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are influenced by beliefs (see Figure 2.2) See the diagram below (Kenedy & Kennedy 1996: 354)

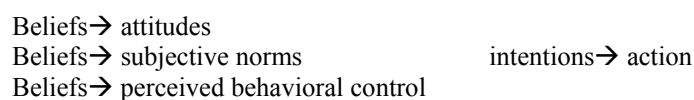


Figure 2.2 Attitude, intention, and behavior (source Kenedy & Kennedy 1996: 354)

Johnson (1994) used pre-service teachers' stated beliefs such as their intentions to teach in a particular way; and their perceptions of their own classroom practices. The findings indicated that the teachers had conflicting beliefs about teaching. The author suggested that, in order for effective second language learning to take place, these beliefs should be accessed and appropriated. He recommended that teacher education programs provide teachers with alternative beliefs which could be more suitable for effective second language instruction.

Borg (1998a) in his descriptive study investigated two teachers' beliefs about their use of meta talk (explicit talk about grammar) in their English language teaching classes. He used classroom observations and semi-structured interviews to gain insights about the initiation, development, and outcomes of meta talk in these two EFL teachers' work and the rationale behind meta talk they adopted. He identified various kinds of complex and interacting psychological, methodological, and experiential factors influencing these teachers' approaches to the use of meta talk.

Borg (1998c) following the assertion that teachers' classroom practices are determined by their personal pedagogical belief systems, analyzed the teaching of L2

grammar by looking into an experienced teacher's personal pedagogical systems. He defined the term 'personal pedagogical systems' as teachers' stores of beliefs, assumptions, knowledge, theories and attitudes and investigated the role these core attributes played in shaping the teachers' classroom practices and decisions. As a research methodology, he used a naturalistic exploratory interpretive paradigm ["...a task of interpreting human action by understanding why people behave in the way they do." (Borg 1998c)], and employed both observations and teacher interviews as research tools. In his study, he used this naturalistic approach to explore how this teacher viewed and practiced grammar teaching. Thus, he focused on the teacher's explanations of his inner perspectives and his understandings of his actions rather than searching objective reality.

Chacón, (2005) investigated 100 teachers' self-efficacy beliefs within an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context. She claimed that teachers' perceived capabilities to teach have a direct impact on their teaching practices. Hence, she asserted that teachers' self-efficacy beliefs influence teachers' actions and learning outcomes. In her study, she employed both descriptive and correlational analysis procedures. She used teacher interviews and a self-efficacy scale to measure the teachers' management, engagement and instructional strategies as research instruments. The results of this study suggested a strong correlation between the teachers' self reported English proficiency and perceived self-efficacy. The findings also indicated that the teachers' efficacy for instructional strategies was higher than their efficacy for management and engagement. Chacón, (2005) noted that the connections between the teachers' self-efficacy and their perceived English language proficiency highlighted the perceived importance of content knowledge. Thus, she concluded that EFL teachers' perceived

competence in their speaking, listening, reading, and writing leads them to build a strong sense of self- efficacy about their teaching.

2.10.2 L2 teacher belief studies which viewed teacher beliefs as a source for teacher awareness and professional growth.

Borg's study (1998b)--data based teacher development--differently from other teacher cognition studies did not approach teacher cognition from 'the researcher as an outsider' perspective. He perceived teacher reflection as a major source for professional growth and based his methodological assumptions on this principle (see also Williams & Burden 1997). In this particular research study Borg's aim was to help the teachers uncover their own beliefs through the use of research activities (see Borg 1998b). Thus, he used authentic teaching data as part of a teacher development course to sensitize teachers to the role their beliefs played in their teaching and to help them discover how their own practices were shaped by their beliefs. He called this teacher development activity 'data-based teacher development'. He claimed that using authentic teaching data provided teachers with mirror image of their teaching and provided ideal platform for self-reflection and professional growth.

M. Ellis (2006) claimed that teachers' previous learning experiences as language learners, contribute to their language teaching positively. She claimed that teachers who themselves have already experienced learning another language possess more functional beliefs about language learning than monolingual ones. She, therefore, aimed to explore the links between teachers' language learning background and their pedagogical beliefs. The participants for the study were selected from three main groups: native English speakers with a second language; native English-speaker monolinguals; and non-native speakers. M. Ellis based her research principles on the idea that 'teachers' prior personal

experiences as L2 learners strengthen their understanding of second language development'. She claimed that teachers who have already experienced L2 learning will certainly have different beliefs about L2 learning than a native speaker who has never had such an experience. Her research findings asserted that language learning experience builds in powerful insights which interact with formal professional knowledge and beliefs gained through informal sources and life experiences. She argued that late bilingualism through formal language learning gave teachers direct experience of learning and communication strategies in L2.

Farrell (1999) investigated three experienced EFL teachers' reflections regarding their classroom practices. Farrell viewed teacher reflection as 'teachers' learning through a critical analysis of their own beliefs about teaching and learning'. He argued that reflective teachers take more responsibility for their actions. Farrell used various kinds of research tools such as: field notes, written logs, group meetings, individual meetings/observations, participants' written reaction-journals, and written artifacts. His data analysis showed that the teachers' discussions centered mainly on their personal theories and their problems related to their teaching. He also discovered that these three teachers used group meetings for critical reflection. Farrell categorized the topics that these three teachers were critical about as follows: theories of teaching, approaches and methods, evaluating teaching, self-awareness and questions about teaching.

2.10.3 L2 teacher belief studies which based their assumptions on how best to implement educational innovation and promote teacher change.

Todd's paper 'continuing change after the innovation' reported on a group of teachers' beliefs about a task-based curriculum innovation (see Todd 2006). He claimed

that teachers' beliefs are the most influential in decisions regarding curriculum change and innovation. He asserted that in traditional approaches innovation was brought in through top-down impositions without considering beliefs of the teachers who implemented these innovations. Todd noted that contrary to top-down approaches bottom-up innovation requires involvement of the teachers. The primary concerns of Todd's research were to find out 'how' and 'why' the task-based curriculum continued to change after its initial implementation. For this research project the data was collected through sets of informal semi-structured interviews. The aim was to help teachers reveal their beliefs about the innovation they were implementing. The interview transcriptions were used as the major source of data. The findings illustrated that the originally planned 'strong' version of the task-based learning model was modified and 'weakened' because the teachers believed in the effectiveness of the explicit teaching of linguistic forms and assessment through formal exams.

2.10.4 L2 teacher belief studies which investigated the nature of teacher beliefs.

Tercanlioglu (2005) looked into a group 118 EFL pre-service teachers' beliefs about language learning. Her research searched answers for the following questions:

- 1) What beliefs do pre-service teachers have about foreign language learning?
- 2) Are belief factors related to each other?
- 3) Are beliefs moderated by the gender of the learner?

She used Horwitz's Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) to collect data. She analyzed the data obtained by using quantitative analysis procedures: descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means, and standard deviations; Pearson correlations analysis; and ANOVA. The factor analysis illustrated that these pre-service

teachers' beliefs were mainly clustered around five factors in the following order of significance: importance of learner motivation and expectations; the nature of language learning; learning and communication strategies; foreign language aptitude; and difficulty of language learning. The results obtained via Pearson product-moment correlations showed strong relationship between these five beliefs factors.

2.10.5 L2 teacher belief studies which aimed to provide the basis for effective pre-service teacher education.

Peacock's (2001a) longitudinal study investigated changes in the beliefs about second language learning of 146 trainee ESL teachers over their 3-year teacher education program. The study based its assumption on the idea that teachers' initial '*mistaken ideas*' could change through the course of their teacher education program as they studied TESL methodology. Peacock (2001a) proposed that it is important to work on mistaken trainee beliefs from the very beginning because they could influence teachers' teaching and their future students' language learning irrevocably. He collected first-year trainee beliefs about language learning by using Horwitz's Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI). This longitudinal study provided some evidence of stability of beliefs. In this study Peacock (2001a) discovered that the trainees had three key beliefs about language learning that differed from experienced ESL teachers' beliefs and these beliefs changed very little over their three years of study of TESL methodology. He observed that, during their third year there were still too many trainees that still believed that learning a second language means learning a lot of vocabulary and grammar rules, and that people who speak more than one language well are very intelligent. Peacock (2001a) noted that these two key beliefs about 'learning a

lot of vocabulary’ and ‘learning grammar rules’ are particularly important because they are mostly associated with lower levels of L2 proficiency.

2.10.5 L2 teacher belief studies which aimed to explore discrepancies between teachers’ and learners’ beliefs

Studies which have searched discrepancies between teacher and learner beliefs took place in various teaching contexts and focused on different teaching/learning themes (see Discordances in Part 2 for more information). Many studies investigated the difference between learner and teacher beliefs as regards classroom practices and teacher learner approaches to learning and teaching (e.g. Bloom 2007; Canagarajah 1993; Hawkey 2006; Horwitz’s 1988; Kumaravadivelu 1991; McCagar’s 1993; Mantle-Bromley 1995; Peacock 1998, 2001b). Some other empirical studies investigated discordances between L2 learner and L2 teacher beliefs by focusing on some common L2 issues such as: error correction; grammar teaching (e.g. Schulz 2001); teacher and student role expectations (e.g. McCargar 1993); use of L1 in L2 classrooms (e.g. Levine 2003); learner and teacher perceptions of language activities (e.g. Hawkey 2006); teacher and learner beliefs about oral language instruction (e.g. Cohen & Fass 2001), and so forth. These studies have used various research methodologies such as; questionnaires, interviews, observations and blend of various research instruments.

2.11 Influence of teacher beliefs on teachers’ approaches and styles of teaching

Different teachers’, like learners, have different teaching styles and approaches to teaching which influence their decisions on ‘how to teach’ and ‘which learning materials to select’, and ‘how to assess their students’ work’. Entwistle (2003) asserted

that to describe these different and sometimes contrasting conceptions of teaching several categories have been used. He stated that these categories can be summarized in terms of three most frequently identified teaching styles: transmitting information, encouraging student activity, and facilitating conceptual change. Entwistle (2003) explained that teachers who see teaching mainly in terms of transmitting information tend to think about it mainly in their own terms. He asserted that such teachers select precisely the content to be covered and organize it in manageable chunks (a list of specific teaching items), and transmit it to the students. Thus, they mainly focus on the content to be covered. Williams & Burden (1997) stated education is usually regarded as carried out by one person, a teacher, standing in front of a class and transmitting information to the learners. They claimed that this view simplifies the complex process involving interplay between the learning process, the teacher's intentions, the individual personalities of the learners, their culture and background, and many other variables. According to Entwistle (2003), teachers who belong to the second category encourage student activity (student-directed activity). These teachers organize their teaching around appropriate learning activities and encourage student participation. Teachers, who belong to the third category aim at conceptual change. Such teachers, in order to facilitate student learning (in this case conceptual change), put more emphasis on what students already know and encourage students to engage in ideas, so as to improve their understanding (thus selection of materials relevant to learners' interests and experiences is of primary focus).

Samuelowicz and Bain's (2001) research work, which reported on several studies done from 1992 to 2001 on teacher beliefs about teaching and learning, discovered two main categories of teacher orientations to teaching:

1. *Teaching-centered orientations*: Imparting information and transmitting knowledge, facilitating understanding [Samuelowicz and Bain (2001) considered ‘facilitating understanding orientation’ an ‘intermediate’ orientation on the teaching and learning-centered orientation continuum. Yet they preferred to include this orientation within teaching-centered orientations because they considered the characteristics of this orientation closer to teaching-centeredness].
2. *Learning-centered*: Changing students’ conceptions, helping students develop skills, preventing misunderstandings, negotiating meaning, encouraging knowledge creation, supporting student learning

Although Samuelowicz and Bain’s (2001) research studies did not aim at language teaching, their categories are useful to visualize the differences between two distinct conceptualizations of teaching/learning (see Table 2.5 & Table 2.6).

Table 2.5 Teaching-centered orientations (source Samuelowicz & Bain 2001)

Dimensions	Teaching-centered orientations		
	Imparting information	Transmitting structured knowledge	Providing a facilitating understanding
Desired learning outcomes	Recall of atomized information	Reproductive understanding	Reproductive understanding
Expected use of knowledge	Within subject	Within subject For future use	Within subject For future use
Responsibility for organising or transforming knowledge	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher shows how knowledge can be used
Nature of knowledge	Externally constructed	Externally constructed	Externally constructed
Students’ existing conceptions	Not taken into account	Not taken into account	Not taken into account
Teacher-student interaction	One-way Teacher→students	Two-way to maintain student attention	Two-way to ensure/clarify understanding
Control of content	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
Professional development	Not stressed	Not stressed	Not stressed
Interest/motivation	Teachers’	Teachers’	Teachers’

Table 2.6 Learning-centered orientations (source Samuelowicz & Bain 2001)

Dimensions	Learning-centered orientations			
	Helping students develop expertise	Preventing misunderstanding	Negotiating understanding	Encouraging knowledge creation
Desired learning outcomes	Change in ways of thinking	Change in ways of thinking	Change in ways of thinking	Change in ways of thinking
Expected use of knowledge	Interpretation of reality	Interpretation of reality	Interpretation of reality	Interpretation of reality
Responsibility for organizing or transforming knowledge	Students & teacher	Students	Students	Students
Nature of knowledge	Personalized	Personalized	Personalized	Personalized
Students' existing conceptions	Not taken into account	Used to prevent common mistakes	Used as basis for conceptual change	Used as basis for conceptual change
Teacher-student interaction	Two-way to negotiate meaning	Two-way to negotiate meaning	Two-way to negotiate meaning	Two-way to negotiate meaning
Control of content	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher	Students
Professional development	Stressed	Stressed	Stressed	Stressed
Interest/motivation	Students'	Students'	Students'	Students'

2.12 Teacher beliefs and some controversial issues

2.12.1 Beliefs about using L1 in L2 classrooms

The issue of L1 use in L2 language classrooms has long been a controversial topic in the L2 literature. The major themes concerning this issue have usually been discussed under the topic ‘teachers’ use of L1 in second/foreign language classrooms.’ These discussions have sought out answers to the following questions:

1. Should L1 be used in L2 classrooms (including both teachers and learners)? If yes, *why, when* and *how much* L1 should be used?

However, although the topic has been one of the most discussed issues, the SLL/FLL literature provides us with a few empirical studies which directly asked

teachers' opinions/reasons 'why (or why not) they use L1 in their language classes (e.g. Levine 2003; Macaro 2001). In general, the SLL/FLL research regarding the issue of L2 versus L1 use focused mainly on how much L2/L1 is used in L2 classrooms and very little theoretical and/or empirical research has been done as regards 'why and when' teachers and students feel the need to alternate between L2 and L1. Eldridge (1996), Levine (2003), Turnbull and Arnett (2002) and Macaro (2001) all pointed out that there is, in fact, relatively little theoretical and empirical evidence to support pedagogical decisions concerning when and how much L1 should be used in L2 classrooms. Teacher and learner perspectives (their beliefs, reasons, practices have been investigated by only a few empirical studies. Levine (2003) noted that (except for a few empirical works) the debate is largely based on intuitions about best practices, anecdotal evidence and personal classroom experience. Levine (2003) stated that almost all L2 teachers appear to have their personal approach towards L1 and L2 use in their language classrooms. Levine (2003) postulated that teachers' personal approaches may be influenced by "...pedagogical training, knowledge of the second language acquisition (SLA) literature, official policy, and classroom experience. Yet often it appears to be based primarily on classroom experience and intuitions about what feels right" (p. 343). In the same vein Duff and Polio (1990) postulated that institutional policy on L2 use, lesson content and objectives, pedagogical materials, and teachers' educational backgrounds may be some of the influencing factors on teachers' amount of L2 (L1) use in their language classrooms.

Various empirical studies based their research on the assumptions offered by the natural-approach which advocates L2 instruction without recourse-to-L1¹⁶ (see Krashen

¹⁶ The expression 'without recourse-to-L1' originates from Krashen and Terrell's (1983) natural approach which advocates exclusive L2 use during language instruction.

1981a, 1981b; Krashen & Terrell 1983: 9). Thus, many of the empirical studies took the ‘without recourse-to-L1’ position, and they either observed, recorded or asked about the amount of teacher use of L2 (and/or L1) in language classrooms (e.g. Duff & Polio 1990; Guthrie 1984 cited in Levine 2003; Polio & Duff 1994).

Many scholars, although most of them agree on the legitimacy of L1 in L2 classrooms, claim that successful language learning requires extensive L2 input. (Chaudron 1988; R. Ellis 1989, 2005a; Turnbull 2001). R. Ellis (2005a) explained that language learning is a slow and difficult process (both in naturalistic and instructed learning contexts) and unless learners receive L2 exposure, they cannot acquire it. He added that “In general, the more exposure they receive, the more and the faster they will learn.” (R. Ellis 2005a par 26). Quality and quantity of L2 contact are also considered to be positive factors influencing L2 willingness to communicate (WTC) (Clement *et al.* 2003; MacIntyre *et al.* 1998; MacIntyre *et al.* 2003). Thus, many specialists have emphasized inevitable disadvantages of extensive L1 reliance in L2 classrooms (Chaudron 1988; R. Ellis 1989, 2000, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c; Turnbull 2001). These specialists’ argued that, especially in cases when the learners have little or no L2 contact outside the classroom environment, foreign language teachers should aim to maximize L2 use in their classes. These claims are supported by some empirical studies which found direct correlation between extensive L2 use and learner achievement. (Burstall 1968, 1970; Burstall, Jamieson, Cohen & Hargreaves 1974; Carroll 1975; Carroll, Clark, Edwards & Handrick 1967; Wolf 1977: all cited in Turnbull & Arnett 2002). Other arguments such as extensive L2 contact: a) ‘contributes to learner motivation’ (e.g. Macaro 1997; Gardner 2001a; Gardner & Lambert 1972); and b) ‘increases learner

willingness to communicate' (MacIntyre *et al.* 1998) are also supported by some empirical studies. R. Mori's study (2004) demonstrated how genuine opportunities staying-in English rule generated. R. Mori's study illustrated that the opportunities to communicate in English created an environment where the learners made best use of the knowledge they possessed instead of going back to their L1.

The most persuasive theoretical rationale for maximizing the L2 use in L2 classrooms was presented by some empirical studies that found direct correlation between extensive L2 use and learner achievement. (Burstall 1968, 1970; Burstall, Jamieson, Cohen & Hargreaves 1974; Carroll 1975; Carroll, Clark, Edwards & Handrick 1967; Wolf 1977: all cited in Turnbull & Arnett 2002). Thus the idea that 'teachers are the learners' primary source of L2 input; therefore, they should maximize their L2 use' was supported by these empirical studies. Later studies, as well as the importance of L2 exposure, emphasized the quality aspect of L2 use in language classrooms (e.g. Polio & Duff 1994; Walsh 2002). Walsh's research article (2002) tackled the issue a little differently from the other scholars who investigated teacher talk in language classrooms before him. He criticized previous research for mainly focusing on the quantity rather than quality in teacher talk. In his research, Walsh (2002) recorded eight experienced EFL teachers' lessons. His article provided some extracts demonstrating good examples of teacher use of L2 to encourage learner participation (none of the teachers used L1). He analyzed the data by using conversation analysis (CA) and tried to find answers to the following questions:

1. To what extent do teachers of EFL hinder or facilitate learner contributions by their use of language?

2. How can teachers enhance the quantity and quality of learner output by more careful language use?
3. In what ways do teachers deny learning opportunities by 'filling in the gaps' or 'smoothing over' learner contributions?

Walsh's research (2002) suggested that the teacher's choice of language can construct or obstruct learner participation. Walsh (2002) argued that the aim of teacher talk should aim to maximize learner contribution in the L2.

Turnbull and Arnett (2002) reviewed theoretical and empirical literature regarding teachers' uses of the L1 and L2 in second and foreign language classrooms. Their review looked into teachers' uses of the L1 and L2 in language classrooms as regards: exposure to L2 input; student motivation; the ways in which the L1 use can promote L2 learning at cognitive level and code-switching; and when the L1 should be used. They asserted that relevant research studies on the topic found a direct correlation between L2 achievement and teacher use of the L2. They considered these results the most persuasive theoretical rationale for maximizing the teacher's use of the L2 in the classroom. They argued that since teachers are often the students' primary source of linguistic input maximizing the L2 in the classroom is a favorable practice. Turnbull and Arnett's (2002), although some of the examples they provided offered anecdotal support rather than empirical, acknowledged that increased use of L2 has positive effect on student motivation. However, Turnbull and Arnett's (2002) also argued that maximizing L2 should not be interpreted as exclusion of the L1 from second/foreign language classrooms.

However, in some cases 'maximizing L2' is interpreted as 'without recourse-to-L1'. This view, in some cases, is taken as granted and practiced in language classrooms

through word-by-word translations of Krashen and Terrell's natural approach (see Krashen & Terrell 1983). However, in some cases, despite the discussions against the use of L1, L1 has preserved its place in language classrooms. It is commonly claimed that even in extreme cases in which the mother tongue is completely banned in L2 classrooms it is still unavoidable for learners not to refer to their mother tongue. Thus, some research studies attempted to understand origins of possible influences and consequences regarding this phenomenon. Some studies asked both the teachers and learners to explain why they use the L1 in language classrooms; or in some cases the learners were asked whether they were satisfied with the amount of the L2 used in their language classes (see Duff & Polio 1990; Levine 2003; Macaro 1997). Macaro's case study (2001) looked into learners' and teachers' code-switching between the L1 and L2. His findings illustrated that the quantity of the L1 and/or L2 used by the teachers had little effect on the quantity of the L1/L2 used by the learners. Some empirical studies which used Horwitz's BALLI (Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory) detected links between learner use of L2 and anxiety (see Horwitz 1999). Levine (2003), on the other hand, found that the use of L2 and language anxiety did not increase proportionally. He explained that increased use of L2 does not necessarily result in higher anxiety in learners. Thus, he concluded that learners who experience extensive L2 use in their classrooms get used to this practice and extensive L2 use helps them develop strategies to cope with their language anxiety.

Some sociocultural, sociocognitive, and social psychological approaches, which are increasingly establishing new paradigms in SLA (Second Language Acquisition) research, argue for L1 use in L2 classrooms. The scholars who are taking the sociocultural, sociocognitive or social psychological standpoints claim that learners use their culture and mother tongue as a point of reference when learning a foreign language

(Antón & DiCamilla 1999; Castellotti 2001). Castellotti claimed that learners' mother tongue is in the core of their representations and constitutes a point of anchoring; therefore, people who are concerned with L2 learning cannot disregard this fact (Castellotti 2001). She collected her data directly from the language classrooms and analyzed when and why the learners and teachers alternated between L1 and L2 (see Castellotti 2001). Similarly Antón and DiCamilla (1999) argued for the use of L1 in language classrooms. They used a Vygotskian interactionist approach in their study. Like Castellotti, they studied the language learners' use of the L1 while the learners were engaged in a collaborative activity. They noted that L1 is an indispensable device which learners use for scaffolding¹⁷. That is, L1 is viewed as a device through which learners transfer previously acquired knowledge from their first language to their L2 instruction. The idea backing this view is that by using the mother tongue, meaning is established immediately and this guarantees that the L2 learning takes place by offering a feeling of security and help for the learners. Antón and DiCamilla (1999) provided evidence that while performing L2 tasks learners use their mother tongue to externalize their inner speech as a means to regulate their mental activities. They also noted that L1 use helps learners to establish and maintain intersubjectivity¹⁸ [i.e. L1 is considered to be a tool which helps learners to construct a shared perspective of the task (Antón & DiCamilla 1999)].

¹⁷ *Scaffolding* is a term originates from Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (see Vygotsky 1978; Daniels 1996). Scaffolding is assumed to facilitate the learner's ability to build on prior knowledge (language is postulated to be playing an important role) and internalize new information. In other words, scaffolding assists the learner in building his/her understanding of new content and process (Daniels 1996).

¹⁸ Intersubjectivity refers to the task participants' common agreement "...on the nature of the activity they are engaged by sharing a common motive and goals for performing the task." (Ellis R. 2003: 189).

Duda (2006) approached this issue from cognitive perspective and argued that learners' first language is the best means to aid learners to develop their metacognitive ability. He explained that learners' mother tongue provides them with the optimal condition for linguistic introspection during their metacognitive development. Therefore, he suggested that learners' metacognitive reflections be conducted in their first language. Regarding cognitive issues related to the L1 use, Turnbull and Arnett's (2002) literature review offered the following examples on 'how and when teacher use of L1 can be functional in L2 classrooms':

1. As a cognitive tool:
 - a) to help learners scaffold their learning (see also Antón & DiCamilla 1999 and Section 2.7)
 - b) to negotiate meaning (Brooks & Donato 1994 cited in Turnbull and Arnett 2002)
2. During collaborative tasks to:
 - a) to increase efficiency
 - b) to increase attention
 - c) to facilitate interpersonal interaction (Swain & Lapkin 2000 cited in Turnbull and Arnett 2002)
3. As a pedagogical tool:
 - a) to create authentic learning environments (e.g. by using code-switching) (see Cook 2001).
 - b) to check understanding (e.g. to ensure that learners understand a grammatical concept or vocabulary item (Turnbull 2001b cited in Turnbull and Arnett 2002)

Castellotti and Moore (1997) and Eldridge (1996) argued that code-switching¹⁹ can be an effective teaching strategy. Castellotti and Moore (1997) stated that teachers should decide in advance on ‘how much’ and ‘when’ to use the L1 in their classrooms (see also Castellotti 2001; Castellotti & Moore 2002). Coste (1997 cited in Turnbull and Arnett 2002) claimed that code-switching can further learner L2 proficiency by using L1 as a reference of point. Eldridge’s study (1996) illustrated that majority of code-switching in the classroom is highly purposeful, and related to pedagogical goals. Macaro’s case study (2001) looked into learners’ and teachers’ code-switching between the L1 and L2. He explained that in their study the teachers were exposed to theoretical positions and empirical studies on the issue during their training program. The study analyzed the quantity of the L1 used and the teachers’ reflections and beliefs on code-switching. His findings illustrated that the quantity of the L1 and/or L2 used by the teachers had little effect on the quantity of L1/L2 used by the learners. The study also revealed that the teachers referred to the theoretical literature they have read only very little.

As a result of this increased awareness of the facilitative role of L1 in meaning-based L2 classroom environments some researchers have re-evaluated the use of L1 within the L2 learning context (Cook, 2001; R. Ellis 2003; Klapper 2003; Turnbull). Cook (2001), although he expressed positive views for maximizing the L2 in language classrooms, stated that maximizing L2 use in the classroom should not be interpreted as abandoning the L1 completely. However, as I mentioned earlier, most of these above-mentioned studies focused mainly on the amount of the L2 or L1 used in the language classroom. Only a few exceptions (e.g. Antón & DiCamilla 1999; Castellotti 2001;

¹⁹ Alternating rapidly between L1 and L2 in either oral or written expression (Coste 1997 cited in Turnbull & Arnett’s 2002)

Castellotti & Moore 1997; Eldridge 1996; Levine 2003; Macaro 2001) investigated the impact of L1 and L2 use on learners and learning. Moreover, only very few of the empirical studies included teachers' beliefs about and reasons for using or not using the L1 in their classrooms.

2.12.2 Beliefs about L2 grammar teaching

Issues concerning the teaching of grammar have long been a major topic of discussion in second/foreign language pedagogy (Borg 1999b; Ellis 2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c; Ellis *et al.* 2002; Savignon 2002b). Borg (1999c) asserted that although research about the role of formal instruction in L2 grammar teaching has long been the area of debate, research in this area is still unable to provide language teachers' with clear answers.

Contrary to the earlier (traditional) SLL/FLL methods, which operated through linguistic syllabi that are in the form of sequences of grammatical structures, recent trends in second/foreign language teaching (see Section 2.29) emphasize contextualized meaningful learning rather than the teaching of isolated linguistic forms (see R. Ellis 2000, 2003, 2005a, 2005b; Richards & Rodgers 2001; Savignon 2002b and so forth) [see also Section 2.27.4 for 'focus-on-forms' vs. 'focus-on-form' discussions]. Savignon (2002) maintained that many language teachers interpreted 'focus on meaning' as that grammar is not important, or that communicative approaches aim at developing learners' oral skills without directing any attention to learners' grammatical competence. Thus communicative approaches have been criticized for not having a clear paradigm regarding this issue. Swan (1985b) argued that the communicative approach has an over-simplified view of language teaching by only emphasizing the semantic features in language learning. He claimed that such practices are misleading

because language teaching should involve integrating formal syntactic syllabuses. Borg (1999c) explained that research on this specific issue is full of uncertainties and unable to provide consistent guidelines for L2 teachers. Ellis (2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c) and Ellis *et al.* (2002) asserted that a lot of importance is attached to the issue of ‘grammar’. They, therefore, suggested that a careful consideration should be given to resolve the dichotomy regarding this issue. Ellis *et al.* (2002) argued that entirely meaning-centered language instruction cannot be sufficient enough to promote high levels of linguistic competence. Thus, Ellis (2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c) and Ellis *et al.* (2002) suggested that, although primary focus should be on meaning, language instruction should also ensure focus on form.

Borg (1999b) claimed that regarding grammar teaching, research principally focused on learning outcomes rather than actual classroom processes. He asserted that fuller understanding of the process of teaching could only be done through research on teacher cognition (beliefs, knowledge, theories, assumptions, and attitudes). Thus, Borg (1999c) suggested that the area of L2 grammar teaching, which provides prolific data to examine teachers’ theories and the psychological bases of grammar teaching, should be further researched. Borg (1999c) strongly asserted that studying teacher cognition (beliefs) is relevant to the whole field of language teaching and perpetual research on all aspects of L2 teachers’ beliefs (theories, cognitions etc) is required to enlighten our understandings of classroom realities. He claimed that information obtained on teacher beliefs about the grammar would provide Teacher Development (TD) practices with information grounded in the study of actual classroom practices. He maintained that this information flow from classroom to TD practices can also help teachers find themselves, their classroom practices and their needs in such development programs and encourage them to reflect on their teaching practices.

Part 2: Discordances between Learner/Teacher Beliefs

2.13 Introduction

Empirical studies done in educational psychology provide us with wealth of evidence demonstrating existence of discordances between teacher and learner perspectives, and how these discordances impact negatively on learning teaching environments (e.g. Entwistle 1987, 2003; Entwistle *et al.* 2002; Prosser & Trigwell 1999). Similarly, SLL/FLL literature also provides us with abundance of anecdotal, experiential and empirical evidence on existence of differences between learner and teacher beliefs²⁰ (e.g. approaches to learning vs. approaches to teaching, perceptions of learning vs. perceptions of teaching, styles of learning vs. styles of teaching; and learner vs. teacher agendas and so forth). Entwistle 2003 stated that the literature on student learning and teachers' views about teaching/learning suggests marked differences in the way teachers and learners think about teaching and learning. Milner (2005) stated that, at times, teachers' beliefs are not in agreement (concordance) with the experiences and beliefs of their learners and this causes discordance between teachers' and students' learning/teaching agendas, which inevitably influence students' learning negatively.

²⁰ Here I use the term 'beliefs' as a general term to encompass various labels such as learner/teacher intentions, interpretations, perceptions, preconceptions, perspectives, preferred approaches, styles, agendas and so forth that have been referred to as origins of 'mismatches' in SLL/FLL classrooms. Although these terms are all separate entities they are postulated to be belief-related and are guided by their underlying beliefs.

2.14 Why is discordance between teaching and learning important ?

Nunan (1986) maintained that several studies on teacher and learner perceptions of the usefulness of certain teaching techniques and activities illustrated existence of clear differences between teacher and learner perspectives of language learning and teaching practices. Nunan (1995) asserted that learners tend to follow their own agendas rather than those of their teachers. Kumaravadivelu (1991) asserted that recent trends in language teaching have a significant degree of flexibility (e.g. communicative language learning, humanistic language teaching, and task-based learning). He explained that these new trends mainly emphasize communicative language learning, and within this framework, classroom activities are presented with a set of general learning objectives and problem-solving tasks, and not a list of specific linguistic items. In the same vein, R. Ellis (2003) maintained that, contrary to the earlier (traditional) SLL/FLL methods, which viewed language as a set of linguistic systems and operated through linguistic syllabi (usually grammatical structures), recent language pedagogy does not attempt to specify "...what the learners will learn, only how they will learn." (R. Ellis 2003: 31). Kumaravadivelu (1991) claimed that this flexibility in L2 pedagogy then depends highly on learner and teacher perceptions and interpretations of classroom aims and events; therefore, increasing the potential for misunderstanding and miscommunication in the language classroom. According to Nunan (1995), major causes for mismatches (discordances) are the difference between teacher and learner agendas:

"...the principal reason for the mismatch between teachers and learners, which gives rise to a disparity between what is taught and what is learned, is that there is mismatch between the pedagogical agenda of the teacher and that of the learner. While the teacher is busily teaching one thing, the learner is very often focusing on something else."

(Nunan 1995: 134-135)

Kumaravadivelu (1991) stressed the influence of prior teacher and learner experiences on learner and teacher perceptions and interpretations:

“...the teacher and the learner, as experienced members of the classroom community in a particular society, bring with them their own perceptions of what constitutes language teaching, language learning, and learning outcome, and their prescriptions about what their classroom roles ought to be.”

Kumaravadivelu (1991) stated that within this new language-learning environment both the teacher and learner go through the process of restructuring their role relationship. Therefore, he suggested looking into factors contributing to gaps between teacher intention and learner interpretation of L2 language tasks.

Like Kumaravadivelu (1991), Nunan (1986) also stressed the influence of prior learning experiences and societal factors on learners' current perceptions of their language experiences, as regards recent L2 learning pedagogy. He explained that teacher and learner differences mainly stem from the learners' social/cultural backgrounds and previous learning experiences which in somewhat discordant with their teachers' views which are influenced by recent theories of learning/teaching (e.g. communicative language learning/teaching).

The empirical studies which investigated differences between L2 teachers' and L2 learners' perspectives in teaching and learning used mostly Horwitz's BALLI (Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory) to detect possible gaps (discordances) in language classrooms (e.g. Peacock 1998). Several other empirical studies used research methodologies such as ethnography²¹, observations, interviews, and blend of various

²¹ Ethnography means learning from people. It is a research methodology commonly used by anthropologists. It is a tool for understanding how people see their experiences. It has broad implications

research methodologies to discover and understand possible differences between teacher and learner perspectives in language classrooms (e.g. Bloom 2007; Canagarajah 1993; Hawkey 2006; Kumaravadivelu 1991; Mantle-Bromley 1995; Peacock 1998, 2001b). Some other empirical studies investigated discordance between L2 learner and L2 teacher beliefs by focusing on some common L2 issues such as: error correction; grammar teaching (e.g. Schulz 2001); teacher and student role expectations (e.g. McCargar 1993); use of L1 in L2 classrooms (e.g. Levine 2003); learner and teacher perceptions of language activities (e.g. Hawkey 2006); teacher and learner beliefs about oral language instruction (e.g. Cohen & Fass 2001), and so forth.

All of these above mentioned scholars stressed the important influence teacher and learner beliefs have on language learning outcomes. It is commonly believed that learners' achievement of success depends largely on the degree of agreement between 'teacher intention' and 'learner interpretation'. Schulz (2001) asserted that inconsistencies in student and teacher belief systems could be harmful to learning. Several empirical SLL/FLL studies provided evidence to support this view (e.g. Bloom 2007; Canagarajah 1993; Cohen & Fass 2001; Hawkey 2006; Horwitz 1987, 1988, 1999; Peacock 1998, 2001b and so forth).

Horwitz (1988) argued that learners' have preconceptions of language learning and these preconceptions might lead learners to have negative and incorrect expectations about how foreign languages are learned. These incorrect beliefs may have other effects. Students may feel frustrated when they see that their beliefs and

for many fields, including education. In education it is mainly used to understand teachers' and learners' needs, experiences, viewpoints, and goals. Such information is considered useful for teachers and programme designers to improve student learning (Spradley 1979).

expectations are not concordant with the classroom methods used. In cases when learner expectations and conceptions of foreign language learning differ from teacher conceptions and expectations, learning outcomes are postulated to be further affected. Horwitz suggested that the gap between teacher and learner beliefs might affect learners' confidence in their teachers and their willingness to participate in the L2. McCargar (1993) claimed that unsatisfied learners might abandon a class and choose another one which best meets their perceived needs, goals and expectations.

Several empirical studies confirmed Horwitz's (1988) and McCargar's (1993) conclusions by demonstrating that gaps between teacher and learner beliefs and their approaches to learning and teaching may result in learner resistance²² (learner reluctance to participate in classroom activities) and dissatisfaction (e.g. Bloom 2007; Canagarajah 1993; Hawkey 2006; Mantle-Bromley 1995; Peacock 1998, 2001b).

For instance, Peacock's (1998, 2001b) studies found that the gaps between teacher and learner beliefs reduced learner confidence and satisfaction; and caused learner reluctance to participate in communicative activities; and consequently resulted in negative learning outcomes. Similarly, Canagarajah's (1993) research, which investigated learner resistance, clearly demonstrated that language learners could be unsatisfied with the teaching methods used in their language classroom and might react to it by showing resistance to participate in the language activities. Canagarajah (1993) identified a link between resistance and product/result-oriented learning. He explained that the participant students in his research expressed displeasure and dissatisfaction with the communicative approach used in their EFL classes, and wanted explicit

²² Canagarajah (1993) used the expression 'ambivalent student opposition' to define learner resistance.

grammatical instruction that they could study and learn as content. Canagarajah noted that the students often disregarded learner-centered and activity-oriented classes but attended classes which dealt with the grammar points overtly. He also explained that the students were reluctant to participate in the role-play or other interactive activities. He explained that the learners showed resistance to engaging in learner-centered learning activities and tried to gear classroom interaction towards a teacher-centered form.

Hawkey (2006) investigated a group of English language teachers' and learners' perceptions of communicative language learning/teaching in their classes. Although the data indicated that both the teachers and the learners had an overall agreement on merits of communicative teaching and learning, the findings of the study suggested remarkable differences between the perceptions of learners and teachers on the importance of grammar and pair work in their classes. Hawkey regarded these differences as potential problem areas to focus on, and he, therefore, suggested that teachers should be given support in these areas.

Bloom's teacher-research project (2007), which was based on communicative language teaching (the course for this project was designed by using task and project based teaching models), investigated thirteen adult language learners' reactions towards non-traditional language classroom. She collected data via anecdotal records (to document these anecdotal records she videotaped each class); informal interviews, and informal and formal student feedback. Her research findings suggested that the conflict between teacher and learner expectations created tensions in the classroom. Bloom's study revealed that the tensions were mainly related to the following four themes: 'Student versus teacher-centered learning', 'self-efficacy versus *laissez faire* work attitude', 'communication versus accuracy', and 'process versus product orientation'.

She observed that the student had tensions during student-centered activities. She stated that these tensions developed because the course did not meet the learners' expectations; that is, they preferred a more teacher-centered approach. During student-centered activities the students questioned the teacher's role and 'control' of the classroom. She explained that some students appeared to be confused during self-directed learning time. Bloom stated that although some students took the responsibility of their own learning, some others had 'a laissez faire attitude'. Bloom asserted that the aim of the course was authentic communication rather than working on the ability to produce perfect language and the assignments and the activities encouraged the learners to focus on the process rather than the product.

Jing (2006) investigated how and why learner resistance occurred in a metacognition-training (MT)²³ project. The aim of the MT project was to improve learner reflection and autonomy. His paper addressed two research questions:

1. In what ways were the students resistant to the teacher's goals and expectations in a metacognition-training (MT) project?
2. What were the possible explanations for this resistance? (Jing 2006).

His findings indicated existence of learner resistance because of gaps (discordance) between the teacher's goals and expectations and those of the learners. Jing also discovered that institutional pressures and societal expectations were the influencing and controlling factors (e.g. examination culture valued by the educational

²³ Metacognition-training (MT) is "...reflection on learning processes and learning to learn (e.g. the development of capacity for planning, monitoring and evaluating one's learning)..." (Jing 2006: 96). Such reflection is postulated to improve self-direction and learner autonomy in learning (Jing 2006).

community). He explained that these institutional and societal pressures and expectations led both the learners and teachers to employ product-oriented approaches in learning/teaching and the learners to learn for examinations. Jing explained that because of the product-oriented approach MT project failed to succeed. Jing (2006) explained this as follows:

“...learner resistance is also a matter of tensions and conflicts in learner and teacher agendas, and in short-term and long-term priorities in learning. For example, students might recognize the long-term potential of MT (Metacognitive Training) (which intended to involve them in more reflective and process oriented learning), but still felt that short-term priorities (e.g. improving basic language skills and taking examinations) should prevail. In an examination-oriented educational context, this might constitute a reasonable and sensible orientation towards learning.” (Jing 2006: 113).

Cohen and Fass (2001) investigated a group of EFL teachers’ and learners’ beliefs concerning oral language tasks. The findings indicated that there was disagreement between student and teacher beliefs regarding the amount of student teacher talk in the classroom. They also discovered that although the program claimed to have a communicative approach to teaching the teachers’ actual classroom implementations did not correspond to this objective. Moreover, the findings also indicated that the beliefs held by the teachers and the students did not reflect a communicative approach. They therefore, suggested more training for both the teachers and the students in order to fulfill the institutional objectives. Similarly, Mantle-Bromely (1995) investigated a group of learners’ beliefs about foreign language learning (She used Horwitz’s BALLI) and discovered that these learners’ beliefs differed greatly from commonly held teacher beliefs. She therefore, stressed that teachers need to have a clear understanding of their students’ beliefs and help them construct realistic and informed beliefs about foreign language learning.

Kumaravadivelu's study (1991) identified ten potential sources of mismatches (discordance) between teacher intention and learner interpretation: cognitive, communicative, linguistic, pedagogic, strategic, cultural, evaluative, procedural, instructional, and attitudinal.

Discordances between teachers' general teaching styles (which are directly linked to teachers' beliefs and conceptions of teaching) and learners' preferred learning styles have also been proved to be influencing learning outcomes negatively (see Peacock 2001b). Peacock noted that a gap (discordance) between teaching and learning styles might cause serious learning failure, frustration and demotivation. He suggested that EFL teachers should teach by using various strategies in order to accommodate different learning styles. It is generally argued that there are greater chances of achieving desired learning outcomes when the gap between teacher intention and learner interpretation is narrower (Kumaravadivelu 1991).

Kumaravadivelu (1991) argued that knowledge of potential sources of gaps (discordance) between teacher and learner beliefs would help teachers: sensitize themselves to different interpretations/perceptions of language-learning tasks; and facilitate desired learning outcomes in the classroom. However, compared to the importance given to the topic, the SLL/FLL literature provides us with very few empirical studies that sought to understand why and how mismatches (discordances) occur, and there is very little empirical work to suggest what could be done to overcome these discordances.

2.15 Ways of overcoming discordances

The research findings have shown that discordances between teacher and learner perspectives have negative effects on educational instruction. These findings have led educationalists to search answers to the problem. Regarding the issue, in the whole, educationalists appear to share the views that: a) learners' and teachers' beliefs play a significant role, therefore, both teachers' and learners' opinions should be consulted and their beliefs should be explored; b) in order to mediate learners' dysfunctional beliefs learner training should become part of language instruction; and c) teachers should receive help on the issue.

In different language learning contexts, the emphasis on communicative learner-centered instruction (e.g. meaning/communication based language tasks, autonomy and the acquisition of metacognitive skills) may result in learner resistance when expectations of language learning involve reliance on: a) teacher rather than the learner and self-regulation; b) rote-learning as opposed to creative, meaningful, communicative language use; and accuracy at the expense of fluency. Thus, knowledge of learner beliefs and its implications for learning and teaching is considered to be vital in order to understand the possible origins of discordances between learning and teaching (see Benson & Lor 1999; Cohen and Fass 2001; Hawkey 2006; Jing 2006; Kumaravadivelu 1991; Schulz 2001).

Nunan 1986 stated that the duty of language teachers is not only to teach the language but also to train the learners on how to become a good language learner. He claimed that learners' need to be convinced about the merits of communicative language activities (role-playing, problem-solving etc). He suggested that learners should be sensitized to the requirements of communicative language learning through

explanation, discussion and demonstration. In his view, in order for curriculum innovations to be effective, educators (teachers, curriculum designers etc.) should approach the learners and their perceptions of the language learning process with sensitivity and should be willing to consult learners' beliefs and negotiate.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) noted that teachers in communicative classrooms are required to respond to their students' needs and understand their students' perceptions of their learning styles, learning assets and learning goals. They suggested that this may be done informally (one-to-one sessions with students) or through administering needs assessment instrument. They proposed that on the basis of such needs assessment, teachers should plan their language instruction to respond to the learners' needs. In the same vein, Schulz (2001) suggested that it is important that teachers explore their students' perceptions of issues related to language learning and make efforts to deal with potential conflicts between student beliefs and teaching practices. Similarly, Benson and Lor (1999) proposed to take into consideration learners' conceptions of, beliefs about, and approaches to language learning. Based on their research with a group of language learners (1999), they found that the learners' conceptions of language learning were influential in shaping the learners' beliefs, and subsequently the approaches they adopted to learning and the learning strategies they used. Benson and Lor (1999) suggested that exploring learners' conceptions of learning²⁴ is important because it helps to classify learner beliefs. They maintained that language teachers need not only know what beliefs learners hold about learning but they also need to know whether these beliefs are 'functional' or 'dysfunctional' in order to

²⁴ The notion 'conceptions of learning' is referred to as 'beliefs about language learning' by Horwitz and investigated via Horwitz's BALLI (Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory) studies (see Horwitz 1987, 1988, 1999).

be able to influence learners' attitudes and language learning behaviors. Benson and Lor suggested that in order to modify language learning beliefs, the learner must also modify the underlying conceptions on which these beliefs are based.

Today in some institutions where foreign languages are taught, counseling²⁵, or/and learner training programs (e.g. metacognitive training; language learning strategy training etc.) are integrated in language learning curricula. Such programs aim to: a) train learners' on how to become a good language learner (e.g. self-directed, autonomous etc); b) negotiate (mediate) learners' dysfunctional beliefs and help them to appropriate these in a more functional way (e.g. see Jing 2006). The Council of Europe has published various studies proposing different approaches for mediating language learners' beliefs and helping learners develop positive attitudes toward the target culture(s) and language(s) they are learning (see Byram & Planet, 2000; Fenner, 2001; Zarate *et al.*, 2004).

2.16 Conclusion

In educational enterprises, the teaching act is considered to be one of the most important aspects in the success of the outcomes of an education program. There is now a common view among SLL/FLL experts that being a good teacher is a complex, abstract phenomenon and cannot be achieved through mastery of discrete skills that are transmitted by teacher educators (Borg 2003a; Hall 2005; Peacock 2001a). In order for effective teaching and learning to take place, teachers are required to be aware of their students' beliefs, interests, needs and expectations (Savignon 2002b; Williams &

²⁵ CRAPEL (Centre de Recherches et D'Applications Pédagogiques En Langues) Université Nancy 2 has been using counseling services as part of their self-directed language learning program (see Gremmo, 1993b; Bailly, 1993).

Burden 1997). This view emphasizes more active role of teachers, which requires teachers question their teaching and their students' learning to reduce any gaps between teacher intention and learner interpretation. This view has also prompted theorists to encourage teachers to use formal assessment of learners' needs (e.g. questionnaires, interviews etc) to minimize possible discordances between their teaching styles and their students' learning styles. Savignon (2002b) suggested that in order to facilitate the chances of achieving desired learning outcomes teachers ought to use instruments to identify students' needs, classroom activity preferences, and develop self-awareness in learners to encourage changes in students' behavior.

Part 3: Theoretical Underpinnings

2.17 Introduction

The role and importance of beliefs have been of a great interest for many scholars from diverse disciplines. In disciplines where human behavior and learning are of a primary concern (namely, cognitive psychology, educational psychology and social psychology) beliefs are viewed as an important construct to be investigated in relation to their subsequent impact on people's behavior. Many theories of learning, especially the ones which emerged from conceptual frameworks for the study of *human cognition* (e.g. Flavell's metacognitive theory--see Flavell, 1979); *social representations* (e.g. Moscovici's social representations theory--see Moscovici 1976, Moscovici & Duveen 2000); *expectancy-value model of attitude and behavior theories* (e.g. Fishbein and Ajzen's theory of reasoned action-- see Fishbein and Ajzen 1975; and Ajzen's theory of planned behavior --see Ajzen 1991); *attitudes and motivation* (e.g. Socio-educational model of Gardner & Lambert-- see Gardner & Lambert 1972); *expectancy-value model*

of attributional theories (e.g. Weiner's attributional theory of achievement motivation--see Weiner 1986) self-referent beliefs such as self concept, self perception, and self efficacy (Bandura's socio-cognitive theory, self-efficacy theory--see Bandura 1986, 1997, 2006a, 2006b; Pajares & Schunk 2002), utilized beliefs to comprehend human behavior.

The belief construct involves multitude of complex and interacting agents. Understanding this complexity, regarding teacher and learner beliefs, necessitates going beyond mainstream L2 teaching/learning theories. Narcy-Combes (2005) noted that '*research objects*' in pedagogy are in interaction with each other within complex systems, and each of these *research objects* is a subject of study in one or several disciplines that research on pedagogy depends upon. Thus, in order to be able to investigate the belief phenomenon from different perspectives, this dissertation work referred to different theories.

2.18 Metacognitive theory

Flavell's metacognitive theory (1979), refers to the individual's knowledge about his/her most basic mental states—desires, perceptions, beliefs, knowledge, thoughts, intentions, feelings, and so forth (Flavell 2004). Briefly stated, metacognitive research deals with cognitive knowledge that individuals know about their own thinking (self-knowledge) and about others. The metacognitive research has contributed to the understanding of student learning by providing data on learners' self-knowledge and the types of self-regulation strategies they use to control their cognitive activities. This type of research continues to dominate the field of cognitive development research and shows no sign of diminishing.

The term *metacognitive knowledge*, which originates from Flavell's metacognitive theory, refers to the individual's beliefs or knowledge about (his/her or others') cognitive processes (Flavell 1979). Pintrich described metacognitive knowledge as follows "Metacognitive knowledge involves knowledge about cognition in general, as well as awareness of and knowledge about one's own cognition." (Pintrich 2002: 219). According to Flavell, metacognitive knowledge, which can be both *conscious* and *automatic* (unconscious), is used by the individual to guide his/her cognitive activities (i.e., to engage in or to abandon a particular cognitive activity). Flavell proposed three categories of metacognitive knowledge (see Figure 2.3): person variables, task variables, and strategy variables.

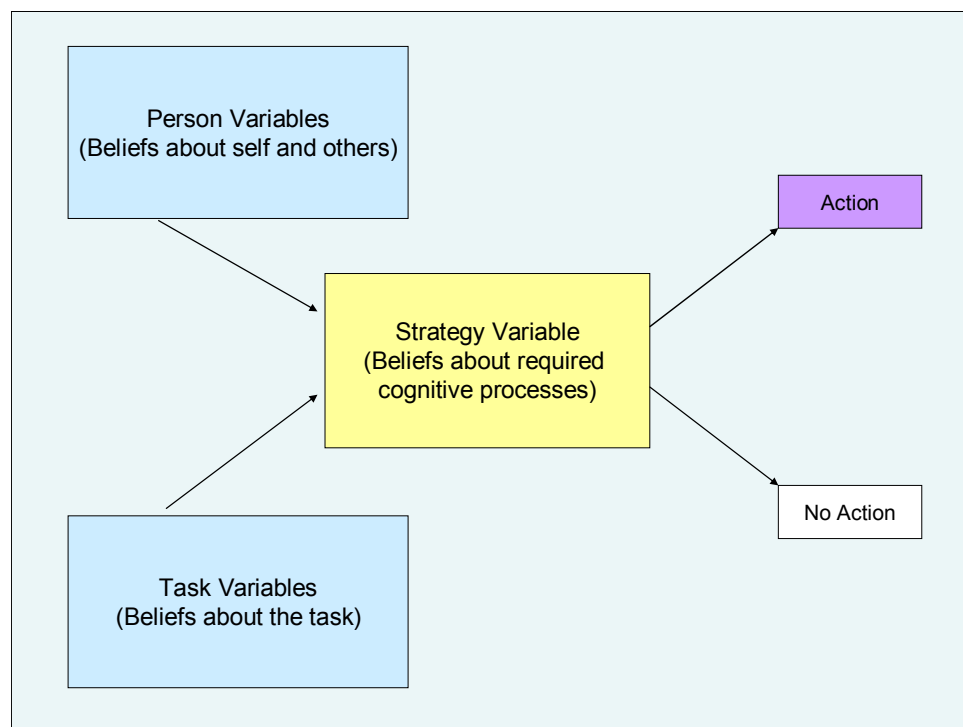


Figure 2.3 Schematic representation of the metacognitive knowledge model

Person variables

Person variables are the individual's beliefs about himself and other people (e.g. that s/he can learn better by memorizing vocabulary items; or his/her friend can learn languages better because s/he has a better memory etc.).

Task variables

These are the individual's beliefs (knowledge) about a given task (e.g. whether the task is interesting, familiar, and whether it is within the capabilities of the individual to accomplish).

Strategy variables

Strategy variables involve the learner's self regulation of his/her learning; selection of cognitive processes that the individual believes to be appropriate to fulfill a task (e.g. belief that whether the task requires summarizing, analyzing, expressing personal opinion etc. or whether the individual needs to ask for further clarification etc.).

In order to understand how individuals use their metacognitive knowledge, we need to understand how self-knowledge is acquired. Many scholars based their theories of metacognitive knowledge acquisition on Representational Theory of Mind (RTM) or Computational Theory of Mind (CTM)-- a computer based model of knowledge formation [proposed first by Hilary Putnam 1961 (cited in Host 2005)] which was inspired by Chomskian model of knowledge acquisition. According to CTM, information-bearing units are connected to one another to form networks of information that are stored in the mind (see Section 2.27.4 for more information about CTM).

Although CTM supports much work in cognitive strategies in general, it fails to explain the conscious elements in metacognitive phenomenon entirely because the processes involved in CTM are mainly considered automatic and sub-conscious processes.

Thus, some scholars explained self-knowledge acquisition through social constructivist accounts that self-knowledge is a progressive construction of meaningful structures, which are linked to one another by a process of inclusion of lower and less powerful meaningful units into higher and more powerful ones. In this respect, metacognitive theory bears some theoretical similarities with Piaget's constructivist theory²⁶ (see Section 2.27.4 for further information about Piaget) and sociocultural model of Vygotsky (see Section 2.27.7 for further information about sociocultural approaches). However, metacognitive knowledge focuses more on the acquired self-knowledge, which belongs to an individual mind, rather than the knowledge acquired through social interactions with others (parents, family, friends etc.) or via some other external sources (e.g. via social artifacts as in Vygotsky's sociocultural model). Pintrich (2002) maintained that regardless of their theoretical perspectives--sociocultural Vygotskian, or cognitive constructivist Piagetian, or information processing models--researchers now agree that with development learners become more aware of their own thinking and cognition in general and this knowledge (metacognitive knowledge) guides them in their learning.

²⁶ Piaget believed that individual minds are constructed out of social interactions and social meanings (Huitt & Hummel 2003).

2.19 Social representations

The concept of *social representations* was first introduced by Durkheim. Nevertheless, social psychologist Serge Moscovici was the first to consider this *concept* a *phenomenon* and develop it into a theory --the theory was first introduced in 1961 and fully elaborated in 1976-- (Duveen 2000).

Moscovi's theory of social representations is concerned with the process through which knowledge (beliefs, images, ideas etc.) is produced, transformed, and transmitted into the social world (Duveen 2000). Durkheim (as cited in Riley 1997: 127) defined representations as "(Representations are) group ideas which are widely shared and socially forceful because they are collectively created through the interaction of many minds." According to Moscovici (1984), the fact that 'representations are produced collaboratively in society' was a known concept, but structure or inner dynamics of representations received little attention. Moscovici claimed that Durkheim, who had a sociological/anthropological viewpoint, perceived representations as stable forms of collective understanding. He maintained that Durkheim had a static conception of representations. Moscovici claimed that Durkheim's conceptualization of representations would not be relevant to modern and dynamic societies which are subject to change. He exemplified this dynamic nature of social representations as follows:

"I suppose that social representations in movement more closely resemble money than language. Like money, they have an existence to extend that they are useful, circulate, take different forms in memory, perception, works of art, and so on, while nevertheless always being recognized as identical, in the same way that 100 francs can be represented a banknote, a traveller's cheque....And their distinctive value varies according to relations of contiguity..." (Moscovici, 1984 p.153)

Moscovici (1984) explained that social representations are networks of beliefs (ideas, metaphors, images and so forth) which are connected to one another around a *core belief* (a prototype which represents a class). Moscovici (1984) maintained that although representations take different shapes with different values there is always a ‘*core belief*’, which connects them all to one another, and that these core beliefs are recognized by individuals who are the members of the same society. Moscovici and Vignaux (1994) acknowledged that according to the ‘central kernel’ hypothesis each social representation is composed of ‘cognitive elements’ or ‘stable schemes’ and other cognitive elements and peripheral schemes are formed around these central kernels (this description bears similarities with schemata²⁷ theory.). Moscovici and Vignaux (1994) explained that according to this hypothesis the stable elements dominate the meaning of the peripheral elements, and that the central kernels (or core beliefs, central stable cognitive schemes, or prototypes) have a stronger resistance to change than the newly formed peripheral schemes. Moscovici and Vignaux (1994) stated that “...the former (stable elements) expresses the permanence and uniformity of the social, while the latter (peripheral schemes) expresses its variability and diversity” (p. 159) (see Figure 2.4).

Duveen (2000) asserted that social representations, which are produced in society, are part of individuals’ everyday world and circulate in the media they watch and read, in everyday discussions they have with their friends, families, colleagues and so forth. In short, these representations constitute the realities of individuals’ everyday

²⁷ Schema (Schemata: plural) refers to categorical rules, cognitive structures or scripts, which all individuals are assumed to possess, to interpret the world. The concept of schema was first introduced by Bartlett (1958) and later developed and used by Piaget (1970), Bruner (1973), Ausubel (1980) and some other cognitive psychologists.

lives and are sustained by social influences of communication. Moscovici (1984) asserted that the main purpose of representations is to facilitate interpretations and to form opinions. He explained that social representations theory views representations as a ‘*classification system of assigning categories and names*’. According to Moscovici, comparing, objects, ideas, individuals, events and so forth, lead people to create these classifications and to link them to a prototype, which represents a class. He considered this classification system more than just a simple means of grading and labeling discrete entities (e.g. persons, objects, events, people’s actions etc.).

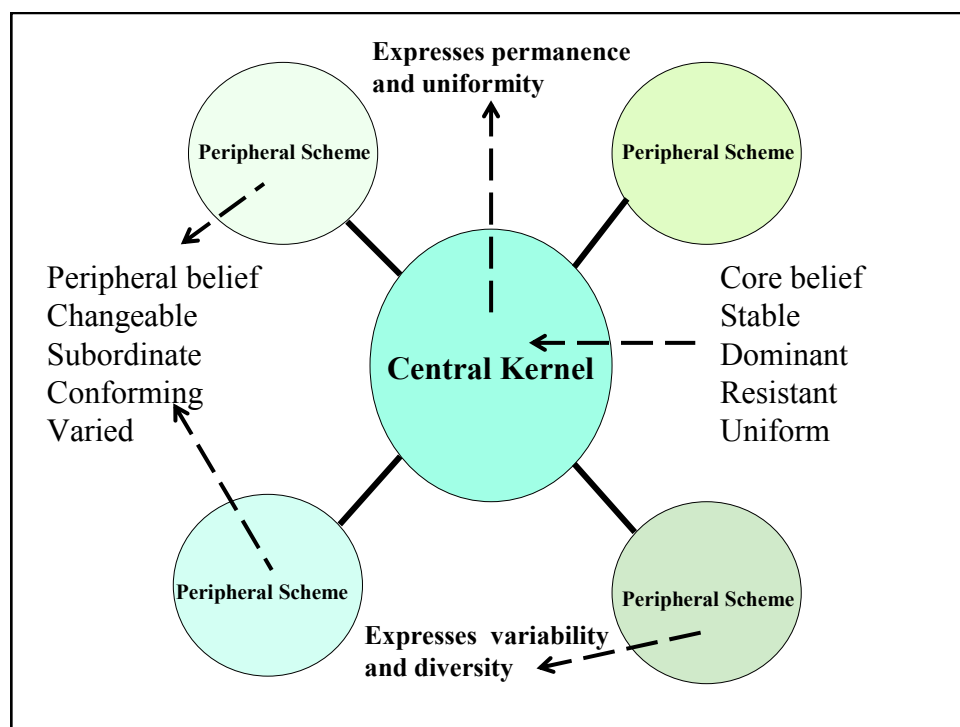


Figure 2.4 Schematic representation of central kernel hypothesis.

Moscovici sustained that interpreting an unfamiliar idea requires categories (names, references etc.) so that it can be integrated into the ‘society of concepts’. Moscovici (1984) further explained the concept of social representations in the following way:

“We fabricate them [representations]... make them tangible and visible and similar to the ideas and beings we have already integrated and with which we are familiar. In this way, pre-existing representations are somewhat modified and those things about to be represented are modified even more, so that they acquire a new existence.” (Moscovici 1984: 49)

Moscovici’s social representations theory holds that knowledge is always produced through interaction and communication (Duveen, 2000). Moscovici (1998) explained this phenomenon as follows:

“We have no reason to exclude totally individual experience and perception. But...we must remember that nearly everything a person knows they have learnt from another, either through their accounts, or through the language which is acquired, or the objects which are used.” (Moscovici 1998: 126)

From this perspective, Moscovici’s social representations theory shares similarities with constructivist and sociocultural trends in psychology (Duveen and Llyod: 1990). The idea that knowledge is treated as correlative and co-constitutive is also the major element in constructivist and sociocultural trends: for instance, Piaget’s constructivist theory; Vygotsky’s social development theory [Vygotsky stressed that knowledge acquisition is constructed through social interaction and artifacts]; and Lave’s situated learning [Social interaction is viewed as a crucial element of Lave’s situated learning. Lave stressed that learning is a function of the activity, context and culture in which it occurs (see Section 2.27.4 for further information about Lave’s situated learning)]. However, Moscovici’s social representations theory is not primarily concerned with the interpersonal sources of self-knowledge like in Vygotsky’s social development theory; or intra-personal knowledge construction like in Piaget’s theory of learning [Piaget viewed knowledge acquisition as a process of continuous self-

construction (see Section 2.27.4 for further information]. Moreover, social representations cannot be viewed merely as self-knowledge, which is the product of individual's cognitive processes either—e.g. Flavell's Metacognition theory [Flavell's metacognition theory views knowledge as the product and property of the individual mind]. Above all, social representations should not be confounded with *mental representations*²⁸, a theoretical construct borrowed from cognitive science, which considers representations a network of connected information bearing units that belong to individual minds. Moscovici (1986) conceded that social representations, in certain respect, specific to the society individuals belong to and that they represent an environment in relation to the individual or the group. Moscovici (1984) explained the primary aim of social representations theory is to discover how individuals and groups, who have diverse views, ideas, attitudes and so forth, can construct a stable and predictable world out of such diversity.

Moscovici claimed that function of all representations is to make something 'unfamiliar' 'familiar'. He explains this phenomenon as follows (see Moscovici 1984 and 1998):

“What I mean is that consensual universes are places where everybody wants to feel at home, secure from any risk of fiction or strife. All that is said and done there only confirms acquired beliefs and interpretations, corroborates rather than contradicts tradition. The same situations, gestures, ideas are always expected to recur, over and over again. Change as such is only perceived and accepted in so far as it provides a kind of liveliness and avoids the stifling of dialogue under the weight of repetition. On the whole the dynamics of relationship is a dynamics of familiarization, where objects, individuals

²⁸ According to CTM (Computational Theory of Mind) representations are information-bearing units, and are connected to one another to form networks of information which are stored in the individual's mind.

and events are perceived and understood in relation to previous encounters and paradigms.” (Moscovici 1984: 37).

Moscovici (1984) maintained that the fear of unknown is ‘deep rooted.’ However, he asserted despite this fear the unknown attracts individuals (and communities). According to Moscovici, individuals perceive the unknown as a threat to the sense of continuity, and this fear forces individuals to make the unknown explicit. Moscovici (1984) sustained that in such cases, individuals’ beliefs, images, ideas, and the language they share are used to integrate the unfamiliar into their mental and physical world. Moscovici (1984) explained that the conflict between the familiar and the unfamiliar is always resolved in favor of the familiar. In other words the unknown, after having been enriched and transformed, is always absorbed into an already known category.

Moscovici (1984) stated that it is necessary to activate the cognitive mechanisms in order to start the appropriation process (integrating unknown, unfamiliar, unusual, implicit to known, familiar, customary, and explicit). According to Moscovici this process is composed of two complementary and interdependent mechanisms: Anchoring and objectification (see Figure 2.5):

Anchoring

The first mechanism aims to *anchor* the unknown, to reduce it to an ordinary category and image, to put it into a familiar context. In other words, this is a process whereby the unfamiliar is absorbed into a known category, which is familiar to the individuals who are members of the same society/group (Duveen and Llyod 1990). To anchor is thus to classify and name something new and unknown. Moscovici (1984) emphasized that things that are unclassified and unnamed are strange, non-existent and

at the same time threatening. He explained that individuals experience resistance when they are unable to evaluate something; therefore, to overcome such resistance, individuals try to place it to a given category and label it with a name (Moscovici 1984).

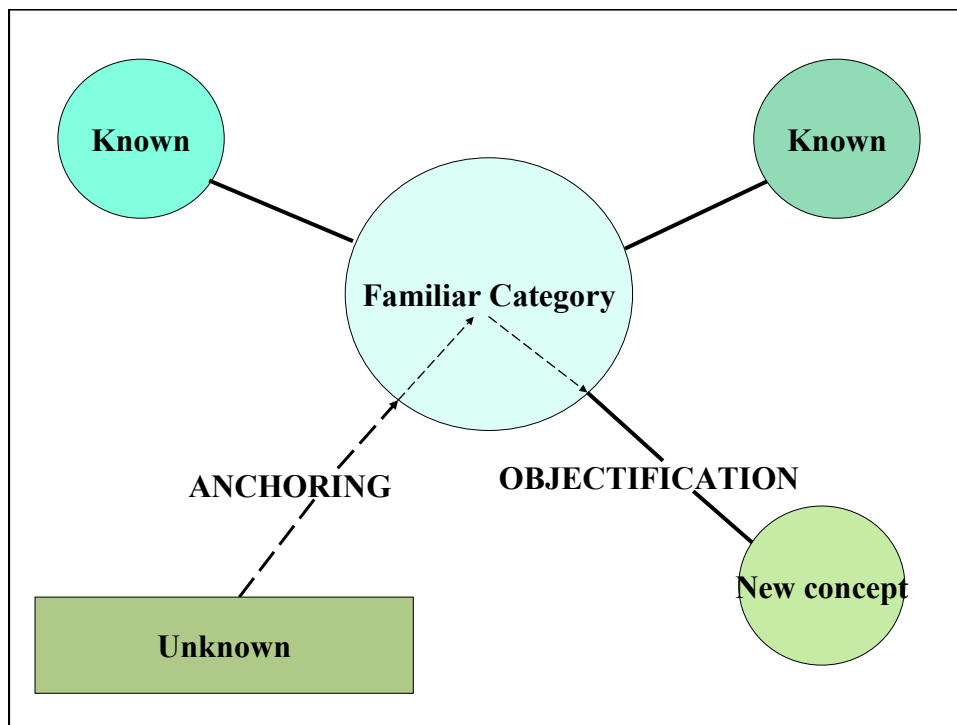


Figure 2.5 Schematic representation of the appropriation process.

*Objectification*²⁹

The aim of the second mechanism is to objectify the unknown, that is, to turn something abstract into something almost concrete, which already exists in the individual's physical world (Moscovici, 1984). In other words, it is a process whereby the individual transforms the unfamiliar into a more significant and easily

²⁹ The term *objectification* has also been referred to as *objectivation* by some scholars (e.g. Castellotti & Moore 2002).

comprehensible image. Moscovici (1984) maintains that such a process reassures and comforts individuals and re-establishes a sense of continuity.

Moscovici (1998) stressed that any new/strange/unknown idea is always anchored to an already existing social representation and this new idea is modified during the course of anchoring and objectification process. However, he asserted that in the course of this process the familiar always remains unchanged. He explained that “Searching for the familiar means that these representations tend towards conservatism, towards the confirmation of their significant content.” (Moscovici 1998: 150).

Regarding the knowledge construction processes involved, Moscovici’s social representations theory also shares some similarities with Piaget’s cognitive development theory³⁰ and Ausubel’s assimilation theory³¹. Although each of these theories has (more or less) different conceptualizations of knowledge they all emphasize the dynamic act of processing information (assimilating, transforming, adapting, modifying etc) and incorporating something new (information, idea etc.) into something already known.

³⁰ According to Piaget cognitive development consists of a constant effort to adapt to the environment in terms of assimilation and accommodation: assimilation is the process of incorporation of new information to the existing schemes or thought patterns people already have; and accommodation is the process of adapting/modifying existing schemes to account new information). The equilibration, which covers both assimilation and accommodation, is the process to establish the balance between assimilation and accommodation (Huitt & Hummel 2003).

³¹ According to Ausubel, meaningful learning is a process through which the learner connects the new piece of information to information he/she already knows. In other words, new information is anchored into existing cognitive structures (Ausubel 1980).

2.20 The theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behavior

The theory of reasoned action (TRA) which resulted from attitude research from expectancy value models³², was formulated by Ajzen and Fishbein in 1970s (see Ajzen & Fishbein 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen 1975), and started to be fully used in the 1980s. The theory of reasoned action suggests that a person's behavior is determined by his/her intention to perform the behavior. According to the theory, intention is a function of a person's attitude toward a given behavior.

Later the TRA was elaborated by Ajzen (in 1985 and 1987), and the theory of planned behavior (TpB) was born in 1987 as an extension of the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen 1988, 1991). Today, Ajzen's theory of planned behavior is considered a well-developed theory and one of the widely accepted expectancy-value theories. The TpB incorporated the original components of the TRA model, but also included *perceived behavioral control* variable--this control aspect did not exist in TRA (Ajzen 2002).

Behavior

According to Ajzen and Fishbein (2005) individuals' behaviors are the result of their underlying beliefs, attitudes and intentions. Beliefs, attitudes, and intentions are not observable; whereas behavior is considered to be the observable manifestation of its

³² Expectancy-value theories hold that people are goal-oriented and they act according to their beliefs and values to achieve some end. Such models assume that individuals tend to choose behaviors with the largest expectation of success and value. Expectancy value models suggest that behavior, behavioral intentions, attitudes are the function of expectancy (or belief) (Palmgreen, 1984). Expectancy-value theory has demonstrated to be useful in the explanation of social behaviors, and motivation.

underlying beliefs attitudes and intentions. Ajzen (2002) stated that individuals might tend to perform routine behaviors with minimal conscious control especially in cases where the context remains repetitive and unchanged. However, although Ajzen (2002) agreed on the fact that individuals can sometimes act out of their habits, he claimed that this rule could not be applied to all behavior types. He claimed that behavior could be guided either by automatic well-established routines or by conscious reflection. He claimed that (from the TpB perspective) behavioral stability could be attributable to the cognitive and motivational factors that remain unchanged (rather than habituation).

Ajzen and Fishbein (2000) emphasized the role of the individual's accessible beliefs in behavior change. They maintained that individuals' intentions are informed by beliefs that are accessible in memory. Then, influenced by these beliefs, intentions guide corresponding behavior. Ajzen (2002) concluded that as long as intentions and their underlying beliefs (attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control) remain unchanged the behavior also remains the same. He claimed that empirical tests have shown that behavior change is possible when realistic expectations are built in; when intentions are strong and well formed; and when specific plans for intention implementation are developed.

Ajzen (2001) explained that according to the theory of planned behavior, individuals act in accordance with their, *intentions* and their *perceived control* over the behavior.

Intention

Ajzen (2001) explained that the best predictor of behavior is intention (not attitude as many other theories proposed). Intention is considered to be the immediate

antecedent of behavior. Ajzen (2002) defined intention as a person's willingness to perform a specific behavior. Ajzen (1991) explained that intentions are assumed to encompass motivational factors that influence a behavior. Ajzen explained that:

“... they (intentions) are indications of how hard people are willing to try, of how much of an effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behavior. As a general rule, the stronger the intention to engage in a behavior, the more likely should be its performance.” (Ajzen 1991: 181)

Ajzen (2001) stated that three things determine intention : 1) attitude towards the specific behavior; 2) subjective norms; and 3) perceived behavioral control (see Figure 2.6 for Ajzen's TpB model).

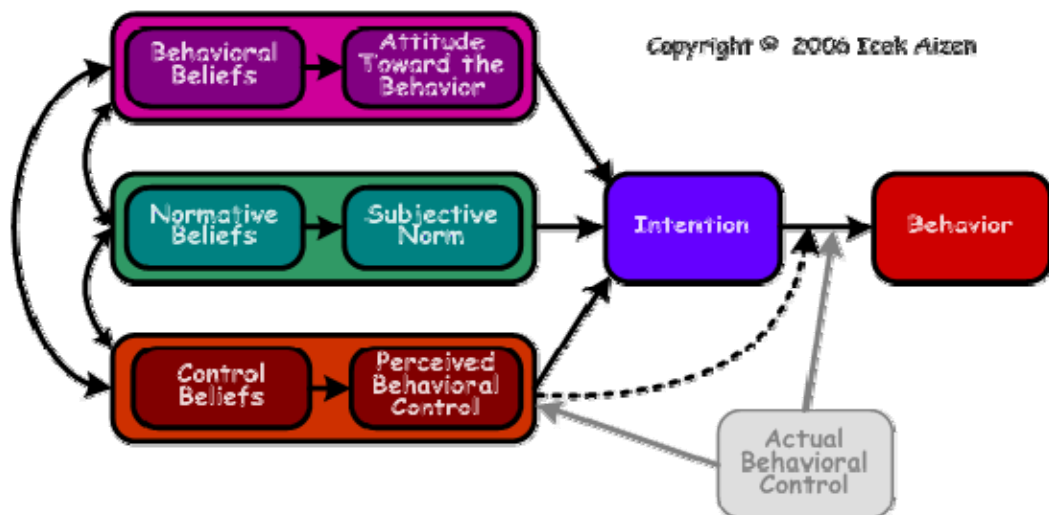


Figure 2.6 Schematic representation of the theory of planned behavior (Note: Source online documents at URL [June 2006] <http://www.people.umass.edu/ajzen/tpb.diag.html#null-link>

Attitude towards the behavior

Attitude towards behavior, according to the theory of planned behavior (TpB), refers to the degree of the individual's positive or negative judgment as regards the performance of the behavior in question. In short, it refers to a favorable or unfavorable

evaluation of the behavior in question. The TpB holds that attitude towards behavior is determined by the accessible behavioral beliefs (aggregates of related beliefs which are shaped by prior experiences and connected to the outcomes of similar past behaviors) (Ajzen 2002). It is assumed that the accessible behavioral beliefs together with the subjective values of the expected outcomes of a particular behavior determine the individual's general attitude toward the behavior.

Subjective norm

Subjective norm is a type of social pressure and it is determined by normative beliefs (beliefs about expectations of other people). In other words, perceived expectations of significant others have a considerable influence on the individual's actions. These people may be parents, family, friends and so forth. People may also be disposed (or not be disposed) to perform a behavior depending on their willingness to act in accordance with others [regulations or rules may also have strong influence on one's attitude toward performing a given behavior].

Perceived behavioral control

Perceived behavioral control refers to people's perceptions of their ability to perform a given behavior (Ajzen 2002), or perceived self-efficacy in relation to the behavior (Davis & Ajzen 2002). Ajzen defined perceived behavioral control as "the perceived ease or difficulty performing the behavior." (Ajzen 1987: 40). It is assumed that perceived behavioral control is determined by the total set of accessible control beliefs (i.e., beliefs about the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of the behavior).

Ajzen stated that, according to the theory, people's behaviors are guided by three kinds of beliefs:

1. *Behavioral beliefs*: The behavioral beliefs are the individual's beliefs regarding the probability that the behavior will produce a given outcome (beliefs about the likely consequences the behavior may produce). The individual may hold many behavioral beliefs regarding a particular behavior. However, not all of these beliefs are easily available at a given moment. It is assumed that the beliefs that are accessible at a given time have influence on the individual's attitude.
2. *Normative beliefs*: Normative beliefs are the individual's perceptions (beliefs) of what others around him/her expect him/her to do.
3. *Control beliefs*: Control beliefs are the individual's beliefs about the presence of factors (external & internal) that may facilitate or hamper performance of the behavior in question.

According to TpB, the individual has a strong intention to perform the behavior when the attitude and the subjective norm towards a given behavior are favorable, and when the person perceives greater control over the behavior. Ajzen (2002) explained how TpB views this phenomenon:

“In their respective aggregates, behavioral beliefs produce a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the behavior; normative beliefs result in perceived social pressure or subjective norm; and control beliefs give rise to perceived behavioral control, the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior. In combination, attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm, and perception of behavioral control lead to the formation of a behavioral intention. Finally, given a sufficient degree of actual control over the behavior, people are expected to carry out their intentions when the opportunity arises.”
(Ajzen 2002: 1)

2.21 Attribution theory

Attribution theory was developed from Heider's "naïve" psychology³³ within social psychology (Weiner, 1980). Attributional approaches assume that people are motivated to look for meaning in their own behavior, as well as, in the world around (and about) them (Ross 1976). Heider (1958) claimed that people act on the basis of their beliefs and maintained that psychologists could learn a great deal from these people's explanations and understandings of events, and behaviors. He stressed the importance of taking ordinary people's beliefs seriously, whether these beliefs are valid or not, and suggested that beliefs must be taken into account if psychologists were to deal with human behavior. The individual's explanations of his/her experiences and attributions they make, therefore, are considered to be important because they are the individual's inferences (self-attributions) to understand and interpret the causes that s/he believes to be responsible for his/her own behavior, feelings, and attitudes (Ross 1976).

Attribution theory deals with the processes of explaining events and the behavioral and emotional consequences of those explanations (Ross 1976). Simply put, the theory assumes that individuals try to determine why people (including themselves) do what they do. According to the theory individuals, naturally, seek to understand why another person did something and attribute causes (or a cause) to explain that behavior (Weiner 1986). Attribution (causal ascription) is the key term in attribution theory and it refers to individuals' interpretations of the causes of events that happen to themselves and others (Weiner 1986). Attribution theory was seen as relevant to the study of the

³³ Heider's "naïve" psychology is also called commonsense psychology, lay psychology, and folk psychology. It deals with people's perceptions /beliefs about their social environments: in other words, everyday explanation and prediction of human behaviour (Clark 1987).

acquisition of self-knowledge, person perception, attitude change, motivation, event perception, and much more (Ross 1976).

Although Heider was the first to propose a psychological theory of attribution, Weiner (1985) proposed an attributional theory of achievement motivation in which causal ascriptions (attributions, beliefs, and interpretations) play a key role. The theoretical framework that Weiner developed (see Weiner 1980, 1985, 1986) has become a major research paradigm in achievement and motivation research. This theory postulates expectancy and affect as key elements, which guide motivated behavior. According to Weiner's attributional theory of achievement motivation individuals use attributions to interpret and predict the outcomes of their actions (Weiner 1980).

Weiner's attribution theory tries to explain difference in motivational orientations and motivational levels between high and low achievers (Weiner 2000). According to Weiner ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck are the key factors that influence attributions people ascribe for their achievements. Weiner (2000) stated that there are three underlying causal properties and that all causes can be located within a three-dimensional causal space: a) locus, b) stability, and c) controllability.

Locus

According to Weiner (2000) *locus* refers to the location of a cause, internal or external. Internal attribution ascribes causality to a factor (or factors) within the person. It is the inference that a person is behaving in a certain way because of something about the person, such as attitude or personality. In other words, an internal attribution claims that the person perceives himself/herself as directly responsible for the event. For instance, success that is attributed to ability and effort, or failure that is attributed to the

individual's perceived lack of ability are considered to be the functions of internal causes. When the cause is attributed to an outside factor (or factors), the attribution is considered to be an external attribution. In other words, an external attribution is the assumption that a person is behaving a certain way because of something about the situation he or she is in (not because of something within her/him or because of him/her). For instance, a student who is attributing his/her failure in learning a foreign language to the conditions of learning, or not having a good/fair teacher, or not finding the methods used appropriate to his/her needs and so forth, is considered to be making external attributions.

Stability

Stability (or causal stability) dimension of causes designates whether causes change over time or not (e.g. language aptitude and lower perceived ability are considered to be constant and durable) (Weiner 2000). However, teaching/learning condition can change over time (i.e. different teachers with different approaches to teaching etc.).

Controllability

Weiner (2000) explained *controllability* as the degree of control the individual feels over a cause. That is, some cases individuals feel that they can control causes (e.g. succeeding by working harder etc.). However, some causes cannot be changed by personal volition and/or effort (e.g. lack and aptitude, lower perceived ability etc.).

Weiner (2000) asserted that the three properties of causes, locus, stability and controllability, play a significant role in shaping the two key determinants of motivation: namely expectancy--subjective likelihood of future success--and value –

degree of emotions attached to attainment or non-attainment of a goal. Weiner (2000) explained that when the cause is stable (or perceived as stable) people anticipate the same outcome. For instance if the individual perceives that s/he lacks the ability (which is internal, stable, and uncontrollable) to perform a task (which is similar to one that s/he has already experienced a failure with), s/he then will anticipate failure again. If, for example, the failure is attributed to a teacher who is perceived as unfair [which is external locus, stable (until the course lasts), and uncontrollable], then attending the same teacher's classes will be anticipated as failure again (see Figure 2.7 for different scenarios).

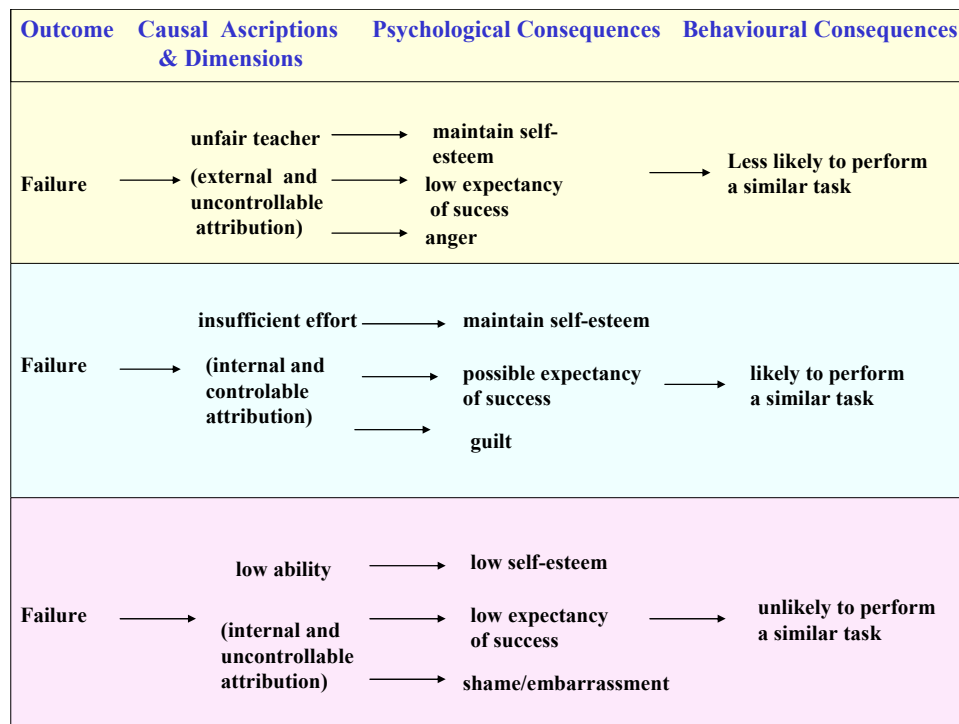


Figure 2.7 Influence of locus and controllability on individuals' emotions and expectancies (Adapted from Weiner 2000).

According to Weiner's attributional theory of achievement motivation, locus and controllability relate to feelings state and in return, affects value of achievement outcomes. Weiner (2000) asserts that locus influences individuals' feelings of pride and

self-esteem positively in case of success. However, in case of failure individuals are likely to experience feelings of shame/deprecation/embarrassment and low self-esteem. Weiner (2000) maintained that both controllability and locus, following a failure (non-attainment of a goal), determine whether guilt or shame is experienced. He claimed that ascribing failure to insufficient effort (which is internal and controllable) often elicits a feeling of guilt. Whereas, attributing failure to perceived lack of aptitude (which is internal but uncontrollable) often arises feelings of shame, embarrassment, and humiliation. He also asserted that expectancy of success together with the emotions experienced (pride, shame, or guilt etc) determine subsequent behavior

Attributional theory of achievement motivation and emotion holds that high achievers attribute their success to high ability and effort which they are confident of and this builds pride and confidence in them (Weiner 2000). They attribute their failure to bad luck or some external factors (e.g. poor teaching etc) which they do not perceive as their fault and maintain their self-esteem. Low achievers, on the other hand, think that they do not have the required ability and/or associate success with luck or some other external factors that they think are beyond their control. Such individuals, do not feel responsible for their own success and success does not increase their pride and confidence (see Figure 2.8).

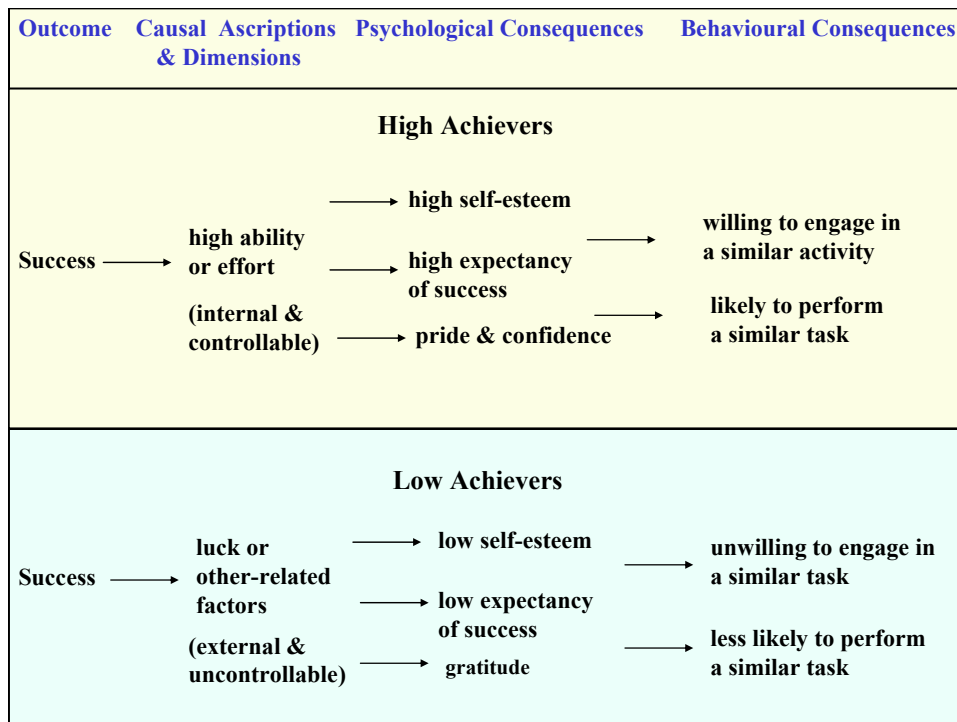


Figure 2.8 Possible causal ascriptions of high & low achievers following success
(Adapted from Weiner 2000).

2.22 Socicognitive theory: Self-beliefs and self-efficacy theory

In educational research literature, self-beliefs became a real research interest with Bandura's sociocognitive theory (e.g. Zimmerman 1990; Schunk & Zimmerman 1997 etc.). According to sociocognitive theory, people influence their own functioning. This view holds that people create their social systems and in return, these social systems influence their lives. "Human self-development, adaptation, and change thus involve a dynamic interplay between personal and social structural influences within the larger societal context". (Bandura 2006 b: 53). Bandura proposed that *self-regulatory* systems, which mediate external influences, enable individuals to have personal control over their thoughts, feelings, motivations and actions. Bandura (1986) acknowledged that self-beliefs that individuals create, and hold to be true for themselves regulate their

behaviors. These self-referent beliefs are considered to play a vital role in individuals' successes and failures (Pajares & Schunk 2002). Bandura (1986) viewed the beliefs that individuals have about their capabilities as the most critical elements on human behavior and motivation. According to Bandura, these beliefs comprise a self-system, and the individual's behavior is the result of the interaction between this system and external influences.

Self-beliefs are studied under different classifications such as self-perception, self-concept beliefs, self-worth beliefs, and self-efficacy beliefs (see Pajares & Schunk 2001). Self-perception is the individual's appraisal of his/her competences whereas *self-concept belief* is "a self-descriptive judgment that includes an evaluation of competence and the feeling of self-worth associated with the judgment in question... Self-concept beliefs reflect questions of 'being' and 'feeling'." (Pajares & Schunk 2002: 20). Self-perception and self-concept beliefs are acknowledged to be empirically difficult to differentiate; therefore, these two terms have been used interchangeably by many (Pajares & Schunk 2001). Self-perception or self-concept beliefs are considered instrumental in people's achievements. Bandura (1986) claimed that the beliefs people hold about their capabilities are better indicators of their behaviors than what they are actually able to do. Pajares and Schunk (2001) stated that individuals have both global and specific perceptions of themselves. General self-perceptions comprise the global self-concept which covers the totality of one's self-referent beliefs, whereas the more specific self-perception can comprise self-concepts about academic, social, emotional self (Pajares & Schunk 2001).

Self-worth belief, on the other hand, refers to the feeling of value (worth) the individual attributes to himself/herself regarding the judgment in question (e.g. a person

might have a high self-worth regarding language learning—if s/he perceives language learning as important and/or of good value). Self worth belief is assumed to be influenced by society and culture, and opinion of others (e.g. an individual might have a high self-concept a feeling of confidence because of high achievement but not necessarily a high self-worth if s/he and/or *others* do not perceive e.g. language learning as of high value).

Self-efficacy beliefs, which are considered to be the most important self-referent beliefs, are studied under self-efficacy theory--a sub-theory developed under the framework of social cognitive theory (Bandura 1986). Bandura (2006b) postulated self-efficacy beliefs as the foundation of human agency³⁴. Simply defined, self-efficacy *beliefs* refer to personal beliefs (judgments) about one's capabilities to engage in an activity or perform a task (Bandura 1986). “Self-efficacy beliefs revolve around the question of ‘can.’” (Pajares & Schunk 2002:..20). Bandura (2006a) maintains that the individual’s belief in his/her efficacy is the foremost personal resource in ‘self-development’, ‘successful adaptation’ and, ‘change’. He also claimed that efficacy beliefs shape individuals’ motivations, goals, outcome expectations (i.e. whether they expect their efforts to produce favorable or unfavorable outcomes), way of thinking, emotions, and their determination in front of difficulties.

“Among the mechanisms of human agency, none is more central or pervasive than beliefs of self efficacy. This core belief is the foundation of human motivation, well-being, and accomplishments. Unless people believe that they can produce desired effects by their actions, they have little incentive to act or to persevere in the face of difficulties.

³⁴ To be an agent means to have the power to influence one’s own functioning and life circumstances (Bandura 1997).

Whatever other factors serve as guides and motivators, they are rooted in the core belief that one has power to effect changes in their actions.”(Bandura 2006a:3)

According to social cognitive theory, self-efficacy beliefs affect individuals’ functioning in various ways (Bandura 1986) (see Figure 2.9):

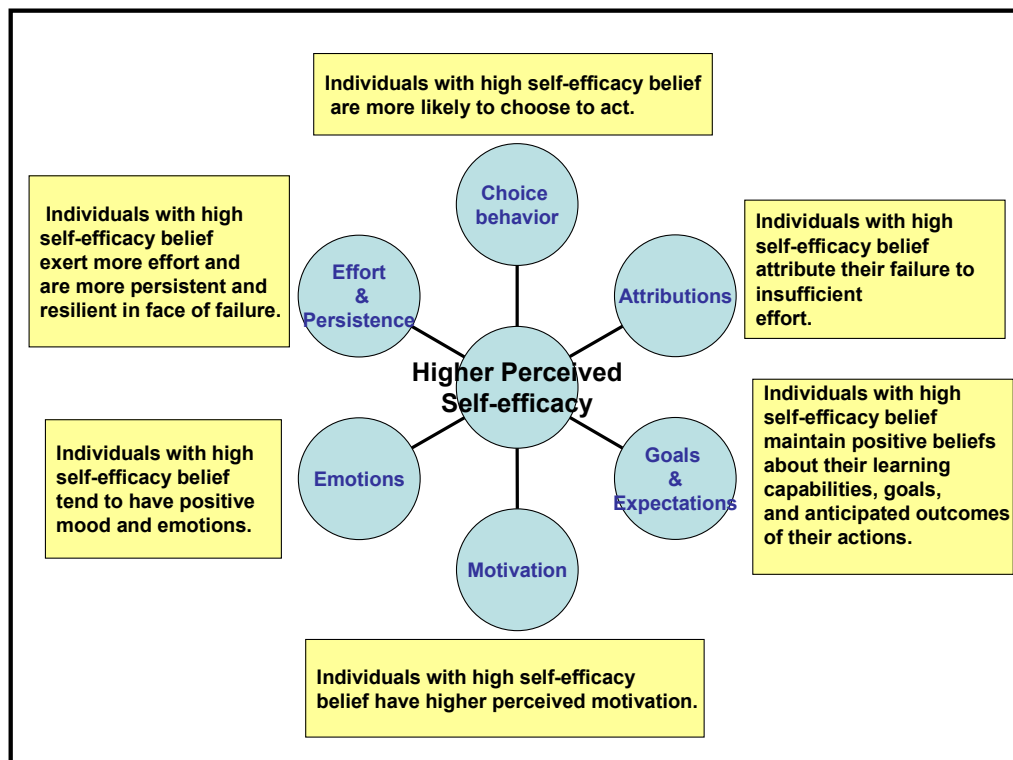


Figure 2.9 Schematic representation of the influence of high self-efficacy on individuals.

Choice behavior

Bandura (1986) maintained that people choose to engage in tasks/activities that they believe they have high efficacy and avoid the ones that they perceive beyond their capabilities.

Effort and persistence

When people perceive strong self-efficacy they exert more effort and are more persistent and resilient in face of failure. “People who regard themselves as highly efficacious act, think, and feel differently ... They produce their own future, rather than simply foretell it” (Bandura 1986: 395).

Emotional reactions

According to self-efficacy theory, an individual with low self-efficacy beliefs perceives tasks to be fulfilled more difficult than they actually are. Thus, this belief restrains him/her from performing his/her best. An individual with high self-efficacy beliefs, on the other hand, directs his/her attention and effort on task requirements and exerts more effort in face of difficulty or failure (Bandura 1986). Bandura (2006b) maintained, “A strong sense of coping efficacy reduces vulnerability to stress and depression in taxing situations and strengthens resiliency to adversity.” (Bandura 2006b: 56).

Attributions

Perceived self-efficacy has also proved to be influencing attributions individuals make about their performances. Individuals with high self-efficacy belief are assumed to attribute their failure to insufficient effort (i.e. people with high self-efficacy possess success orientation and exert more effort when engaged in a similar task another time). However, individuals who believe that they have low self-efficacy attribute their failure to lack of necessary skills and ability (i.e. people with low self-efficacy belief avoid engaging in similar tasks). Another scenario is that individuals with low self-efficacy belief attribute their success to external factors rather than their own capabilities (i.e. a

learner with low self-efficacy belief might attribute his success to ‘a teacher who gives high grades’ or ‘to an easy exam’ etc) (Bandura 1986).

Goals, expectations and motivation

Bandura (2006b) asserted that self-efficacy beliefs play a significant role in the regulation of motivation. He maintained that people feel motivated to undertake challenges on the basis of their outcome expectations. The likelihood that people will act depends highly on whether they believe they can produce the required performance.

According to Bandura’s Social Cognitive model self-efficacy beliefs are influenced by four main sources (Bandura 1986):

Mastery experience

Mastery experience is considered to be a key source for self-efficacy belief (Bandura 1997). Bandura (2006b) acknowledged that the individual’s successes help him/her develop strong sense of self-efficacy. On the other hand the individual’s failures, especially when experienced in early stages of efficacy development, weaken the individual’s self-efficacy beliefs. Mastery experiences are considered the most powerful sources of self-efficacy belief. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk, Hoy. & Hoy (1998) asserted that the individual’s perception that his/her performance has been successful increases his/her efficacy, and contributes to his/her expectation that s/he will be able to accomplish a similar performance in the future, as well.

Social modeling (Vicarious experience)

It is postulated that when the individual observes successes of others with similar abilities to himself/herself, s/he has more confidence in his/her own capabilities and expects to succeed in a similar task (see Bandura 1986).

Verbal/Social persuasion

According to self-efficacy theory, verbal persuasions and the messages that the individual receives from others (significant others such as parents, teachers, friends etc) can have a strong influence on the development of his/her self-efficacy beliefs.

Physical & emotional states

Physical and emotional states and mood are also considered to affect people's judgment of their personal efficacy. According to self-efficacy theory people may interpret their stress, fatigue or tensions as signs of weakness and susceptibility to perform unsuccessfully. Consequently, this interpretation may affect their judgments of self-efficacy.

2.23 Student approaches to learning (SAL) and learners' conceptions of learning

Learner conceptions of learning have been studied within the theory of 'Student Approaches to Learning' (SAL). The concept of 'learners' conceptions of learning' was originated in educational psychology and introduced to literature through the

phenomenographic³⁵ research studies of Marton and his associates (see Marton & Säljö 1976a and 1976b) at the University of Göteborg (Gothenburg) and developed further through a series of studies (see Biggs 1994; Entwistle 1987, 2003; Entwistle, McCune, & Hounsel 2002; Entwistle, McCune & Walker 2001; Gibbs 1994; Prosser & Trigwell 1999; see also ETL project online documents at URL <http://www.ed.ac.uk/etl>). Marton and Säljö (1976a, 1976b), in their seminal study, focused on the qualitative differences in how learners approached learning, and discovered the following learner conceptions (Säljö, 1979):

1. Learning as a *quantitative increase in knowledge* (acquiring information or simply ‘knowing a lot’).
2. Learning as *memorizing and reproducing* (rote-learning information for the purpose of reproducing it when necessary).
3. Learning as acquiring facts, skills and methods that can be *retained and used* as necessary (using metacognitive strategies to regulate learning).
4. Learning as *making sense* or abstracting meaning (making connections with previous experience, focusing on the meaning, relating parts to each other to form a meaningful whole).

³⁵ Phenomenography is a research specialisation developed by a research group at the University of Göteborg, Sweden. It was first appeared in Marton Ference’s works. It is an empirically based approach (based on observation and experience) that aims to identify the qualitatively different ways in which people experience, conceptualize, perceive, and understand various kinds of phenomena (Marton & Fai, 1999). Principles of Phenomenographic research can be summarized as follows:

1. “Researchers should seek an understanding of the phenomenon of learning by examining the students' experiences”
2. “Research about learning needs to be conducted in a naturalistic setting involving the actual content and settings people learn with.” Online documents at URL <http://tip.psychology.org/marton.html> [June 15, 2006].

5. Learning as interpreting and *understanding reality in a different way* (developing personal meaning and understanding, comprehending the world by re-interpreting knowledge).

Research has shown that learners' approaches to learning are determined by their conceptions of learning. In their influential work, Marton and Säljö (1976a, 1976b) introduced the idea that learners adopt either a learning approach focused on *understanding* or a learning approach focused on *memorizing* and *reproducing*. Marton and Säljö's ideas and research led to formulation of learner approaches to *deep approach* and *surface approach*. To define these two distinct approaches Entwistle (1987) proposed the following definitions:

Quantitative/surface approach: Intention to complete task requirements; memorize information needed for assessments; failure to distinguish principles from examples; treat task as an external imposition; focus on discrete elements without integration; unreflectiveness about purpose or strategies (Entwistle: 1987, p. 16).

Qualitative/deep approach: Intention to understand; vigorous interaction with content; relate new ideas to previous knowledge; relate concepts to everyday experience; relate evidence to conclusions; examine the logic of the argument (Entwistle, 1987, p. 16).

The fact that learners adopt different approaches to learning is now very well known. Deep approach to learning is described as a deep motive based on intrinsic motivation and curiosity. It is assumed that there is a personal commitment to learning and the learner relates new material to existing prior knowledge to make this new information meaningful and personal. A learner who uses surface approach, on the other hand, carries out tasks because of external consequences. A typical strategy used by a

learner who adopts a surface approach is rote-learning (e.g. the learner focuses on what appears to be the most important and memorizes it). Thus, s/he does not see interconnections between the meanings and implications of what is learned.

Many studies built upon Marton and Säljö's initial findings, and *achieving approach* (or *strategic approach*) was also added to literature. The aim of an achieving approach (Strategic approach) is to get a high grade. Learners that have an achieving approach are extrinsically motivated and use maximum of achieving strategies (e.g. the learner is highly organized, uses various study and time management skills to succeed). Here again the focus is on the product and learning is the means rather than the end. However, an achieving (strategic) approach is considered to be using strategies from both the surface approach and the deep approach. Research has shown that learners may adopt different approaches according to the task, course requirements or teaching context (Prosser & Trigwell 1999).

Entwistle (2003) stated that, approaches learners adopt to their learning depend on learners' motivational orientations, as well—namely intrinsic and extrinsic orientations of motivation. . He argued that each learner approach has an underlying motivational orientation. Within deep approach, for example, intrinsic interest in a subject matter leads the learner to create a structured personal understanding by relating ideas. Entwistle (2003) summarized the defining features of these three learning approaches (deep, surface and strategic) as follows (see Table 2.7):

Table 2.7 Defining features of approaches to learning and studying (source: Entwistle 2003)

Deep Approach	
Motive/orientation	Intrinsic interest in the content
Intention	To understand ideas for oneself
Process	Relating ideas into structured understanding through logical analysis and evidential support
Surface Approach	
Motive/orientation	Extrinsic or instrumental and/or fear of failure
Intention	To cope minimally with course demands
Process	Syllabus-bound accretion of information through routine memorizing and procedural learning.
Strategic/Achieving Approach	
Motive/orientation	Need for achievement and/or sense of duty
Intention	To achieve high grades or other form of recognition
Process	Organized studying through time management and monitoring effectiveness.

Prosser and Trigwell (1999) argued that interaction between the learner and his or her learning context constitutes a unique learning situation for the student. They claimed that this situation will be different for each student even if they may be in the same context because each learner will have a unique perception of his/her situation. They postulated that individual learners' perception of their situation is related to their prior experiences of other situations (prior learning experience, other non educational experiences etc), their approaches to learning and their learning outcome (see Figure 2.10).

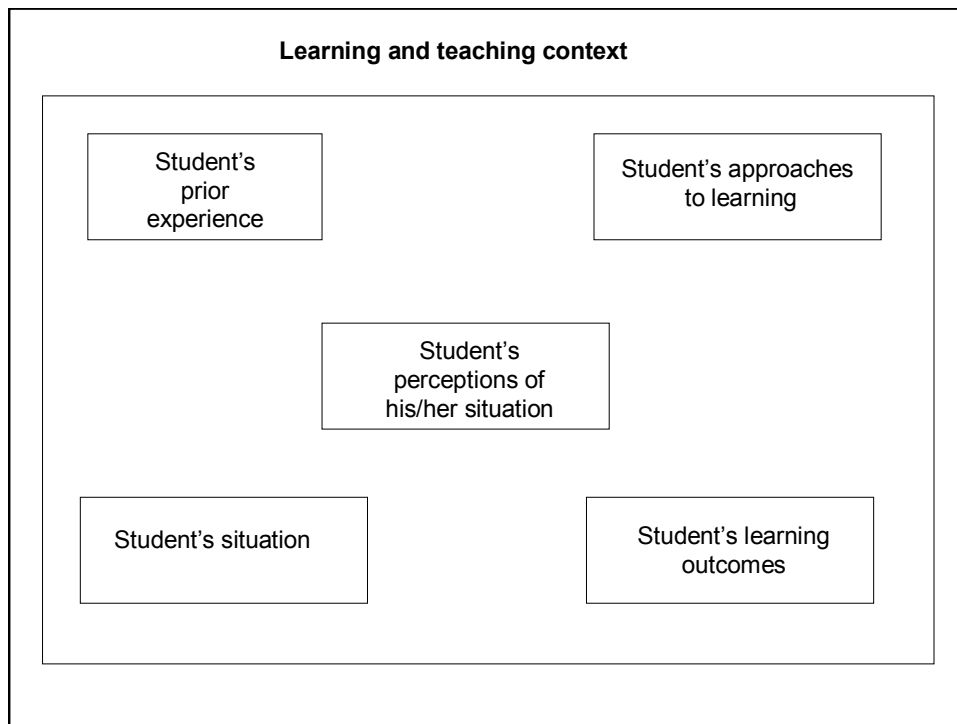


Figure 2.10 Individual learner's experience of learning (source: Posser & Trigwell 1999: 17).

Thus, Prosser and Trigwell (1999) considered learners' prior experiences, perceptions, approaches and outcomes to be simultaneously present in their awareness. In the same vein, Entwistle *et al.* (2001) illustrated that meanings learners attach to the concept of learning are function of the cumulative effects of learners' previous educational experiences and other experiences.

Research done in this area both confirms and extends these sources by revealing that learner's conceptions of learning are shaped by their prior experiences (learning and other experiences), their expectations and orientation of motivation, and approaches and assessment procedures employed by teachers (past/present) (see Figure 2.11). SAL (Student Approaches to Learning) research has clearly shown that learners' prior learning experiences, learning conceptions and learning approaches have direct influence on their learning outcomes.

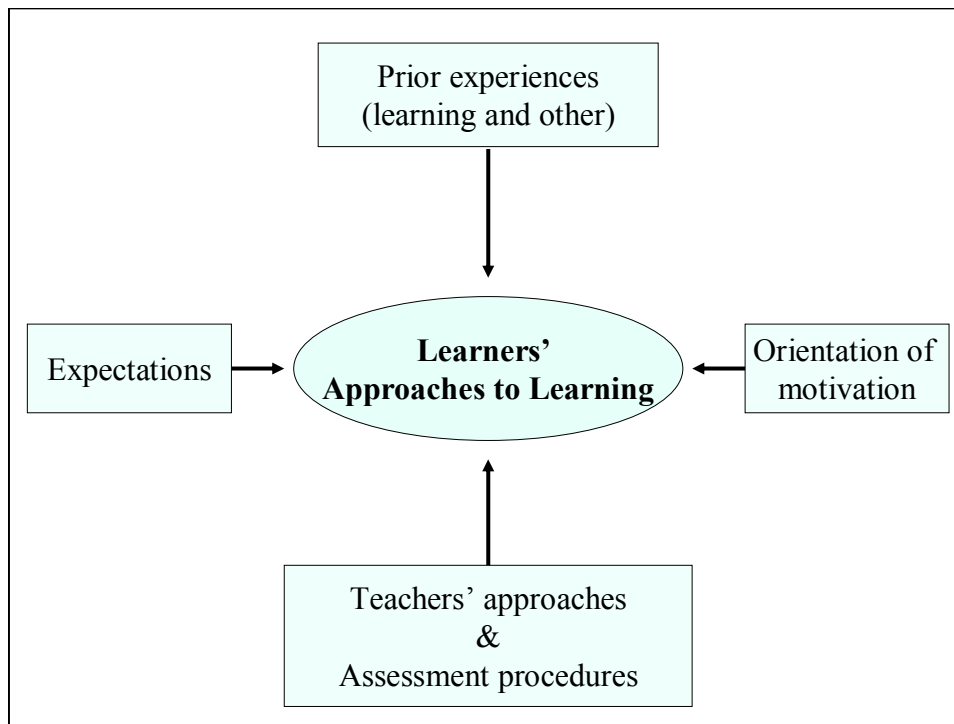


Figure 2.11 Sources for learners' approaches to learning

2.24 Conclusion

Metacognitive theory, social representations theory, theory of reasoned action (TRA), theory of planned behavior (TpB), attribution theory, self-efficacy theory and research done on SAL (Student Approaches to Learning) have all contributed to the understanding of different phenomena with always beliefs being their inseparable core constituent and central focus. They all based their assumptions on firm bases with clear frameworks and served many scholars in different disciplines for different purposes. Although they appear to be distinct individual theories--and considered and defended to be different from each other by their founders, academy and disciples--, all of these theories appear to be complementary with one another as regards the belief phenomenon, which constitutes the central element of all.

In this research study, the researcher has referred to each of these theories to explore different aspects of the L2 learner belief phenomenon. Hence, the researcher has used relevant components of each of the above-mentioned theories to examine the L2 learners' stated beliefs from different perspectives in order to be able to picture them in their aggregates.

Part 4: Theories, Approaches, and Methods in Second/Foreign Language Teaching/Learning

2. 25 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to examine some major theories and research that have claimed to constitute effective pedagogy for the acquisition of a second/foreign language (L2) in a classroom context. Thus, this section examines the key learning theories, main perspectives and theories in second language acquisition (SLA) research, theories of language and major methods and approaches that have had influence on instructed second/foreign language learning.

Although this research primarily focuses on the 'belief dimension' of second/foreign language learning which is considered non-linguistic affective aspect of language learning, the researcher believed that this feature cannot be looked into independently of linguistic processes involved in second/foreign language teaching and learning. she, therefore, stipulated that inclusion of a section on theories of language, language learning and major theories of learning is crucial in order to have clear pedagogical stand points when interpreting teachers' and learners' beliefs as regards their functions within language instruction.

Depending on the theoretical perspective taken, language learning/teaching and its components might be perceived differently by different L2 specialists. The following are some of the controversies foreign/second language teaching has faced when different theoretical perspectives are applied: a) teacher and learner roles (e.g. active vs. passive; teacher-centered vs. learner-centered); b) theory of language (e.g. structural vs. meaning/interaction-based); c) classroom interaction (e.g. one-way vs. two-way); d) control of content of instruction (e.g. teacher-centered vs. learner-centered); e) learners' conceptions of language learning; learner strategies, perceptions, styles (e.g. not taken into account vs. regarded as significant, used as basis for planning language instruction, and/or appropriated/mediated to match with language instruction) and so forth.

I, therefore, believe that it is important to have a clear vision of what foreign/second language learning involves; how language learners'/teachers' beliefs are regarded/valued/ used within language instruction; and which teacher/learner beliefs are considered functional/dysfunctional. This revision, therefore, will enable me to evaluate and interpret the learners' and the teachers' beliefs in the light of the research-based principles.

2.26 Theories of learning and second/foreign language instruction

The theories that have influenced learning/teaching approaches in educational instruction and foreign/second language teaching originated mainly from the following divisions of psychology: a) behaviorist (e.g. Skinner); b) cognitive (e.g. Miller, Craik & Lockhart, Flavell); c) humanist (e.g. Maslow, Rogers, Mezirow); d) constructivist (e.g. Ausubel, Bruner, Piaget, Lave) and; d) social constructivist (or sociocultural) (e.g. Vygotsky) (see Table 2.8).

Table 2.8 Theories of learning

School of Psychology	Division	Concerns	Key Theorists	Learning Theories
Behaviorist	Behaviorism	Stimulus Response Reinforcement	Skinner	Operant conditioning
Humanist	Humanistic learning	Emotional factors and affect	Mazlow Rogers	Humanistic theory of Learning Experiential learning
Cognitive	Information processing	Information processing Computer models	Miller Craik & Lockhart	Information-processing-Theory Levels of processing
Cognitive	Constructivism	Knowledge construction and learner as active creator	Ausubel Bruner Piaget Lave & Wenger	Subsumption theory Constructivism Genetic epistemology Situated cognition
Sociocultural	Social constructivist learning	Interactions with others	Vygotsky	Social constructivism

The above-mentioned theories of learning (together with theories of language, theories of language learning and second language acquisition (SLA) research) have had vital influence on the rise and fall of different methods and approaches in foreign language teaching. This section will focus on some divisions of psychology that have had impact on language instruction. Some language teaching methods/approaches that have been influenced by these theories of learning will also be described in this section. However, some L2 teaching/learning methods/approaches will be described in detail,

some others will be just mentioned and some others will be left out, depending on the impact they have had on second/foreign language instruction.

2.27 Approaches to second language acquisition research

Research into second language acquisition (SLA) has employed different perspectives from different disciplines: namely linguistics, sociolinguistics, psychology, and sociology. Gass and Selinker (1994) noted that SLA research is a multidisciplinary field and the general research emphasis can vary depending on the perspective taken and the discipline of reference used. They explained that:

“...Linguistics focuses on the products of acquisition (i.e., a description of the system produced by learners), psychology focuses on the process by which those systems are created (e.g., a description of the process of the way in which learners create learner systems), and sociolinguistics focuses on social factors that influence the linguistic product of acquisition.” (Gass & Selinker, 1994: 108).

2.27.1 Behaviorist approaches and Language instruction

Behaviorism has had profound influence on educational instruction and especially language instruction. The theory of behaviorism is based on the study of overt behaviors that can be observed and measured quantitatively (Standridge 2002). Behaviorism is founded on the hypothesis (proposition) that behavior can be studied and explained without referring to internal mental states. Behaviorist view emphasizes the need of objectivity. Behaviorists view holds that only the behaviors which can be directly observed are worthy of examining. Therefore, early behaviorist considered actions to be the only legitimate objects of study, and ignored thoughts and/or emotions (Standridge 2002). Thus, early learning theorist (Thorndike, Hull, and Skinner)

attempted to explain all learning in terms of *conditioning* and totally ignored the possibility of thought processes occurring in the mind.

Skinner, who is the founder of modern behaviorism, viewed learning as merely the result of environmental rather than cognitive factors. He constructed a system of principles which described human behavior in strictly observable terms (Skinner 1953, 1974). Skinner's theory is based upon the idea that learning is a function of change in overt behavior. However, he completely excluded the fact that the mind and/or feelings also play part in shaping the individual's behavior (Williams & Burden 1997; Standridge 2002).

Russian psychologist Ivan Pavlov (1927) was the first to propose that change in behavior is the result of a *response* to a *stimulus* (event) that takes place in the environment (Standridge 2002). Skinner extended the applications of conditioning and developed the theory of *operant conditioning*: a behavior modification technique which uses consequences to modify the occurrence and nature of behavior (see Skinner 1974). Operant conditioning technique is based on the idea that people behave the way they do because this kind of behavior has had certain consequences in the past. That is, when a particular stimulus-response (S-R) pattern is rewarded the individual is conditioned to respond.

Reinforcement is one of the key concepts in Skinner's conceptualization of (human) learning. According to the reinforcement theory, individuals act in expectation of a certain reward. There are two types of behavioral reinforcements: *positive reinforcement* and *negative reinforcement*. The reinforcement theory holds that consequences which give rewards (positive reinforcement) increase a behavior (e.g.

smiling at students after a correct response; praising students' ability to parents etc.). Consequences which give punishments weaken a behavior (Standridge 2002).

All in all, Skinner proposed that the individual's experience of reinforcements determines his/her behavior (Skinner 1953, 1974). Thus, behaviorist theory came to explain all learning in terms of operant conditioning by proposing that if the behavior is reinforced then the likelihood of that behavior repeating on a subsequent event will be increased, and if it is punished the likelihood of the behavior repeating will be decreased.

Skinner argued that educational instruction could be improved by adoption of simple procedures. As has been the case with other educational domains, behaviorist approach has had profound influence on language teaching, as well (Richards & Rodgers 1986, 2001; Williams and Burden 1997). Thus, behaviorist theorists viewed language as a series of behaviors that could be taught. They believed that languages were made up of a series of habits that learners could acquire and that if learners could develop all these habits, they would speak the language well (Richards & Rodgers 1986, 2001; Williams and Burden 1997).

Educational instruction from behaviorist perspective can be summarized as follows (see R. Ellis 2003, 2005b, 2005a; Richards & Rodgers 1986, 2001; Williams and Burden 1997:

- Knowledge is viewed as an external reality that can be transmitted to learners.
- Learning is organized around written performance objectives (These objectives should clearly define the target behavior).
- Activities are set to achieve these predetermined and specific objectives.

- What is to be taught should be explained explicitly to the learners (The learners should clearly know what is expected from them).
- Tasks should be broken down into small, sequential steps.
- Prearranged (prescribed) knowledge is transmitted to the learners.
- Learning is molded (shaped) by repetition and reinforcement.
- Learning is assumed to have occurred when the learner reacts correctly according to the stimulus.
- The teacher predetermines the correctness of the response (these correct responses are clearly indicated in the objectives/outcomes).
- The teacher is the authority and has the control of the learning.
- Each learning event is evaluated (to see if the objectives have been achieved) and if necessary, repeated until it is fully mastered.

Behaviorist approaches had numerous shortcomings. The major criticism is the oversimplification of human behavior. From behaviorist perspective human beings were perceived as automatons instead of social and purposeful creatures of will. Learning was viewed independent of the context and learning as a social process was completely neglected. Behaviorist teaching emphasized rote-learning (de-contextualized memorization by repetition) which allowed limited (or no) rate of knowledge transfer and limited retention unless reinforced. Students who were taught through behaviorist methods of learning had very limited chance of learning by association and were unable to put pieces together to apply them in other situations. There was almost no cooperation between learners and presence of a teacher was necessary for the learning event to take place.

In spite of its shortcomings, the behaviorist approach dominated educational instruction around the world. The following can be regarded as the major reasons for the behaviorism's long-lived popularity:

- Has a firm theoretical foundation
- Easy to implement
- Has clear objectives
- Uses time efficiently
- Easy to measure the success of learning outcomes

2.27.1.1 Audiolingual method

The framework provided by the behaviorist theory had a powerful influence on the development of the audiolingual method to language teaching (Williams & Burden 1997). The theory of language underlying audiolingual method was originated from structural linguistics (Richards & Rodgers 2001). This theory viewed language as being a system consists of structural units such as morphemes, phonemes, structures, sentence types and so forth. From this behaviorist perspective, language learning was seen as behavior to be thought; and learning a language as acquiring a set of appropriate mechanical habits. The foreign language teaching from this perspective assumed that learning could take place if predetermined knowledge was organized and transmitted in small sequential steps (Richards & Rodgers 2001; Williams and Burden 1997). Audiolingualism was a teacher-centered method. The role of the teacher in an audiolingual language class was to develop good language habits in learners. Thus the audiolingual syllabus included structurally sequenced instructional material which were used to help teacher develop 'mastery learning' in the learner (Richards & Rodgers 2001). The mastery learning was based on the assumption that, given enough time and

the proper instruction, most learners could master any learning objective. The learners were expected to be responsible for mastering learning objectives. Thus, the audiolingual method was based on using mechanical drills for the formation of good language habits in learners (e.g. pattern drills, memorization of dialogues, choral repetition of structural patterns, or substitution drills and so forth) (Richards & Rodgers 2001; Williams & Burden 1997). ‘Errors’ were regarded as reinforcers of bad habits. Therefore, if the learners’ responses were incorrect they were corrected immediately and if their responses were correct they were rewarded so that the desired habits would be formed (Richards & Rodgers 2001; Williams & Burden 1997). The behaviorists also believed that a contrastive analysis of languages would be useful in teaching languages. They assumed that similar points between languages would help the learners to learn easily and the points that were different would be difficult to learn and would create problems in learning. Thus in audiolingual classrooms contrastive analysis exercises were widely used (Richards & Rodgers 2001; Schalkwijk, Esch, Elsen, & Setz. 2002; Williams & Burden 1997).

One of the major limitations of the audiolingual method was that the role of the learners was a rather passive one (Richards & Rodgers 2001; Schalkwijk, Esch, Elsen, & Setz. 2002; Williams and Burden 1997). The focus was on “...the external manifestations of learning rather than on the internal processes.” (Richards & Rodgers 2001: 62). Since, the major objective of audiolingualism was to develop ‘observable correct language habits’, the principal processes involved in learning were ignored entirely. That is, there was almost no interest in what was going on inside the learners’ heads or the cognitive processes involved in learning. Students’ were almost never had the opportunity to engage in learning actively and/or analyzing the language they were learning. Recent research has demonstrated that language learners make use of a wide

range of mental strategies to sort out the system of the language they are learning and to construct personal meanings out of it. However, audiolingual approaches tended to focus on controlled structural input and did not leave room for learner initiated language input. Consequently, learners' had almost no control over the content. The language learning activities used were not suitable for the learner to initiate discussions or negotiate meaning. There was no room for the actual process to allow learners to develop effective learning and communicative strategies. Language learning research has demonstrated that proficient language learners use a wide range of effective language learning strategies. Therefore, recent research has suggested that language design and instruction should encourage both the use and development of effective learner strategies (see O'Malley, 1997; O'Malley. & Chamot 1990; Oxford 1994, 2003; Wenden 1986a, 1986b, 1995, 1998, 1999; Wenden & Robin 1997 and many others).

Audiolingual teaching, since the emphasis was on the production of correct language structures, regarded learner errors as 'bad habits'. Therefore, teachers directed learners to give correct responses and tried their best to avoid errors. However, there is now abundant evidence to claim that risktaking, in other words having room for mistakes in language classrooms, provides the learners with the opportunity to try out and test the language they are learning and this serves as valuable means to learn (Oxford & Shearin 1994). Empirical studies have also illustrated that risk-takers, in terms of language learning, progress more quickly (see Ely 1986).

However, despite its shortcomings audiolingual approach dominated foreign language learning methodology from the early 1950s to the late 1960s (and there are still materials based on audiolingual principles that continue to be used even today) (see R. Ellis 2005b; Richards & Rodgers 2001). The audioligual method's reputation was

directly related to the practical convenience its well-defined methodological framework provided. Some of the reasons for its dominance in second/foreign language instruction can be summarized as follows:

Practical convenience

The major reasons for the Audiolingual method's popularity were that it provided language teachers with clear objectives and easy steps to follow in the language classroom. In context where language teachers had limited language competence and/or professional training, it was easy for the teachers to follow the instructions and sequences provided in their audiolingual course books (which involved mainly mechanical exercises such as repetition/substitution drills etc, and presentation, practice, production paradigm). Teaching in audiolingual classroom, therefore, was less threatening for the teachers who had limited professional and language competence. However, in (today's) classrooms where meaning and (mostly) learner-initiated language are emphasized (e.g. In classrooms where learners are allowed to participate in free-language practice rather than controlled mechanical drills), teachers have almost no control on the language produced and are expected to make on-line decisions. Thus, teachers who lack professional and linguistic competence tend to feel less secure in such teaching/learning environments than they did in audiolingual classrooms.

Coherent theoretical and psychological perspective

The other important reason for the audiolingual method's popularity was that it was based on a coherent theoretical perspective (Williams & Burden 1997) that many recent trends in second/foreign language teaching/learning fail to provide.

2.27.2 Humanistic approaches and language instruction

“Humanistic approaches emphasize the importance of the inner world of the learner and place the individual’s thoughts, feelings and emotions at the forefront of all human development.” (Williams & Burden: 30). Abraham Maslow (1943) and Carl Rogers are two most well known proponents of humanistic learning theorists. Maslow’s humanistic theory of learning holds that fulfillment of individual potential would not be possible unless the individual fulfills his/her needs. He proposed two categories of needs: maintenance needs and being (growth) needs (see Figure 2.12).

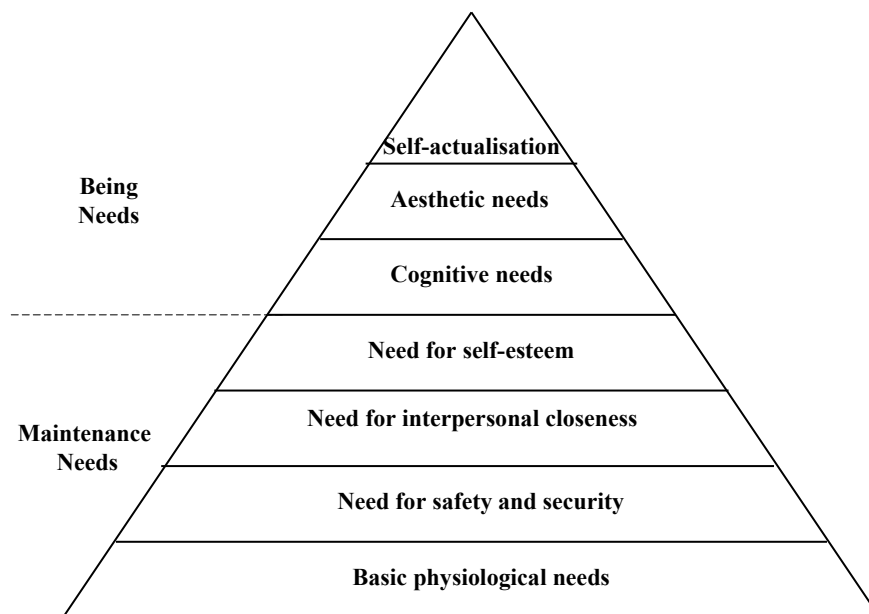


Figure 2.12 Maslow’s hierarchy of human needs

According to Maslow (1943) if needs are disrupted in a lower stage fulfillment of needs up in the hierarchy would be more difficult (or even impossible). Although Maslow’s ideas have some theoretical limitations his theory provides valuable insights into the understanding of the learner and his/her needs.

Carl Rogers (1979) believed that an individual needs positive regard both from the self (positive self-concept, self-worth etc.) and from others in order for growth to take place (see Rogers 1979). Rogers equated learning to personal change and growth. He claimed that human beings have natural disposition to learn if positive conditions for learning are supported (i.e. setting a positive non-threatening climate, having room for both emotional and intellectual components of learning, and emphasizing ‘openness’ in order for change to take place). Rogers’ experiential learning theory addresses the needs and desires of the learner and holds that learning should be self-initiated and that it requires involvement of the learner. He stipulated that self-initiated learning is all-encompassing and most lasting. Rogers (1979) summarized his views about ‘person-centered approach’ as follows:

“Briefly, as the person is accepted and prized, he or she tends to develop a more caring attitude toward him or herself. As the person is emphatically heard, it becomes possible for him or her to listen more accurately to the flow of inner experiencing. But as the person understands and prizes self, there is a development of a self more congruent with experiencing. He or she is thus becoming more real, more genuine.” (Rogers 1979: 2).

Thus, he proposed that learners take responsibility in the learning process to direct and control their own learning. He also put forth that ‘learning to learn’ and ‘self-evaluation’ are important components of the learning process. Johnson and Johnson (2004) explained that ‘humanism’ and humanistic approaches to language teaching emphasize ‘whole person learning’. They asserted that humanistic approaches to language teaching emphasize personal growth and responsibility through taking psychological and affective factors into account. Moskowitz (cited in Johnson & Johnson 2004:159) summarized the principles underlying humanistic education as follows:

1. A principal purpose of education is to provide learning and an environment that facilitate the achievement of the full potential of students.
2. Personal growth as well as cognitive growth is a responsibility of the school. Therefore education should deal with both dimensions of humans—the cognitive or intellectual and affective or emotional.
3. For learning to be significant, feelings must be recognized and put to use.
4. Significant learning is discovered for oneself.
5. Human beings want to actualize their potential.
6. Having healthy relationships with other classmates is more conducive to learning.
7. Learning about oneself is a motivating factor in learning.
8. Increasing one's self-esteem is a motivating factor in learning.

Williams and Burden (1997) asserted that humanistic approaches have had a significant influence on second/foreign language teaching methodology. Silent way, community language learning, suggestopaedia (Johnson & Johnson 2004), and some forms of task-based teaching (Ellis 2003), all bear humanistic qualities. Williams and Burden (1997) maintained that messages transferred through humanistic approaches have been widely accepted and applied to communicative language classroom practices.

2.27.3 Formal linguistic perspective on SLA

Starting from the 1960s, generative linguistics (rule-based systems that focus on all the grammatical sentences of a language) dominated formal linguistic theory for about forty years. Many applied linguists during this period believed that generative linguistics was the only means for understanding language form, expression, and acquisition (Grabe 2002). Chomskian linguistics (transformational, Government and

Binding, and Minimalism) was seen as real foundation for understanding the nature of language knowledge (syntactic knowledge).

From formal linguistic perspective, second/foreign languages were considered to be learnt/acquired in the same way as the first language. This linguistic perspective is often associated with the ‘nativist view’, which originates from Chomsky’s language acquisition device (LAD), and assumes that language ability is innate (inborn). According to O’Grady (2006) nativism constitutes two different classes of acquisition theories: ‘grammatical nativism’ and ‘general nativism’. Grammatical nativism holds that some portion of grammar is innate (exists as a grammatical component of the LAD which is also known as Universal Grammar). However, general nativism (which is also called cognitive nativism or emergentism) accepts the existence of an innate acquisition device but refuses that it includes grammatical categories. This view holds that the entire grammar is the result of interaction of the LAD with experience (O’Grady 2006).

Scholars defending nativist perspective assume that “...the innate language faculty involved in first language is also involved in second language acquisition...” (see Johnson & Johnson 2004: 129). Within this perspective, formal grammar is viewed as an explicit description of a speaker's knowledge of his or her language(s). Formal linguistics research, then, searched to find answers for two main questions: “What does it mean to say we ‘know’ a language?” and “How does that knowledge arise in the mind of the speaker; that is, how is it acquired?” (Juffs, 2002: 87).

The focus of research from this perspective has been on language universals (Gass & Selinker 1994) [see also Chomsky’s Universal Grammar (UG) in Johnson & Johnson 2004]. Formal linguistic research topics have mainly comprised contrastive analysis (CA)--study of structural differences and similarities of two or more languages

(Johnson & Johnson 2004), and morpheme order studies and so forth (see Gass & Selinker 1994 for detailed information on morpheme order studies). However, this formal generative linguistic approach has been criticized for: a) the notion of the idealized speaker; b) its failure of non-explanation for language acquisition; and c) its insignificant interface with real-world uses (Grabe 2002).

However, some researchers like Lightbown and White (1987 cited in Juffs 2002) claimed that (formal) linguistic theories are essential but they do not play an exclusive role in SLA studies. Lightbown and White claimed that formal linguistic approaches, although they do not deny the importance of pragmatics and sociological influence in language use and language learning, do not address communicative competence (see Canale & Swain 1980 for communicative competence see also Section 2.29.1). According to Lightbown and White (1987 cited in Juffs 2002) major aim of formal linguistic research is, then, a comprehensive theory (see Flynn 1996, Gregg 1996, Schwartz 1999 cited in Juffs 2002 for views on formal linguistic SLA research).

Juffs (2002) noted that formal linguistics has provided invaluable information on the principles underlie human languages. He asserted that the data gathered through linguistic research provided a framework for investigating how this knowledge is related to native language competence. He asserted that formal linguistic research has played a crucial role in the explanation of second language research. Juffs (2002) claimed that, although the results of formal linguistic research have not always had direct pedagogical applications, without the knowledge of such generalizations and knowledge of structural properties of languages it would not be possible to see whether these generalizations apply to second/foreign language learning/acquisition, as well.

Juffs (2002) noted that formal linguistic research is useful in that it provides background information into understanding of second language learning/acquisition process.

2.27.4 Cognitive perspective on SLA

The learning theories and models developed within cognitive psychology are the theories and models which have been commonly researched and referred to by many SLL/FLL specialists (see R. Ellis 2000, 2003, 2005b; McLaughlin, Rossman, McLeod 1983; Richards & Rodgers 2001; Savignon 2002b; Schmidt 1995a; Williams & Burden 1997). The following divisions of cognitive psychology are found to be the most relevant as regards SLA:

1. Information processing models (e.g. Atkinson & Shiffrin's information-processing model of mind; Craik & Lockhart's levels of processing; Miller's information-processing theory: computational theory of mind)
2. Constructivist models (e.g. Ausubel's subsumption theory; Bruner's constructivism; Lave's situated cognition; Piaget's genetic epistemology)

Some researchers felt that linguistic theory alone has been epistemologically not sufficient to explain all linguistic and non-linguistic variables involved in SLA (Norris & Ortega 2004). Moreover, because of diminishing importance of native language research, many researchers believed that taking a cognitive theoretical standpoint would be more appropriate (Gass & Selinker 1994). As a consequence of conflicting and unsatisfactory results obtained in formal (nativist) linguistic research cognitive

perspective has gained eminence on SLA research starting from the 1980s (Kaplan 2002).

Scholars defending cognitivist approaches to SLA have agreed that “second language linguistic knowledge develops as the result of learners applying general learning mechanisms to the specific case of second language acquisition.” (Johnson & Johnson 2004: 129). The major models that influenced cognitive SLA research originated from information-processing theories. Thus, the 1990s experienced a marked movement toward ‘information processing’. Information processing perspective emphasized “...notions of language awareness, attention and learning, “focus-on-form” for language learning, learning from dialogic interactions, patterns of teacher-student interaction, task-based learning, content-based learning, and teacher as researcher through action research.” (Grabe, 2002, p. 7)

Research done in cognitive psychology provided language instruction with valuable insights about the language learner and language learning processes. This new perspective contributed to a shift from teacher-dominant classroom instruction to learner-centered learning processes. Contrary to behaviorist assumptions, cognitive view of learning considers human mind and learning processes active. Cognitive psychology, therefore, is concerned with the mental processes that are involved in learning (Williams & Burden 1997). Representational Theory of Mind (RTM) or Computational Theory of Mind (CTM)-- a computer based model of knowledge formation [proposed first by Hilary Putnam 1961 (cited in Host 2005)], which was inspired by Chomskian model of knowledge acquisition, has been one of the widely used models to describe how human mind works. According to CTM information-bearing units are connected to one another to form networks of information which are

stored in the mind. Hence, how information is processed, encoded and retained in the mind and how this information is retrieved when needed has been the major concerns of information-processing theorists (e.g. Miller 1956; Atkinson & Shiffrin 1968; Anderson 1983, 1985, 1996). From the information processing perspective human mind is viewed as processor of information (like a computer) which has the capacity to store and retrieve information. Thus, within this division of cognitive psychology research primarily focused on how memory functions while processing information. Cognitive scientist George Miller (1956) proposed that human mind, like computers, takes in information, processes it, locates and stores it and generates responses to it.

Bruner (2004) asserted that the interest in cognitive psychology began with Noam Chomsky's critical review of Skinner's Verbal Behavior (see Chomsky 1959 for his review of Skinner's verbal behavior). Bruner explained Chomsky's contribution to cognitive research and language acquisition as follows:

“I think it would be fair to say that, under this new dispensation, more has been learned during the last three decades about language acquisition than in any prior century--more, indeed, than in all of them combined. And it's well to remember that the flood of research that made this possible was precipitated by the linguist Chomsky, not by a learning theorist.” (Bruner 2004: 13)

R. Ellis (2000) maintained that cognitive theory offers more persuasive explanation of classroom language learning than audiolingual (behaviorist) learning theory. He acknowledged that cognitive theory gives full credit to the contribution of the learner's internal mental processing and does not attempt to explain L2 learning merely in terms of observable behaviors. Cognitive view includes dimensions such as: how individuals 'build up', 'retain', and 'draw upon' their memories; and the ways in which individuals are involved in the process of learning. R. Ellis (2000) noted that

cognitive theory seeks to understand and explain: "... (1) how knowledge is established, (2) how knowledge becomes automatic and (3) how new knowledge is integrated into the learner's existing cognitive system." (p.7). In spite of different perspectives taken, the idea that learners 'decode' 'analyze' 'store' and 'produce' (e.g. the language learning process) is common to all versions of cognitive approach (Towell & Hawkins 1994).

R. Ellis (2000) maintained that SLL/FLL research draws extensively on research into information processing. Williams and Burden (1997) explained that information processing models are mainly concerned with "...the way in which people take in information, process it and act upon it." (p. 15). Thus, 'how information is processed and stored in memory' has been the primary focus of the work of information processing theorists (Williams & Burden 1997). Atkinson and Shiffrin's (1968) model of memory is one of the best known models of memory. Atkinson and Shiffrin (1968) described memory as being comprised:

Sensory memory: Receptor of sensory input which could hold information for a short period of time.

Short-term memory (working memory): Work place of information which is responsible for active processing of information; that is perceiving, feeling, comparing, computing and reasoning.

Long-term memory: Store of information with unlimited capacity of storage which could be accessed when needed and it is the location where information can be retained for a long time (up to a life time). Long-term memory is considered to be composed of

‘all that is known’. It is also viewed as passive repository where information remains dormant until it is called into working-memory.

Miller’s (1956) contribution to cognitive science is his discovery that short-term memory can only hold seven chunks (7 plus 2/minus 2) of meaningful information. He thus proposed that in order to retain information for a longer period, chunking (reducing information into smaller units) is necessary. Thus, strategies to retain information for a longer time became the major interest of cognitive psychologists. Atkinson and Shiffrin (1968) proposed that stimuli are initially recorded in sensory memory for a short period of time before being transferred into short-term memory (working memory). Atkinson and Shiffrin’s theory holds that most people’s working memory has limited retention capacity; therefore, it is necessary to break down complex material into related ‘chunks’ before encoding these to the long-term memory store [this theory conforms with Miller’s (1956) findings]. Thus this view assumes that if individuals establish connections between concepts, break down information, and rebuild this information with logical connections, then their retention of material and understanding will increase. It is also argued that, since retention time in short-term memory is very limited the most common way of retaining information is by rehearsal (process to hold information in working memory for a period of time), which may take the form of simple repetition or more elaborate means which involve the association of meaning to what is to be remembered (for association of meaning see Ausubel 1980).

Consequently, many information-processing researchers proposed that rehearsal is an essential condition for encoding (transferring) information in long-term memory. However, some researchers (e.g. Craik & Lockhart 1972) claimed that although rehearsal is an essential condition for encoding in long term memory, the way

information is processed in working memory is more important for storage in long-term memory than rehearsal. Thus, Craik and Lockhart (1972) proposed 'levels of processing model' as an alternative to theories of memory that postulated separate stages for sensory, working and long-term memory. Hence, they suggested 'depth' of processing as being a better way for information storage. They claimed that deeper the processing, the more the information will be remembered. They, therefore, emphasized importance of connecting new information to already existing knowledge. According to this view, information is processed at multiple levels simultaneously depending upon its characteristics. For instance, if information that involves strong visual images or many associations with existing knowledge will be processed at a deeper level (and therefore will be remembered better). Craik and Lockhart's theory (1972) supports that individuals remember things 'which are meaningful to them'. Craik and Lockhart argued that meaningful stimuli require more (and deeper) processing than meaningless stimuli. Thus, Craik and Lockhart (1972) proposed elaborating encoding strategies in order for rehearsal to be more effective. They claimed that providing individuals with interesting stimuli in rich contexts, and establishing connection of information to those stored in the long-term memory would increase the effectiveness of rehearsal. They also proposed organizing information as means of elaboration (see also Ausubel's advanced organizers 1968). They suggested that creating or revealing links between items that are perceived as separate, and/or providing individuals with richer contexts by increasing the amount of information associated with each item, and/or supplementing information with audio/visual support, would provide a means of elaboration and chunking, and therefore, would enhance the processing by maintaining information in working memory and encoding information to long-term memory.

Attention, as an important component of information processing approach, has provided some invaluable insights into the student learning process (Williams & Burden 1997). Many experiments have provided support that attention is necessary to transferring and encoding information in long-term memory. Within cognitive theory, ‘attention’ has been viewed as one of the most crucial elements of the learning process. Some SLL/FLL specialists have claimed that ‘there is no learning without attention’. It is argued that “...unattended stimuli persist in immediate short-term memory for only a few seconds at best, and attention is the sufficient and necessary condition for long-term storage to occur” (Schmidt 1995a: 9). Schmidt (1990) through a review of psychological research and theories of consciousness looked into the role played by consciousness in input processing in second/foreign language learning. He concluded that unconscious processes of abstraction are not enough for input to become an intake. He claimed that learners must notice-the-gap when there is a discrepancy between their interlanguage (IL) and the target language form. Schmidt put forth that learners will not notice this discrepancy unless their attention is drawn to it. He, therefore, concluded that ‘noticing’ (conscious attention) is a necessary condition for converting input to intake.

However the issues of attention, conscious and subliminal processes have raised a number of controversies. A number of researchers and theorists have argued that there are two types of learning: a) declarative-- through conscious access to the information needed; b) procedural learning--learning that takes place without awareness (see also Section 2.27.4 for ‘explicit’ vs. ‘implicit’ learning). Anderson’s (1983) Adaptive Control of Thought (ACT) has been one of the most influential models used in SLA research.

Anderson (1983) proposed that learning involves a staged process through which information is transferred from declarative memory to production memory. Anderson's acquisition process [Adaptive Control of Thought (ACT)] involves three stages: a) the cognitive stage, b) the associative stage, c) the autonomous stage. According to Anderson during the early stages (the cognitive stage) of learning, the learner makes use of some general interpretive strategies to produce the L2 by accessing the declarative knowledge³⁶ (explicit knowledge). During the associative stage the learner starts producing the L2 through the process of 'knowledge compilation' which involves the processes of 'composition' and 'proceduralization'; that is, at this stage the information is stored in as chunks (instances, implicit knowledge, formulaic expressions, or exemplar-based information) which enable the learner to access productions through matching in a more rapid way. It is assumed that when a task is performed repetitively procedural knowledge³⁷ (implicit knowledge) replaces interpretive application of declarative knowledge (explicit knowledge). However, at this stage the production is still a careful one. Anderson proposed that the errors the learner makes should be dealt with at this stage. He argued that once past this stage the declarative knowledge (explicit knowledge) has little or no influence on the autonomous productions. According to Anderson when the learner reaches the autonomous stage the learner's productions no longer need to work in conjunction with the declarative knowledge (the learner no longer needs to access his/her working or short-term memory). In the autonomous stage, the procedural knowledge could still be

³⁶ Ellis R (2003) defines declarative knowledge as "...it consists of factual information about the L2 that has not yet been automatized" (p. 341).

³⁷ "...Knowledge that is fully automatized so that it is easily and rapidly accessible during the performance of a task." (Ellis R 2003: 348).

appropriated by fine-tuning. According to Anderson, practicing (exposure) is a necessary condition for the development of proceduralized linguistic knowledge (implicit knowledge). R. Ellis (2000) noted that Anderson considered learners' implicit knowledge of language dependent on learners' prior explicit knowledge. R. Ellis argued that, contrary to this view, there is evidence supporting that learners can acquire an L2 subconsciously without any explicit learning [however, R. Ellis did not exclude the fact that explicit knowledge could supplement implicit knowledge (see R. Ellis 2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c)]. In spite of some conceptual differences in certain viewpoints, Anderson's ideas have been widely quoted by SLL/FLL researchers and his model has contributed to gaining invaluable insights about instructed second/foreign language acquisition and learning strategies (see R. Ellis 2003; O'Malley & Chamot 1990). Research into L2 learner strategies has drawn extensively upon research done in information processing. Much of the work on learner strategies in second/foreign language learning, which includes memory strategies, has widely drawn on Anderson's acquisition process (e.g. O'Malley & Chamot 1990).

Anderson's ideas have also been used in L2 skill-learning. Anderson proposed that different sets of skills are used for comprehension and production. R. Ellis (2003) interpreted this phenomenon as "The implication here is that practice in processing input will only serve to develop learners' ability to comprehend the target language, not to produce it, and that production is necessary to develop automaticity in speaking." (p.112). Similar views about automatization are also found in the works of Shiffrin and Schneider (1997 cited in R. Ellis 2003) and Logan (1988).

Shiffrin and Schneider (1997) put forward that information is processed through:
a) automatic processing and; b) controlled processing. R. Ellis (2003) explained the difference between these two processes as follows:

“Both types of processes have their advantages and disadvantages. Automatic processes are easy and rapid. They take up little processing capacity and thus make it possible for learners to focus attention on higher-order skills, i.e. attending to message content rather than to form. However, automatic processes can be suppressed or changed only with difficulty. In contrast, controlled processes are easily established and are flexible but they are very demanding on processing capacity. Thus learners who rely on the controlled processing of linguistic form have less capacity to attend to the content of their messages” (R. Ellis 2003: 144).

Similarly, Logan’s instance theory (1988) emphasized the role automatization plays in skill acquisition. Logan’s theory holds that automatization is the result of acquisition of ‘domain specific knowledge base’. According to Logan, this knowledge base is in the form of separate representations and stored as ‘instances’. He claimed that repeated practice in consistent environment is the only necessary condition for automatization to occur. He asserted that automaticity, which enables individuals to fulfill tasks quickly and effortlessly (automatically), is an important phenomenon in skill acquisition. Ellis (2003) noted that learner’s production practice is important because it helps them build up a repertoire of ‘instances’ (stored chunks, formulaic expressions, exemplar-based information). R. Ellis (2003) claimed that in order to develop automatic processing (i.e. to change behavior) learners should ‘practice the actual behavior itself’ and added that “...for practice to work it must involve learners producing the target structure in the context of communicative activity...communicative activity serves as a device for proceduralizing knowledge of linguistic structures that have been first presented declaratively.” (p.146). Thus, R. Ellis (2003) noted that

practicing language structures mechanically (e.g. as in audiolingual methods) would not enable learners to use these structures autonomously. He claimed that practicing language structures mechanically would not allow information to be transferred to long-term memory because such practices are performed through de-contextualizing target structures R. Ellis (2003) (see also Anderson 1983, 1985, 1996; Atkinson & Shiffrin 1968; Ausubel 1968; Craik & Lockhart 1972).

The implicit knowledge and explicit knowledge distinctions proposed by Krashen's Monitor Model (1985) is not dissimilar from the cognitive views discussed above (see Anderson 1983, 1985, 1996; Atkinson & Shiffrin 1968; Logan 1988). R. Ellis (2005a, 2005b, 2005c) explained that implicit knowledge is procedural knowledge and it is held unconsciously. Learners have access to this knowledge rapidly (automatically) and this knowledge is the primary condition for fluent language communication. Implicit knowledge cannot be verbalised easily. Explicit knowledge on the other hand is declarative and this knowledge includes conscious knowledge of grammar rules (and metalanguage to explain these rules). Compared to implicit knowledge accessing this type of knowledge is slower. This view is supported by Stephan Krashen's monitor theory which holds that that acquisition (subconscious processes) and learning (conscious formal knowledge) are separate processes and that learnt knowledge is called upon only to correct mistakes which occur during communication. According to Krashen this learnt knowledge serves as a monitor and that it cannot transform into acquisition. Krashen (1981a, 1981b, 1985; Krashen & Terrell 1983) conceptualized second language acquisition as the same process as the acquisition of the first language; that is, it is not conscious, it does not happen in formal situations or through explanation of formal grammatical rules; it follows a fixed order of acquisition; and it is not related to the learner's age. Krashen conceptualized learning as

conscious, formal, explicit knowledge of language rules, which cannot lead to acquisition. Krashen assumed that language acquisition takes place when the learner is exposed to rich comprehensible input in the L2. He claimed that in order for acquisition to take place the input is required to be slightly beyond the learner's actual linguistic competence ($i+1$). Thus according to Krashen and Terrell (1983) in the classroom learners need to be provided with comprehensible input containing new language data slightly above their current competence so that they could relate this new information to the next stage ($+1$) towards which they are moving along [see Krashen's (1981a, 1981b, 1985 and Krashen & Terrell (1983) for comprehensible input and input hypothesis].

However R.Ellis (2003) noted that implicit learning is associative learning (this view is different from nativist perspective). That is, implicit learning functions through development of complex networks of connections. Thus, from this perspective implicit learning involves a connectionist model³⁸ of linguistic representation. R. Ellis (2003) defined explicit and explicit knowledge as follows: "Implicit knowledge refers to that knowledge of language that a speaker manifests in performance but has no awareness of...Explicit knowledge refers to knowledge about language that speakers are aware of and, if asked, can verbalize." (p. 105). R. Ellis (2000) further explained the distinction between these two knowledge types as follows: a) explicit knowledge is conscious and declarative; whereas implicit knowledge is subconscious and procedural (however this procedural knowledge might not always be fully automatic); b) explicit and implicit knowledge are stored separately in the brain; c) explicit and implicit knowledge do not

³⁸ "...connectionist theories view linguistic knowledge as a complex network of associations that allows for parallel processing. In such theories, no clear distinction is made between representation and learning mechanisms, as the networks are necessarily dynamic, constantly adjusting the associations in response to input frequencies." (Ellis R. 2003: 105).

have primacy of sequence (succession) of growth over one another. In some cases explicit knowledge can precede (and/or exceed) implicit knowledge or vice versa; however, d) only implicit knowledge is developmental.

Different specialists, however, have different views about the role played by explicit and implicit knowledge in language learning. The ‘interface hypothesis’, which addresses whether explicit knowledge plays a role in L2 acquisition, is used to position the explicit and implicit knowledge controversies. According to R. Ellis (2005b) there are three positions and each of these have different approaches to second/foreign language teaching. Krashen (1985) defends non-interface position (see R. Ellis 2005b); that is, he claims that explicit knowledge cannot become implicit knowledge [research on memory studies suggest that explicit and implicit memories are separate (R. Ellis 2005b)]. However, some other specialists support the interface position and argue that explicit knowledge can become implicit knowledge if learners are exposed to communicative practice [this view is supported by ‘skill-learning theory’³⁹]. Some others, on the other hand, support the ‘weak-interface’ position [is also called ‘weak non-interface position’ (see Ellis 2003)] and claim that explicit knowledge plays a role in ‘noticing’⁴⁰ and ‘noticing-the-gap’ through which learners make cognitive comparisons between the ‘input’ and their own ‘output’ (Ellis 2003, 2005b). Thus, supporters of the non-interface position focus primarily on meaning/communication-based tasks and exclude grammar (e.g. task-based teaching). The supporters of interface

³⁹ Skill-learning theory (see also DeKeyser 1998 for skill-learning theory) or skill-based theory views knowledge as being proceduralized into implicit knowledge gradually through practice (Ellis 2003). Another theory which support this view is Logan’s instance theory (see Logan 1988).

⁴⁰ Noticing is a conscious cognitive process which involves attending to linguistic form learners receive in the input and the output they produce (Ellis 2003).

position advocate use of presentation-practice-production (PPP) approach (i.e. language structures are first presented and then practiced and finally learners produce the language in a freer communicative context as in weak forms of communicative language teaching (CLT) [PPP is also referred to as present-practice-produce see Ellis 2003] (see Section 2.29.1 for further information about PPP and weak/strong versions of CLT). Supporters of the weak-interface position use consciousness-raising tasks to help learners to figure out their own explicit grammar rules via noticing [R. Ellis 2003; Savignon 2002b support this third position].

Like information-processing theorists cognitive constructivist psychologist (e.g. Ausubel, Bruner, Piaget) are also concerned with how knowledge is acquired. Ausubel (1960, 1980), Bruner (1973, 2004), and Piaget (1970, 1972) are considered the major theorists among the cognitive constructivists. The cognitive constructivist theories hold that to know is to construct conceptions of reality that correspond to the individual's experience. Applied to learning this view emphasizes the importance of prior knowledge and prior ideas in any learning situation. The constructivist theory views learning as giving meaning to the world around us and making sense of our personal experience through organizing and reorganizing our existing knowledge. Thus, constructivist theory suggests that individuals do not simply memorize or accept others' conceptions of reality; instead, they create their own meaning and understanding. Constructivist views have provided SLA researchers with firm theoretical ground to base language acquisition research on.

“Constructivist views of language acquisition hold that simple learning mechanisms operating in and across human systems for perception, motor action, and cognition while exposed to language data in a communicatively rich human social environment navigated by an organism eager to exploit the functionality of language are sufficient to drive the

emergence of complex language representations. Various tribes of constructivism [connectionists, functional linguists, emergentists, constructivist child language researchers, computational linguists]...all share a functional-developmental, usage-based perspective of language.” (N. Ellis 2006: 63)

The most influential cognitive constructionist theory was developed by Jean Piaget. Piaget’s theory holds that individuals construct their cognitive abilities and create their own sense of the world (this view opposes nativist theories which conceive cognition as innate knowledge and abilities- e.g. Chomsky and Krashen.). The major theme in the theoretical framework of Piaget was that the individual acts accordingly to conceptual categories (schemata⁴¹) that are developed in interaction with the environment. Piaget (1970) proposed that the individual’s cognitive development consists of a constant effort to adapt to the environment; and that the individual’s schemata (cognitive structures, cognitive rules or scripts) are constructed through the processes of adaptation. According to Piaget this adaptation process comprises assimilation (the interpretation of events in terms of existing cognitive structure) and accommodation (changing the cognitive structure to make sense of the environment). Like Piaget, Bruner as well regarded cognitive development as an active process in which individuals construct new ideas or concepts based upon their schemata. According to Bruner the individual selects and transforms information, constructs hypotheses, and makes decisions, relying on a cognitive structure (script or schema). He asserted that the individual’s cognitive structures provide meaning and organization to his/her experiences and allows the individual to go beyond the given information and

⁴¹ Schema (Schemata: plural) refers to categorical rules, cognitive structures or scripts, which all individuals are assumed to possess, to interpret the world. The concept of schema was first introduced by Bartlett (1958) and later developed and used by Piaget (1970), Bruner (1973), Ausubel (1980) and some other cognitive psychologists.

construct new information meaningful to him/her. However slightly differently from Piaget, Bruner emphasized the role of context and resources provided within the context. In other words he regarded cognitive development as the individual's interaction with the resources in his/her environment (in this respect Bruner's ideas bear similarities with social interactionist views—e.g. Vygotsky's social interactionist theory—this interactionist perspective is specially highlighted in Bruner's more recent works –e.g. see Bornstein & Bruner 1989; Bruner 2004). Bruner (2004) argued that growth depends on human beings interacting with the resources in their environments: environments (physical, biological, interpersonal and cultural). He gave the following example to highlight the importance of the environment:

“...the prediction that children must be so early tuned to the structure of their native language that they pick up its phonemic distinctions in parental talk even before they learn to understand or talk the language proper....And you can test it in context directly--by seeing whether childrens' prelinguistic babbling has a higher frequency of native-language phoneme sounds than of foreign ones. And so it does: French babies babble in French, Spanish in Spanish, etc. With such experiments, one tests in context, not in a maze, and knows without extrapolation whether the experiment has any bearing on real learning by real people in real life.” (Bruner 2004: 13).

An implication of Bruner's theory is that in order for growth to take place individuals (especially children) should be provided with suitable activities, materials and tools that are more concordant with their cognitive capabilities, interests, experiences, and contexts. He also argued that in order to go beyond the information given, instruction should be designed to allow extrapolation.

One of the most significant contributions to learning or in other words acquisition of information was the cognitive psychologist David Ausubel's 'advance

organizers' (see subsumption theory 1960, 1980). Advance organizers are characterized as instructional strategies/materials which help bridge already existing information with new information. Ausubel (1960) defined advance organizers as cognitive instructional strategies that support learning and retention of new information. Thus, Ausubel's theory is mainly concerned with how individuals acquire and retain large amounts of meaningful information from textual and/or verbal presentations. The "advanced organizer", as an instructional strategy, has been widely used in many learning contexts (e.g. in SLL/FLL many pre-reading, pre-listening, pre-speaking tasks bear highly the characteristics of Ausubell's theory). The major purpose of this cognitive instructional strategy is to promote acquisition and retention of new information with meaningful instruction. The subsumption theory holds that meaningful learning results when individuals link new information to relevant concepts within their schema. Each individual's schema is unique and relative to the individual's experiences and cognitive processes. It is assumed that this process produces a series of changes within individuals' cognitive structures through modifying already existing concepts and creating new linkages between new concepts that are being formed.

Lave and Wenger (1991) stipulated that learning should be situated. They asserted that learning is a function of the context, culture, and activity in which it occurs. In a way, situated learning (or situated cognition) is positioned to as an alternative to information-processing theory (Wilson & Myers 2000). Wilson and Myers asserted that situated cognition "...seeks to correct some of the oversights of the symbolic-computation approach to cognition, in particular its reliance on stored descriptions of rules and information, its focus on conscious reasoning and thought, and its neglect of cultural and physical context" (2000, p. 65). Wilson and Myers maintained that situated cognition aims to bring the individual and the social together.

They claimed that knowing, learning, and cognition are social constructions, expressed in actions of people interacting within their context. Lave and Wenger's situated learning theory (1991) holds that learning is acquired situationally and that it is grounded in the actions of everyday situations. They put forth that knowledge transfer is possible only in similar situations. They also stipulated that learning cannot be separated from the world of action. They stated that learning is acquired in situated social coparticipation and like other acts it is the result of a social process. Lave and Wenger (1991) claimed that skills to perform can only be acquired by actually engaging in the process. Thus, this idea implies a highly interactive and productive role for the skills that are required in the learning process. Lave and Wenger (1991) mainly aimed at discovering the types of social engagements which provide the proper context for learning rather than emphasizing the role of cognitive processes and conceptual structures involved in learning. Kirshner and Whitson (1997) acknowledged that situated learning and thinking have drawn heavily on the sociocultural theories of Lev Vygotsky and skill-learning theories.

2.27.5 Interactionist perspective on SLA

While nativists believe inborn factors are more dominant, interactionists believe that environmental (external) factors are as influential as internal (cognitive) factors in language acquisition (see Gass 1997, 2002; Norris & Ortega 2004). Some SLA researchers view the interactionist perspective of SLA as part of the cognitivist view and refer to it as 'cognitive-interactionist theory' (see Norris & Ortega 2004). However, some others place the interactionist view within sociocultural theories and refer to it as 'social interactionist theory' (see Gass 1997).

Recently, research in SLA has had some data as evidence for the interactionist position (see Gass 2002). Gass (2002) explained that research in SLA from an interactionist perspective looks at two main issues: input and the interactions learners engage in. Within the interactionist research framework the key considerations are: input, intake, interaction, negotiation of meaning, attention, hypothesis confirmation, hypothesis testing, noticing-the-gap, and output (see Gass 2002, 2006).

Interactionists, like nativists, emphasize the important role played by input (Gass 1997, 2002, 2006; Gass & Selinker 1994). However, conceptualization of input, from the interactionist perspective, differs from conceptualization of input described by nativists. The concept 'input' (as regards second/foreign language acquisition/learning) was first added to SLA literature by Stephen Krashen. Krashen (see Krashen 1981a, 1981b, 1985; Krashen & Terrell 1983) defended nativist view and assumed that language acquisition takes place when the learner is exposed to rich comprehensible input in the L2. He claimed that in order for acquisition to take place the input is required to be slightly beyond the learner's current linguistic competence ($i+1$). Thus according to Krashen and Terrell (1983) in the classroom learners need to be provided with comprehensible input containing new language data slightly above their current competence so that they could relate this new information to the next stage ($+1$) towards which they are moving along [see Krashen 1981a, 1981b, 1985; Krashen & Terrell 1983 for comprehensible input and input hypothesis]. However, Krashen's conceptualization of input and especially comprehensible input has been harshly criticized by some SLA scholars. According to Gass (1997), Krashen's conceptualization of input (especially the concept of compressible input), which has constituted the major focus in UG studies, assumes a central role in second/foreign language acquisition. From the interactionist perspective, comprehensible input alone is not a sufficient condition to

promote second/foreign language development. In order to show the distinction between comprehensible input and the concept of input from the interactionist perspective Gass (1997) proposed the term ‘comprehended input’. She explained that comprehensible input implies the speaker rather than the hearer. She claimed that comprehensibility is controlled by the hearer not by the speaker. She suggested that comprehension should rather be viewed as a process with different levels and stages “...comprehension represents a continuum of possibilities ranging from semantics to detailed structural analyses.” (Gass 1997: 5). For interactionists the process of ‘intake’ is as important as input. According to Gass (1997):

“*Intake* is the process of assimilating linguistic material...It is in the intake component that psycholinguistic processing takes place. That is, it is where information is matched against prior knowledge and where, in general, processing takes place against the backdrop of the existing internalized grammatical rules. It is where generalizations are likely to occur, it is where memory traces are formed, and finally, it is the component from which fossilization stems” (1997: 5).

Thus, this view holds that in order for input to be internalized processing input and integrating it into already existing knowledge is necessary. Gass (1997) explained that when the learner receives new input data s/he either uses this data to confirm and strengthen his/her hypothesis about particular knowledge or s/he rejects his/her original hypothesis (in this case s/he modifies his/her original hypothesis and waits for new input data to confirm this new hypothesis). She also explained that in some cases (when the learner has some level of understanding but has not fully mastered certain linguistic items) the learner stores the information (creates a hypothesis) and waits for new information (input) to confirm (or disconfirm) his/her hypothesis.

According to interactionists in order for full grammatical competence to be developed learners need to be ‘pushed to produce’⁴² ‘comprehensible output’ (Swain 1995) [see also Krashen 1998 for his criticism about comprehensible output). According to Gass (1997) output is “...the overt manifestation of that process [the acquisition process]...it serves as means of hypothesis testing...” (p. 7). Gass (1997) argued that when learners produce language they at the same time test their hypotheses through negotiation of meaning and the feedback they receive. She also claimed that output helps development of fluency and automaticity of processing. The output hypothesis is also coupled and strengthened by ‘interaction hypothesis’. According to interaction hypothesis⁴³ encountering of ‘input’ is not alone sufficient to promote second/foreign language acquisition/learning. Long (1983) put forth that in order for input to become comprehensible some sort of interaction is required (in Krashen’s comprehensible input hypothesis input is viewed as a main causal variable and main condition in order for second/foreign language acquisition to take place). Interaction hypothesis holds that face-to-face interaction promotes second/foreign language development (Johnson & Johnson 2004). Many researchers agree that interaction between two (or more) interlocutors enriches the input. In other words the major difference between interactionist view and the nativist view is that nativists claim that one-way input

⁴² According to Swain’s output has to be comprehensible; thus, she proposed that learners need to be “...pushed toward the delivery of a message that is not only conveyed, but that is conveyed precisely, coherently, and appropriately.” (Swain 1985: 249).

⁴³ Gass (2002) noted that: the interaction hypothesis originated from Wagner-Gough and Hatch’s ideas (1975 cited in Gass 2002), later formulated by Long (1980, 1981, 1983) and refined by others [(Gass and Varonis 1985, 1989; Mackey 1999; Pica 1987, 1988; Pica and Doughty 1985; Pica, Doughty, and Young 1986; Pica, Young, and Doughty 1987; Schmidt and Frota 1986; Varonis and Gass 1985a) all cited in Gass 2002].

(comprehensible input) is a sufficient condition for second/foreign language acquisition; whereas, interactionist perspective considers two-way communication to be the necessary condition. Long's interaction hypothesis holds that 'negotiation of meaning' and especially interactional adjustments done by a more competent interlocutor [e.g. by a native speaker (NS)] makes the input comprehensible and facilitates acquisition. During the course of interaction (between learners and others) negotiation of meaning with a more competent interlocutor leads the learner to the provision of the feedback [e.g. with the use of direct or indirect corrections such as clarification requests, repetitions, confirmation checks, recasts (rephrase of utterance by changing one or two of its components) etc.]. The feedback draws the learner's attention to inappropriate or faulty use and; therefore, help them see inconsistencies between the input and his/her output. In short, it is claimed that negotiation of meaning helps the learner to 'notice-the-gap'⁴⁴, between received input and his/her actual output (see Section 2.27.4 for more information about 'noticing'). This activity is assumed to provide the learner with greater transparency of semantic and syntactic relationships (Gass 2002).

To sum up, scholars who defend the interactionist perspective believe that following processes facilitate second/foreign language acquisition/learning: "... (1) comprehensible input is necessary for acquisition, (2) conversational interactions (negotiation) makes the input comprehensible, and (3) comprehensible output aids learners in moving from semantic processing to syntactic processing." (Gass & Selinker, 1994, p. 219). According to Ellis (2003) interactionist view suggests that:

⁴⁴ Noticing-the-gap: is a conscious cognitive process which involves the learner to compare language forms which he/she noticed in the input and with his/her interlanguage (Ellis 2003).

1. Acquisition is facilitated when interactional modifications (e.g. negotiation of meaning i.e. simplified input) lead to comprehensible input.
2. Acquisition is facilitated when learners receive feedback (e.g. direct or indirect corrections such as clarification requests, repetitions, confirmation checks, recasts).
3. Acquisition is promoted when learners are pushed to reformulate their utterances.

2.27.6 Social psychological perspective on SLA

The social psychological perspective of second language acquisition holds that learning a second language, to some extent, entails certain degree of identification with the speakers of that language. From this perspective language represents more than being a system for communication. According to this view language is a defining characteristic of a cultural group (see also Section 2.2.3). Therefore, an individual's attitudes toward the speakers of that particular language are assumed to influence both his/her motivation to learn and consequently his/her degree of attainment in that particular language. Initially, this view was formulated to encompass second language learning in bilingual contexts (Gardner 2002). "From the social psychological perspective, learning a second language means the acquisition of near-native facility with the content and structure of the language and near-automaticity in its use both conceptually and behaviorally." (Gardner 2002: 162). However, Dörnyei (1994) proposed another model which emphasizes language instruction in educational contexts (rather than bilingual contexts). SLA research from this perspective mainly focused on attitude and motivation dimensions (for relevant studies see Gardner 1979, 2001a, 2001b; Gardner & Lambert 1972; Gardner & MacIntyre 1991; Gardner et al. 1990;

Gardner et al.2004; Gardner, & Tremblay 1994). SLA from this perspective provides us with three models:

1. Lamberts Model

The first model was proposed by Lambert (1967, 1974 cited by Gardner 2002). The model proposed that aptitude, attitudes, orientation, and motivation promote the development of bilingual proficiency and that this can have an effect on one's self-identity.

2. Gardner and Smythe's Model

The second model was proposed by Gardner and Smythe (1975 cited in Gardner 2002). The model assumes that second language learning/acquisition involves both linguistic and non linguistic elements. The model is also referred to as 'socioeducational model'. Currently, the model focuses on six constructs: language aptitude, attitudes toward the learning situation, integrativeness, motivation, language anxiety, and language achievement (characterized in terms of linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes). Gardner and Smythe also developed and standardized the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery [AMTB] (see also <http://publish.uwo.ca/~gardner/AMTBmanualforwebpage.pdf> for further information).

3. Dörnyei's Model

The third model was proposed by Dörnyei (1994). This model emphasizes an educational perspective of motivation. This model identifies three components of motivation: the language level, the learner level, and the learning situation level. The first two levels, the language level and the learner level, have constructs similar to those

in Lambert and Gardner model. However, the last level introduces completely new constructs (see Figure 2.13 for Dörnyei’s model).

LANGUAGE LEVEL	Integrative motivational subsystem Instrumental motivational subsystem
LEARNER LEVEL	Need for achievement Self-confidence • Language use anxiety • Perceived L2 competence • Causal attributions • Self-efficacy
LEARNING SITUATION LEVEL	
Course-specific Motivational Components	Interest (in the course) Relevance (of the course to one's needs) Expectancy (of success) Satisfaction (one has in the outcome)
Teacher-Specific Motivational Components	Affiliative motive Authority type Direct socialisation of motivation • Modelling • Task presentation • Feedback
Group-Specific Motivational Components	Goal-orientedness Norm and reward system Group cohesiveness Classroom goal structure

Figure 2.13 Dörnyei's (1994) motivational framework of L2 acquisition (cited in Byram 2001:429)

2.27.7 Sociocultural perspective on SLA

Recently, growing body of research on SLA has been informed by sociocultural theory (STC). Lantolf (2002) noted that SCT has evolved from L. S. Vygotsky’s sociocultural theories. He maintained that Vygotsky’s idea that the human mind is “...*mediated* primarily by linguistically based communication” is now a well-accepted

principle in SLA (Lantolf 2002: 104). Lev Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theories have complemented many learning theories (e.g. Bandura's social learning theory; Lave's situated learning theory; Bruner's constructivist theory etc.). Vygotsky's social constructivist theory also bears a lot of similarities with Piaget's cognitive development theory. However, Vygotsky (1978), differently from Piaget, conceptualized social interaction as the necessary source and condition for optimal cognitive development. Vygotsky (1978) stipulated that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition. Thus he viewed cognitive development as a social construction which is developed with social collaboration. He claimed that optimal cognitive development depends upon the 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD) where individuals construct the new language through socially mediated interaction. ZPD is based on the hypothesis that 'apprenticeship' influences cognitive development (Cuq 2003) (similar hypothesis is also put forth by situated cognition theorists). Vygotsky put forth that engaging in full social interaction with others (peers, parents etc) enables ZPD to develop fully. He stipulated that the skills which the individual acquires through interaction with peers (with parents, and significant others, such as teachers, friends etc.) exceed what the individual can attain alone. Thus the degree of difference between autonomously acquired knowledge and knowledge that is acquired in collaboration constitutes the ZPD (Cuq 2003). ZPD is assumed to be influenced by three regulatory factors: a) object-regulation (influence of environmental factors—environmental factors control the individual); b) other-regulation (influence of others--experts mediate and provide the individual with strategies); c) self-regulation (influence of inner-mechanisms--the individual controls the activity). Vygotsky (1978) considered cognition to both an inter-psychological and an intrapsychological phenomenon; that is, he viewed cognition as being both on the social level (interpsychological) and inside the

individual (intrapsychological). According to this viewpoint, as a learner moves from object-regulation to other-regulation, and then to self-regulation, the cognitive activity thus moves from an interpsychological plane to an intrapsychological plane (Schinke-llano 1995).

SLA from this perspective holds that language acquisition and social interaction are in mutually dependent roles and that language acquisition cannot be understood devoid of the context in which it occurs (Schinke-llano 1995). According to this view language development occurs as the result of meaningful verbal interaction (Schinke-llano 1995). The theory mainly focuses on processes and changes rather than products and stages. This approach does not view language process as a linear development. It holds that language learners go forth and back during the course of their interlanguage construction. SLA from this perspective focuses on the processes and changes rather than products and states (Schinke-llano 1995). SLA from sociocultural perspective sees the language development bound up with ZPD and regulated-cognitive activity. Lantolf (2002) argued that, within this sociocultural perspective, activity theory (as an extension of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory) also forms a coherent framework for theorizing SLA. He, thus, claimed that understanding the human mind necessitates studying its 'formation' and its 'activity' rather than studying its 'structure'. In activity theory, the task constitutes the basic component of activity. According to activity theory, human development is conceptualized as a continuing attempt to solve various tasks.

SLA research from sociocultural perspective has been both supportive and demonstrative of the efficacy of Vygotskian ideas in obtaining desired second/foreign language learning outcomes. Research from this perspective investigated primarily the role of social mediation in second/foreign classrooms. Comparative research studies on

the level of expert-novice mediated activity (L2 teacher-L2 learners), and peer-mediated activity (L2 learner-L2 learner) have demonstrated positive results in favor of mediated activity in second/foreign language classrooms (see Lantolf 2002 for different studies done in this area). Second language research has also demonstrated that many of the language forms that young children played with in their private speech (self-directed speech or language play) appeared later when they engaged in L2 activities (see Saville-Troike 1988 cited in Lantolf 2002). Ohta (2001 cited in Lantolf 2002) also provided some samples of adult L2 private speech in a language classroom.

2.28 Theories of language

Current approaches and methods in foreign/second language teaching have been informed by three major theories of language; namely, *structural theories*; *functional theories*; and *interactional theories* (Richards & Rodgers 2001).

The structural perspective is the most traditional and regards language as ‘... a system of structurally related elements for the coding of meaning.’ (Richards & Rodgers 2001: 20). From this perspective language learning is viewed as “... the mastery of elements of this system [structural] which are generally defined in terms of phonological units..., grammatical units, grammatical operations..., and lexical items.” (Richards & Rodgers 2001: 20-21). The areas of research which informs this view of language are: linguistic analysis, and textual discourse analysis. The methods and approaches which based their assumptions on structural linguistics theories are as follows (see Richards & Rodgers 2001):

- The audiolingual method,
- Total physical response (TPR)
- The silent way

The functional view of language emphasizes the functional and social aspects of competence (R. Ellis 2005b). This approach draws on Hymes' model of communicative competence⁴⁵ (see Hymes 1971) and Halliday's systemic functional grammar⁴⁶ (see Halliday 1985). Although language structures (grammatical characteristics of language) are regarded as important elements of language and are also included within the functional perspective, this view primarily focuses on the semantic (meaning) and communicative dimensions (Richards & Rodgers 2001). Sociolinguistics, pragmatics and semantics are the areas of research which have been informing this theory of language. Thus language learning from this perspective is viewed as expressing personal meaning and communication functions. According to R. Ellis (2005b) an implicit element of notional-functional view, is that "...[from notional-functional viewpoint] language learning involves the learning of formulaic chunks of language as much as it involves learning rules." [R. Ellis noted that this implicit element was not mentioned by Richards and Rodgers (1986)]. A typical notional-functional syllabus consists of a list of functions and notions together with linguistic support required to use them in communication (R. 2005b). In short, the aim is to develop grammatical,

⁴⁵ The term communicative competence was originally proposed by Hymes (1971), as a reaction to perceived limitations in Chomsky's competence/performance model of language. Communicative competence refers to 'the underlying systems of knowledge and skills required for communication' [for further developed models of communicative competence see Canale & Swain (1980) and Savignon (2002a)].

⁴⁶ Halliday (1975) identified the following seven functions of language: instrumental, regulatory, instructional, personal, heuristic, imaginative, and representational.

strategic, discourse and sociolinguistic⁴⁷ competences in learners [for the components of communicative competence see Canale & Swain 1980)]. According to R. Ellis (2005b) although notional-functional approach claims to be ‘meaning-centered, it still emphasizes accuracy rather than fluency. Therefore, it can be considered to be a ‘weak-communicative approach’. Some of the language learning approaches and methods based on notional-functional view of language are:

- Weak-forms of communicative language teaching (CLT) (see Section 2.29.1 and R. Ellis 2003, 2005b for weak vs. strong forms of communicative language teaching)
- Functional-notional syllabuses
- The natural approach

The interactional view of language sees language primarily as; the means for establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships, and for performing social communication between individuals (see also interactionist perspective on SLA). The objectives of language learning is from this perspective is to initiate and maintain conversations with other people. Areas of research drawn on are conversation analysis (see Seedhouse 2005), and ethnomethodology⁴⁸. The following approaches are the

⁴⁷ Savignon suggested ‘sociocultural competence’ (see Savignon 2002b) as an extended version of the term ‘sociolinguistic competence’ that Canale and Swain (1980) proposed. Canale and Swain (1980) defined sociolinguistic competence as the ability to interpret the social meaning of the choice of linguistic varieties for the communication situation. Sociocultural competence, on the other hand, is viewed as an interdisciplinary field of enquiry (Savignon 2002b) which extends well beyond linguistic forms and requires understanding of the social context in which language is used.

⁴⁸ The term ‘ethnomethodology’ was introduced by Harold Garfinkel in the 1960s. It is a sociological discipline which focuses on the ways in which people make sense of their world, display this understanding to others, and produce the mutually shared social order in which they live (Hilbert 1992).

examples based on the interactional view of language learning (see Richards & Rodgers 2001):

- Task-based language teaching
- Whole language teaching
- Neurolinguistic programming
- Cooperative language learning
- Content-based instruction
- Communicative approaches (mainly strong forms)

2.29 Recent trends in second/foreign language learning/teaching

Recent trends in second/foreign language teaching/learning are generally viewed under the rubric of ‘current communicative approaches’ (Ellis 2003; Richards & Rodgers 2001). Communicative language teaching, humanistic language teaching, content-based instruction (theme-based learning), and task-based teaching are four main approaches which constitute the recent trends in second/foreign language teaching (see Richards & Rodgers 2001). However, differently from earlier major trends in language teaching (e.g. the grammar-translation method and the audiolingual method), these new trends do not emphasize systematic teaching practices based on a particular theory of language. In other words, none of these new trends can be considered a method. The principles which constitute the frameworks of these approaches draw highly on research done in fundamental disciplines (e.g. SLA research, linguistics, psychology, educational psychology, social psychology, sociology etc.) which are considered most pertinent to solving problems involved in second/foreign language teaching/learning (Johnson & Johnson 2004). Anthony (1963 cited in Richards & Rodgers 2001: 19) defines method

as: "...Method is an overall plan for orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon, the selected approach." To define approach Johnson and Johnson (2004) proposed a broad definition as follows: "...‘general thinking’ behind a language teaching initiative as opposed to step-by-step ‘recipe’ for the conduct of language teaching." (p. 13). To clarify the conceptual confusions between the method, approach and procedure Richards and Rodgers (2001) proposed the following model (see Figure 2.14).

As it is clear from the above definitions these recent trends in language teaching have a significant degree of flexibility (R. Ellis 2000, 2003, 2005a, 2005b; Kumaravadivelu 1991; Richards & Rodgers 2001 and so forth). Within this broad framework, classroom activities are presented with sets of general learning objectives and problem-solving tasks, and not a list of specific linguistic items (see R. Ellis 2000, 2003, 2005a, 2005b; Richards & Rodgers 2001; Savignon 2002b and so forth). R. Ellis (2003) maintained that contrary to the earlier (traditional) SLL/FLL methods, which viewed language as a set of linguistic systems, and operated through linguistic syllabi that are constructed around a sequence of units of language (usually grammatical structures), in recent trends in SLL/FLL "...no attempt is made to specify what the learners will learn, only how they will learn." (R. Ellis 2003: 31).

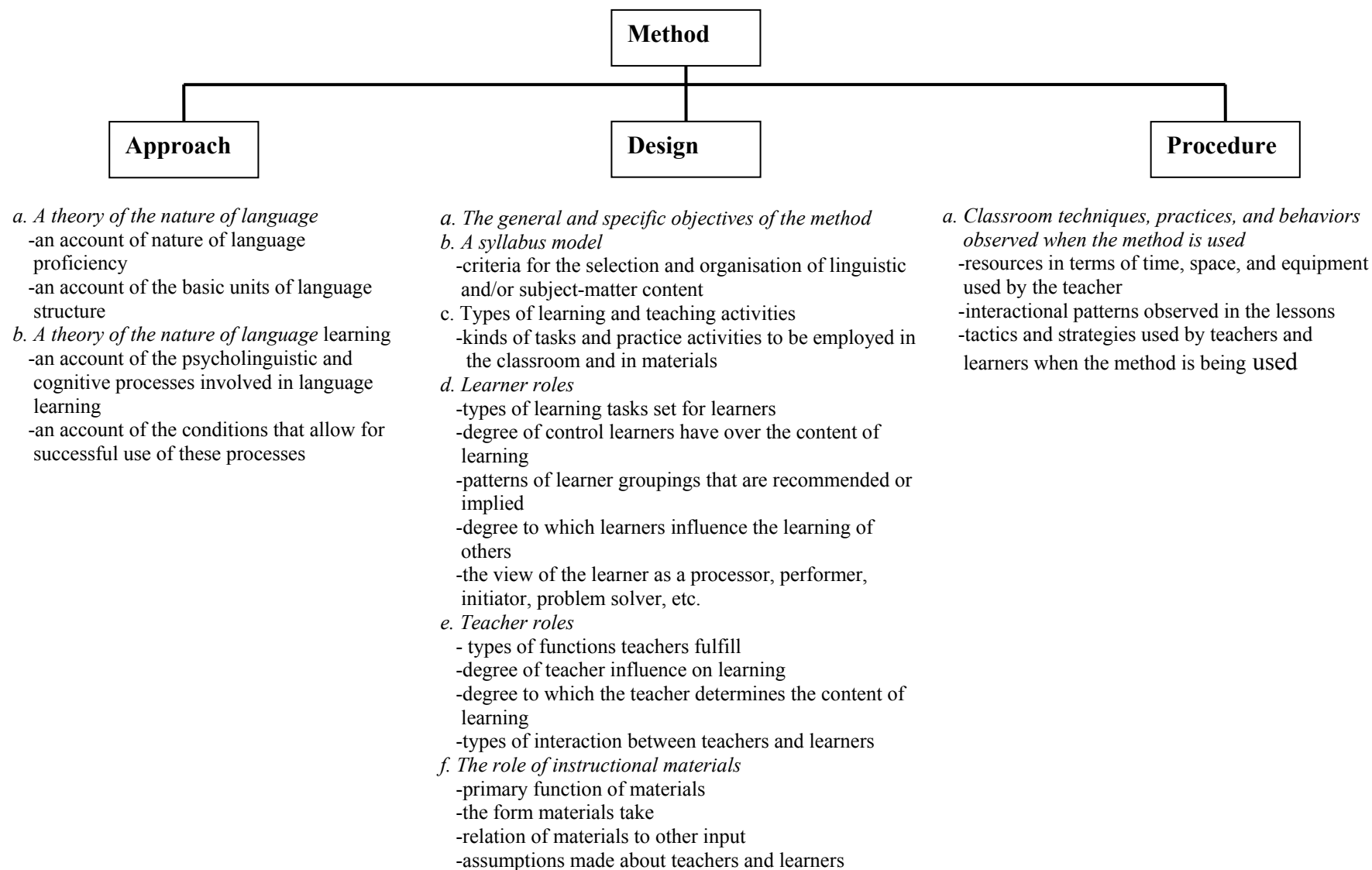


Figure 2.14 Summary of the elements and subelements that constitute a method (source: Richards & Rodgers 2001:33)

Thus communicative approaches have been criticized for not having a proper language teaching paradigm or specific procedures to follow in language instruction. For instance Kumaravadivelu (1991) claimed that this flexibility in L2 pedagogy depends highly on learner and teacher perceptions and interpretations of classroom aims and events; thereby increasing the potential for misunderstanding and miscommunication in the language classroom. These new trends have also been the targets of criticisms because they have been perceived as not being based on coherent theoretical perspectives; not being context-sensitive; not being based on local linguistic, sociocultural, and political particularities; and not taking the context of language education into consideration (e.g. see Swan 1985a 1985b; Bax 2003). Swan (1985b) argued that the communicative approach has an over-simplified view of language teaching by only emphasizing the semantic features in language learning. He claimed that such practices are misleading because language teaching should involve integrating formal syntactic syllabuses with authentic materials. He also argued that, with their over emphasis on the L2, communicative approaches fail to see the vital role of the mother tongue in foreign language learning.

Savingnon (2002), although she highly advocated merits of CLT, noted that depending on their experiences teachers might differ in reactions to CLT. She asserted that the concept of ‘communicative ability’ might cause frustrations to some teachers because the concept might be perceived as ambiguous. She explained that ‘negotiation of meaning’ lacks precision and does not provide a universal scale of assessment. Savingnon (2002) also added that ‘focus on meaning’ has been interpreted as that grammar is not important, or that CLT merely favors learners’ ability to express themselves, without respect to form. Ellis *et al.* (2002) argued that entirely meaning-centered language instruction could not be sufficient to promote high levels of linguistic

competence. Thus, Ellis (2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c) and Ellis *et al.* (2002) suggested that, although primary focus should be on meaning, language instruction should also ensure focus on form. They asserted that since a lot of importance is attached to the issue of ‘grammar’, focus on form has been a major discussion in second/foreign language pedagogy. They, therefore, suggested that careful consideration should be given to resolve the dichotomy regarding this issue. Ellis (2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c) and Ellis *et al.* (2002) argued that people involved in SLL/FLL need to first see the distinction between ‘focus-on-forms’ and ‘focus-on-form’ approaches. Ellis explained that focus-on-forms approach refers to language instruction which focuses on teaching pre-selected linguistic items. Such an approach encourages students to focus on language forms rather than meaning (Ellis 2003, 2005b). However, focus-on-form approach draws learners’ attention to form while they are primarily focused on the message (meaning) (Ellis 2003). Ellis *et al.* (2002) explained that focus-on-form approach can be either planned focus-on-form or incidental focus-on-form. They stated that planned focus-on-form is similar to focus-on-forms in that it makes use of the pre-determined linguistic forms for treatment. However, differently from focus-on-forms approach planned focus-on-form orientation is meaning-centered and attention to form takes place in interaction (in a communicative task) without the teacher directing learners to use of the target form. In incidental focus-on-form approach language forms are not pre-selected. This approach makes use of un-focused communicative tasks in which the teacher and learners (incidentally) attend to forms while performing tasks; or take time-out to deal with specific language forms (see Basturkmen *et al.* 2004 and Ellis *et al.* 2002 for further details about focus-on-form approach). R Ellis (2003) explained that focus-on-form activities can be implemented in a number of ways (e.g. when dealing with learner errors; when learners’ are in search for a form to express

themselves when they are performing a task; or when the learners are working collaboratively to solve some linguistic problem).

Savignon (2002b) noted that, although the controversies about form-focused (focus-on-forms approach) and meaning-focused classroom activity have not yet been resolved, learner involvement in communicative actions are considered crucial in order for language development to take place. She claimed that this practice necessarily requires attention to form (focus-on-form approach), as well (similar views were also expressed by Ellis 2003, 2005b). However, Savignon (2002b) argued that focus on grammatical features should relate to the learners' communicative needs and experiences and that explicit attention to grammar should not be perceived as the explicit teaching of the sentence level grammatical structures (e.g. grammar should be viewed within broader features of discourse, sociolinguistic rules of appropriateness, communication strategies as well).

Savignon (2002b) noted that, despite findings against focus-on-forms approach, some teachers insisted on discrete grammar teaching and testing. This emphasis, thus, has led teachers to use learners' L1 to make sure that explanations of grammar features are well-understood. Thus, already limited classroom time has been used for explanations of explicit language rules and the excessive use of the L1. Savignon (2002b) asserted that with its emphasis on sentence-level grammatical features SLA research, as well, contradicted pragmatic and sociolinguistic aspect of language learning [e.g. see morpheme acquisition studies in Johnson & Johnson (2004)]. Savignon (2002b) also noted that SLA research findings showing that the 'route' of language

acquisition is unaffected by classroom instruction have also added to the frustrations and confusions teachers have had [see Ellis 1983, 1990 for route/rate⁴⁹ distinction].

2.29.1 Communicative language teaching (CLT)

Communicative language teaching (CLT) involves a multidisciplinary perspective that includes disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology, and educational research (see R. Ellis 2000, 2003, 2005b; Savignon 2002b; Richards & Rodgers 2001.). Halliday's 'functional model of language' and Hymes' (1971) concept of 'communicative competence' (which he proposed as a response to perceived limitations in Chomsky's competence/performance model⁵⁰ of language) provided the necessary theoretical support for CLT (Hymes's communicative competence is similar to Halliday's 'meaning potential'⁵¹). After a series of empirical studies, Canale and Swain (1980) further developed Hymes's concept of communicative competence to match instructional goals. Canale and Swain (1980) first added the

⁴⁹ Ellis (1982) claimed that the personal-syllabuses that learners construct influence their 'route' of learning. SLA research has shown that instruction can enhance the rate of acquisition but the route of development is not affected by correction, reward or reinforcement (see Ellis 1982, 1990; Johnson & Johnson 2004).

⁵⁰ Chomsky's transformational-generative grammar differentiates between language competence (the subconscious control of a linguistic system) and language performance (the speaker's actual use of language) (The Columbia Encyclopedia 2004). Chomsky's conceptualization of competence-characterizes the linguistic competence of the ideal native speaker and it is perceived not to be applicable to foreign/second language learning (Savignon 2002b).

⁵¹ Halliday's systemic functional (SF) theory views language as a resource which people use to achieve their aims by expressing meanings in context. Halliday viewed language as a system for 'meaning potential' which implies that language is not a well defined system of grammatical sentences. In short, Halliday's SF theory suggests that particular aspects of a given context (such as the topics discussed, the language users and the medium of communication) define the meanings likely to be expressed and the language likely to be used to express those meanings (Halliday 1985).

strategic competence component to existing grammatical (linguistic) competence and sociolinguistic competence. Then Canale (1983 cited in Savignon 2002b) added discourse competence as the fourth component of communicative competence (see below):

1. Linguistic competence: the knowledge of the grammatical rules, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, etc.);
2. Sociolinguistic competence: the knowledge of the socio-cultural code of language use (e.g. knowledge and use of appropriate register, politeness, and style);
3. Strategic competence: knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies which can be used to enhance the efficiency of communication and enable individuals to repair communication breakdowns.
4. Discourse competence: knowledge of language rules such as cohesion and coherence

Savignon (1983 cited in Savignon 2002b) developed a classroom model of communicative competence by slightly altering the model proposed by Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983 cited in Savignon 2002b) (see Figure 2.15). Savignon extended sociolinguistic competence beyond linguistic forms and proposed sociocultural competence instead. This new component emphasizes understanding of the social context in which language is used; that is, it emphasizes the roles of the participants, the information they share, and the function of their interaction. Savignon (2002b) noted that the components of communicative competence are interrelated and they cannot be assessed in isolation. She further claimed that all these four components are in interaction with each other and when one component increases the others

increase, as well. Consequently, this process produces an overall increase in communicative competence.

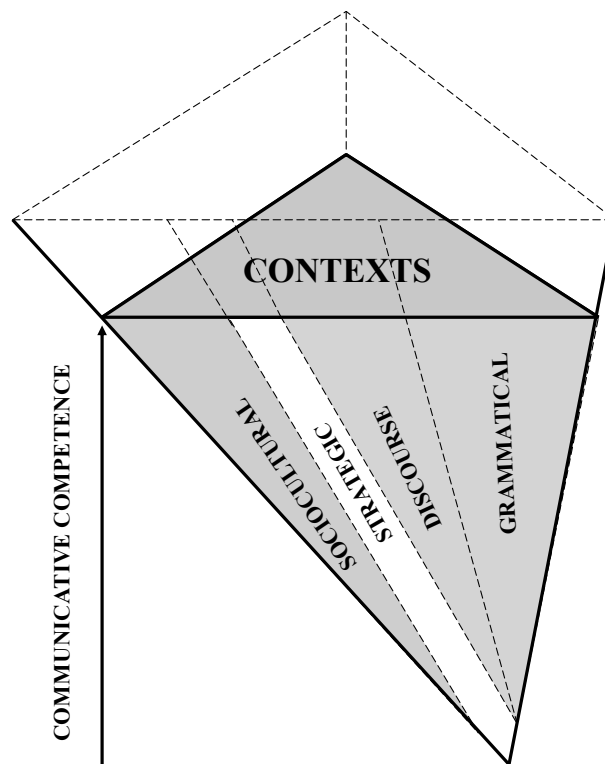


Figure 2.15 Components of communicative competence (source: Savignon 2002b: 8)

Ellis R. (2003) claimed “...CLT is not a monolithic and uniform approach.” (p. 28). He noted that earlier models of CLT (like the audiolingual method) were mainly based on structural syllabi and had a view of language as a set of linguistic systems (Ellis R. 2003). Ellis R. (2003) identified two versions of CLT: weak version (can also be referred to as ‘interventionist approach’, ‘analytic’, or ‘task-supported teaching’); and strong version (can also be referred to as ‘non-interventionist’, ‘holistic’, or task-based teaching’).

The weak version of CLT is based on the assumptions that “...the components of communicative competence can be identified and systematically taught.” (p.28).

Earlier versions of CLT were generally in this form (see also functional/notional syllabuses). The weak version of CLT used the traditional ‘presentation-practice-production’ (PPP) model. In these weak versions of CLT lessons usually started with the presentation of language features/functions followed by a controlled practice, and finally, as a last step, learners were provided with free production activities through which they could use the language that has been presented and practiced at earlier stages in a more communicative manner. Kumaravadivelu (1991) maintained that SLA research has illustrated that language learning is a developmental process. He explained that this developmental learning is more of ‘a partial learning of many items at a time’ rather than ‘a complete mastery of one item at a time’. He asserted that language learning is (largely) a subconscious process; that is, it is rather *incidental* than *intentional*. He also argued that learning is a learner-oriented process and that learner strategies and the learning process determine the final learning outcome. Contrary to SLA research findings PPP views language as “...acquired sequentially as ‘accumulated entities’...” (Ellis 2003: 29). Thus, the fact that L2 acquisition is a process and that learners pass through a series of transitional stages when acquiring a language feature appears to be incompatible with this sequentially ordered PPP model (Ellis 2003). Ellis (2003) also pointed out that tasks used at the production stage could not be considered communicative because such tasks would draw learners attention to the language structures practiced earlier; thus leading the learner to focus on form rather than meaning.

The strong version of CLT (non-interventionist, holistic, task-based teaching) holds that language is acquired through communication. Communicative language practice in strong versions of CLT is provided through the use of ‘tasks’, field experiences, inviting guest speakers, chat rooms, role-plays, multimedia, and so forth as

opposed to ‘exercises’. That is, communicative tasks constitute the entire language curriculum (see Ellis 2003; Savignon 2002b). Savignon (2002b) summarized some of the features of CLT as referred to in the SLL/FLLL literature as follows: ‘task-based’, ‘content-based’, ‘process-oriented’, ‘interactive’, ‘inductive’, and discovery-oriented’.

Ellis (2003) asserted that the aim of CLT is to enable learners to function ‘interactionally’⁵² and transactionally⁵³ in an L2. In other words the major objective of CLT is to enable learners use the L2 communicatively. Thus, a variety of authentic materials and games, role-plays, simulations, and task-based activities are widely used in CLT classrooms (see Richards & Rodgers 2001). Savignon (2002b) noted that CLT cannot be found in any one textbook or in a set of curricular materials. She also argued that “...CLT properly seen as an approach, grounded in a theory of intercultural communicative competence that can be used to develop materials and methods appropriate to a given context of learning.” (p.23). Savignon (2002b) maintained that local understanding of the context is required in order for curricular development to advance. She asserted that analysis of social contexts of language use is a requisite to define ‘what communicative competence is’ and ‘what communicative competence involves’ in classroom context. It has been widely stated that identification of learners’ communicative needs form the basis for communicative task/curriculum design (Ellis 2003, 2005b, Richards & Rodgers 2001; Savignon 2002b). Richards and Rodgers

⁵² Interactional function: language is used to establish and maintain contact (Brown & Yule 1983 cited in Ellis 2003)

⁵³ Transactional function: language is used to exchange information (Brown & Yule 1983 cited in Ellis 2003)

(2001) recommended that the CLT teacher should feel responsible for determining and responding to his/her learners' language needs. Savignon (2002b) noted that design of communicative language instruction, as well as social context of language instruction, should also consider learners' age, interests, the opportunities for language contact outside the classroom, teacher preparation, and other relevant factors. Thus, she recommended that learners' needs, styles of learning, interests be surveyed before the selection of methods and materials in order to be able to design a program appropriate to both the goals and the content of teaching. She maintained that, although the major aim of most language programs has been enhancement and development of communicative language ability, until recently classroom as a social context has not received enough attention from SLA researchers. Savignon (2002b) noted that with growing recent interest in sociocultural theories of language acquisition now researchers have directed their attention and interest toward the social dynamics and discourse of the classroom [e.g. What does teacher/learner interactions look like? What happens during pair/group work? How much is the second language is being used and for what purpose? Is the aim truly communication, that is, is the focus on the negotiation of meaning, rather than on practice of grammatical forms? (p. 21)]. Savignon (2002b) suggested that like language instruction, language testing in the communicative approach should emphasize functional goals. She noted that current approaches to language instruction favor holistic assessment of learner competence; that is, qualitative evaluation as opposed to quantitative assessment of discrete language. She argued that holistic/qualitative assessment tools could measure features that are more representative of learners' communicative competence.

Nunan (1991:279) summarized five basic characteristics of CLT as: a) learning to communicate through interaction in the target language; b) use of authentic materials;

c) opportunities for learners to focus, not only on the language but also on the learning process itself; d) use of learner's own personal experiences; e) linking of classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom. Richards and Rodgers (2001) stated that there is a wide range of language activities that are compatible with CLT. They claimed that these activities are unlimited as long as they enable learners to attain the communicative objectives of the curriculum. Savignon (2002b) recommended various types of language activities that are concordant with communicative approach to language teaching/learning. She suggested that multimedia, which allows realistic simulations of communicative language situations, is an ideal way to teach foreign languages. She also recommended use of internet games, chat rooms to serve communicative purposes in language classrooms. Savignon (2002b) asserted that although group/pair work activities are viewed essential to engage learners in face-to-face interaction (as in real life interactions) using group/pair work is not always the necessary condition to have learners to engage in communication. She explained that writing/reading activities that involve readers and writers in interpretation, expression, and negotiation of meaning could also serve communicative purposes as much as face-to-face interactions. She also asserted that activities that serve for metalinguistic awareness⁵⁴ are also welcome in CLT.

Savignon (2002b) stated that, although focus-on-form cannot be seen as a replacement for meaning, CLT does not exclude metalinguistic awareness of form. She stated that focus-on-form could sometimes provide learners with rich opportunities to focus on meaning, and help build sociolinguistic awareness.

⁵⁴ Metalinguistic awareness: conscious knowledge about language. According to Johnson and Johnson (2004) this reflexiveness allows language to be both the means and object of description (e.g. what does this word mean? Could you tell me what 'l'onion' is in English ?etc.).

2.29.2 Task-based language teaching

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) can be viewed within a 'strong communicative approach' (R. Ellis 2005a, 2005b). Ellis (2005b) noted that there are only a few purely task-based courses available. From this strong communicative approach perspective, TBLT aims to engage learners in authentic communication in second/foreign language classrooms. The characteristics of TBLT can be summarized as follows: a) amount and quality of L2 input-- it has been argued that extensive L2 input enhances L2 acquisition; b) opportunity to interact-- task-based approach holds that people learn to interact through interacting; c) interactional authenticity-- TBLT is based on the principle that activities which involve real-world communication allow language to be used for carrying out meaningful tasks; and that meaningful tasks promote language learning (R. Ellis 2003, 2005a, 2005b; Narcy-Combes & Walsky 2004; Richard & Rodgers 2001); d) negotiation of meaning-- task-based approach holds that interactional adjustments done during negotiation of meaning facilitate language acquisition; e) fluency over accuracy-- TBLT emphasizes primacy of meaning over accuracy; however, it also accepts that learners need to attend to form; and, therefore, it employs 'focus-on-form in context' approach (see Section 2.27.4 for 'focus-on-form' and 'focus-on-forms'); f) implicit learning (automatic, procedural knowledge) over explicit learning-- the goal of TBLT is to develop implicit L2 knowledge; however, it does not neglect explicit knowledge (see Section 2.27.4 for implicit/explicit knowledge, declarative/procedural learning, and automaticity); g) language as a tool-- that is, in TBLT the emphasis is not on the language itself. Learners are required to communicate using their own 'linguistic' and 'non-linguistic' resources to complete tasks; h) use of (holistic) tasks as syllabus--the content of a task-based syllabus comprises tasks without any specification of language forms (or functions or notions) to be taught. TBLT uses

tasks both in planning and on implementation of language instruction (see R. Ellis 2003; Richard & Rodgers 2001). That is the syllabus for language instruction is actually in the form of tasks to complete.

According to Ellis (2003) tasks used in language instruction need to be ‘situationally authentic’(need to employ same communicative characteristics as real-world activities) and they should aim to achieve ‘interactional authenticity’ (e.g. negotiation of meaning, problem-solving, shared understanding, asking questions, clarifying meaning etc.). Ellis also added that although the tasks used in TBLT emphasize primarily development of oral skills, this approach does not exclude reading, writing and listening skills. Ellis (2003) stipulated that TBLT can be viewed within the strong version of CLT--a non-interventionist approach which holds that language is acquired through real-world communication (see Section 2.29.1). Ellis argued that in TBLT the focus is on ‘how learners’ will learn’ rather than ‘what learners will learn’. Thus, tasks are designed to encourage spontaneous communication, problem solving, refinement of knowledge (hypothesis testing/hypothesis confirmation etc), learning strategies, self-esteem and so forth. To show the distinction between ‘tasks’ and other language learning/teaching exercises Ellis (2003) provided the following definitions (see Ellis 2003: 4-5 for various definitions of ‘tasks’).

“ ‘Tasks’ are activities that call for primarily meaning-focused language use. In contrast, ‘exercises’ are activities that call for primarily form-focused language use...a task is concerned with ‘pragmatic meaning’, i.e. the use of the language in context, an exercise is concerned with ‘semantic meaning’, i.e. the systematic meaning, that specific forms can convey irrespective of context...a ‘task’ requires the participants to function primarily as ‘language users’...In contrast, an ‘exercise’ requires the participants to function primarily as ‘learners’...” (Ellis 2003: 3).

Design of tasks in TBLT is informed by different approaches such as humanistic teaching, procedural syllabus, process syllabus, metacognitive approach and so forth. Tasks from the humanistic perspective emphasize the importance of the affective dimension and cognitive development for full potential of growth (see Section 2.27.2 for humanistic approaches). Humanistic tasks aim at increasing self-esteem, and motivation (there is almost no attention to linguistic features) (see Ellis 2003 for task-design based on humanistic principles). The concept of ‘procedural-syllabus’ was proposed by Prabhu (1987 cited in Ellis 2003). In procedural syllabuses, tasks are designed to engage learners in ‘meaning-based activity’. Such tasks are mainly cognitive in orientation and require learners to do problem-solving tasks, describing, extending meaning and so forth. The process syllabus approach was introduced by Breen and Candlin (Breen 1989 and Candlin 1987 cited in Ellis 2003). Such syllabuses are negotiated syllabuses and are constructed in collaboration between teachers and learners as the course is taught (Ellis 2003). Tasks from this perspective focus primarily on the processes that are the outcomes of the performance of a task. Task design from the metacognitive perspective aims to help learners become more effective language learners. Such tasks, therefore, are designed primarily for learner training purposes and may involve questionnaires, learner-interviews so on and so forth that ask about learners and learning. In such tasks ‘language learning’ can become the content which learners talk about (which provides the teacher with some invaluable information about the learners and their learning) or learner training can be integrated into the task content.

Ellis (2003) asserted that ‘tasks’ have become a real research issue in SLA and the use of tasks in second language classrooms has been supported by SLA research. He noted that task-based research has been mainly informed by research done in the interactionist perspective (see Section 2.27.5 for the interactionist perspective on SLA).

Ellis maintained that research work that has been motivated by ‘input’ and ‘interaction hypotheses’ has had its major focus on tasks. Learner productions, therefore, have formed the major area of research inquiry. Within this framework SLA research has investigated the relationship between tasks and language use as regards negotiation of meaning, communicative strategies, and communicative effectiveness (Ellis 2003). Interactionist research has sought to identify and understand: characteristics of psychologically motivated tasks; learner participation involved; tasks that lead to negotiation of meaning; and whether different task types require different information exchange (i.e. if the task requires one-way or two-way information exchange and so forth). According to Ellis (2003) learner production is significant in that it promotes greater learner control and automaticity (see Section 2.27.4 for automaticity). Ellis (2003) noted that learner production is considered to be most relevant to TBLT. Ellis (2003) maintained that recent research regarding tasks has also drawn on Vygotsky’s social constructivist (sociocultural) perspective. From this perspective, tasks are viewed as social tools that promote learning through social interaction. This view holds that learners can perform language functions that they cannot perform alone when they engage in interaction with others (teachers, other learners etc.) [see Section 2.27.7 for zone of proximal development (ZPD)].

2.29.3 Content-based instruction

Since the 1980s, CBI has gained considerable credibility as an alternative to traditional approaches, which emphasized the use of ‘linguistic syllabuses’ in second/foreign language instruction. Principles and learning theories that CBI draws on are in line with principles of the communicative approach. Like CLT, CBI also emphasizes both cognitive and communicative processes of language learning (Chapple

& Curtis 2000; Crandall & Tucker 1990; Kasper 2000). Thus, often CBI is regarded as a subdivision of communicative approaches to second/foreign language instruction (see Richards & Rodgers 2001). In CBI, teaching is organized around the content (or themes). In other words, it uses content syllabus rather than a linguistic syllabus; that is, it allows the content to determine the nature and order of the linguistic forms (Chapple & Curtis 2000; Kasper 2000). CBI, therefore, views the L2 as a tool for acquiring knowledge. Most commonly practiced forms of CBI integrate topics, themes, tasks from learners' subjects of study into their language learning context and it aims to build L2 skills in learners through the study of subject matter (Chapple & Curtis 2000; Crandall & Tucker 1990; Kasper 2000; Richards & Rodgers 2001).

CBI emphasizes the importance of providing ESL learners with opportunities to interact with authentic, contextualized, and linguistically challenging materials in a communicative context and it views second/foreign language acquisition/learning as a social and cognitive activity. Within this social and cognitive activity, prior knowledge and strategy use are regarded as critical to the learner's L2 development and acquisition. CBI is a formal approach with theoretical underpinnings (Kasper 2000). Linguistic, cognitive and sociocultural theories provide CBI with some firm theoretical foundation. CBI is grounded in the theory that: a) people learn a second/foreign language more successfully if they use the language as a means of acquiring information; b) people learn best if the teaching is based on their prior experiences; c) people learn best if the instruction addresses their needs, interests and goals (see Richards and Rodgers 2001). The SLA research has been supportive of the principles that characterize CBI. The major principles that characterize CBI are:

1. Rich and authentic L2 context

CBI holds that language acquisition takes place in rich and authentic L2 context. Ellis (2000, 2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c) argued that rich and extensive L2 input enables learners to learn more and faster. Thus, CBI aims to provide learners with rich context in which authentic meaningful communication can occur.

2. Relevance of content to learner needs

It has been widely stated that learners learn better if the content is meaningful and relevant to their needs. CBI holds that meaningful content which is relevant to the learners' needs and interests, promotes language acquisition.

3. Learning by doing

CBI is based on the principle that 'people learn by doing'. It holds that linguistic ability develops through active engagement in a communicative activity. Hence, CBI emphasizes creating opportunities for active involvement of learners in communicative L2 activities (e.g. tasks encouraging use of face-to-face interactions, problem solving activities, comparing, analyzing; working in groups/pairs etc which involve experiential learning).

4. Negotiation of meaning

CBI provides learners with communicative language tasks, which encourage negotiation of meaning (see Section 2.27.5 for negotiation of meaning).

5. Use of tasks

Tasks are viewed as the essential part of authentic and experiential language learning; thus, task-based learning is considered to be an integral part of content-based instruction (see Section 2.29.2 for more information about tasks and task-based learning).

2.30 Conclusion

Knowledge of SLA theory is necessary for teachers to be aware of certain techniques and principles, recent developments in research and their implications for L2 practices (R. Ellis 2000, 2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c). Richards and Rodgers (2001) noted that through gaining experience teachers develop their personal approaches and methods according to the needs of their learners and other institutional requirements. Such personal approaches are normally based on an established approach or a method but are modified to match with classroom realities through the influence of teachers' experiences, beliefs, principles, and the feedback obtained from their learners (this could be informal/intuitive or formal systematic by using informed research instruments). Richards and Rodgers (2001) noted that the primary sources that contribute to the development of a personal approach are the teacher's beliefs and principles. They argued that "All classroom practices reflect teachers' principles and beliefs, and different belief systems among teachers can often explain why teachers conduct their classes in different ways." (Richards & Rodgers 2001: 251).

R. Ellis (2005a, 2005b, 2005c) noted that SLA research and theory are unable to provide teachers with a consistent and uniform paradigm on how language-teaching can best promote learning. He asserted that there is still a dichotomy between whether

language teaching should continue the systematic teaching of grammar (focus-on-forms approach) and whether it should deal with grammatical features within the communicative language-learning context (focus-on-form approach). R. Ellis also noted that there is no agreement on whether the explicit teaching of knowledge (explanation of rules, using definitions, or use of metatalk etc.) contributes to second/foreign language acquisition. However, R. Ellis argued that teachers need some consistent generalizations and principles to guide them in their classroom practices (see R. Ellis 2005a, 2005b, 2005c). He, therefore, drawing on findings from a wide range of SLA studies, put together a set of generalizations and principles (see R. Ellis 2005a, 2005b, 2005c). R. Ellis's 'ten principles', therefore, can be seen as 'provisional specifications' for the learner-centered language instruction (see R. Ellis 2005a, 2005b, 2005c).

R. Ellis's 'ten principles' for successful language instruction

Principle 1: In order for learners to be proficient in any second/foreign language they need to develop a 'rich repertoire of' both 'formulaic expressions' [see Section 2.27.7 for automaticity, proceduralized learning and chunking] and 'rule-based competence' (i.e. knowledge of grammar rules).

Principle 2: Second/foreign language instruction should primarily focus on 'meaning' and aim at providing opportunities for learners to 'focus on meaning' via the use of communicative language activities. R. Ellis (2005a, 2005b, 2005c) makes distinction between 'semantic meaning' and 'pragmatic meaning'. He explained (2005c) that semantic meaning refers to meanings of lexical items and grammar structures. Pragmatic meaning on the other hand refers to contextualized meaning; that is, it refers to meaning (message) inherent in a communicative act. He explained that this meaning (message) can only be transferred through the actual act of communication. R. Ellis

argued that although both types of ‘meaning’ are important, the primary emphasis of teaching should be on pragmatic meaning.

Principle 3: Learners also need to attend to form in order to be able to notice discrepancies between the input and their output. Thus, ‘noticing’ (conscious attention) is considered to be the necessary condition for converting input to intake. (see also attention, ‘focus-on- form’ vs. ‘focus-on-forms’ in Section 2.27.4).

Principle 4: Language instruction should primarily aim at developing implicit knowledge in learners (see Section 2.27.4 for proceduralized vs. declarative knowledge and implicit vs. explicit knowledge). However, R. Ellis (2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c) explained that emphasis on implicit knowledge should not be interpreted as no focus on explicit knowledge in language classrooms.

Principle 5: R. Ellis recommends that learners’ ‘built-in syllabus’ should be taken into account during language instruction. Relevant literature provides us with some evidence that language learners’, more or less, follow a natural predictable order when they acquire an L2. Several research studies have also demonstrated that the explicit teaching of grammar (or following a sequential teaching of grammatical forms) does not have any influence on this developmental sequence of L2 acquisition. Thus, Corder (cited in R. Ellis 2005a, 2005b, 2005a) proposed the term ‘built-in-syllabus’ to refer to learners’ developmental order of language acquisition. Thus, R. Ellis concluded that it might be beneficial if teachers teach grammar compatible with their learners’ natural processes of acquisition.

However research in this area is limited to a few studies (see morpheme studies e.g. in English, learners acquire the progressive ‘-ing’, plural ‘-s’, and active

voice before they acquire passive form or the third person singular ‘-s’) and does not provide teachers’ with significant data on the complete acquisitional sequences learners’ follow. Moreover, even if teachers were provided with complete significant data on the natural sequences L2 learners follow in L2 acquisition it would be difficult for teachers to judge which stage of acquisitional development each learner has reached, and act accordingly. In addition, research has illustrated that the sequence of formal language teaching (especially the sequential teaching of grammar rules) does not necessarily correspond to learners’ sequence of L2 acquisition and their built-in syllabus. (Ellis 2005a, 2005b, 2005c) Thus, what R. Ellis proposes as ‘Principle 5’ (the teaching of grammar should be compatible with learners’ natural order of acquisition) appears to be vague and difficult to apply in language instruction.

Principle 6: In order for successful L2 acquisitions teachers are required to maximize use of the L2 in the classroom. In other words, extensive L2 input is a necessary condition to help learners achieve high levels of L2 proficiency (R. Ellis recommended the L2 to be used both as the object and the medium of instruction).

Principle 7: Relevant research has demonstrated that output (speaking and writing), as well as input, is a necessary condition for successful language learning [see Section 2.27.5 for output hypothesis].

Principle 8: According to the interaction hypothesis face-to-face interaction promotes second/foreign language development. This view holds that interaction between two interlocutors enriches the input and helps learners develop both fluency and automaticity. Thus, oral communicative interaction is necessary to promote L2 oral skills [see Section 2.27.5].

Principle 9: Differences between learners (their beliefs, interests, levels, goals, expectations) need be taken into consideration.

Principle 10: Learners need to be tested both on their free and controlled productions.

Although knowledge of approaches and methods is a requirement for effective language teaching and the understanding of learning/teaching related issues, approaches and methods should not be seen as ready-made solutions to all teaching problems that can be applied in any teaching situation regardless of the contextual factors (Ellis 2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c; Richards & Rodgers 2001). Nunan (2005) argued that general principles of second/foreign language acquisition should be well understood and appropriately applied by educationalists within their distinctive classroom settings and social, political contexts. Before taking a decision to apply an approach or a method, in other words, when designing a program, factors specific to that particular learning/teaching situation need to be carefully investigated. That is, designing a foreign/second language programme requires a thorough understanding of the cultural context, political context, and the institutional context that includes both the learners and the teachers and their physical learning/teaching environments (Richards & Rodgers 2001).

Part 5: L2 Learner/Teacher Beliefs: Terminology and Theoretical Standpoints Employed

2.31 Introduction

This section defines the terminology used and explains the theoretical perspectives taken in this dissertation work. This research work deals with L2 beliefs which represent the non-linguistic and cognitive and affective side of L2 learning and teaching. Research in this particular area demands an insightful understanding of psychological issues concerning beliefs and their influences on learning. Thus, research of this nature necessitates going beyond the mainstream SLA research, probing, and examining relevant theories and research done in neighboring disciplines, in which the belief phenomenon is the primary research concern. This study has employed different theoretical viewpoints and research methodologies depending on the belief dimension in question. Therefore, many of the terms used also originate from various sources (and some other than SLA).

2.32 Belief terminology

Stated beliefs: throughout this research the researcher will use the term stated beliefs to refer to the learners' statements of their beliefs. L2 learners' stated beliefs in this research will be viewed as involving both implicit (emotional, subliminal) and explicit (cognitive) elements.

L2 Learner beliefs: the term L2 learner beliefs will be used as a general term to encompass various types of beliefs that the researcher will refer to in this study. The term encompasses both individual and social dimensions, and affect (emotions and

other implicit elements in individuals memories). L2 learner beliefs are assumed to be shaped through the influence of a) cultural/social beliefs; b) beliefs about learning in general; and c) personal/direct L2 experience (see Figure 2.14).

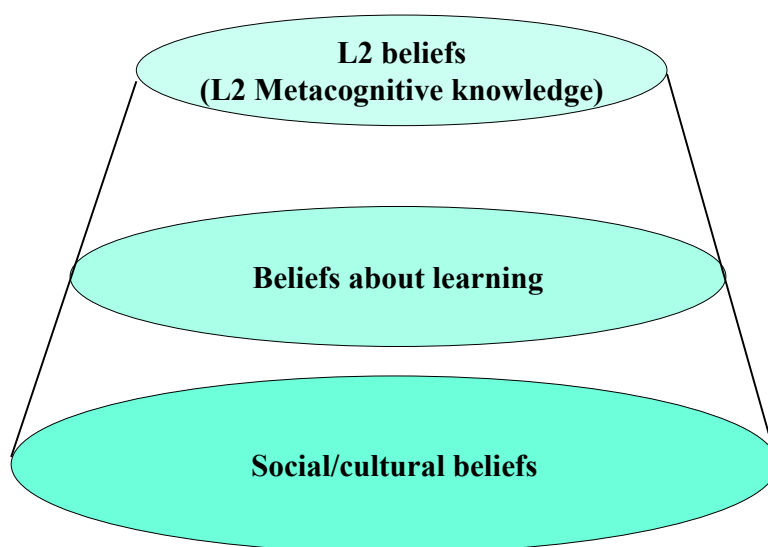


Figure 2.16 L2 learner beliefs

L2 Metacognitive knowledge: the term will be used to refer the learner's *L2 beliefs about his/her immediate L2 learning context:* a) self-beliefs such as self-efficacy, and self-concept as regards L2 learning and L2 activities; b) control beliefs as regards L2 task requirements. For instance if the L2 task in question is within the learner's capabilities and so on.; c) attributions as regards the learner herself/himself, others (teachers other students etc), teaching materials, L2 teaching/learning and so on; and d) normative beliefs (beliefs about expectations of others); e) motivation (if they feel like performing L2 tasks or not; why they are learning the L2 etc); f) attitudes (if they have positive/negative beliefs about the L2 and L2 tasks, L2 environment etc.) (see Figure 2.14).

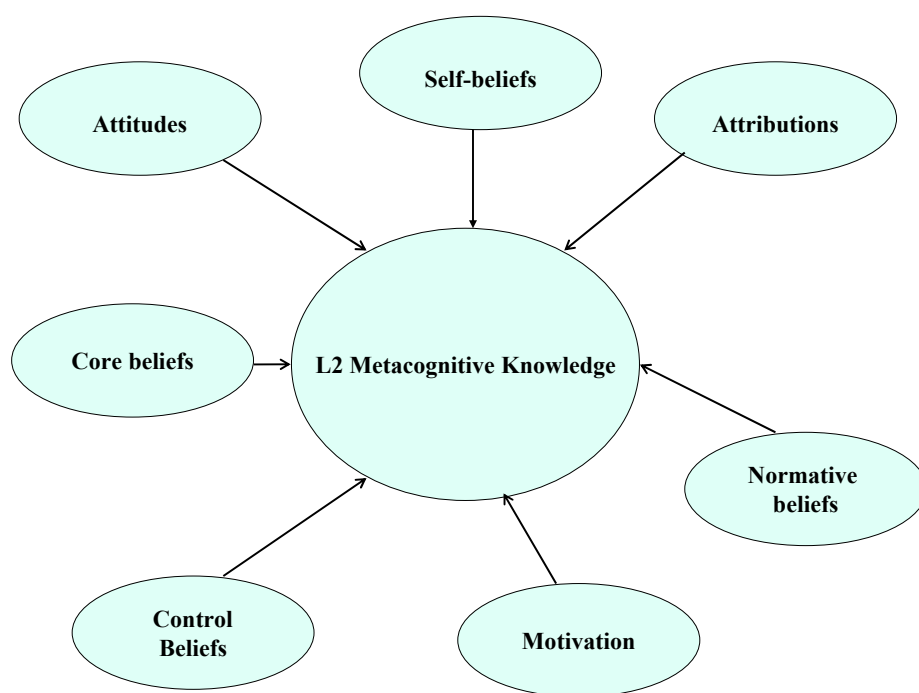


Figure 2.17 Factors that have influence on the learner’s L2 metacognitive knowledge

Self-beliefs (self-referent beliefs): These will include the individual learner’s beliefs about himself/herself as regards L2 learning (e.g. *self-efficacy beliefs*, *self-concept beliefs*, *self-perception*, *perceived L2 competence etc*).

Self-efficacy beliefs: The term refers to personal beliefs (judgments) about one's capabilities to engage in an activity or perform a task at a given level (Bandura, 1986). Here, more precisely, the term will be used to refer to the learners’ stated beliefs about their L2 capabilities.

Self-concept belief: The term will be used to refer to the L2 learners’ personal evaluations of (judgments about) their general L2 competence and the feeling of self-worth associated with it (see Pajares & Schunk 2002).

L2 competence: The term will be used to refer to the learner’s general perception of his/her L2 level.

Control beliefs: The term control beliefs will be used to refer to the L2 learner's stated beliefs about the factors that may facilitate or impede his/her performance of an intended L2 behavior.

Normative beliefs: Normative beliefs will be used to refer to the learner's perceptions (beliefs) of what others around him/her expect him/her to do (as regards English language learning).

Core beliefs: The term will be used to refer to the beliefs that constitute prototypes in the learner's memory around which other peripheral beliefs are connected (e.g., belief that knowing a language means being able to communicate in that language (core belief). Therefore, it is assumed that if the learner believes that languages are primarily learned for oral communication, this belief will encourage the learner to value communication activities. Thus s/he will be expected to have other peripheral beliefs that correspond to this belief (e.g. perceived importance of communicative activities i.e. oral interaction, listening comprehension tasks etc.).

Social/cultural beliefs (social representations): the term social/cultural beliefs (social representations) will be used to refer to beliefs which are cooperatively created by members of the society the individual lives in and will be used only to refer to the ensemble of beliefs which exist and circulate . It is assumed that such cultural beliefs can be found in different forms in a society and that the individual may acquire any of these depending on his/her perspective (status, political view etc) and the immediate environment s/he belongs to. The learner may or may not approve of/or hold these beliefs.

Attributions: the term will be used to refer to learners' explanations and understandings of L2 events, and behaviors they experience. For instance, causes they ascribe for their L2 actions in relation to themselves, others, and other L2 related objects concerning L2 learning/teaching (e.g. failure ascribed to a teacher, L2 materials, teaching, ability etc; or success ascribed to hard work, favorable L2 conditions etc). Attributions will also be looked into as regards *controllability* (the degree of control the individual feels over a cause); *stability* (whether a cause changes over time or not) and; *locus* (if the location of a cause is internal or external).

Attitude: in this study attitude will be used to refer to the learner's favorable or unfavorable evaluation of a behavior or an object in question. Thus, it is assumed that aggregates of negative beliefs, as a rule, lead to negative attitudes and aggregates of positive beliefs lead to positive attitudes towards the behavior or object in question.

Motivation: the term motivation will be used to refer to: "...to be moved to do something...impetus or inspiration to act..." (Ryan & Deci 2000: 54).). Two broad types of definitions will be used to refer to learners' motivational orientations: a) *intrinsic*; and b) *extrinsic* motivation.

Intrinsic motivation: the term will be used to refer to 'doing something because it is inherently interesting and enjoyable'.

Extrinsic motivation: the term will be used to refer to 'doing something for its instrumental value' such as to get good grades, a job and so forth.

Willingness to communicate (WTC): the term will be used to refer to the learners' positive disposition to participate in L2 activities (especially oral communication).

L2 anxiety: the term will be used to refer to fear (feeling of discomfort: state of feeling awkward, embarrassed, or uneasy) associated to learners' L2 use (especially in oral communication).

Teacher beliefs: the term will be used as a generic term to encompass various types of beliefs (e.g. pedagogical beliefs, theoretical beliefs, cultural/social beliefs etc.).

Espoused theory: the term will be used to refer to teachers' formal (theoretical) knowledge (beliefs) about 'what' and 'how' to teach.

Theory-in-use: the term will be used to refer to what teachers actually do in their language classrooms (including their descriptions of what they do in their classrooms).

Discordance: the term will be used to refer to disagreement between the teachers' and the learners' stated beliefs; conceptualizations of language learning; and the inconsistency between teacher intention and learner interpretation.

Concordance: will be used to refer to the agreement between the teachers' and the learners' stated beliefs.

Hidden agenda: will be used to refer to teachers' unconscious beliefs which they find difficult to interpret. This hidden agenda can be interpreted as the discordance between the espoused theory and the theory-in-use which the teachers are unaware of and find it difficult to express explicitly.

Pedagogical beliefs: these will be used to refer to teachers' beliefs which are shaped through their classroom experiences.

Theoretical beliefs: these will refer to teachers' theoretical principles or belief systems, which guide their expectations about student behavior and the decision they make.

Teacher-centered approach: this refers to a teaching orientation which emphasizes and values frontal teaching (one-way teaching). It is based on transmission of content knowledge. Teachers who employ teacher-centered orientations select precisely the content to be covered and organize it in manageable portions (a list of specific teaching items to be covered within a lesson, a semester etc.), and transmit it to the students. Thus, they mainly focus on the content to be covered.

Learner-centered approach: this refers to a teaching orientation which emphasizes and values active student involvement and participation in L2 classrooms (two-way teaching). Teachers who employ learner-centered orientations encourage student activity (learner-directed activity). These teachers organize their teaching around appropriate learning activities and encourage student participation. Teachers, who belong to this category aim to facilitate student learning, put more emphasis on what students already know and encourage students to engage in tasks. For such teachers, selection of materials relevant to learners' interests and experiences is of primary focus.

Approach to teaching: the term will be used to refer to the teacher's preferred teaching style. That is, whether the teacher employs a teacher-centered or a learner-centered approach to teaching.

Attributions: the term will be used to refer to teacher's explanations and understandings of L2 events, and behaviors they experience.

2.33 Theoretical standpoints employed

The aim of this study was to investigate both the learners' and the teachers' statements of their beliefs in order to be able to gain insights on how the teachers and the learners interpret the English language instruction at the IUT (Institut Universitaire de Technologie) de Mont de Marsan (Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour) context and in the light of the data obtained help enhance learning conditions in this institution. The aim of the literature review is to provide this dissertation work with firm theoretical basis on how to approach and how to look into L2 beliefs. This literature review contributed to both a) the shaping of the research paradigms and methodologies to be used; and b) the interpretation of the learners' and the teachers' stated beliefs. This study employed five objectives from different methodological perspectives:

1. *Exploratory*: to explore what the learners state as their L2 beliefs.
2. *Comprehensive*: to understand and define the learners' stated L2 beliefs.
3. *Developmental*: to explore if the learners' stated L2 beliefs indicate any change concerning their present and past learning experiences.
4. *Normative*: To evaluate if the learners' stated beliefs conform to recent SLL/FLL research (whether these stated beliefs are functional or dysfunctional).
5. *Comparative*: to see if the learners' and the teachers' stated beliefs are in concordance with each other.

2.33.1 Explorative perspective on the L2 learners' stated beliefs

This study aimed to explore: a) what L2 beliefs the learners state to have; b) the differences between the learners' stated beliefs regarding their prior and present L2

situations; c) the links between the learners' stated beliefs and their L2 attitudes, motivations, and attributions; d) if the learners' stated beliefs were functional/dysfunctional e) what the teachers pronounce as their L2 beliefs; f) discordances between the teachers' and the learners' stated beliefs. This study used various kinds of research tools (e.g. preliminary research--mind showering, written records, group discussions, questionnaires and interviews; main research--questionnaires and interviews) (see Section 2.4) and various types of analysis methods to explore different aspects of the learners' stated beliefs (both quantitative and qualitative). Although this dissertation work did not aim to make generalizations (see Section 2.4.3 for criticisms about questionnaires) it attempted to discover the target group of learners' general tendencies. This research also focused on the individual learners' interpretations of their L2 beliefs in order to be able to understand what each belief meant to each individual.

In this study learners' stated beliefs were viewed as being both a cognitive and social phenomenon. However, the study did not primarily focus on social aspect of beliefs such as how the learners' beliefs are shaped within their social environment (learning environment) and/or how their environment influences shaping of their beliefs. In other words, this research did not attempt to understand the belief phenomenon within the course of its making but it rather focused on the present manifestation of the learners' beliefs that were already part of their belief systems. However, the learners' statements of their past L2 experiences were also used in order to be able to make comparisons between the learners' perceptions of their past and present L2 experiences. This aspect is especially regarded as significant because such comparisons can highlight elements that are salient in learners' belief systems; can provide data on differences between current and past beliefs; can help differentiate

between stable beliefs and beliefs which have gone through modification; and can indicate conditions which are favored or disfavored by the learners (this study holds that beliefs are developmental; they can be both stable and flexible; and that the change in conditions may influence individuals' beliefs and leads them to make modifications). In this study, beliefs are viewed as involving both implicit and explicit elements. This study also views beliefs as cognitive manifestation of a social phenomenon (see Chapter 3 Methodology and Chapter 4 Analysis).

2.33.2 Developmental perspective on the L2 learner beliefs

In this section, drawing upon the previously mentioned theories and L2 learner belief studies, I will propose a categorization of L2 learners' beliefs. This progressive view of L2 learners' belief formation assumes that learners' beliefs come into being in society in different contexts (society as a whole, general educational context, L2 learning context) respectively and are reshaped and internalized in learners' intra-personal planes as L2 learning beliefs. This hierarchical formulation views L2 learners' belief formation as a *developmental process* through anchoring and objectification (see also Section 2.19). We can also assume that through this process; that is through gaining experience each belief is fine tuned and reshaped from: distant to closer; general to specific; social to individual; less relevant to relevant; subconscious to conscious. This view presumes that learners' beliefs are (co)constructed, reconstructed and appropriated (fine-tuned) through gaining experience (through going up from one phase to another) and are internalized as part of the learner's L2 belief repertoire. The three phases, social/cultural context, the general educational context, and the L2 learning context(s), are the social environments where the learner (co)constructs his identity and his beliefs through interaction with others (parents, friends, teachers etc.) and with tools (media,

beliefs take shape as social representations in the learner's memory and they often precede the learner's experience in language learning. Before the learner starts learning a foreign language, s/he already possesses some of these ready-made beliefs (culturally/socially constructed or collectively created beliefs) about foreign languages and, perhaps, beliefs about how foreign languages are/should be learned. However, these social/cultural beliefs might not always appear to have direct links with L2 learning itself. In some cases beliefs about a particular foreign language and the learner's interest in learning seem to originate from other socially/culturally shared beliefs about that specific culture, its people, and its economical and political status (see Csizér & Dörnyei 2005). The learner's knowledge about the shared historical past and political relations between the target foreign language culture and his own might also contribute to shaping his beliefs about and his attitudes towards learning that particular language and most often even before starting to learn it.

These social/cultural beliefs can also be considered *core beliefs* which the learner acquires unconsciously and accepts as 'truths' before having any personal experience in language learning (Alanen, 2003). Later, through gaining experiences of learning in general and language learning specifically these social representations might be reinterpreted, fine-tuned, and internalized to become part of the learner's personal L2 belief repertoire.

2.33.2.2 Phase two: The General educational context and learners' beliefs about learning

Learners' beliefs about learning constitute the second phase in the learners' belief formation process. There is now abundant evidence that learning/teaching traditions may vary in different cultural contexts (e.g. learning may be conceived as a

reproductive process through which learners store knowledge and reproduce it when necessary; teacher-centered approaches may be emphasized over learner-centered learning/teaching and so forth). Starting from a young age, learners are exposed to educational traditions and consciously or unconsciously they develop some beliefs about what learning and teaching are/should be and what the roles of learners and teachers are/should be. Moreover, at this stage, learners have day-to-day experience in learning and they construct/reconstruct beliefs based on these experiences and internalize these, embedding them in other relevant beliefs in their belief repertoires.

Much L2 learning takes place in formal educational contexts, in classrooms, as is the case with other subjects. As a result, L2 learning may be perceived as the same as learning other subjects. In most cases, learning other subjects precedes L2 learning and learners embark on the L2 learning process with some preconceptions about learning. However, these beliefs, may not always correspond to what FLL/SLL specialists consider functional in L2 learning.

Literature from the field of educational psychology concerning *Conceptions of Learning* and *Student Approaches to Learning (SAL)* provides us with abundance of evidence about the existence of different learner approaches to learning (see Biggs 1994; Marton & Säljö 1976a, 1976b; Entwistle 1987, 2002; Entwistle, McCune, & Hounsel 2002; Prosser & Trigwell 1999). Although research in this area has mainly concerned higher education and subjects other than SLL/FLL, knowing what conceptions learners have about learning in general would be useful to understand the role of beliefs in learners' conceptions of learning and the approaches they adopt to learning. This knowledge, together with learners' conceptions of L2 learning, would help to make comparisons. It may also help understand why learners choose to do

certain tasks and ignore others, why they resist or participate, why they show interest or lack of interest, and why they fail or succeed (see also Benson, & Lor1999; Matsumoto 1996; Sanaoi 1995 for conceptions of language and language learning).

2.33.2.3 Phase three: The L2 context (s) and learners' beliefs about L2

The language learning context(s), learners' past and present experiences in L2 learning, forms Phase three in the learners' belief formation process. Like general teaching/learning traditions, L2 learning traditions may vary in different educational contexts. In this phase learners have direct contact (experience) with L2 learning. The learners' social representations, attitudes towards and beliefs about the target language, their past learning experiences in general and L2 learning in particular, all contribute to shaping their beliefs about the L2, and their conceptions of L2 learning. In this phase learners start to have well-established beliefs about how efficient they are in L2 learning, what their roles and their teachers' in L2 classrooms should be, and how L2 should be learned. Teachers' approaches to teaching/learning, testing types used, learners' prior experiences, and goals and course expectations are all said to be factors influencing the approaches learners adopt to learning (Entwistle 2003; Entwistle, McCune, & Hounsel 2002; Prosser & Trigwell 1999). Consequently, to cope with L2 learning demands, learners use strategies that they believe to be effective in their L2 learning context.

2.33.2.4 The intra-personal plane and L2 metacognitive knowledge

Beliefs, which have been co-constructed in social planes through interactions between others and social tools (artifacts) are appropriated and internalized in the learner's psychological plane to become part of the learner's metacognitive knowledge

(Alanen, 2003). The learner uses this knowledge reservoir as a resource to guide his /her L2 activities, and drawing upon his/her metacognitive knowledge (L2 belief repertoire), s/he makes some judgments regarding self (self-efficacy beliefs, self-concept beliefs, expectancies etc.), others and L2 tasks. Through assessment of his /her control beliefs, the learner activates his/her self-regulatory mechanisms to choose the strategies s/he believes to be suitable to fulfill the required language tasks (or chooses not to act).

2.33.3 Comprehensive perspective on the L2 learners' stated beliefs

To define and explain functions of different types of stated beliefs, this research work made use of various theories, approaches and the research done in various disciplines such as SLA, cognitive psychology, educational psychology, and social psychology. The following theories of learning are especially found useful to identify and name different types of beliefs as regards their functions: Metacognitive theory (Flavell 1979); social representations theory (Moscovici 1976); attribution theory (Weiner 1980, 1985); theory of planned behavior (Ajzen 1988); self-efficacy theory (Bandura 1986); and Student approaches to learning (Marton & Säljö 1976a and 1976b). All of these theories look into different aspects of the belief phenomenon. Thus, All of the above-mentioned theories seem to be necessary to operate together to have a complete view of the L2 belief phenomenon (what types of beliefs individual's claim to possess; how these stated beliefs function; how they influence individuals' functioning; and how they are linked with one another).

2.33.4 Normative perspective on the L2 learners' stated beliefs

In this study, the SLA research findings and the new trends in SLL/FLL will be used to identify if the learners' stated beliefs are functional or dysfunctional. Recent

research findings on successful language learning procedures suggest the importance of: face-to-face learner interaction, communicative language tasks, active learner participation, self-directed learning, contextualized input, maximizing use of the L2, primacy of focus on meaning rather than form; rich and authentic L2 context, learning by doing, negotiation of meaning, relevance of content to learner needs and so forth. The SLA research has also demonstrated that traditional learning procedures [the teacher-centered transmission of knowledge models, presentation-practice-production procedures, the systematic teaching of grammar (focus-on-forms approach)] are not appropriate to second/foreign language teaching (see Part 4). Thus, this study will base its criteria on these findings when evaluating the functionality of the target learners' and the teachers' stated beliefs.

2.33.5 Comparative perspective on the L2 learners' and teachers' stated beliefs

Learning cannot be viewed devoid from teaching; therefore, the links between teacher and learner beliefs are also considered to be crucial to understand the learning act. In this research study the learners' stated beliefs will constitute the primary focus of attention. However, the teachers' stated beliefs will also be investigated to detect possible discordances (see Section 2.11 and Part 2) between the teachers' and learners' stated beliefs concerning the English language instruction. In other words, the teachers' stated beliefs will be looked into from 'the learner' and 'learning' perspective (the learners' perceptions of L2 and L2 learning, perceived L2 needs, goals, expectations, L2 motivations etc.), rather than from 'the teacher' and 'teaching' perspective (e.g. the teachers' pedagogical needs, expectations, motivations etc.).

2.34 Conclusion

Belief research done in various research contexts provided this research with some background knowledge on how to approach L2 learner beliefs and which research methodologies to adopt to explore L2 learner beliefs (see Section 2.4). In order to be able to identify different belief types and understand how different beliefs function, this research has addressed the following theories of learning: metacognitive theory, social representations theory, theory of reasoned action (TRA), theory of planned behavior (TpB), attribution theory, self-efficacy theory and research done on SAL (Student Approaches to Learning) (see Part 3). The study also focused on how different L2 belief types influenced learners' L2 attitudes, motivations, and attributions. Finally, various principles and procedures which correspond to the recent SLA research findings (see Part 4) have been used to interpret the learners' and the teachers' stated beliefs as regards their functionality in second/foreign language learning and teaching.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study is based on the assumption that beliefs (both teachers' and students') have impact on both teachers' and learners' behaviors and influence L2 practices. This chapter details the methodology by discussing: a) the research methods used; b) the target population and the context in which the study took place; c) the participants and the researcher's role; d) the instruments used and the analysis procedures employed.

The belief construct involves a multitude of complex and interacting agents. Understanding this complexity, regarding teacher and learner beliefs, necessitates going beyond mainstream L2 teaching/learning theories. Thus, in order to be able to investigate the belief phenomenon from different perspectives, this dissertation work referred to various theories (see Chapter Two). The researcher based this work on the assumptions that:

- stated beliefs are not merely conscious cognitions and they bear some subliminal emotional elements.
- individuals' stated beliefs are meaningful because they reveal individuals understandings and interpretations of events from their perspective.
- beliefs have impact on individuals attitudes, motivations and consequently on their behaviors;
- beliefs are context-dependent and they cannot be looked into without considering the context in which they are formed and manifested;
- beliefs should be examined as regards the individual's past and present experiences;

- beliefs are dynamic, developmental and changeable; thus, they can be influenced and mediated;
- some beliefs can be more resistant than others
- beliefs are both personal (cognitive & emotional—explicit & implicit) and social.

This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What types of L2 beliefs do the learners' statements point to (e.g. self-referent beliefs, control-beliefs etc.)?
2. Are there differences between the learners' stated beliefs regarding their prior and present L2 experiences?
3. What relations are there between the learners' stated beliefs and their L2 attitudes, motivations, attributions?
4. Are the learners' stated beliefs functional?
5. What types of beliefs do the teachers' statements point to?
6. Are there discordances between the teachers' and the learners' stated beliefs?

The study employed five objectives from different theoretical and methodological perspectives:

1. *Exploratory*: to explore what the learners pronounce as their L2 beliefs.
2. *Comprehensive*: to understand and define the learners' stated L2.
3. *Developmental*: to explore if the learners' stated L2 beliefs indicate any change concerning their present and past learning experiences.

4. *Normative*: To evaluate if the learners' stated beliefs conform to recent SLL/FLL research (whether these stated beliefs are functional or dysfunctional).
5. *Comparative*: to see if the learners' and the teachers' stated beliefs are in concordance with each other.

Prior to the main larger-scale research study this study used two preliminary research studies [an exploratory belief research (n=62), and a belief study based on eight students' attributions about L2 learning]. These two preliminary studies: a) provided the researcher with some initial data on the learners' self-reported beliefs; b) helped the researcher have a more focused approach; and c) guided the researcher in selecting an appropriate research methodology.

The main study used a two-phase, sequential mixed-methods approach to obtain first quantitative results on the learners and teachers' stated beliefs regarding L2 practices using online surveys (learner and teacher questionnaires). After the analysis of the questionnaire data, the individual interviews (learner and teacher) took place to explore the results obtained via the questionnaires in more depth.

3.2 Choosing the method

Conducting L2 learner belief research proved to pose some problems as regards the research methodologies used. Some SLL/FLL scholars have been highly critical of using questionnaires and quantitative means of data analysis in this area (e.g. Alanen 2003; Barcelos 2003; Benson & Lor 1999; Dufva 2003). These scholars maintained that questionnaires ask participants to choose from ideas that are not theirs. According to these scholars, research that is based on questionnaires and surveys aim at explanation

and generalization and would not be sufficient to understand the complexity of learner beliefs. Thus, many scholars recommend the use of various research tools and both qualitative and quantitative means of data analysis. Sakui and Gaies (1999) claimed that the questionnaire data provides limited information on learners' beliefs. Thus in their study they used interviews to complement and explain the questionnaire data. They discovered that the interviews allowed the learners to reveal the reasons behind their beliefs, which were not addressed in the questionnaire. They also asserted that the interview data complemented the questionnaire data and provided them with the necessary data triangulation.

Mixed-methods research enquiry is based on the assumption that collecting diverse types of data provides a better understanding of the research problem in question. A mixed-methods approach was used in order to capture the best of both quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interview) data. Such an approach enables the researcher to test consistency of findings obtained through different instruments and provides triangulation (Greene *et al.* 1989). In this study, a two-phase sequential exploratory research design was used. That is, the research methodology consisted of two phases; quantitative (questionnaire data) and qualitative procedures. As a first step the questionnaire data were collected and analyzed. After the analysis of the questionnaire data was completed, the qualitative data (the interview data) were collected and analyzed to cross-check and explain the quantitative data. These two phases were connected with one another and aimed at collecting data on the same predetermined themes. The rationale for this type of approach is that the quantitative data provide the researcher with a general understanding of the research problem and the tendencies of the participants in question. The qualitative data on the other hand provide the researcher with in-depth information and help explain the quantitative data.

3.3 Description of context and population

The study took place in a IUT (Institut Universitaire de Technologie) which is part of the Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour. The IUT campus is located in Mont de Marsan, a small French town in the south-west of France. The IUT consists of three departments: a) diplômé universitaire de technologie (DUT⁵⁵) réseaux et Télécommunications (R&T); DUT génie biologique (GB); and c) DUT sciences et génie des matériaux orientation Bois (SGM). To obtain the DUT the learners are required to complete a standard two-year program. The students are also provided with an option to complete an additional one-year program to obtain a Licence professionnelle⁵⁶ diploma. In the 2006-2007 academic year the total student number was 265 (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Student population in IUT de Mont de Marsan in 2006-2007 academic year

Department	No of students
DUT R&T	120
DUT GB	95
DUT SGM	50

Like at all the other public French universities, at the IUT de Mont de Marsan English is a compulsory part of the curriculum. English classes are organized around

⁵⁵ DUT (Diplôme Universitaire de Technologie): The DUT is a two-year higher diploma course in technology at an IUT (Institut Universitaire de Technologie).

⁵⁶ Licence professionnelle: An employment-oriented licence that lasts one year (after completion of a two-year DUT) and includes 12 to 16 weeks' work experience in a company.

modules within this two-year DUT program. Each module is comprised of TD⁵⁷ (travaux dirigés) and TP⁵⁸ (travaux pratiques).

At the IUT de Mont Marsan the student number in the TDs varies between 25 up to 35 students per group. The TD component covers practical whole-group and group-work activities. The TDs are normally done in a classroom. All classrooms are equipped with overhead projectors, and movable chairs and desks which allow different classroom organisations such as group and pair work. The institution has a wireless internet connection which also makes possible to use laptops with video projectors in the classrooms.

The TPs normally take place in a multi-media room (name used at the IUT de Mont Marsan) which is reserved for language classes. The multi-media room is a language laboratory designed to accommodate maximum of 15 students. The room is equipped with ICT (Information and communications technology) facilities, such as PC (personal computer) workstations with internet and wi-fi (wireless fidelity-network) connections; multi-purpose generic software applications such as word-processors (e.g. Microsoft Word), e-mail packages, MSN online Web messenger, and Web browsers (e.g. Google), media players (e.g. Real player) which allow various types of media formats (e.g. text, audio, video, graphics, animation, interactivity); CALL (computer assisted language learning) software applications that are specifically designed for

⁵⁷ TD Tutorials. University programmes cover theoretical and practical components. In literary and humanity studies, the practical component takes the form of *travaux dirigés* in small groups of 30-35 students.

⁵⁸ TP (*travaux pratiques*): Practical work. University programmes cover theoretical and practical components. In science studies, the practical component takes the form of *travaux pratiques* in small groups of 10-15 students.

language learners [e.g. Reflex English, IELTS (International English Language Testing System) preparation software applications etc]. A full-time system administrator maintains the regular technical support of this laboratory. Almost all of the students are competent computer-users and some are well informed about technical issues (e.g. DUT R&T students).

At the IUT the Mont de Marsan English language teaching is primarily done by *vacataires*⁵⁹ or teachers who are employed by a one-year (renewable) contract. In the 2006-2007 academic year there were four *vacataires* and a full-time teacher who was hired on a one-year contract (the researcher). The average year of experience was 14 with minimum of 9 to maximum 21 years of language teaching experience (including the researcher). All of these teachers were female (including the researcher).

3.4 Participants

The participants of the study were the students and teachers at the IUT de Mont de Marsan Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour. Approval to conduct the study was received from the IUT administration and the entire population of students and teachers at the IUT was asked to complete the online questionnaires (two questionnaires; one for the students and one for the teachers) -- No selection procedure was applied. Participating in the study was done on voluntary basis. All of the teachers completed the online teacher questionnaire and they all participated in the interviews.

⁵⁹ In French educational system the term *vacataire* is used to describe a temporary employee-- equivalent of either a supply (Br) or substitute teacher (USA), or a part-time lecturer (at the university).

3.4.1 Learners

The learners in the study were French university students who were studying at the IUT (Institut Universitaire de Technologie) de Mont de Marsan to become technicians. The participants' average age was 21 and they had an average of 9 years of English language learning experience. The participants' level of English ranged from lower intermediate to intermediate levels (no formal or standard instrument was used to evaluate the learners' levels of English. The assessment of the learners' levels of English was based on the learners' classroom performances and evaluations done by the teachers).

120 students completed the learner questionnaire (one student's questionnaire was cancelled because the student answered only one question) (see Table 3.2) and nineteen students participated in the learner interviews (see Table 3.3).

Table 3.2 Participant information: learner questionnaire

Department	Year	Frequency	Percentage	Non-response
R &T	1	49	41,2%	2
R &T	2	23	19.3%	
R &T Licence professionnelle	3	20	16.8%	
GB	1	17	14.3%	
SGM	1	9	7.6%	
SGM Licence professionnelle	3	1	0.8%	
Nationality				
French		116	98.3%	1
Other		2	1.7%	
Gender				
Female		13	10.9%	1
Male		106	89.1%	
Average age		Minimum	Maximum	
20.5		18	42	1
Average year of L2 experience				
8.8		1	14	2

Table 3.3 Participant information: learner interviews

Department	Year	Number of participants
R &T	1	13
R &T	2	6
Nationality		
French		17
Other		3
Gender		
Female		3
Male		16

3.4.2 Teachers

The participants were four female *vacataires* (part-time language teachers) who had main employments at French secondary/high schools (3 teachers) and at a French primary school (1 teacher). The teachers had language teaching experience ranging from 9 to 17 years (see Table 3.4).

Table 3.4 Participant information: teacher interviews & questionnaire

	Nationality	Year of experience	Department
Teacher 1	French	12	GB 1 and GB Licence professionnelle
Teacher 2	Belgian	9	R &T 1
Teacher 3	French	10	R &T 1, SGM 1, SGM 2, SGM Licence professionnelle
Teacher 4	French/British	17	R &T 2

3.5 The researcher's role and bias

For this study, the researcher's biases and assumptions resided in her own experience as a teacher at the IUT, Mont de Marsan. The researcher was one of the five teachers, who were working in this institution. Thus, some of the participant students were the researcher's own students and the participant teachers were her colleagues. The researcher had also had a teacher trainer experience in various in-service programs designed for language teachers. She, therefore, had some assumptions about what constituted good teaching and good learning. The researcher was aware of these biases; therefore she: a) maintained the commitment to conform to a researcher's neutrality code and the ethics of research; b) tried to sustain a clear focus on the purpose of the study; and c) explained the purpose both to the teachers and the students, and her role as a researcher.

3.6 Preliminary studies

Prior to the main study, the researcher employed two preliminary studies: a) an exploratory learner belief study; and b) a belief study based on eight students' attributions about the L2 and L2 learning. The aim of these two studies was to provide the researcher with some preliminary data on the learners' stated beliefs and help develop appropriate research methodologies.

3.6.1 Preliminary exploratory study (n=62)

This small-scale exploratory study aimed to investigate sixty-two learners' statements of their beliefs about the English language and English language learning (see Gabillon 2007a). The participants, except for one female, were all male French

students who were studying at the IUT (Institut Universitaire de Technologie) de Mont de Marsan to become technicians. The participants' ranged from 18 to 22 years of age, from six to nine years of English language learning experience, and from lower intermediate to intermediate levels of English. No special selection procedures were applied. Joining the groups was done on voluntary basis.

The study was a small-scale exploratory research, which sought to find out:

- a) what type of beliefs the learners' statements of their beliefs point to;
- b) possible links between the stated beliefs and the impact these stated beliefs might have on:
 - i) the learners' attitudes towards the English language and English language learning;
 - ii) the motivational compositions the learners made use of.

The study comprised three phases:

Phase one comprised a mind-showering activity--listing what comes to mind about a theme or topic -- and group discussions. Twenty-eight students participated in the mind-showering and group discussion activities. These 28 students also accepted to participate in Phase 2 and Phase 3. The mind-showering activity and group discussions took place in November 2004.

In the second phase, which took place in May 2005, a 23-item Likert type scale questionnaire was designed by using the formerly elicited data (see Appendix A for the 2005 questionnaire). That is, the themes obtained during the mind-showering activity and the group discussions were formulated and the final scale items were selected from

this pool to devise the questionnaire. Sixty-two participants (including the 28 students from Phase one) participated in this second phase.

Phase 3 comprised focus-group interviews⁶⁰. Twenty-eight students who were also the members in phases one and three participated in this last phase, as well. Focus-group interviews were conducted in June 2005 after the questionnaire data were analyzed. The focus-group interviews used the themes obtained during the mind-showering activity and group discussions (the questionnaire used the same themes). During the interviews, further on-the-spot questions were asked to elicit in-depth information, clarify points and understand what each stated belief meant to different individuals, and how these stated beliefs related to one another. The data gathered through the focus-group interviews were analyzed qualitatively. The focus group interviews were transcribed and the recurring themes (at least four occurrences) were grouped under relevant categories. The same data then reorganized under subcategories (such as ‘perceived significance of different L2 skills’, ‘perceived L2 competence’ etc.). The focus-group interviews served a threefold purpose: a) to cross-check and explain the questionnaire data; b) to provide in-depth information on these learner’s stated beliefs; c) and to understand what each stated belief meant to different individuals.

⁶⁰ Glesne and Peshkin (1992) asserted that using focus-group interviews (interviewing more than one person at a time) provides more in-depth information and offers significantly greater coverage than an interview with one individual. They maintained that topics such as perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes are better discussed in smaller groups of people who know each other.

The overall data--the written records from the mind-showering activity, the explanations given by the participants during the group discussions and the focus-group interviews, and the questionnaire data--and relevant EFL/ESL literature were used to interpret the results.

One significant outcome of this study was the participants' common stated belief about the importance of listening and speaking skills which they also claimed to perceive as difficult skills to acquire. The results of the study also suggested that these learners' attitudes and orientations of motivation were linked with their stated beliefs (beliefs about goals, expectations etc.). The data obtained via this study indicated that the majority of these learners had lower motivations and mainly extrinsic motivational orientations towards learning English.

3.6.2. Preliminary research: learner attributions

This study used interviews of eight L2 learners of English who were studying at the IUT (Institut Universitaire de Technologie) de Mont de Marsan to become technicians (see Gabillon 2007b). The interviews were conducted in June 2005. The study investigated the learners' statements of their beliefs about 'English and English language learning'. The study used an attributional perspective as a research methodology and based its data analysis procedures both on the content of the discourse and its thematic progression (TP)⁶¹. That is, the learner interviews were analyzed by focusing on: a) the content of each discourse; b) the function of each item within the discourse in question; c) the cause and effect relationships between different discourse

⁶¹ Thematic progression (TP) is a functional explanation of the ordering of information in discourse (Danes 1974 cited in Crompton 2004).

items; d) the links between the learners' stated beliefs and the type of attributions they made; and e) the common themes across different individuals.

The thematic analysis of the learners' interviews suggested that some self-reported beliefs (I like/dislike English) are linked to other peripheral beliefs which are gathered around core beliefs (e.g. beliefs about the importance of the L2, beliefs about L2 task relevance, significance etc.). These eight students, regardless of their attitudinal orientations toward English, all expressed a 'core belief' that knowing English means 'being able to speak this language'. This research has discovered four major attributions, which had influence on these eight learners' attitudes towards learning English:

Negative attributions: a) lack of L2 ability; b) dislike for the L2;

Positive attributions: a) relevance of L2 learning situation; b) intrinsic interest in the L2 and L2 learning situation.

3.7 Instruments

This study used: a) a learner questionnaire; b) a teacher questionnaire; c) learner interviews; and d) teacher interviews as research instruments.

Like all research instruments, interviews and questionnaires have several advantages and disadvantages. Questionnaires are considered effective in collecting large amounts of data from large number of people in a short time. Because they are usually anonymous, they are considered effective in obtaining genuine responses. Interviews on the other hand can provide the interviewer with the opportunity to probe for in-depth information, ask for clarifications and examples, and explore new

relationships. Interviews are considered effective in obtaining information on the perceptions and beliefs of individuals; their ideas for change and their beliefs about what motivates, demotivates, discourages, and encourages them. The major difference between questionnaires and interviews is the presence of an interviewer. In questionnaires, questions are pre-determined and respondents' answers are limited to the choices provided. However, in interviews, since the interviewer is present, there is an opportunity to explain and clarify the meaning of questions when the participants do not understand. Interviews are specially found useful to complement survey results because they can support the survey data by providing the researcher with explanation of the questionnaire data and helps him/her cross-check of the questionnaire results. However, interviews take a lot of time and can only be used with small number of participants.

3.7.1 Learner questionnaire

The learner questionnaire used in this study (June 2006) was the improved version of the Likert type scale questionnaire used in the preliminary research in May 2005. The learner questionnaire was designed, piloted, adapted, used, and readapted by using several steps and procedures.

3.7.1.1 2005 learner questionnaire

Prior to the design of the May 2005 learner questionnaire a mind showering activity and group discussions were organized to elicit initial information on the learners' statements of their beliefs about the English language and English language learning (November 2004). Twenty-eight learners participated in the mind-showering and the group discussions. The data gathered through the mind-showering activity and

group discussions were analyzed qualitatively. A coding technique was used to organize the data into categories. That is, the group discussions were transcribed and the recurring themes (at least four occurrences) were grouped under categories. A similar procedure was applied to the written data gathered via the mind-showering activity. The information obtained through the mind-showering activity and the group discussions provided the initial data on some self-reported learner beliefs. After the coding the following broad categories emerged:

- The participants' beliefs about the English language
- The participants' beliefs about English language learning
- The participants' motives for learning English
- The participants' beliefs about the L2 language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) and the other components of L2 learning (vocabulary and grammar)
- The participants' beliefs about using L1 in the classroom

The 2005 questionnaire was designed by using the themes obtained during the mind-showering activity and the group discussions. The data obtained were studied and the final scale items were selected from this pool to devise the questionnaire. The questionnaire used a four-point Likert type scale and it contained 23 items. Although the questionnaire used in this preliminary study kept to the participant's stated beliefs and the themes obtained from these stated beliefs, the format and content of Horwitz's BALLI (Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory) was also studied before constructing the questionnaire. Thus the relevant items from the BALLI (the items which shared similarities with the participant learners' stated beliefs were adapted and included to the questionnaire (see Horwitz 1988). The questionnaire used in this study

employed a four-point scale to see whether the participants leant towards the ‘agree’ or ‘disagree’ end of the scale. Horwitz’s BALLI (1988) contains thirty-four items on a five-point Likert type scale.

The original questionnaire was prepared in English and then translated into French. The French version of the questionnaire was sent to some teachers, PhD students and researchers to check and comment on. The questionnaire was piloted to check whether the format and the items of the questionnaire were clear to the participants. After the piloting the revised final copy of the questionnaire was administered (n=62) in May 2005.

Although the learner questionnaire used in the preliminary study had been piloted, after the overall analysis some data were still difficult to interpret. The major problem areas in the 2005 learner questionnaire were:

1. In the 2005 questionnaire two items were found to be problematic: “Writing in English is easier than speaking in English” and “Reading comprehension is easier than listening comprehension”. These two questions asked learners to compare two different skills (two receptive skills reading vs. listening and two productive skills writing vs. speaking) rather than asking to evaluate each of these skills separately. During the interviews the learners stated that they found reading the easiest skill. Thus, the perceived difficulty of listening skill appeared to be very high when compared to the reading skill. Thus in the 2006 learner questionnaire this section was revised.
2. The 2005 learner questionnaire did not include any items about learners’ past L2 experiences. Inclusion of the learners’ past L2 experiences was needed to see how the learners perceived their prior L2 practices and whether their self-reported

beliefs differed regarding their present time L2 experiences. Thus, the 2006 learner questionnaire included a section on learners' previous L2 experiences to detect if the learners had similar/different beliefs regarding their past versus present L2 practices.

Despite some shortcomings, the 2005 questionnaire provided the researcher with some valuable insights about the learners' self-reported L2 beliefs. In the light of these findings some alterations were made in the L2 practices. Some of these modifications were:

1. The results obtained in the 2005 study indicated that the learners perceived listening and speaking skills as the most important L2 skills to acquire. Thus, more interactive and communicative activities were designed to cater for this demand.
2. The results obtained in the 2005 study indicated that the learners mainly had extrinsic orientations towards learning English and longed to see more technical materials related to their subjects of study.

3.7.1.2 The 2006 learner questionnaire

The 2006 learner questionnaire was written by using Sphinx v5, survey design and statistical computer package. Sphinx v5 computer package enabled the researcher to design the questionnaire in a format suitable to display and use online (see Appendix B for the online format of the 2006 learner questionnaire and Appendix C for the word format). The 2006 learner questionnaire was in French and it comprised 69 items. The questionnaire mainly used a four-point Likert type scale to see which end of the scale the learners tended to choose. Four questions used (Q31, Q32, Q33, Q34) used two-

point true/false type of questions. The questionnaire was set online in June 2006 and was available online until July 2006. The students who accepted to participate were provided with the on-line address to complete the questionnaire. The major aim of using this questionnaire was to address maximum of the target learner population and to cover a large number of issues in order to be able to view stated beliefs common to this group of learners. Using an on-line facility provided the researcher with the following benefits:

- It allowed the researcher to use the questionnaire with a larger population.
- It allowed the researcher to cover a large number of issues.
- It was both cost-efficient and less time-consuming than paper questions (i.e. no paper was used and the participants were able to answer numerous questions in a shorter time).
- It provided the researcher with instant on-line data display and analysis.
- It allowed the participants to answer anonymously and (perhaps) more genuinely.

The first six questions (Q1⁶², Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5, and Q6) asked about L2 skill/component difficulty. The aim of these six questions was to obtain the learners' statements of their beliefs about the difficulty of the following L2 skills/components: listening, grammar, pronunciation, reading, speaking, and writing. These questions used a four-point scale and the students were asked to choose from; 4=very difficult; 3=difficult; 2=not difficult; and 1=not difficult at all. These six questions were based on the ideas relevant educational and psychological research suggested. Relevant research suggests that learners' engage in learning tasks which they believe that they have the

⁶² Q=Question (e.g. Q1 is question item number 1)

necessary skills to fulfill the task requirements and these beliefs about their competencies have impact on their learning behaviors (Bandura 1986; Pajares 2001; Wenden 1995; Zeldin & Pajares 2000).

Questions Q7, Q8, Q10, Q11, Q14, Q16, Q17 and Q27 aimed to discover the types of motivational orientations these learners had. These questions used a four-point scale where the students were asked to choose from; 4=strongly agree; 3=somewhat agree; 2=somewhat disagree; and 1=strongly disagree (Q7, Q8, Q10, Q11, Q14, Q16, Q17). Except for Q27 which asked the learners to choose from 4= often; 3= sometimes; 2= rarely; 1= never. These questions were based on extrinsic and intrinsic motivation constructs proposed by Deci & Ryan's self-determination theory (SDT) (1985) and Gardner's instrumentality construct. According to these views, orientation of motivation is directly linked with individuals' beliefs. Intrinsic motivation (something intrinsically interesting and enjoyable) is considered a catalyst which results in high-quality learning; and extrinsic motivation (doing something for its instrumental value e.g. to get a job, good grades etc.) on the other hand, is considered less efficient. The questions in this part, therefore, aimed at discovering beliefs which are linked to intrinsic (Q10, Q11, Q16, Q17, Q27) and extrinsic motivation (Q7, Q8, Q14).

The interest in L2 artifacts are also considered to be related to intrinsic interest in the L2. Q26, Q28 and Q29 investigated if the learners were interested in the L2 artifacts such as reading English books (Q26), listening to English songs (Q28) and watching English movies (Q29). These questions used a four-point scale and the students were asked to choose from; 4= often; 3= sometimes; 2= rarely; 1= never.

The issue of L1 use in L2 classrooms has long been a controversial topic in the L2 literature. Thus, this study aimed to explore how the learners would express their

beliefs about L1 use in their L2 classroom. Q12, Q45, Q47, Q60, Q62 asked whether the learners believed that L1 use was a useful procedure (Q12: explanations in the L1; Q45: collège/lycée--teachers Q47: collège/lycée--students; Q60: IUT--teachers; Q62: IUT--students). These questions used a four-point scale and the students were asked to choose from 4=very useful; 3=useful; 2=not very useful; and 1=not useful at all. Q44, Q46, Q59, Q61 asked whether the L1 was used in their L2 classrooms (Q44: collège/lycée--teacher; Q46: collège/lycée--students; Q59: IUT--teacher; Q61: IUT--students). These questions used a four-point scale and the students were asked to choose from; 4= often; 3= sometimes; 2= rarely; 1= never.

SLL/FLL research has demonstrated that learners' are motivated to learn what they believed to be significant for them (Horwitz 1999; Sakui & Gaies 1999; Wenden 1995, 1998, 1999; White 1995; Yang 1999). This section therefore aimed to uncover which L2 skills/components the learners perceived to be important in their language instruction. Q18, Q19, Q20, Q21, Q22, Q23 aimed to get the learners' opinions about L2 skill/component significance (Q18: vocabulary; Q19: grammar; Q20: speaking; Q21: writing; Q22: reading; Q23: listening). These questions used a four-point scale and the students were asked to choose from; 4=strongly agree; 3=somewhat agree; 2=somewhat disagree; and 1=strongly disagree.

Q13 aimed to view the strength of intent these learners had to learn English. Thus, Q13 asked if the learners would continue to learn English if English had not been compulsory part of their school curriculum (Q13--I learn English because it is a compulsory subject). This question used a four-point scale and the students were asked to choose from; 4=strongly agree; 3=somewhat agree; 2=somewhat disagree; and 1=strongly disagree.

Gardner 2001a asserted that beliefs that circulate in the individual's *social milieu* (cultural background of the individual and his/her family, and the social dynamics of the learner's immediate social environment) influence his/her attitudes and motivation and consequently, his/her L2 achievement. Thus, this section aimed to compare the learners' responses concerning their stated beliefs about their L2 competences with their perceptions of significant others' opinions about the L2 and significant others' L2 competence. Q31 (People around me think that knowing English is important); Q32 (My parents know English); Q33 (People around me have good opinions of English speaking people); Q34 (My parents think that English is important) were compared with Q30--the learners' perceived L2 competence. Q31-Q34 used two-point true/false questions (2=true and 3=false)⁶³; whereas Q30 used a four-point scale with; 4=very good, 3=good, 2=not good and 1=not good at all.

Questions Q17, Q24, Q25, and Q27, attempted to detect links between the learners' willingness to communicate (WTC), and the learners' L2 anxiety and attitudes towards risk-taking. Q17 (Talking in English is enjoyable) and Q27 (I try to create opportunities to talk in English) sought to explore the learners' WTC. Q24 (I feel uneasy when I make mistakes) aimed to discover the learners' levels of L2 anxiety and Q25 (When I speak I use grammar structures and vocabulary that I am sure of) attempted to see the learners' attitudes towards risk taking. These questions used a four-point scale. Q17 asked the learners to choose from; 4=strongly agree, 3=somewhat agree, 2=somewhat disagree, 1=strongly disagree; and Q24, Q25, and Q27 asked the learners to choose from; 4=often, 3=sometimes, 2=rarely, 1=never.

⁶³ In order to make this two-point scale comparable with four-point scales values of the true and false questions were adjusted to true=3 and false=2 (this is an acceptable procedure by statisticians).

The questions from Q35 to Q64 asked the learners' opinions about their past (secondary/high school) versus present (IUT de Mont de Marsan) L2 situations. The questions in this part aimed to discover whether there were differences between the learners' past versus present L2 practices; and whether there were any changes in the learners' statements of their beliefs (and if any); which factors contributed to these statements of belief changes.

The questions in this section all used a four-point scale. These questions were based on the assumptions that individuals' beliefs and attitudes and therefore their behaviors can change when conditions change (Ajzen 2002; Weiner 1986). The last five items were designed to obtain personal information for statistical purposes to describe the participant population (see 3.2 in Section 3.4.1). These questions asked the participants to fill in the required information (Q65--age; Q66--gender; Q67--nationality; Q68--years of L2 experience; Q69--university department).

3.7.2 Teacher questionnaire

The teacher questionnaire was written by using Sphinx v5, survey design and statistical computer package. Sphinx v5 computer package enabled the researcher to design the questionnaire in a format suitable to display and use online (see Appendix E for the teacher questionnaire). The teacher questionnaire was in English (two of the four teachers had nationalities other than French). The teacher questionnaire used a Likert type scale items on a four-point scale (Q1-Q42); and open questions (Q43-Q55). The questionnaire comprised 54 items. The questionnaire was set online in June 2006 and was available online until September 2006. All four teachers were provided with the on-line address to complete the questionnaire (All four teachers completed the questionnaire). The participant teachers were all *vacataires* who had main jobs

elsewhere. Most of the time they came to the IUT just before their teaching hours and they left right after their classes. Therefore, seeing them was limited to the breaks between classes. Using an on-line questionnaire provided the researcher with the facility to cover a large number of issues without taking much of the participants' time. The on-line address was sent to the participant teachers via e-mails and once the questionnaires were completed the data were displayed on-line (this procedure reduced the possibility of unreturned or lost questionnaire problem).

The aim of the teacher questionnaire was: a) to obtain the teachers' statements of their beliefs about their L2 practices; b) to compare the teacher's stated beliefs with the learners' stated beliefs to detect discordances (if any) between the teachers' and the learners' stated beliefs; and finally; c) to see if the teachers' stated beliefs corresponded to the L2 practices suggested by recent L2 research.

The first thirteen questions (Q1-Q13) asked the teachers about the L2 procedures/skills they used in L2 classes [e.g. how frequently they used (or if they used) some L2 components/skills] (see Appendix E for the teacher questionnaire). These questions used a four-point scale and asked the teachers to choose from; 4=often, 3=sometimes, 2=rarely, 1=never.

Q14-Q25 asked the teachers beliefs about their students': goals of learning the L2, expectations from their L2 practices, L2 preferences, L2 attitudes, and L2 competence. The aim of these questions was to see if the teachers' stated beliefs about their students are concordant with the learners' stated beliefs. These questions used a four-point scale and asked the teachers to choose from; 4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree.

Q26-Q32 asked about the teachers' pedagogical beliefs about importance of some common L2 skills/components. The aim of these questions was to explore the teachers' statements of their beliefs about importance of some L2 skills/components and compare these stated beliefs with the responses obtained from the learner questionnaire to view if the teachers' and the learners' stated beliefs are concordant with each other. These eight questions used a four-point scale and asked the teachers to choose from; 4=very important, 3=important, 2=not very important, 1=not important.

Q33-Q38 aimed to discover the teachers' statements of their beliefs about which L2 skills/components their students found difficult to learn. These questions were used to uncover the teachers' statements of their beliefs on the issue and compare these stated beliefs with the learners' stated beliefs concerning the same issue. The major aim was to view if the teachers' and the learners' stated beliefs were concordant with each other. These six questions used four-point scale and asked the teachers to choose from; 4=very difficult, 3=difficult, 2=not difficult, 1=not difficult at all.

Q39-Q43 aimed to discover the teachers' statements of their beliefs about effectiveness of L1 use. Q39-Q42 a four-point scale and asked the teachers to choose from; 4=very useful, 3=useful, 2=not very useful, 1=not useful at all. Q43 was an open question, which asked the teachers to write down if they thought of other L2 situations in which L1 use could be useful. The major aim was to uncover the teachers' statements of their beliefs on the issue and compare these self-reported beliefs with the learners' stated beliefs concerning the same issue.

Q44-Q47 were open questions which asked the teachers to write down the activities their students found: useful (Q44), not useful (Q45), enjoyable (Q46), not enjoyable (Q47).

Q48-Q53 were open questions. They asked if the teachers had attended an in-service training program designed for English language teachers (Q48) (and if yes—the teacher was automatically directed to question 49 if not to Q53): what it/they was/were about (Q49); how long it/they lasted (Q50); if it/they was/were useful (Q51). Q52 asked if the teachers would be interested in attending an in-service training program designed for English language teachers and (if yes) what they would like it to be about.

Q54 asked the teachers which departments they were teaching. Q55, the last question, was an open question and it asked about the years of English teaching experience the teachers had. These two questions were used to provide the researcher with the statistical data needed to describe the participant population (see Table 3.2 in Section 3.4.1).

3.7.3 Learner interviews

The learner interviews took place in February-March 2007 after the learner questionnaires were analyzed (see Appendix D for learner interview questions). Nineteen students volunteered to participate in the learner interviews (see Table 3.3 in Section 3.4.1. for information about the interview participants). The results of the questionnaire (quantitative data) were coupled with the information gathered during the interviews (qualitative data).

The learner interviews served a threefold purpose: a) to cross-check and explain the questionnaire data and to provide in-depth information on these learners' statements of their beliefs b) to identify the attributional styles and self-beliefs different learners' statements indicated; c) to explore the core beliefs these learners' statements indicated

about learning English and detect the stated beliefs which indicate relations with other stated beliefs.

3.7.4 Teacher interviews

The teacher interviews took place between February-April 2007. The aim of the teacher interviews was: a) to explore the teachers' statements of their beliefs about language teaching; b) to compare these stated beliefs with the learners' stated beliefs to view whether the teachers' and the learners' stated beliefs are concordant with each other. Teacher interviews comprised 13 open questions. The questions used in the teacher interviews employed similar themes used in the teacher questionnaire. Four female teachers participated in teacher interviews (see Table 3.4 in Section 3.4.2 for participant information). All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Despite the small group size organizing teacher interviews were more difficult than organizing the learner interviews due to: a) the teachers' time constraints because of their heavy work load; and b) their non-presence at the IUT after their teaching hours. Because of these constraints two teachers took the interviews on the phone (like the two other teacher interviews these two interviews were recorded, as well).

3.8 Analysis methods

3.8.1 Learner questionnaires

The results obtained from the online data were downloaded (as a Microsoft Office Excel format) for further analysis. The data obtained through the student questionnaire were analyzed by using two different analysis procedures: a) overall data analysis; and b) split data (paired-data) analysis. The results obtained via these analysis

procedures were then converted into line graphs by using Microsoft Office Excel spreadsheet to provide visual support.

3.8.1.1 Overall data analysis

The aim of the overall data analysis was to identify the learners' commonly stated L2 beliefs. The mean values of 119 participants' responses were downloaded and related data sets were grouped under themes (e.g. intrinsic/extrinsic interest in the L2; stated beliefs about L1 use; stated beliefs about past vs. present L2 situations etc.). The results were later converted into line graphs by using Microsoft Office Excel spreadsheet program to provide visual support and to facilitate interpretation.

3.8.1.2 Split data analysis

The major aim of the split data (paired-data) analysis was to view the responses of the learners who stated negative L2 beliefs separately from the learners who stated positive L2 beliefs. The split data analysis was done according to the learners' answers to two questionnaire items: 15 (Q15): "I like English... 4=strongly agree; 3=somewhat agree; 2=somewhat disagree; and 1=strongly disagree"; and the questionnaire item 30 (Q30): "My English is... 4=very good, 3=good, 2=not good and 1=not good at all". That is, the overall results obtained from the questionnaire data (n=119), were reorganized (split into two pairs) to identify stated L2 beliefs which pointed to differences between these two pairs (four groups) of learners (i.e. different L2 beliefs expressed by the learners who stated to have lower L2 competence vs. the learners who stated to have higher L2 competence; and the learners who stated that they liked English vs. the learners who stated they did not like English).

As a first step the mean values obtained from 119 students' questionnaire responses were regrouped according to the learners' responses to the questionnaire item 15 (Q15). The questionnaire results obtained from the students who perceived that they liked English (4=strongly agree or 3=somewhat agree) were gathered under one group and the group was labeled as ILE (n=68). The questionnaire results obtained from the students who perceived that they did not like English (1=strongly disagree or 2=somewhat disagree) were grouped under the label IDLE (n=51).

Then, the overall data (n=119) were paired according to the learners' responses to the questionnaire item number 30 (Q30): "My English is... a) 4=very good, b) 3=good, c) 2=not good and 1=not good at all". The students who perceived that their English was good (3=good or 4=very good) were grouped under the label MEG (n=62). The students who perceived that their English was not good (2=not good or 1=not good at all) were grouped under the label MENG (n=56). One student did not answer the Q30; thus, he was not included in this grouping (thus the total participant number in this pair was 118).

The learners' responses to the other questionnaire items were analyzed under these four groupings in order to be able to view how students with negative L2 beliefs (the MENG group and the IDLE group) versus the students with positive L2 beliefs (MEG group and ILE group) differed in their beliefs as regards their L2 practices and L2 situation. That is, the learners' responses to the other questions were analyzed as regards their perceived L2 enjoyment (ILE vs. IDLE) and their perceived L2 competence (MEG vs. MENG). The results obtained from this procedure were then

presented as multiple line graphs. On the multiple line graphs⁶⁴ each group's responses were displayed by using a different line. The aim of this presentation was to provide the reader with visual support that to enable him/her to compare how differently each group of learners responded to the same questionnaire items.

3.8.2 Teacher questionnaires

Four teachers completed the questionnaire online. Sphinx v5 survey design and statistical computer package provided the researcher with instant online display of the questionnaire. The results obtained from the online data were downloaded (as a Microsoft Office Excel format). The data obtained from each teacher's responses were organized around themes. The data collected through the questionnaires were analyzed with the aid of descriptive statistics. The results were displayed as line-graphs. The aim of the line-graph presentation was to facilitate interpretation and provide the reader with visual support.

3.8.3 Learner Interviews

The learner interviews served a threefold purpose: a) to cross-check and explain the questionnaire data and to provide in-depth information on these learners' statements of their beliefs b) to identify the attributional styles and self-beliefs different learners stated; c) to explore the statements of beliefs common to these learners about learning English and detect stated beliefs which appear to be interconnected to (and influence) one another.

⁶⁴ Multiple line graphs have space-saving characteristics because they enable presentation of two (or more) data sets. They are also considered effective in that they provide an easy way to compare two (or more) data sets.

All learner interviews were recorded and the recordings were transcribed. The transcribed data were grouped under actual interview questions; that is, each learner's response was grouped under the corresponding interview question. Then these data were reorganized and presented in tables. Each table displayed all nineteen participants' responses to each interview question. The aim of such a presentation was to provide the reader with a complete view of the responses for each question. This presentation technique helped the researcher to have a cross-sectional view of all participant responses for each question. The data were then compared with the overall results obtained from relevant questionnaire items to cross-check and explain the questionnaire data. The same interview data were also viewed case by case to view each individual participant learner's L2 beliefs to detect the links between these beliefs within each learner (e.g. types of attributions and L2 related self-beliefs each participant held).

3.8.4 Teacher interviews

The teacher questionnaires were supplemented with the interviews because the researcher believed that the interview data would provide more interesting and rich data for analysis. The teacher interviews were recorded and transcribed. Two teachers took the interviews on the phone. However, the face-to-face interviews provided the researcher richer data than the phone-interviews. The teacher interviews obtained data on pre-determined themes. The researcher analyzed these themes: a) to explore the teachers' pedagogical beliefs about language teaching; b) to compare these beliefs with the learners' stated beliefs to view whether the teachers' and the learners' stated beliefs are concordant with each other; and c) to complement the questionnaire data. In the study each teacher represented a case and each teacher's questionnaire and interview results were presented together to complement each other.

3.9 Conclusion

This study used mixed-methods (various types of instruments and analysis methods) to explore different aspects of the learners' and the teachers' stated beliefs (both quantitative--questionnaires and qualitative--interviews). Before designing the questionnaires, statements of the learner beliefs were elicited and used to construct the questionnaires in order to make the questionnaire items more representative of the target learners' stated beliefs. The questionnaire data were also complemented with the qualitative interview data to triangulate and explain the results. Although this dissertation work did not aim to generalize the results obtained, it attempted to discover the target group of participants' general tendencies. The interview data were also used to focus on the individual participants' interpretations of their L2 beliefs to have a deeper understanding of what each stated belief meant to each individual.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This study is based on the premise that understanding learner and teacher beliefs is crucial to successful planning and implementation of foreign/second language instruction. A mixed-methods approach was used in order to capture the best of both quantitative and qualitative data. This type of research enquiry is based on the assumption that collecting diverse types of data provides a better understanding of the research problem in question. Such an approach enables the researcher to test consistency of findings obtained through different instruments and provides triangulation (Greene *et al.* 1989). This study used both questionnaires (teacher and learner questionnaires) and interviews (teacher and learner interviews). The aim of this mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative) study was to investigate both the learners' and the teachers' statements of their beliefs in order to be able to gain insights about how the teachers and the learners interpret the English language instruction at the IUT (Institut Universitaire de Technologie) de Mont de Marsan (Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour) and in the light of the data obtained help enhance learning conditions in this institution.

This research primarily focused on the learners' present time beliefs that are part of their L2 metacognitive knowledge. However, the learners' statements of their past L2 experiences were also used in order to be able to make comparisons between the learners' statements about their past and present L2 experiences. This aspect is especially regarded as significant, because the researcher assumed that such comparisons: could highlight elements that are salient in learners' belief systems; could provide data on the learners' interpretations and understandings of their current and past

L2 situations; could help gain insights about the stable metacognitive elements within the learners' belief systems; could indicate conditions which are favored or disfavored by the learners. The teachers' statements of their beliefs were also investigated in order to be able to compare these with the learners' stated beliefs to view possible discordances.

4.2 Learner questionnaire results

The learner questionnaire was written by using Sphinx v5, survey design and statistical computer package. Sphinx v5 computer package enabled me to design the questionnaire in a format suitable to display and use online (see Appendix B for the online format of the student questionnaire). One hundred and twenty participant students answered the questionnaire online. One student's questionnaire was cancelled (the student answered only one question). Sphinx v5 survey design and statistical computer package also provided the researcher with instant online display of the questionnaire results [e.g. number of participants; summary of the results; each individual participant's file of responses, nationality, gender, department, age, year of study of English etc.]. The results obtained from the online data were downloaded (as a Microsoft Office Excel format) for further analysis. The data obtained through the student questionnaire were analyzed by using two different analysis procedures: a) overall data analysis; and b) split data (paired-data) analysis. The results obtained via these analysis procedures were then converted into line graphs by using Microsoft Office Excel spreadsheet to provide visual support.

4.2.1 The learners' beliefs about L2 skill/component significance

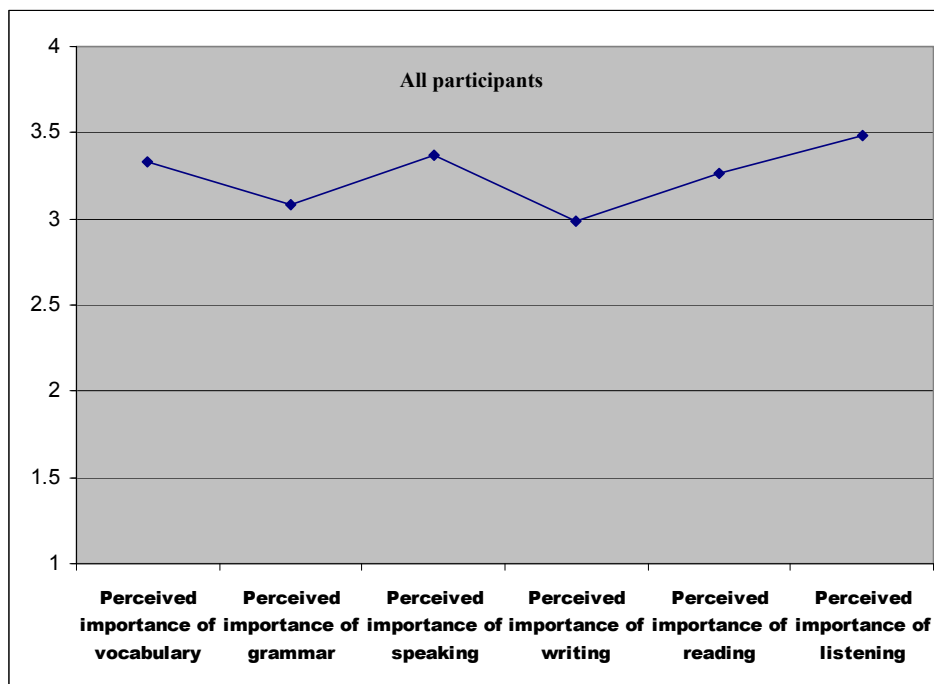
All participants n= 119

It is assumed that learners' core-beliefs about their purposes of learning a foreign language will directly influence their expectations from learning a particular foreign language and the importance they give to the learning of different language skills/components. This section therefore, aimed to uncover which L2 skills/components the learners perceived to be important in their language instruction.

Questions 18, 19, 20 21, 22, and 23 asked how the learners (n=119) perceived the importance of learning of the following six major L2 skills/components: Q18--vocabulary; Q19--grammar; Q20—speaking; Q21—writing; Q22—reading; Q23—speaking (see Appendix C for the learner questionnaire).

Overall analysis of these 119 students' responses suggested that the learners perceived all of these six L2 skills important. The scores were ranged from 3=important upwards to the score of 3.5 on a 1-to-4 Likert type scale. The overall data analysis indicated that for these students: listening, speaking, and vocabulary were the three most important L2 skills/components respectively (the results indicated insignificant differences between the scoring of these three skills/components). These three L2 skills/components were followed by reading, grammar, and writing, respectively (see Figure 4.1). The results indicated that these learners' perceived writing practice and grammar learning significantly less important than listening, speaking practice and vocabulary learning.

Figure 4.1 The learners' stated beliefs about L2 skill/component significance (all participants n=119)



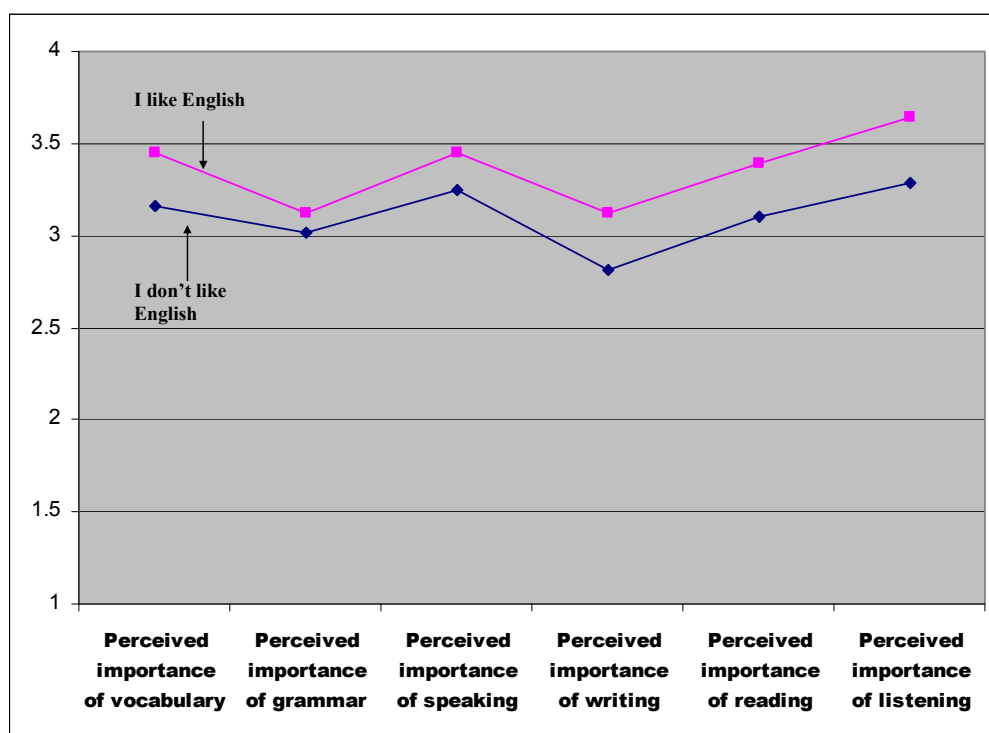
Note: 4=Very important; 3=Important; 2=Not important; 1=Not important at all

I like English (ILE) n= 68 & I don't like English (IDLE) n=51

With respect to the perceived importance of L2 skills/components, the split data analysis illustrated that the IDLE (I don't like English) group, on the whole, perceived the importance of L2 skills/components less strongly than the ILE (I like English) group (see Figure 4.2). However, although these two groups of learners perceived the importance of these L2 skills/components at two distinct levels, they ranked these L2 skills/components almost in the same order of importance. The results demonstrated that both the IDLE group and the ILE group perceived listening, speaking and vocabulary as the most important L2 skills/components respectively. Reading followed listening, speaking and vocabulary with a slightly lower perceived importance. However, concerning grammar and finally writing the learners' responses suggested a significantly lower perceived importance. Both the ILE and the IDLE groups ranked grammar and writing as two least important L2 skills/components. The IDLE groups'

score, concerning writing indicated that the learners within this group did not perceive writing as an important skill to learn (their overall score was below 3=important).

Figure 4.2 The learners' stated beliefs about L2 skill/component significance (I like English n= 68 & I don't like English n=51)



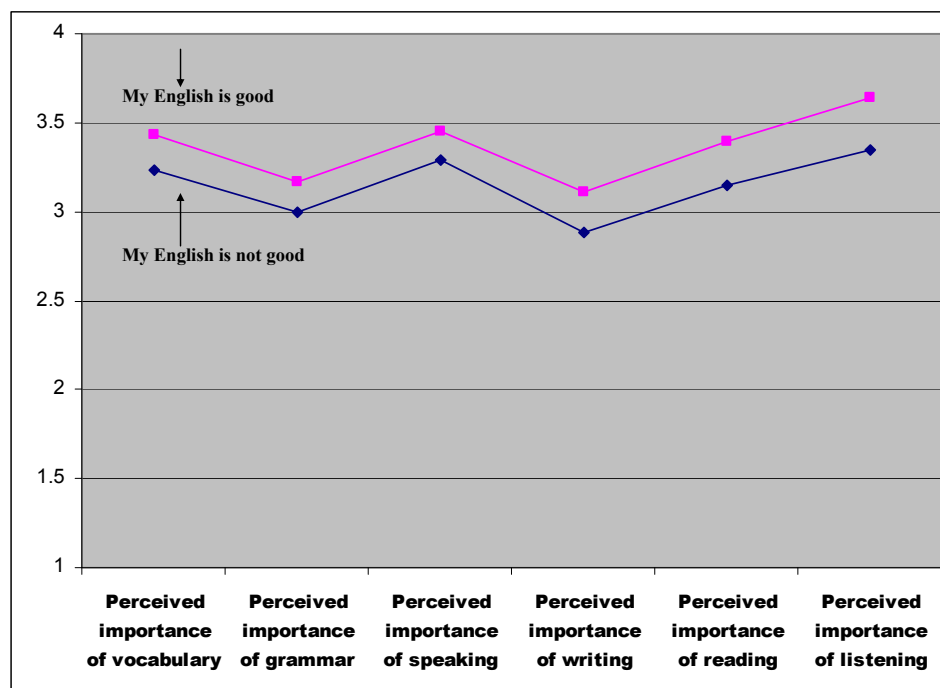
Note: 4=Very important; 3=Important; 2=Not important; 1=Not important at all

My English is good (MEG) n=62 & My English is not good (MENG) n=56

The comparative analysis of the responses of the MEG (My English is good) group versus MENG group (My English is not good) illustrated similar patterns as the results obtained from the analysis of the ILE group and IDLE group's responses. Regarding L2 skill/component significance the responses of the MEG and MENG groups, as well as the responses of the ILE and IDLE groups, illustrated that the learners who expressed positive beliefs perceived the importance of L2 skills/components more strongly than the learners who expressed less positive beliefs. The split data analysis

clearly showed that the MENG group perceived the significance of L2 components/skills less strongly than the MEG group (see Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3 The learners' stated beliefs about L2 skill/component significance (My English is good n=62 & My English is not good n=56)



Note: 4=Very important; 3=Important; 2=Not important; 1=Not important at all

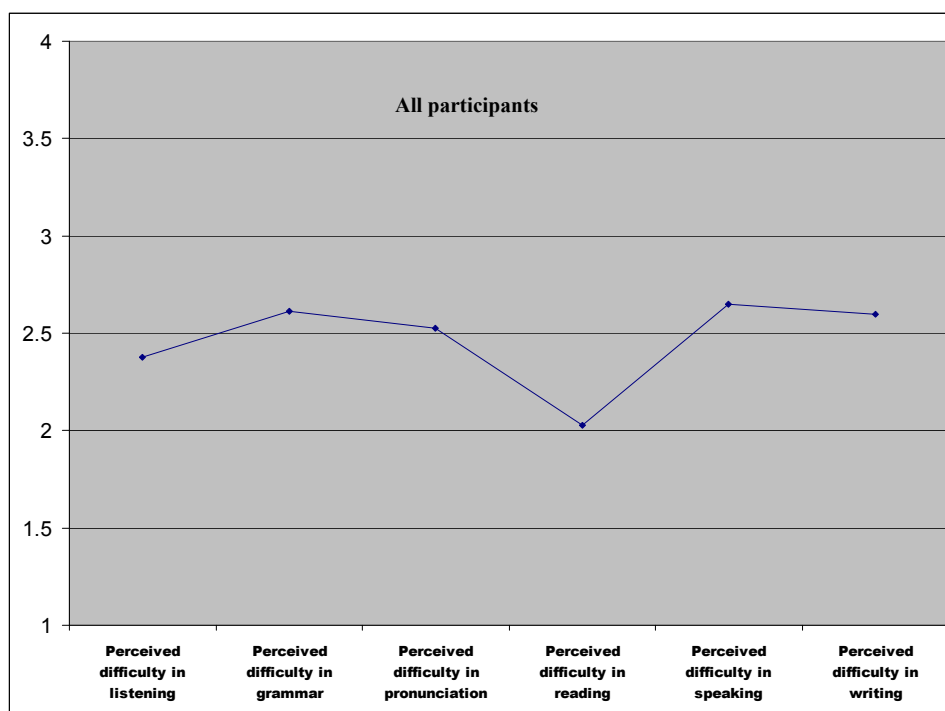
In this section, both groups (My English is good n=62 & My English is not good n=56) graded the importance of L2 skills/components in exactly the same order: listening, speaking, vocabulary, reading, grammar, and then writing respectively. Despite the fact that these two groups of learners perceived the importance of L2 skills/components at two distinct levels, their beliefs concerning the importance of these L2 skills/components were mirror reflections of the same representations. Like the IDLE group the MENG ranked writing skill below 3=important on the scale.

4.2.2 The learners' stated beliefs about L2 skill/component difficulty

All participants n= 119

This section dealt with the learners' perceived difficulty regarding the L2 skills/components. The data sets obtained from the questionnaire items Q1--listening; Q2--grammar; Q3--pronunciation; Q4--reading; Q5--speaking; Q6—writing (see Appendix C for the learner questionnaire) were grouped under the theme '*The learners' stated beliefs about L2 skill/component difficulty*' and the mean scores obtained from the learners' responses to these items were presented as line graphs (see Figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4 The learners' stated beliefs about L2 skill/component difficulty (all participants n=119)



Note: Scale: 4=Very difficult; 3= Difficult; 2=Not difficult; 1= Not difficult at all

The previous section (skill/component significance) indicated that the learners in general perceived all L2 skills/components important (the responses in general ranged from '3=important' to slightly underneath '4=very important'). However, the analysis

of the learners' stated beliefs about L2 skill/component difficulty suggested that, on the whole, these learners did not perceive L2 skills/components difficult (The learners' responses concerted within the range of 2=not difficult and 3=difficult).

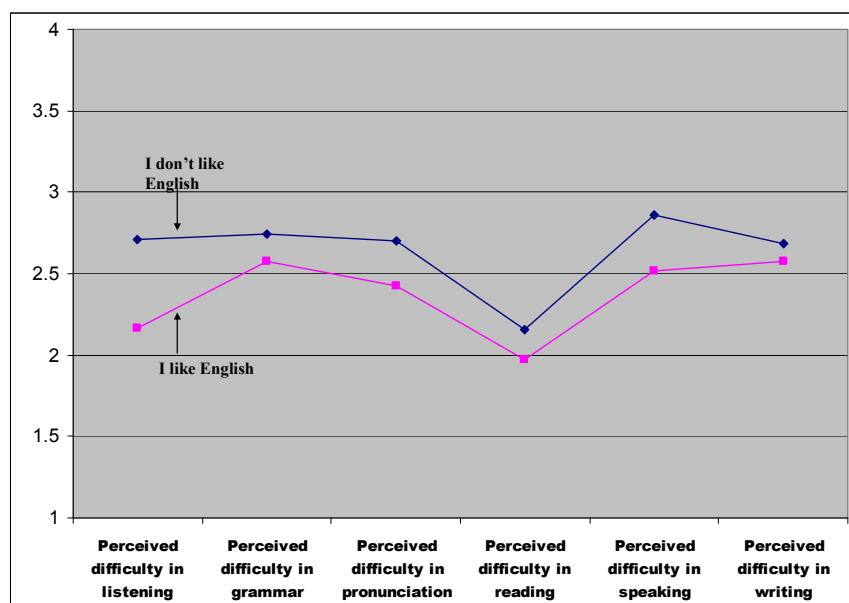
The overall results obtained in this section did not show significant discrepancies between the learners' ratings of different L2 skills/components (except reading). Speaking with a slightly higher score than grammar, writing, and pronunciation respectively was perceived to be the most difficult L2 skill. Listening skill was ranked as the fifth on the learners' difficulty scale. Reading, which the learners perceived as the least difficult, indicated a significant ease compared to all other L2 skills and components (see Figure 4.4).

I like English (ILE) n= 68 & I don't like English (IDLE) n=51

The analysis of the split data 'I like English' (ILE n=68) versus 'I don't like English' (IDLE n=51) illustrated that the learners who stated that they liked English perceived their L2 practices less difficult than the ones who stated that they did not like English (see Figure 4.5).

This comparative analysis illustrated that the ILE group perceived listening and speaking significantly less difficult than the IDLE group. As regards listening and speaking, the discrepancy between these two groups of learners' perceptions appeared to be wider compared to their perceived difficulty regarding the other L2 skills/components. Nonetheless, these two groups appeared to have closer scores concerning their perceived difficulty of writing, grammar and reading. The data analysis indicated that both groups perceived reading to be significantly less difficult compared to all other skills.

Figure 4.5 The learners' stated beliefs about L2 skill/component difficulty (I like English n=68 & I don't like English n=51)



Note: 4=Very difficult; 3=Difficult; 2=Not difficult; 1= Not difficult at all

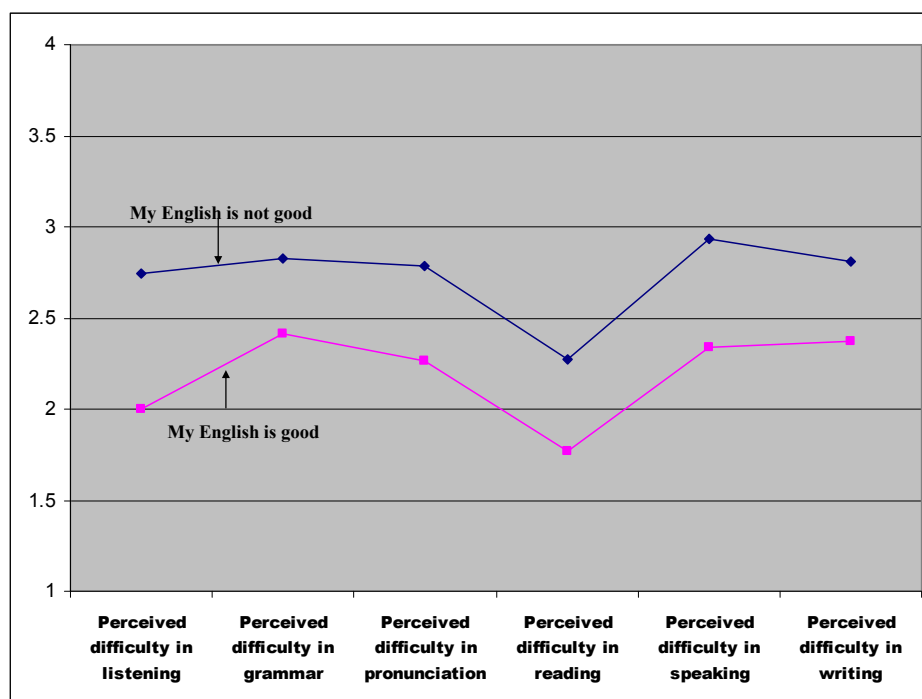
My English is good (MEG) n=62 & My English is not good (MENG) n=56

The perceptions of these two groups MEG (My English is good n=62) and MENG (My English is not good n=56) showed similar patterns as the other two groups ILE (I like English n=68) and IDLE (I don't like English n=51). However, the discrepancy between the scores of the MEG and MENG groups appeared to be greater compared to the ILE and IDLE groups (see Figure 4.6).

Simple comparison between Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.6 shows that the learners who stated that their English was good (MEG) perceived all L2 skills/components easier than the other three groups (IDLE, ILE and MENG). The MENG group's responses illustrated that these students perceived all L2 skills/components as being more or less the same level of difficulty (except reading, which was perceived as the easiest L2 skill). In the same vein, the MEG group perceived difficulty of grammar,

writing and speaking, and pronunciation as being more or less the same. However, the MEG group perceived listening and especially reading significantly easier than the other three groups did (i.e. ILE, IDLE and MENG).

Figure 4.6 The learners' stated beliefs about L2 skill/component difficulty (My English is good n=62 & My English is not good n=56)



Note: 4=Very difficult; 3= Difficult; 2=Not difficult; 1= Not difficult at all

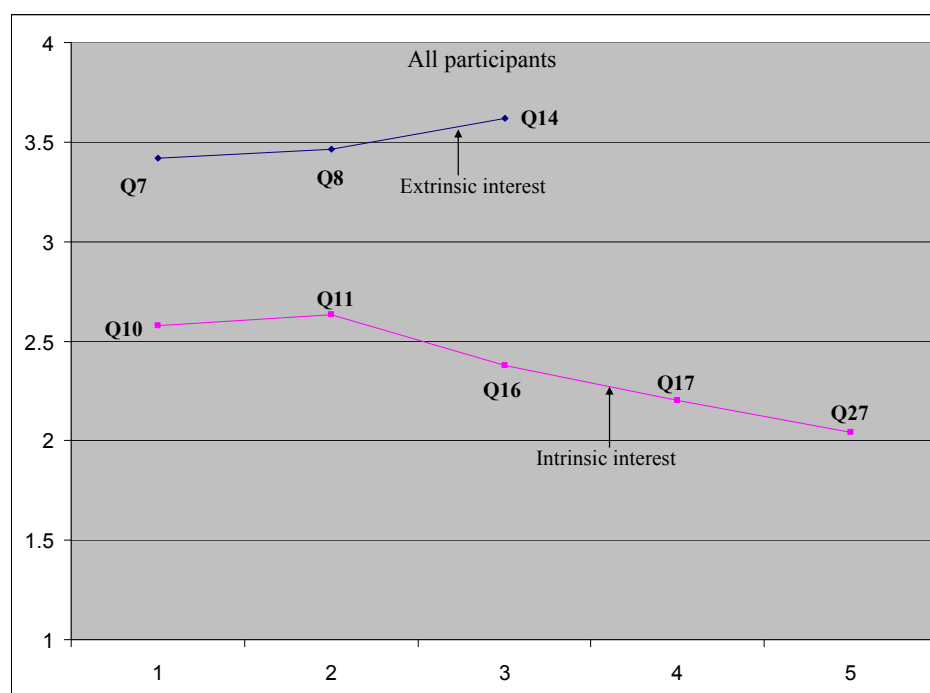
4.2.3 Extrinsic vs. intrinsic interest in the L2

All participants n= 119

Ryan & Deci (2000) noted that beliefs play an important role on the type of motivations people have. In this section the students' stated beliefs were grouped according to their expression of instrumental value such as getting a job or good grades (extrinsic interest) and their expression of personal interest in the L2 (intrinsic interest). The following questions were grouped under 'extrinsic interest': Q7 (English is useful for my studies); Q8 (English will be useful in my career; Q14 (English can be useful

during my travels). And the following questions were grouped under ‘intrinsic interest’:
 Q10 (English is nice to hear); Q11 (English is important for me because it allows me to
 know English speaking people); Q16 (Learning about Anglophone culture would be
 interesting) Q17 (Talking in English is pleasure); and Q27 (I try to create opportunities
 to talk in English) (see also Appendix C for the learner questionnaire) (see Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7 Extrinsic vs. intrinsic interest in the L2 (all participants n= 119)



Note: Q7 (English is useful for my studies); Q8 (English will be useful in my career; Q10 (English is nice to hear); Q11 (English is important for me because it allows me to know about English speaking people); Q14 (English can be useful during my travels); Q16 (Learning about Anglophone culture would be interesting); Q17 (Talking in English is pleasure); and Q27 (I try to create opportunities to talk in English). Scale: 4=Strongly agree; 3=Somehow agree; 2=Somehow disagree; 1= Strongly disagree Except for Q27 ‘I try to create opportunities to talk in English’ 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1=Never

In general the participants showed very high extrinsic interest in English. The results indicated that these learners perceived English as a language with high instrumental value. The majority of the learners agreed that English is useful for their studies and their future careers. They also strongly agreed that English could be useful during their travels. However, contrary to their higher perceived instrumental value of

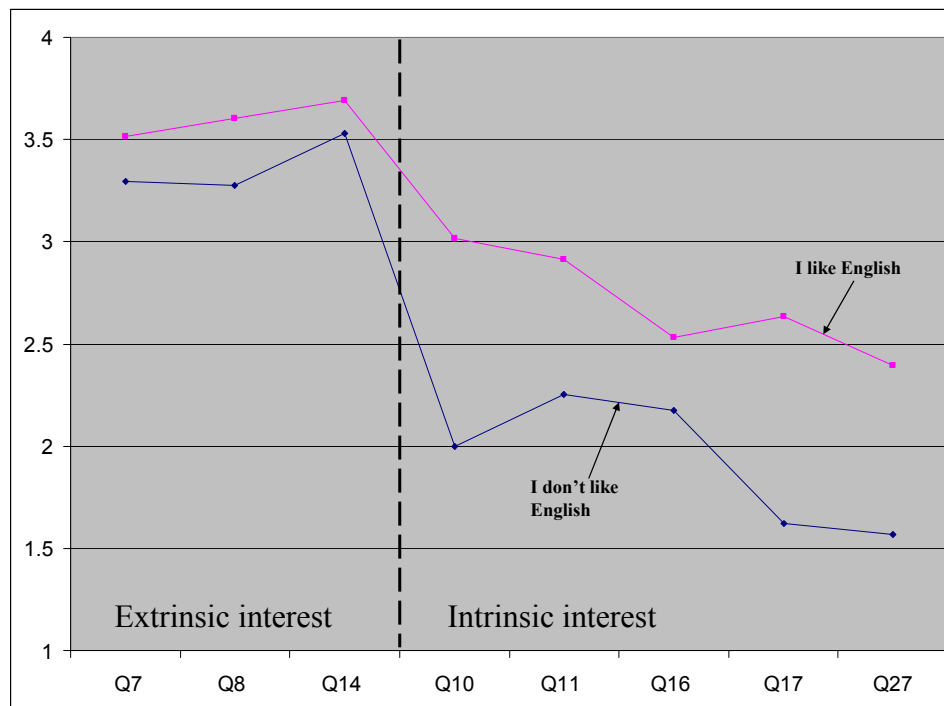
the English language, the majority of the students expressed very low intrinsic interest in this language. The learners' responses revealed that they did not find talking in English enjoyable and that they rarely looked for opportunities to talk in English. The results also indicated that they had little interest in learning about the English speaking peoples' culture, and that they did not find English a nice sounding language.

I like English (ILE) n= 68 & I don't like English (IDLE) n=51

The split data analysis illustrated that the learners who expressed liking towards learning English (ILE) perceived higher intrinsic interest in the English language. Nevertheless, on the whole, neither group expressed significantly high intrinsic interest in the English language. The learners in the ILE group perceived the English language is a nice language which sounds nice to the ear (Agree=3). They also perceived higher intrinsic interest in the L2 as a means that could allow them to know more about English speaking people. However, their responses revealed that they had little interest in knowing about the English speaking people's culture, and talking in English. The ILE group's scores regarding the questionnaire items about their intrinsic interest concerted somewhere between 3=sometimes and 2=rarely (see Figure 4.8).

As regards their perceived extrinsic interest, the scores were significantly high. Both groups agreed that knowing English was important for their studies, future jobs and when they travel (the results concerted within the range 3=somewhat agree and 4=strongly agree). The ILE group also expressed slightly higher extrinsic interest in learning English than the IDLE group.

Figure 4.8 Extrinsic vs. intrinsic interest in the L2 (I like English n= 68 & I don't like English n=51)

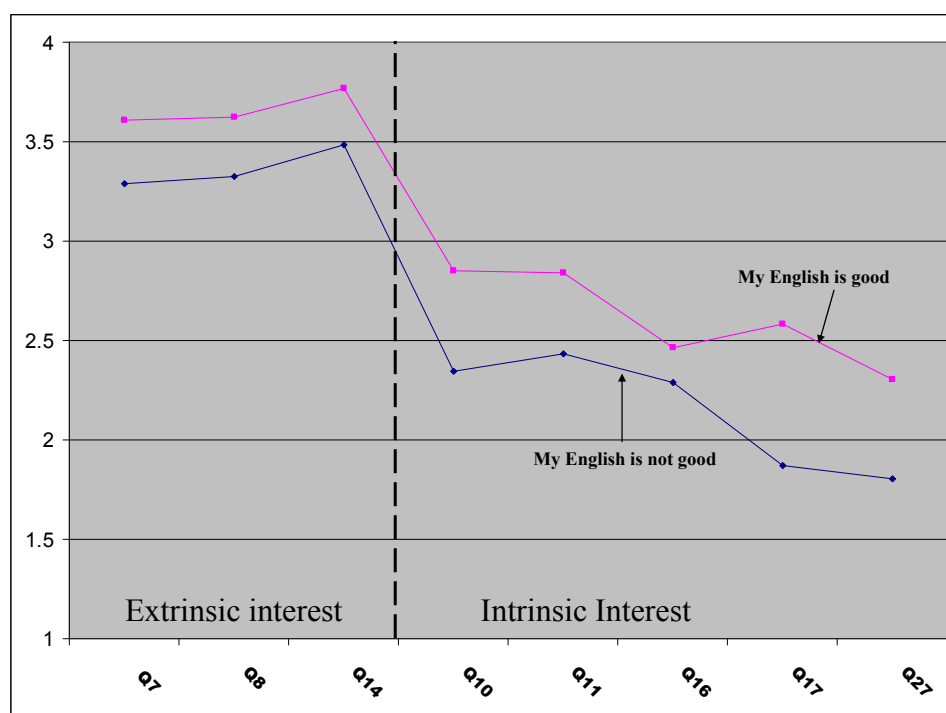


Note: Q7 (English is useful for my studies); Q8 (English will be useful in my career; Q10 (English is nice to hear); Q11 (English is important for me because it allows me to know about English speaking people); Q14 (English can be useful during my travels); Q16 (Learning about Anglophone culture would be interesting); Q17 (Talking in English is pleasure); and Q27 (I try to create opportunities to talk in English). Scale: 4=Strongly agree; 3=Somehow agree; 2=Somehow disagree; 1= Strongly disagree. Except for 'I create opportunities to talk in English' 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1= Never

My English is good (MEG) n=62 & My English is not good (MENG) n=56

The split data analysis of the MEG group versus MENG group's responses revealed similar results obtained from the ILE versus IDLE groups' responses (see Figure 4.8 and Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9 Extrinsic vs. intrinsic interest in the L2 (My English is good n=62 & My English is not good n=56)



Note: Q7 (English is useful for my studies); Q8 (English will be useful in my career; Q10 (English is nice to hear); Q11 (English is important for me because it allows me to know about English speaking people); Q14 (English can be useful during my travels); Q16 (Learning about Anglophone culture would be interesting); Q17 (Talking in English is pleasure); and Q27 (I try to create opportunities to talk in English). Scale: 4=Strongly agree; 3=Somehow agree; 2=Somehow disagree; 1= Strongly disagree. Except for 'I create opportunities to talk in English' 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1= Never

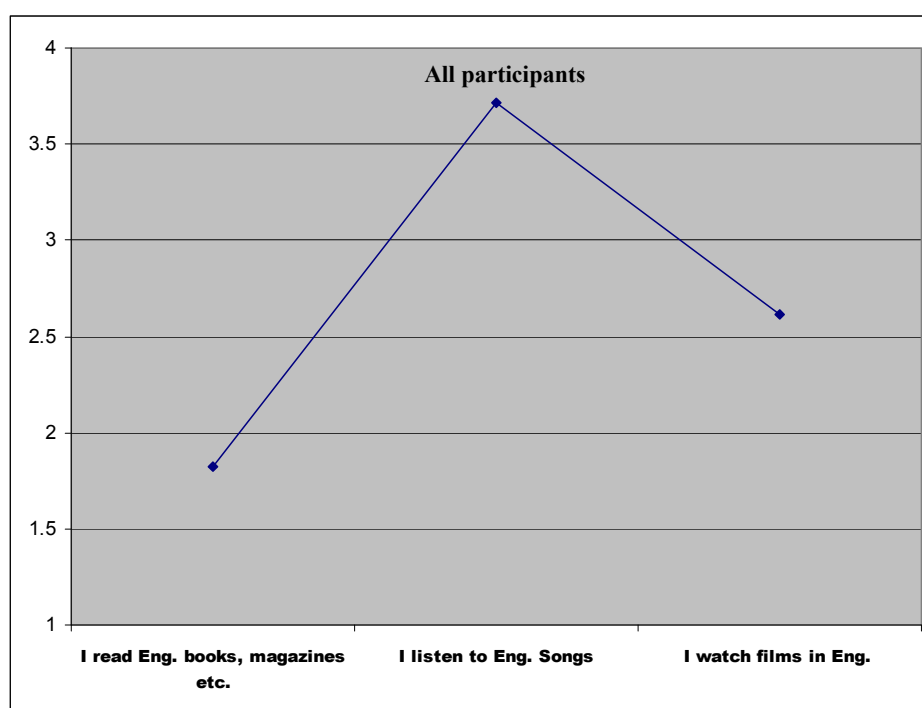
However, the comparison of these four groups' results illustrated that, in the whole, the ILE group had the highest intrinsic interest; whereas the IDLE had the lowest intrinsic interest towards the L2. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the results obtained from the ILE group was not high enough to indicate a high level of intrinsic interest, either (see Figure 4.8). All in all, despite their lower perceived intrinsic interest the results obtained suggested that these four groups of learners perceived that the English language was an important language for them to learn.

4.2.4 Intrinsic interest in L2 artifacts

All participants n= 119

This section investigated if the learners were interested in L2 artifacts such as reading English books (Q26), listening to English songs (Q28), and watching English movies (Q29) (see also Q66, Q28 and Q29). The analysis of the overall data about the learners' intrinsic interest in L2 artifacts such as reading English books and watching English movies illustrated that, on the whole, the learners did not show high interest in these L2 artifacts (see Figure 4.12). The learners stated that they almost never read English books (the scores, in general' ranged from '2=rarely' to '1=never') and they rarely watched English movies (the score ranged from '2=rarely' to '3=sometimes'). However, the majority of the learners expressed very high intrinsic interest in listening to English songs (the scores ranged from 3=sometimes to 4=often)

Figure 4.10 Intrinsic interest in the L2 artifacts (all participants n= 119)

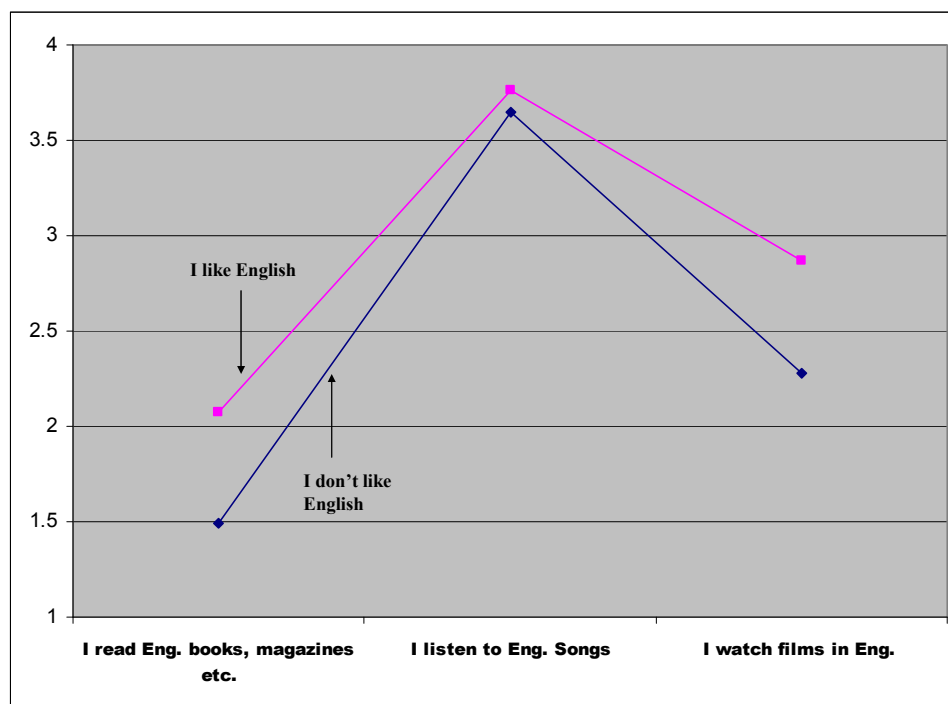


Note: 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1= Never

I like English (ILE) n= 68 & I don't like English (IDLE) n=51

The analysis of the split data demonstrated that the ILE group showed higher intrinsic interest in L2 artifacts (reading English books, watching English movies, and listening to English songs) than the IDLE group (see Figure 4.11). Nevertheless, on the whole, neither group expressed high intrinsic interest in reading English books or in watching English movies. The learners' responses concerning the questionnaire items about reading English books and watching English movies showed significant differences between the ILE and the IDLE groups. However, as regards their responses to the question about listening to English songs both groups expressed high intrinsic interest.

Figure 4.11 Intrinsic interest in the L2 artifacts (I like English n= 68 & I don't like English n=51)

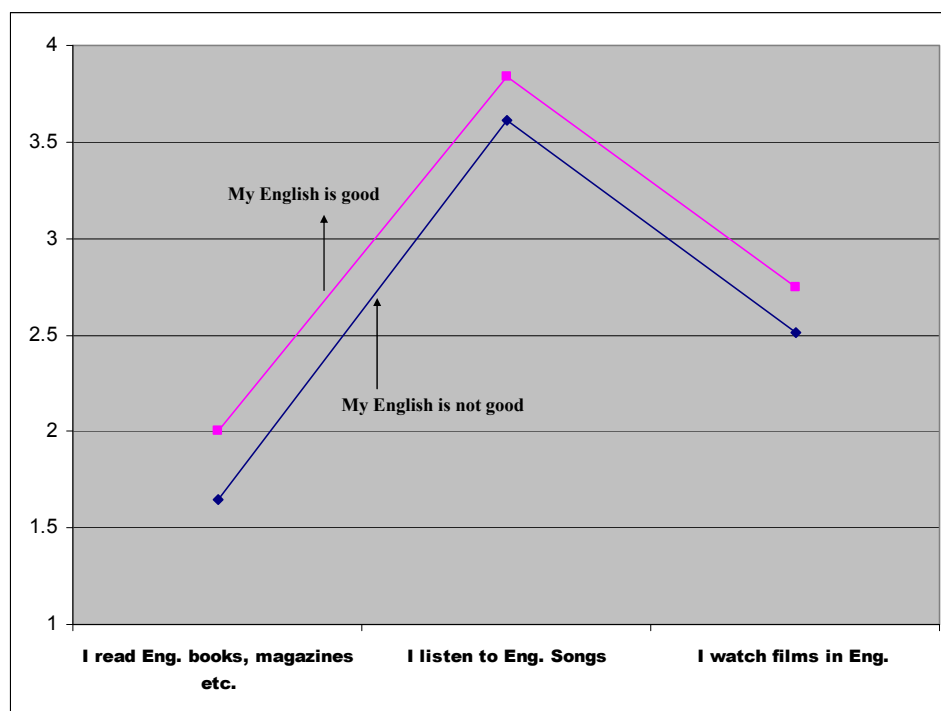


Note: 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1= Never

My English is good (MEG) n=62 & My English is not good (MENG) n=56

The split data analysis of the MEG and MENG groups' responses illustrated similar patterns as the ILE versus IDLE groups' responses. The only slight difference noted was that the discrepancy between the responses of these two groups (MEG vs. MENG) was less prominent compared to the ILE versus IDLE groups (especially regarding reading English books and watching English movies). In short, the MEG and MENG groups, as well, expressed very little intrinsic interest in reading English books or watching English movies; however, like the two other groups, they expressed very high intrinsic interest in listening to English songs (see Figure 4.12).

Figure 4.12 Intrinsic interest in the L2 artifacts (My English is good n=62 & My English is not good n=56)



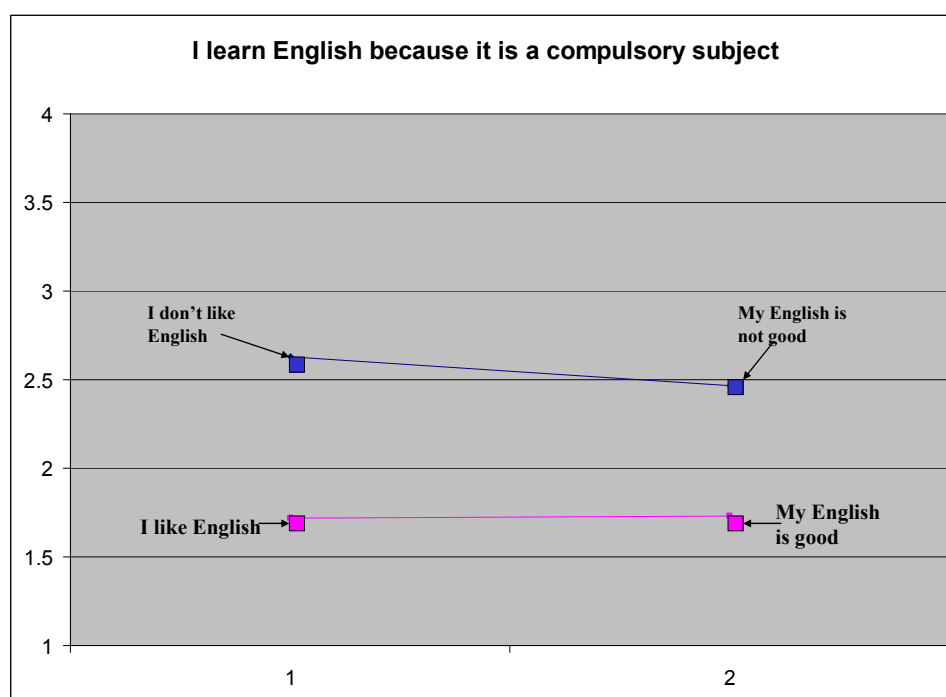
Note: 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1= Never

4.2.5 Perceived intent to learn English

I like English (ILE) n= 68 & I don't like English (IDLE) n=51 & My English is good (MEG) n=62 & My English is not good (MENG) n=56

In the previous sections we observed that these learners (ILE versus IDLE and MEG versus MENG groups), despite their lower perceived intrinsic interest in the language English language (e.g. not liking the language) and its artifacts (e.g. culture, people, books, movies), stated that English language would provide them with some instrumental benefits (e.g. for their studies, future jobs, when they travel etc.). The aim of this section was to verify the strength of these learners' motivation to learn English. Thus question 13 asked if the learners would continue to learn English if English had not been compulsory part of their school curriculum (Q13--I learn English because it is a compulsory subject). Both ILE versus IDLE and MEG versus MENG groups disagreed that they were learning English because it was compulsory part of their school curriculum (see Figure 4.13). Nevertheless, the responses obtained from the learners with more positive L2 beliefs displayed much stronger disagreement (ILE and MEG 1= strongly disagree) than the ones with less positive L2 beliefs (IDLE and MENG 3=somewhat disagree) (see Figure 4.13). However, all in all, the data suggested that these learners, despite their lower perceived intrinsic interest in the English language and its artifacts, perceived some persuasive instrumental benefits of learning this language.

Figure 4.13 Perceived intent to learn English (I like English n= 68 & I don't like English n=51 & My English is good n=62 & My English is not good n=56)



Note: Scale: 4=Strongly agree; 3=Somehow agree; 2=Somehow disagree; 1= Strongly disagree.

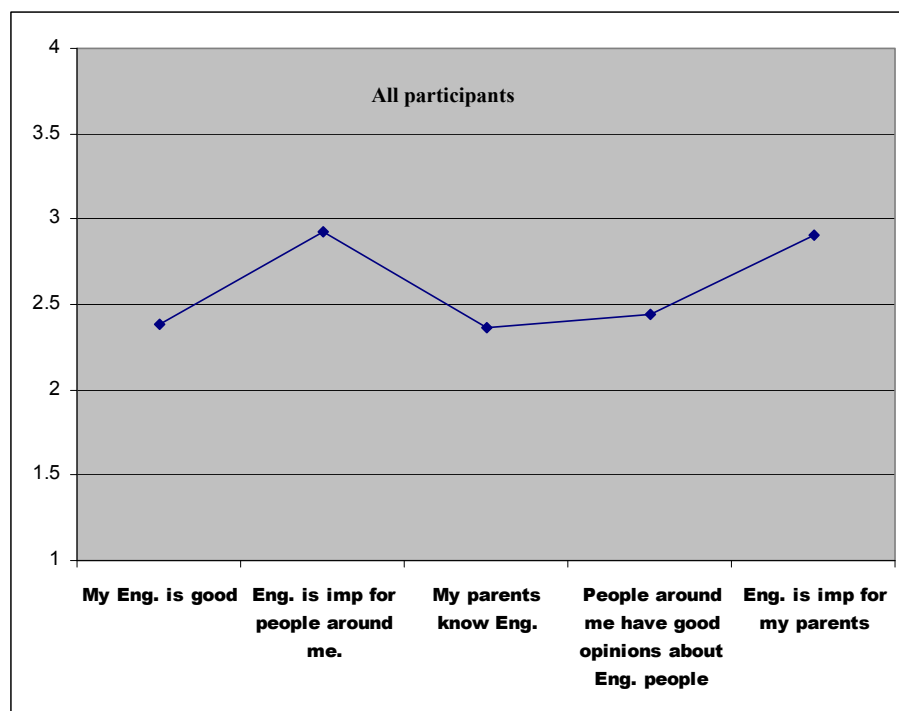
4.2.6 The learners' stated beliefs about their L2 competence and significant others' opinions about English

All participants n=119

This section aimed to compare the learners' responses concerning their stated beliefs about their L2 competences with their perceptions of significant others' opinions about the L2 and significant others' L2 competence. Hence, the results obtained from the following questions Q31 (People around me think that knowing English is important); Q32 (My parents know English); Q33 (People around me have good opinions of English speaking people); Q34 (My parents think that English is important) were compared with the learners' perceived L2 competence Q30 (My English is... very good= 4, good=3, not good=2, not good at all=1). The overall data obtained in this part

of the questionnaire suggested that the learners' social milieu was not satisfactorily supportive of L2 learning (see 4.14). The responses suggested that the people in the learners' social milieu did not perceive the L2 sufficiently important and they did not have positive opinions of the L2 community. The learners' responses also indicated that their parents were not competent in English. The results obtained in this section also revealed that the majority of the learners did not believe that they were good at English.

Figure 4.14 The learners' perceptions of their L2 competence and significant others' opinions about English



Note: Scale: 3=True; 2=Not true. Except for 'my English is...': 4=Very good; 3=Good; 2=Not good; 1=Not good at all.

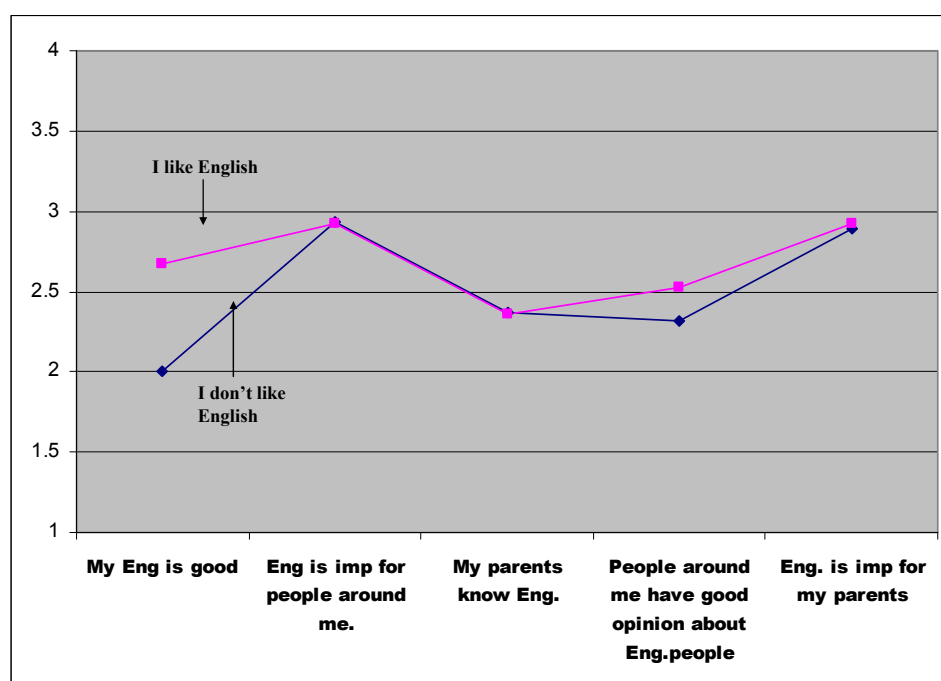
I like English (ILE) n= 68 & I don't like English (IDLE) n=51

The split data analysis concerning the ILE versus IDLE groups' responses attempted to explore if there were differences between these two groups as regards their perceived levels of English, the significant others' opinions of English, and their parents' English competence. This section mainly aimed to discover if there were links

between the learners' stated L2 competences and the influence they received from their milieu.

The split data analysis indicated that the ILE group perceived higher L2 competence than the IDLE group; however, neither group stated that they had a good level of English (see Figure 4.15).

Figure 4.15 The learners' perceptions of their L2 competence and significant others' opinions about English (I like English n= 68 & I don't like English n=51)



Note: Scale: 3=True; 2=Not true. Except for 'my English is...': 4=Very good; 3=Good; 2=Not good; 1=Not good at all.

The ILE group ranked their L2 competence somewhere between '2=not good' and '3=good' and the IDLE group '2=not good'. On the whole, the results showed that both groups' parents and people around them considered English an important language to learn. The majority of the learners (in both groups) asserted that their parents did not speak (know) English. The scores obtained from Q31, Q32 and Q34 were the same for both groups. Neither group stated that people around them had good opinions of English

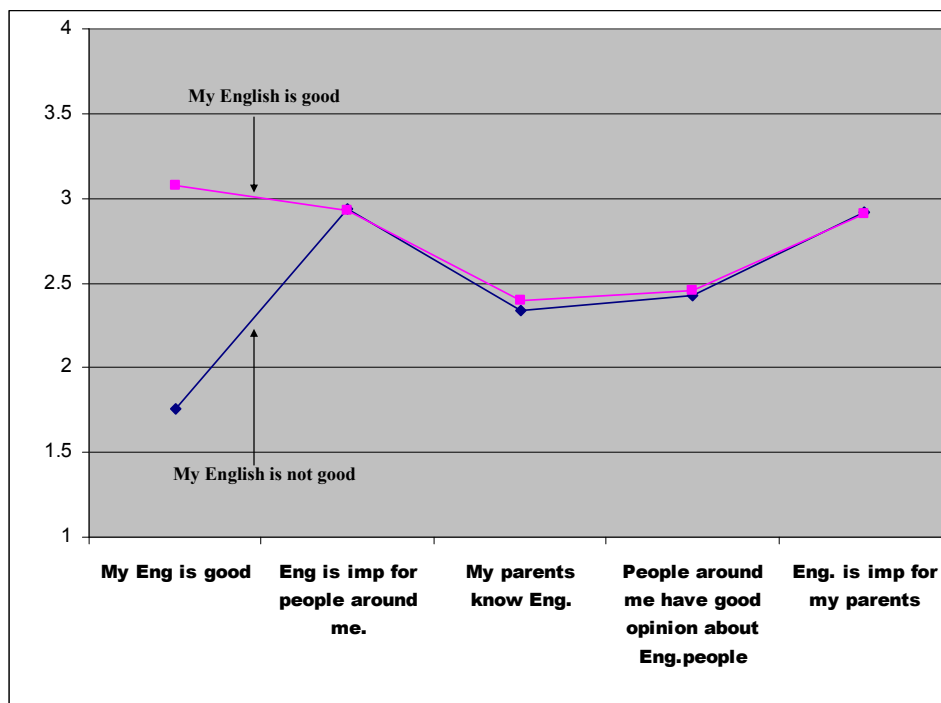
speaking people (Q33); nevertheless, regarding this question (Q33) the ILE group's rating was slightly higher than the IDLE group (see Figure 4.15).

My English is good (MEG) n=62 & My English is not good (MENG) n=56

Regarding the part about perceived L2 competence and the influence of significant others, the results obtained from the MEG and MENG groups showed notable similarities with the results obtained from the ILE and IDLE groups (see Figure 4.15). Although the learners perceived that English was an important language for their parents and people around them, they also perceived that people around them in general did not have good opinions of English speaking people. Concerning the questions about significant others, both groups' (MEG and MENG) ratings were almost identical (see Figure 4.16). Thus, the data obtained was unable to attribute the differences between these two groups of learners' L2 achievements to the type of influence they perceived from their milieu.

However, it should be noted that the results indicated that these learners in general perceived that the people within their milieu did not possess very favorable beliefs about the L2 (especially about the L2 speakers/community). These learners, in general (even the ones who stated that their English was good), did not perceive high L2 competence (the average rating was 3=good) and high intrinsic interest in the L2 (see also sections about intrinsic interest in the L2 Figures 4.7, 4.8, 4.9).

Figure 4.16 The learners' stated beliefs about their L2 competence and significant others' opinions about English (My English is good n=62 & My English is not good n=56)



Note: 4=strongly agree; 3=somewhat agree; 2=somewhat disagree; and 1=strongly disagree. Except for 'I create opportunities to talk in English' 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1= Never

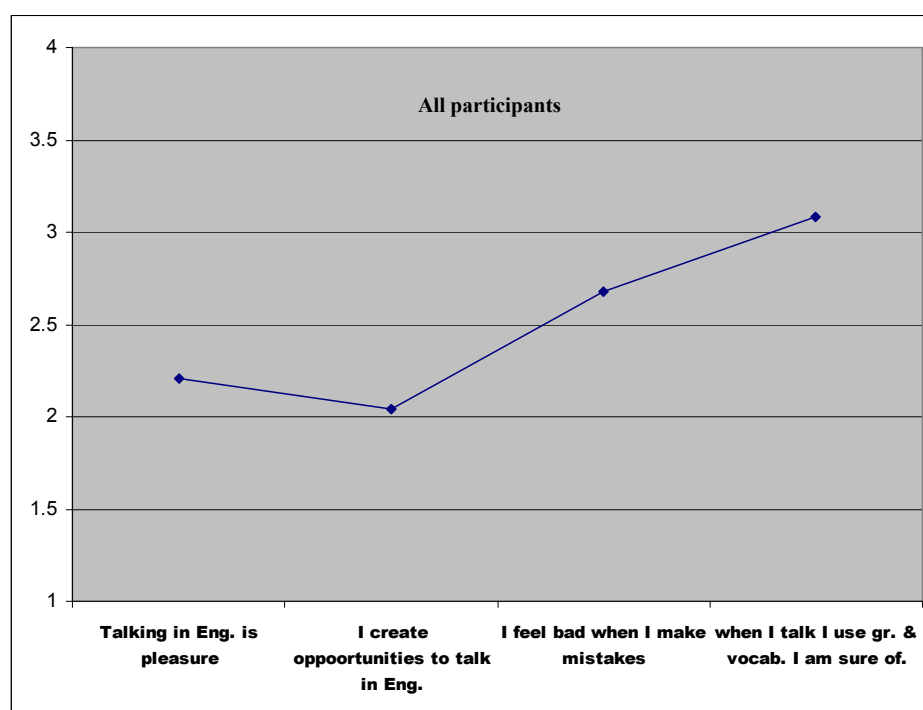
4.2.7 Willingness to communicate, L2 anxiety, and attitude toward risk-taking

All participants n=119

This section attempted to detect links between the learners' willingness to communicate (WTC), and the learners' L2 anxiety and attitudes towards risk-taking. Q17 (Talking in English is enjoyable) and Q27 (I try to create opportunities to talk in English) sought to explore the learners' WTC. Q24 (I feel uneasy when I make mistakes) aimed to discover the learners' levels of L2 anxiety and Q25 (When I speak I use grammar structures and vocabulary that I am sure of) attempted to see the learners' attitudes towards risk taking. Clément, Baker, and MacIntyre (2003) claimed that high perceived confidence (one's self-efficacy belief that s/he can communicate

appropriately in a given situation) and low anxiety promote willingness to communicate. However, the results obtained from this study did not indicate direct links between the learners' lower perceived willingness to communicate and perceived L2 anxiety when communicating in English. Overall results regarding the participants' willingness to communicate (WTC) in English illustrated that these learners in general perceived very low WTC in English (see Figure 4.17). The majority of the learners expressed that they did not enjoy talking in English and that they rarely created opportunities to talk in this language. The learners' responses revealed that they rarely felt L2 anxiety when they made mistakes (on the scale their responses ranged from '2=rarely' to somewhere between '3=sometimes').

Figure 4.17 Willingness to communicate, L2 anxiety, and attitude toward risk-taking (all participants n= 119)



Note: 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1= Never. Except for 'talking in English is pleasure: 4=Strongly agree; 3=Somehow agree; 2=Somehow disagree; 1= Strongly disagree

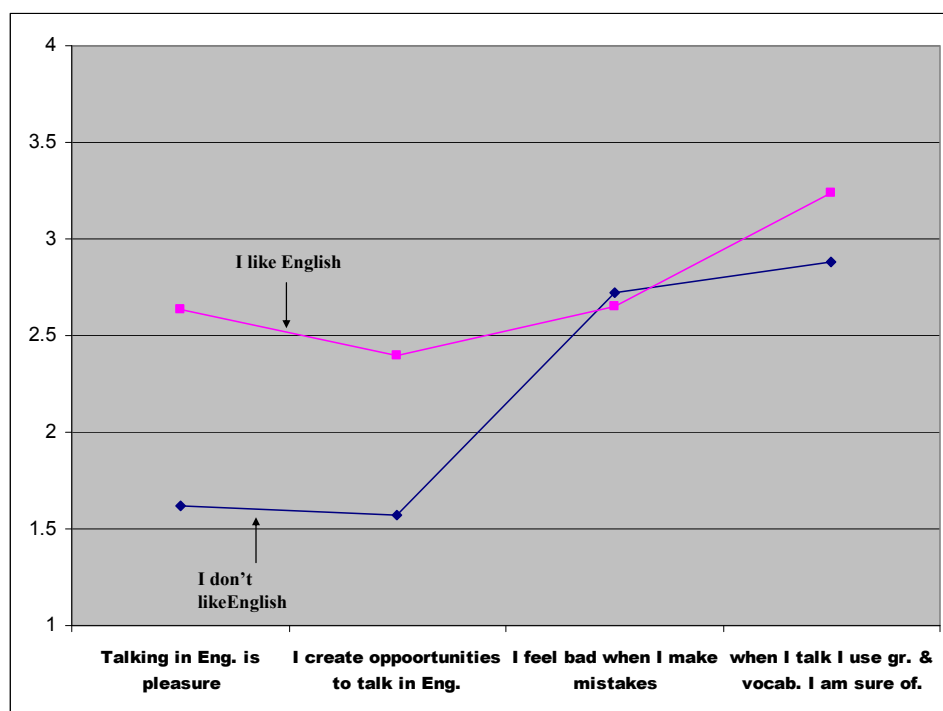
However, the data indicated that the majority of these learners' had tendencies to avoid risk-taking. The learners claimed that they used the vocabulary and linguistic structures they were sure of when they spoke in English. Thus, the results suggested lower perceived L2 competence as being the major factor influencing these learners' WTC rather than L2 anxiety. However, perceived importance of correct L2 production could also be attributed as a reason for these learners' lower perceived L2 WTC, and consequently their lower L2 competence.

I like English (ILE) n= 68 & I don't like English (IDLE) n=51

The split data analysis illustrated that the ILE group had more willingness to communicate (WTC) in English than the IDLE group (see Figure 4.18). However, neither of these two groups' responses indicated a significantly high willingness to communicate in this language.

On the other hand, these two group of learners' responses regarding 'how they felt when they made mistakes' appeared to be almost identical. Neither of these two groups' responses indicated high levels of L2 anxiety as regards their L2 mistakes (on the scale the responses were grouped around somewhere between '2=rarely' and '3=sometimes'). The results also suggested that the ILE group had more tendencies toward risk avoidance (3=sometimes and 4=often) than the IDLE group (3=sometimes and 2=rarely) when they spoke in English.

Figure 4.18 Willingness to communicate, L2 anxiety, and attitude toward risk-taking (I like English n= 68 & I don't like English n=51)

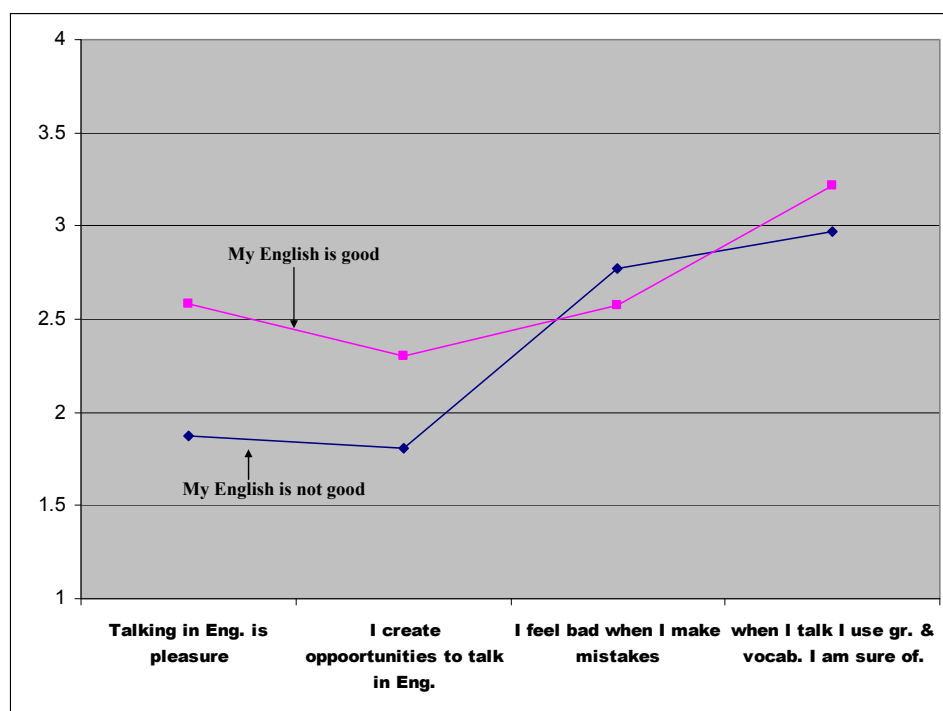


Note: 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1= Never. Except for 'talking in English is pleasure: 4=Strongly agree; 3=Somehow agree; 2=Somehow disagree; 1= Strongly disagree

My English is good (MEG) n=62 & My English is not good (MENG) n=56

The responses of the ILE and IDLE groups (see Figure 4.18) and the MEG and MENG groups (see Figure 4.19) appeared to be very similar; except that the results obtained from the MENG group showed slightly higher willingness to communicate in English than the IDLE group.

Figure 4.19 Willingness to communicate, L2 anxiety, and attitude toward risk-taking
(My English is good n=62 & My English is not good n=56)



Note: 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1= Never. Except for 'talking in English is pleasure':
4=Strongly agree; 3=Somehow agree; 2=Somehow disagree; 1= Strongly disagree

Mostly, the results indicated that the students with positive perceptions about learning English had more willingness to communicate in English than the ones who had negative beliefs about learning this language. However, none of these four groups appeared to have sufficient L2 WTC. The results also indicated that the learners who expressed positive beliefs had also higher tendencies to avoid risks in the L2 than the ones who expressed less positive beliefs about learning English (see Figure 4.18 and Figure 4.19).

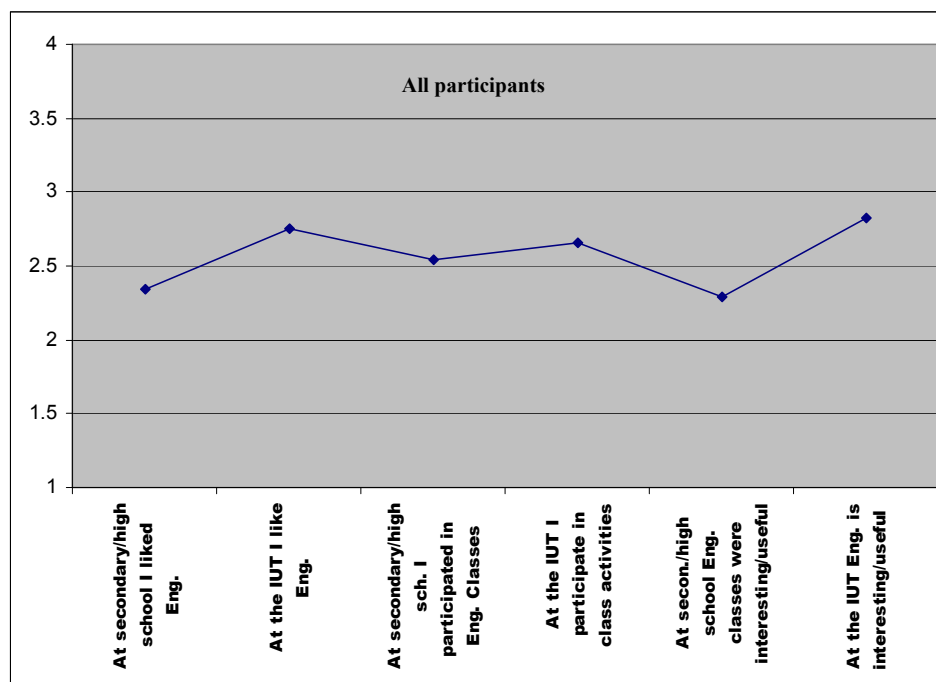
4.2.8 The learners' stated beliefs about their past & present L2 practices

All participants n=119

This section compared the learners' stated beliefs about their past and present L2 situations. The major aim of this section was to explore if there have been changes in the beliefs these learners possessed and which factors contributed to these belief changes. In order to be able to detect possible modifications in these learners' L2 beliefs, their past (secondary/high school) versus present (IUT de Mont de Marsan) L2 situations were compared by using the learners' responses to the following questions: question 35 (Q35 In secondary/high school I liked English) versus question 50 (Q50 At the IUT I like English); question 36 (Q36 In secondary/high school I participated in English classes) versus question 51 (Q51 At the IUT I participate in English classes); question 37 (Q37 In secondary/high school in English classes I studied interesting/useful topics) versus question 52 (Q52 At the IUT I study useful/interesting topics).

Overall results suggested that on the whole the learners did not think very highly of their English language practices. However, the comparative analysis of the learners' responses concerning their past and present L2 practices indicated that these learners perceived a significant improvement in their beliefs about L2 learning with respect to their present L2 situation (see Figure 4.20).

Figure 4.20 The learners' stated beliefs about their past & present L2 practices (all participants n= 119)



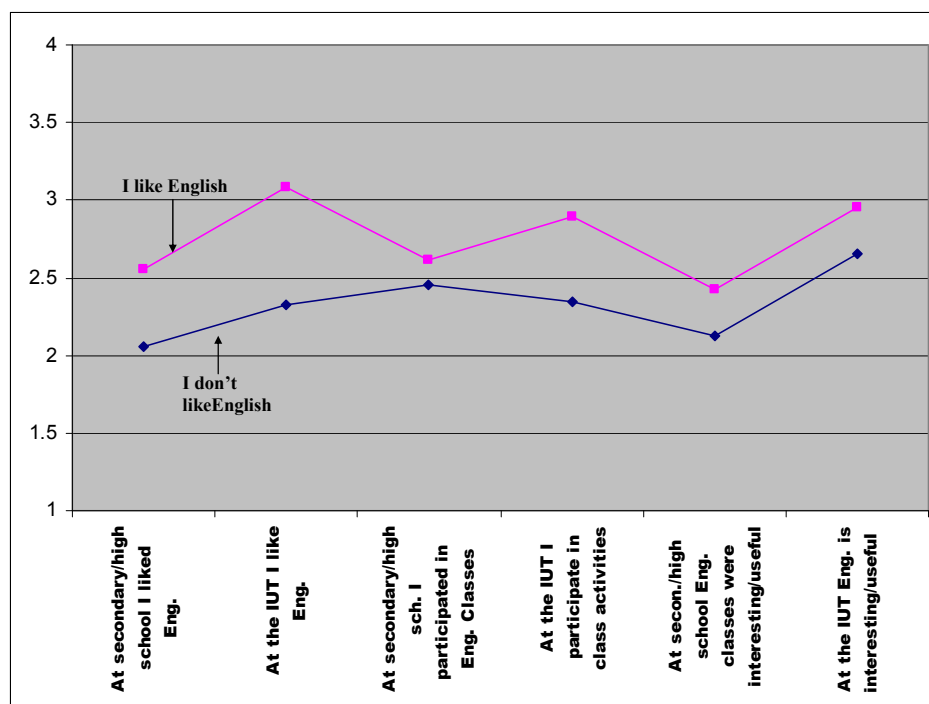
Note: 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1= Never

The learners' responses illustrated that they had more pleasure in learning English and found their English classes more interesting and useful compared to their past L2 practices. Concerning the learners' perceptions about L2 enjoyment and L2 usefulness, the results indicated a significant increase in the learners' statements of positive beliefs regarding their present L2 situation.

I like English (ILE) n= 68 & I don't like English (IDLE) n=51

The split data analysis of the responses of the ILE group and the IDLE group clearly illustrated that there was a significant improvement in these two groups' of learners' perceptions of their L2 practices compared to their past L2 practices (see Figure 4.21).

Figure 4.21 The learners' stated beliefs about their past & present L2 practices (I like English n= 68 & I don't like English n=51)



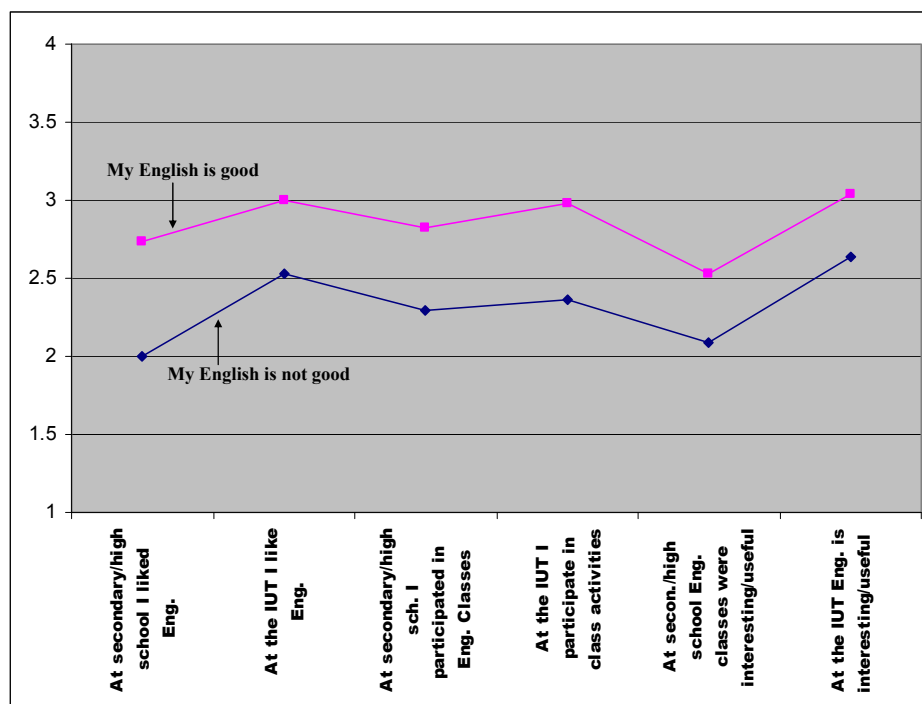
Note: 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1= Never

The ILE group perceived notable improvements in their L2 enjoyment, L2 participation, and their perceptions of the usefulness of the L2 practices and their interest in the L2 in their current L2 situation. Although, in general, the IDLE group expressed stronger negative beliefs about their L2 practices, this group, as well, expressed notable improvement in their perceptions of their L2 enjoyment and the interest and usefulness they perceived in their present L2 situation. However, the IDLE group perceived that they had participated more in their prior L2 situation.

My English is good (MEG) n=62 & My English is not good (MENG) n=56

The analysis of the learners' responses of MEG and MENG groups also illustrated a positive belief change as regards their present L2 situation (see Figure 4.22).

Figure 4.22 The learners' stated beliefs about their past & present L2 practices (My English is good n=62 & My English is not good n=56)



Note: 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1= Never

The learners' responses indicated that these two groups of learners both perceived improvements in their enjoyment of the L2, in their participation (improvement in this aspect was less significantly perceived), and in their interests in the L2 and in their perceptions of the L2 task usefulness as regards their present L2 practices. Thus, the data suggested that the change in their L2 practices had a significantly positive influence on these learners' L2 beliefs.

4.2.9 The learners' stated beliefs about usefulness of L1 use in their English classes

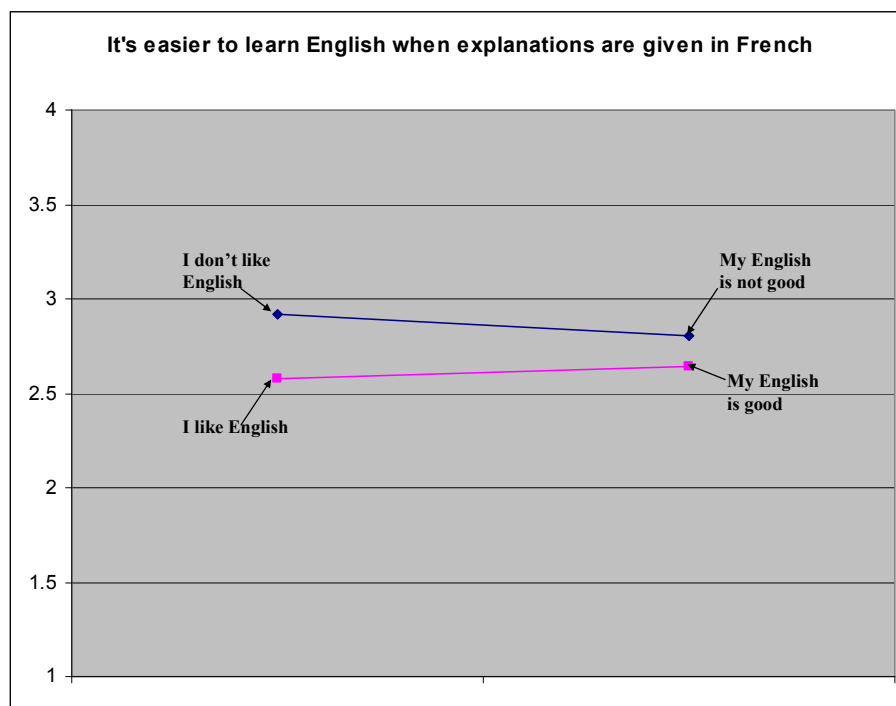
My English is good (MEG) n=62 & My English is not good (MENG) n=56 and I like English (ILE) n= 68 & I don't like English (IDLE) n=51

This section investigated the learners' stated beliefs about the usefulness of L1 use in their L2 classrooms. The issue of L1 use in L2 language classrooms has long

been a controversial topic in the L2 literature. This, section therefore, aimed to discover whether these learners were in favor of L1 use in their L2 classrooms.

The learners' responses to the question 12 (Q12 It is easier to learn English when explanations are given in French) was analyzed to see how differently the learners (ILE, IDLE, MEG and MENG groups) perceived usefulness of L1 use in their L2 practices (see Figure 4.23). The learners' responses to this question suggested that, most of these learners did not find L1 use significantly helpful in L2 learning. However, closer look into the data suggested that the learners who had less positive L2 beliefs and lower L2 competence perceived L1 use more useful (e.g. IDLE and MENG respectively) than the learners who had more positive L2 beliefs and higher L2 competence (ILE and MEG respectively).

Figure 4.23 The learners' stated beliefs about usefulness of L1 use in their English classes (My English is good n=62 & My English is not good n=56) and (I like English n= 68 & I don't like English n=51)



Note: 4=Strongly agree; 3=Somehow agree; 2=Somehow disagree; 1= Strongly disagree

4.2.10 The learners' stated beliefs about frequency of L1 use and L2 skill/component practices in their past vs. present L2 situations

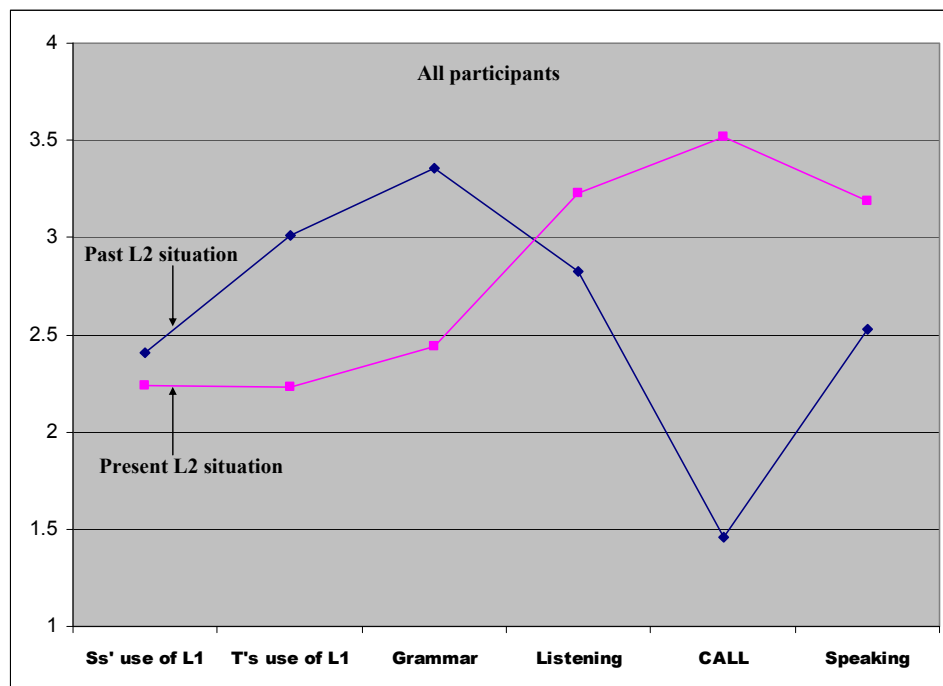
All participants n=119

The questions in this section asked about the learners' perceptions of L1 use and L2 skill/component frequency concerning their past versus present L2 practices (see Figure 4.24). The following questions were compared: Q44 (In secondary/high school my teachers used the L1) versus Q59 (At the IUT my teacher uses the L1); Q46 (In secondary/high school I had the permission to use the L1) versus Q61 (At the IUT I have the permission to use the L1); Q38 (In secondary/high school I did grammar exercises) versus Q53 (At the IUT I do grammar exercises); Q40 (In secondary/high school I had listening practice) versus Q55 (At the IUT I have listening practice); Q42 (In secondary/high school I did CALL⁶⁵) versus Q57 (At the IUT I do CALL); Q48 (In secondary/high school I had speaking practice) versus Q63 (At the IUT I have speaking practice).

The analysis of the data illustrated that the learners perceived their past versus present L2 situations as complete opposites as regards the frequency of different L2 skill/component teaching/practices (see Figure 4.24).

⁶⁵ CALL: Computer assisted language learning

Figure 4.24 The learners' stated beliefs about frequency of L1 use and L2 skill/component practices in their past vs. present L2 situations (all participants n= 119)



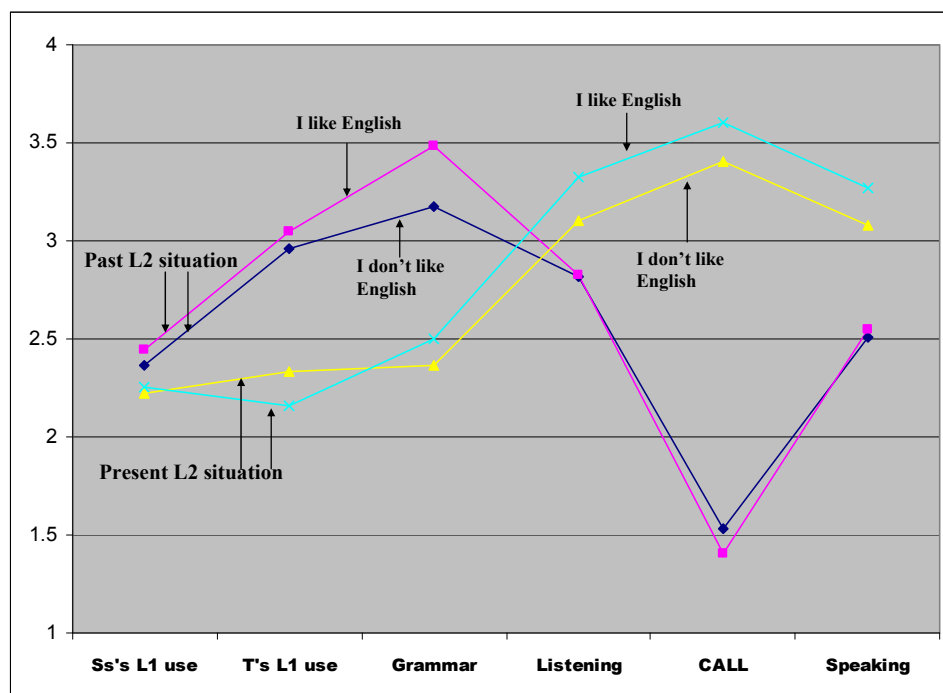
Note: 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1= Never

The learners' responses indicated that grammar teaching constituted the highest frequency in their L2 instruction (between 4=often and 3=sometimes). However, they perceived grammar teaching to be significantly less frequent in their present L2 practices (between 3=sometimes and 2=rarely). The responses also indicated that in their previous L2 situation their teachers' used the L1 significantly more frequently compared to their present L2 situation. The learners' responses indicated that in their present L2 situation CALL, listening, and speaking practices (respectively) constituted significantly higher frequency.

I like English (ILE) n= 68 & I don't like English (IDLE) n=51

The comparative analysis of the split data illustrated that both the ILE and IDLE groups felt significant differences as regards frequency of different L2 skill/component practices in their past versus present L2 situations (see Figure 4.25).

Figure 4.25 The learners' stated beliefs about frequency of L1 use and L2 skill/component practices in their past vs. present L2 situations (I like English n= 68 & I don't like English n=51)



Note: 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1= Never

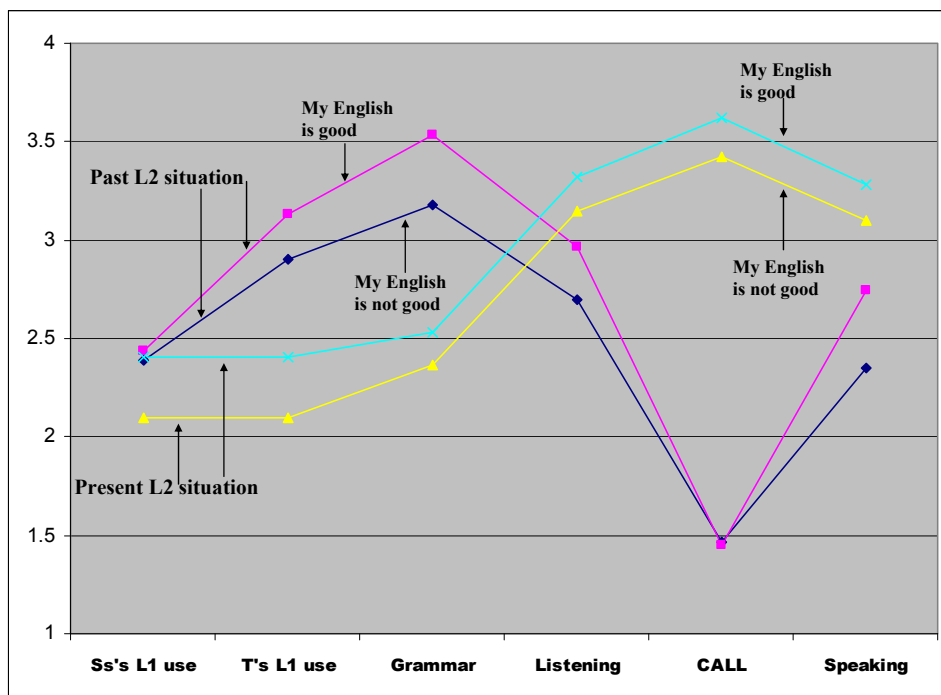
Both groups acknowledged that their previous L2 situation accommodated mainly grammar teaching. The data pointed out that the ILE group felt their past grammar practices to be more frequent compared to the IDLE group. Although both groups recognized their present L2 situation to be containing more listening, speaking, and CALL activities, the IDLE group perceived the frequency of these practices to be less frequent compared to the ILE group. The data also illustrated that these students (ILE and IDLE) perceived their teachers' use of L1 to be more frequent in their past L2 situation compared to their present L2 situation.

My English is good (MEG) n=62 & My English is not good (MENG) n=56

The comparative analysis of the results obtained from the MEG versus MENG groups demonstrated similar patterns as the ILE versus IDLE groups' responses. Both

MEG and MENG groups' responses indicated that their past L2 situation focused more on grammar teaching, and allowed less listening, speaking, and CALL activities compared to their present L2 situation (see Figure 4.26).

Figure 4.26 The learners' stated beliefs about frequency of L1 use and L2 skill/component practices in their past vs. present L2 situations (My English is good n=62 & My English is not good n=56)



Note: 4= Often; 3= Sometimes; 2= Rarely; 1= Never

The MENG group perceived both past and present skill/component practices as being less frequent compared to the MEG group. The data also indicated that, as regards present L2 practices, the MENG group perceived L1 use as less frequent compared to other three groups.

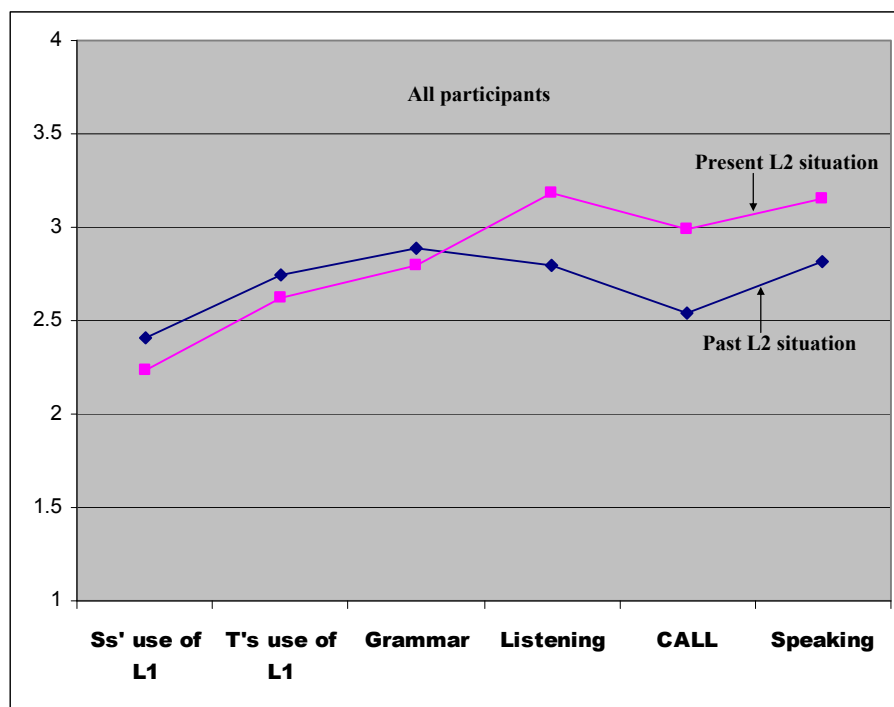
4.2.11 The learners' stated beliefs about L1 use and L2 skill/component usefulness (past vs. present)

All participants n=119

This section investigated the learners' perceptions of past versus present L1 use and L2 skill/component usefulness. Thus the learners' responses to the following questions were compared. Q45 (In secondary/high school the teachers' use of L1 was... a) not useful at all=1, b) not useful=2, c) useful=3, d) very useful=4) versus Q60 (At the IUT the teacher's use of L1 was... a) not useful at all=1, b) not useful=2, c) useful=3, d) very useful=4); Q47 (In secondary/high school having permission to use the L1 was...) versus Q62 (At the IUT having permission to use the L1 is...); Q39 (In secondary/high school the grammar teaching was...) versus Q54 (At the IUT the grammar teaching is...); Q41 (In secondary/high school the listening practice was...) versus Q56 (At the IUT the listening practice is...); Q43 (In secondary/high school the CALL was...) versus Q58 (At the IUT the CALL is...); Q49 (In secondary/high school the speaking practice was ...) versus Q64 (At the IUT the speaking practice is...).

The analysis of the data concerning the learners' perceptions of L2 skill/component usefulness as regards their past versus present L2 practices demonstrated that the learners, in general, did not find L1 use a useful practice (neither the teacher's nor the student's and neither in their present nor in their past L2 classes) (see Figure 4.27).

Figure 4.27 The learners' stated beliefs about L1 use and L2 skill/component usefulness (past vs. present) (all participants n= 119)



Note: 4=Very useful; 3=Useful; 2=Not useful; 1=Not useful at all

The learners' responses revealed similar representations as regards grammar teaching. Although the learner responses regarding their perceptions about the usefulness of grammar teaching were slightly higher than their perceptions about the usefulness of L1 use, the results obtained indicated that these learners did not find grammar teaching a very useful practice (neither in their present nor in their past L2 classes). However, the overall results obtained clearly indicated that the majority of the learners perceived their present L2 listening, CALL, and speaking practices as useful.

4.3 Learner Interview results

Nineteen students volunteered to participate in learner interviews (see Appendix D for learner interview questions). Learner interviews comprised eleven questions. The aim of learner interviews was: a) to cross-check and explain the questionnaire data and

to provide in-depth information on these learners' stated beliefs b) to identify the attributional styles and self-beliefs different learners stated to hold; d) to explore links between some commonly stated beliefs. The interviews were transcribed and the transcribed data were grouped under related themes (the themes were based on the interview questions) and the data were presented in tables.

4.3.1 The learners' stated beliefs about 'what knowing English is' (n=19)

The analysis of the interviews of 19 learners' clearly demonstrated that these learners' had a 'core belief' that knowing English principally means being able to speak and understand this language (see Table 4.1). All of the learners, without an exception, stated that they would like to attain a level which would enable them to understand (native speakers' or non-native speakers') spoken English and express themselves orally without difficulty. In addition to the perceived importance of being able to communicate orally some learners' also articulated importance of grammar knowledge (S3 and S19) and having adequate L2 writing skills (S2, S4 and S16). S15 and S17 also indicated importance of reading in English. S19 stated that vocabulary learning would be important, as well. Two learners' (S16 and S17) also stated that knowing about the L2 culture was part of knowing the language itself.

The interview data were also compared with the results obtained from the questionnaire data about the learners' perceptions of the importance of different L2 skills/components in L2 learning. The results obtained from the learner interviews demonstrated parallel results as the results obtained from the questionnaire data. The results obtained from the questionnaire data (n=119) concerning L2 skill/component significance illustrated that these learners perceived listening and speaking as two most important skills to learn (see Figure 4.1). Thus the comparison of the quantitative data

(questionnaire) and qualitative data (interviews) confirmed that these learners' perceived L2 listening and speaking skills as being more important to acquire than other L2 skills/components.

All in all, the learner interviews unequivocally suggested that having adequate competence in 'speaking and listening skills'; that is, being able to communicate orally in English was the core-belief that constituted the end which these learners expected to achieve. SLL/FLL research has demonstrated that learners' are motivated to learn what they perceive as significant for them. Therefore, the logical conclusion would be to expect these learners to value classroom practices that work towards providing them with corresponding L2 activities to attain this objective.

Table 4.1 The learners' stated beliefs about 'what knowing English is' (n=19)

**S1 Savoir parler, le comprendre, pouvoir aller dans un pays anglais et savoir se débrouiller.	S2 l'apprendre, le comprendre, le parler, l'écrire, un minimum. Je pense bien parler, bien comprendre	S3 Connaître la grammaire, savoir parler et comprendre	S4 Savoir le parler couramment, dans toutes les situations. Comprendre. Savoir l'écrire, savoir l'utiliser.
S5 C'est le reconnaître, savoir de quoi les gens parlent, comprendre, et dans un deuxième temps savoir parler avec eux, réussir à communiquer avec eux. Même si on a pas un anglais parfait, réussir à se faire comprendre et à comprendre.	S6 Le parler, le comprendre et l'écrire.	S7 Pouvoir discuter avec un anglais, savoir discuter dans la langue avoir une conversation, savoir s'exprimer dans la langue.	S8 Pouvoir parler quand on va dans un pays anglophone ne pas être embêté, pour parler.
S9 Savoir le parler et le comprendre.	S10 Savoir l'écrire le parler et le comprendre.	S11 Savoir parler et le comprendre	S12 Savoir parler et le comprendre.
S13 Pouvoir le comprendre et le parler.	S14 Savoir le parler couramment, pouvoir vivre dans un pays anglophone sans problème.	S15 Comprendre l'anglais, c'est très important, et puis le parler, mais c'est surtout le comprendre. Le lire, le comprendre et savoir de quoi on parle.	S16 C'est savoir le comprendre, le parler, l'écrire et connaître le mode de vie anglais américain, les contextes historiques, un peu d'histoire. La société en général, la langue.
S17 Parler, lire, connaître la culture.	S18 Parler	S19 Savoir parler, savoir les choses de base qu'il faut connaître, la vocabulaire, la grammaire, et savoir s'en servir.	

Note: **S= Student. Question 1: "What does 'knowing English' mean to you?"

4.3.2 Perceived enjoyment in learning English (Present vs. Past (n=19))

This section investigated whether the participants liked English; in other words whether they enjoyed English classes, and whether they were motivated enough to learn this language. But what exactly do we mean by enjoyment? According to Graham (2003) many ESL/EFL specialists view enjoyment as something created by fun

activities (e.g. games, songs etc.) which are supposed to promote intrinsic interest to learn the L2. However, although Graham considered such activities (methods) to be useful for creating enjoyable learning, she claimed that ‘L2 enjoyment’ is more relevant to positive self-beliefs in relation to language learning. She argued that real enjoyment is promoted by learners’ belief in the possibility of continued achievement and sense of control over their own learning. Another important factor influencing learners’ L2 enjoyment is task relevance. It has been widely argued that learners’ enjoy learning more when they believe that the tasks are relevant to their needs and interests. Therefore, many SLL/FLL specialists claimed that classroom realities that contradict learners’ expectations about learning lead to disappointment and ultimately interfere with learning (Benson & Lor 1999; Castellotti & Moore 2002; Gabillon 2007; Horwitz 1988, 1999; Richards & Rodgers 2001; Sakui & Gaies 1999; Savignon 2002; Wenden 1999). I, therefore, argue that task relevance and positive self-beliefs are two imperative factors promoting high levels of motivation for language learning.

The interview Question 2 (Q2) asked if the learners liked English (enjoyed English) in their present L2 situation (i.e. at the IUT). This question is compared with Question 3, which asked if the learners liked English when they were in secondary/ high school (i.e. at collège/lycée). The interview analysis demonstrated discrepancies between the learners’ perceptions of their present and past L2 situations, concerning their L2 enjoyment (see Table 4.2 and Table 4.3). Except S1, S17, S3 and S18, who expressed indirect dislike and dual attitudes towards L2 learning, all other participants verbalized L2 enjoyment concerning their present English learning situation (15 students out of 19).

Table 4.2 Perceived enjoyment in learning English (n=19) (present -IUT)

**S1 Je n'aime pas trop l'anglais mais avec vous ça va.	S2 Oui, oui, déjà ça m'intéresse, c'est une langue internationale, importante et j'aime bien. C'est une langue que tout le monde peut comprendre, que tout le monde parle.	S3 Oui... (hésitation) J'ai des problèmes avec la grammaire, sinon c'est intéressant, c'est utile.	S4 Oui. C'est important parce que c'est quasiment une langue internationale. C'est une langue officielle qui est parlé par tout le monde.
S5 Oui.	S6 Oui, j'aime bien.	S7 Oui.	S8 Oui, j'aime bien.
S9 Oui, j'aime bien.	S10 Oui.	S11 Oui, j'aime, ça va sans plus.	S12 Si j'aime bien, par rapport à la musique.
S13 Oui, j'aime bien, mais je n'ai pas un très bon niveau.	S14 C'est une langue internationale, vraiment, j'aime bien le fait qu'on puisse communiquer avec des gens d'ailleurs parle biais de l'anglais.	S15 Moi j'aime bien l'anglais, oui.	S16 Oui, j'aime bien l'anglais.
S17 Non, pas trop. L'oral, je n'aime pas trop.	S18 Oui, sans plus.	S19 J'aime bien.	

Note: **S= Student. Question 2: "Do you like English?"

S1 stated that he did not like English classes. However, he expressed more positive beliefs about learning English in his present L2 situation: "Je n'aime pas trop l'anglais mais avec vous ça va." (see Table 4.2). S1's expressed strong dissatisfaction regarding his past L2 learning situation. The student revealed that he did not find his past L2 learning practices relevant to his perceived needs: "Non. Avant on ne parlait pas du tout, ont faisait des interrogations écrites et des textes pas du tout intéressants de plus les interros n'étaient pas bien, il fallait faire 200 mots sur un texte, c'est tout." and he attributed this as a cause for his dislike for English (see Table 4.3). This learner's discourse indicated that he had expected to have more oral practice in his past L2 situation and expressed that this expectation had not been fulfilled. S1's discourse also indicated a hidden attribution of his non-attainment of his expectations to his past L2 practices. S3, as well as S1, attributed his perceived discontent in learning English to his

lower perceived L2 competence and lower perceived self-efficacy belief “Oui... (hesitation). J’ai des problèmes avec la grammaire, sinon c’est intéressant, c’est utile” (see Table 4.2). Like S1, S3 also attributed his perceived dissatisfaction and nonattainment in the L2 to his past L2 practices: “Non. Je trouve que la façon dont on enseigne l’anglais au collège et lycée n’est pas intéressante. Nous faisons tous les ans la même chose sans pour autant apprendre de bonnes bases au collège pour pouvoir construire dessus. C’est toujours les verbes être, avoir, se présenter toujours les mêmes choses.” (see Table 4.3). Both S1 and S3 expressed overt discontent concerning their past L2 learning situations.

Differently from S1 and S3, S17 and S18’s cases indicated different underlying beliefs as causes for their lower perceived L2 enjoyment in their present L2 situation. S17 attributed his dissatisfaction about his present L2 situation to the emphasis on oral skills in his present L2 practices and he revealed that he did not enjoy participating in oral practice; “Non, pas trop. L’oral, je n’aime pas trop.” He also directly stated that he enjoyed his past L2 situation better than his present L2 situation: “Oui, la façon dont il faisait le cours, c’était animé, on faisait un peu d’orthographe, de grammaire.” S18 on the other hand perceived both L2 situations of equal standing. This learner’s discourse indicated an indifferent attitude towards learning English rather than a negative or positive attitude.

Fifteen students out of 19 expressed positive opinions about learning English (see Table 4.2). A few students attributed their perceived interest and liking for English to the importance they perceived in learning this language: for instance, “Oui, oui, déjà ça m’intéresse, c’est une langue internationale, importante et j’aime bien. C’est une langue que tout le monde peut comprendre, que tout le monde parle.”; “ Oui. C’est

important parce que c'est quasiment une langue internationale. C'est une langue officielle qui est parlé par tout le monde.”; “C'est une langue internationale, vraiment, j'aime bien le fait qu'on puisse communiquer avec des gens d'ailleurs parle biais de l'anglais.”

Almost all of these learners' discourses indicated that they perceived their present L2 practices relevant to their needs and interest (see Table 4.3). The learners who admitted that they did not like English when they were in secondary/high school (S1, S3, S4, S5, S11, S12, 13, 14, 15) and attributed their perceived dislike to prior L2 teaching (an external, uncontrollable cause). Many of these learners stated that they perceived their prior L2 practices as primarily consisting of grammar teaching (e.g. S3, S6, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14). Almost all of the students stated that they perceived their present and past L2 practices as being completely different from each other: For example, “C'est complètement différent, au lycée on étudiait plus la grammaire, ici c'est plus approfondi et plus intéressant, c'est différent.”; “...c'était trop scolaire. Cette année c'est plus concret.”; “...Ce n'est pas pareil ... Ici, on apprend bien à parler. Au lycée, on apprend Les verbes irréguliers par exemple.”. Thus, the data unequivocally indicated that these learners mainly stated that the causes for their dissatisfaction was directly related to their prior L2 experiences (past uncontrollable external locus) which was not within their own control. The interview discourse indicated that with the change in their L2 condition, these learners perceived more enjoyment in learning English.

Table 4.3 Perceived enjoyment in learning English (past—collège/lycée) (n=19)

**S1 Non. Avant on ne parlait pas du tout, ont faisait des interrogations écrites et des textes pas du tout intéressants de plus les intéros n'étaient pas bien, il fallait faire 200 mots sur un texte, c'est tout.	S2 Pas autant que maintenant.	S3 Non. Je trouve que la façon dont on enseigne l'anglais au collège et lycée n'est pas intéressante. Nous faisons tous les ans la même chose sans pour autant apprendre de bonnes bases au collège pour pouvoir construire dessus. C'est toujours les verbes être, avoir, se présenter toujours les mêmes choses.	S4 Non. Au lycée les professeurs étaient plutôt moyens. Ici les sujets sont plus intéressants, au lycée on avait des textes qui ne nous concernaient pas trop.
S5 Non. Je ne pouvais pas parce que c'était trop scolaire. Cette année c'est plus concret.	S6 Ce n'est pas pareil. On apprend les bases, c'est plus pénible. Ici, on apprend bien à parler. Au lycée, on apprend plutôt les bases. Les verbes irréguliers par exemple.	S7 C'est difficile de juger mais ça va.	S8 Au lycée, oui
S9 De manière générale, j'ai toujours aimé. C'est complètement différent, au lycée on apprend plutôt la grammaire ici c'est plus approfondi, c'est plus intéressant, c'est plus varié.	S10 Oui. Mais ici on fait des TP, on a plus l'occasion de faire de l'oral, on s'exprime un peu plus. Au lycée on essayait de comprendre des textes, la grammaire, les verbes irréguliers.	S11 Non, pas au lycée, on ne faisait que de la grammaire. On faisait peu d'oral. Ici, c'est bien ce qu'on fait, on fait plus d'oral.	S12 Non. Pas Trop. C'est complètement différent, au lycée on étudiait plus la grammaire, ici c'est plus intéressant, c'est différent.
S13 Non pas trop. On a fait beaucoup de la grammaire mais on a appris ni la grammaire ni parler	S14 Non. Le problème c'est comment on nous l'enseigne, on nous l'enseigne de manière trop théorique, vraiment apprendre pour apprendre, c'est pas apprendre pour pouvoir parler plus tard, c'est différent. Donc voilà.	S15 Non. Par exemple, ils (les enseignants) étaient toujours absents, et ils nous faisaient faire les mêmes cours.	S16 Oui, on traite de sujets intéressants de la société en général, de l'actualité.
S17 Oui, la façon dont il faisait le cours, c'était animé, on faisait un peu d'orthographe, de grammaire.	S18 Oui, sans plus.	S19 J'ai toujours aimé cette langue.	

Note: **S= Student. Question 3: "Did you like English when you were in secondary/high school (collège/lycée)?"

Regarding prior L2 experiences, only five students (S8, S16, S17, and S19) overtly expressed that they liked English when they were at collège/lycée. Except S17, who expressed preference for his prior L2 methodology, all others stated that they had always liked English. However, the students who expressed favorable opinion about their prior and present L2 practices also highlighted that they perceived these two practices as being distinct as regards the approaches they employed and added that they perceived more positive attitudes towards their present L2 situation (see table 4.3). They revealed that they found their present L2 practices as being more relevant to their expectations, needs and interests. S2, S6, S9, S10, although they did not express direct discontent about their past L2 practices, stated that they found their present L2 situation more favorable (e.g. “Pas autant que maintenant.”; “...ici c’est plus approfondi, c’est plus intéressant, c’est plus varié.”).

The analysis of the interview data illustrated similar conclusions obtained from the questionnaire data. The analysis of both the questionnaire and interview data clearly demonstrated that many students perceived their prior learning experiences as not being relevant to their learning needs. The data also indicated that, with the change in their present L2 practices, some students perceived positive attitudes towards L2 learning.

4.3.3 L2 competence and L2 self-efficacy beliefs (n=19)

Question four (Q4) asked if the learners had high L2 self-efficacy beliefs. Bandura (1986) viewed the beliefs that learners have about their capabilities as the most critical elements on their behaviors and motivation.

S1, S3, S4, S7, S9, S10, S15’s discourses displayed low self-efficacy beliefs about English language learning (see Table 4.4). Rest of the students stated that they

Table 4.4 L2 competence and L2 self-efficacy beliefs (n=19)

**S1 Non...Non j'arrive pas trop a conjuguer, j'ai du mal à conjuguer. Tout à l'heure avec 'who' et 'which', je ne savais pas qu'il fallait utiliser 'which'.	S2 Moyen	S3 Non, peut-être pas... je pense pouvoir me débrouiller dans certaines situations.	S4 Non. Pas bien
S5 Je n'ai pas une bonne prononciation, pas un bon vocabulaire.	S6 Je comprends, mais je ne parle pas très bien.	S7 Non, pas bien	S8 Par rapport à la classe, oui.
S9 Non, je ne pense pas. Je n'ai pas assez pratiqué, pas assez étudié. Quand il y 30 élèves et la prof pose une question, c'est celui que est le plus à l'aise qui répond.	S10 Non. Non, à cause de l'oral. Je manque de vocabulaire.	S11 Moyen	S12 Je pense qu'il n'est pas bon, il est passable. Je ne m'exerce pas assez. Pour pouvoir bien le parler, il faut plus le parler, plus s'investir.
S13 Pas terrible, il n'est pas très bon ni très mauvais, plutôt moyen.	S14 Je pense qu'il est moyen. Je ne pense pas qu'il est bon mais je pense qu'il est passable.	S15 Pas tellement non.	S16 Moyen. Beaucoup de lacunes venant du collège et du lycée, et peut être un manque de pratique.
S17 Moyen. Suffisant.	S18 Moyen	S19 Au niveau des anglais, pas au top niveau. Je n'ai pas trop du mal en anglais, j'ai déjà un bon accent, je veux bien améliorer, j'aime bien cet accent.	

Note: **S= Student. Question 4: "Do you think your English is good?"

had average level of English. Some students attributed their low self efficacy beliefs to external factors such as poor learning conditions (e.g. "Beaucoup de lacunes venant du collège et du lycée, et peut être un manque de pratique."; "Quand il y 30 élèves et la prof pose une question, c'est celui que est le plus à l'aise qui répond."), and task difficulty and ability (e.g. "...j'arrive pas trop a conjuguer, j'ai du mal à conjuguer."; "Je n'ai pas une bonne prononciation, pas un bon vocabulaire."). Only one student attributed his low self efficacy to low effort. This student stated that improvement is

possible when higher effort is exerted (“Je ne m’exerce pas assez. Pour pouvoir bien le parler, il faut plus le parler, plus s’investir.”).

4.3.4 L2 skill/component difficulty (n=19)

Question 5 (Q5) asked which L2 skills/components the learners found difficult to learn (e.g. speaking, listening, reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation). The learners’ discourses indicated that, although they had some differing beliefs about skills/components difficulty, in general the learners stated that speaking, grammar and listening skills were more difficult than the other L2 skills/components. The learners’ interview results also indicated that vocabulary and pronunciation were also perceived as difficult as regards their speaking performance. No student perceived reading to be a difficult L2 skill (see Table 4.5).

Comparative analysis of the interview and questionnaire data pointed to speaking and grammar to be two most difficult L2 components. However, it should be noted that neither the interview nor the questionnaire results indicated considerable discrepancies between different L2 skills/components. On the whole, except reading which was found to be the easiest, all other L2 skills/components were stated to have more or less the same level of difficulty. The data analysis also suggested that the beliefs about L2 skill/component difficulty differed considerably from individual to individual (this was especially obvious in the results obtained from the interviews). Thus, the results indicated influence of various interacting individual factors to be the causes of these differing beliefs among the participants (e.g. L2 competence, learning styles, learning strategies and beliefs about L2 skill/component significance, conceptions of L2 learning etc.). However, the data obtained is insufficient to explain

precisely the causes of these learners' stated beliefs concerning L2 skill/component difficulty.

Table 4.5 L2 skill/component difficulty (n=19)

**S1 Plus dur? C'est comprendre. Ca dépend de l'accent.	S2 La grammaire et apprendre le vocabulaire puis la prononciation aussi.	S3 La grammaire. Comprendre, suivant l'accent des personnes.	S4 La grammaire, toutes les règles à apprendre.
S5 Vocabulaire. Je n'ai pas de vocabulaire pour bien m'exprimer.	S6 Faire des phrases, plutôt parler. Ne pas savoir le vocabulaire et ainsi ne pas savoir faire des phrases complètes. J'arrive à comprendre, je n'ai pas de problèmes pour comprendre	S7 La grammaire.	S8 Ca va
S9 La grammaire. Il n'y pas mal de choses qui rentrent en compte, il faudrait plus expliquer, c'est les bases.	S10 Je ne sais pas. Comprendre...Le parler, c'est dur, parce que je n'ai pas un bon accent. Quand j'entends qqn avec un accent anglais j'ai un peu de mal à le comprendre.	S11 La grammaire	S12 La prononciation et parler, et comprendre.
S13 Parler et grammaire	S14 Je pense que le plus dur c'est la prononciation et l'écoute, parce que la grammaire c'est le seul point positif que j'ai appris au collège et au lycée, c'est cette grammaire qu'on nous rabachait tout le temps, donc ça a été assez facile à apprendre, puisqu'on faisait tout le temps des exercices. Mais pour la prononciation et le fait de pouvoir écouter, au collège et au lycée on ne l'a pas assez fait, et quand on arrive dans des pays anglophones, c'est assez dur je trouve.	S15 C'est surtout à l'oral que je ne suis pas très bon. L'écrit, ça va, mais je manque de vocabulaire. Parler, j'ai du mal et après il me faut du temps.	S16 L'écrit, tout ce qui est grammaire, la syntaxe, le fait de parler.
S17 Parler, comprendre.		S18 La prononciation. Parler, on se débrouille.	S19 Pour moi, c'est apprendre. Je trouve que l'anglais, si on s'y met à fond, ce n'est pas difficile.

Note: **S= Student. Question 5: "As a learner which language component do you find the most difficult (e.g. listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary etc.?" Scale: 4=Very difficult, 3=Difficult, 2=Not difficult, 1=Not difficult at all

4.3.5 L2 skill/component significance (n=19)

The interview question six (Q6) asked which L2 skills/components the learners perceived to be the most important to learn (see Table 4.6). The results obtained in this section illustrated more homogeneous beliefs compared to the learners' stated beliefs

about L2 skill/component difficulty. The learners stated that communication skills (listening and speaking) were the most important skills to learn. Some students also expressed that grammar (four learners) and vocabulary (two learners) were also important components to focus on. Mostly, the results obtained via the interviews, as well as the results obtained from the questionnaires, pointed to the learners' beliefs in the importance of listening and speaking skills.

Table 4.6 L2 skill/component significance (n=19)

**S1 C'est parler et comprendre. C'est ce que vous nous faites faire, à l'oral.	S2 La grammaire c'est important puis le vocabulaire pour se faire comprendre.	S3 La grammaire surtout.	S4 Bien sur il y a une partie d'apprentissage, mais il y a surtout la pratique qui est importante. L'écriture et l'oral, les deux très importants.
S5 Comprendre en général.	S6 Comprendre.	S7 Comprendre surtout.	S8 Le parler...je pense.
S9 Le comprendre et le parler.	S10 Lire plutôt.	S11 Parler et comprendre.	S12 Comprendre est le plus important. Si on comprend on parlera mieux.
S13 Comprendre et parler.	S14 Comprendre et grammaire. Je pense qu'il faut un peu des deux, il faut une moyenne des deux parce que si on arrive à bien comprendre ce que la personne nous dit, au bout d'un moment, la grammaire va venir toute seule, mais il faut quand même avoir un minimum de grammaire pour pouvoir s'exprimer.	S15 Comprendre, pour moi c'est le plus important.	S16 La syntaxe et le vocabulaire.
S17 Parler, c'est moyen, c'est l'oral en fait. Pour moi c'est l'oral.		S18 Parler et la grammaire.	S19 Parler et après un peu de tout.

Note: **S= Student. Question 6: "Which skill/component do you think is the most important (e.g. listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary etc.?)"

4.3.6 Significance of learning English (n=19)

The interview question seven (Q7) aimed to discover if the learners perceived that English was an important language for them to learn. Except for two students (S1 and S10), all of the participants stated that learning English was important for them (see

Table 4.7). The learners' responses indicated that the majority of the learners perceived English as a language with an international status (e.g. "...c'est une langue universelle."; "...les sociétés sont tournées vers internationales, c'est important."; "...c'est une langue importante."; "C'est une des langues mondiales." etc.). The learners also stated that English will be useful for them both in their studies and in future careers (e.g. "...peut me servir dans mes etudes..."; "Pour le travail..."; "...surtout dans cette formation, et tous les docs techniques sont en anglais..."; "...c'est important pour la poursuite des études..." etc.)

The learners' responses indicated that, these learners perceived English as a language with high status; an instrument to achieve their future goals (e.g. succeeding in their studies, getting a job etc.). The results obtained in this section echoed results obtained via the questionnaires. Although the results displayed high extrinsic learner interest (instrumental motivation), none of the participant learners' responses overtly pointed to an intrinsic interest in the language itself (e.g. liking the language itself, being interested in the L2 culture, to be able to talk to and make friends with English speaking people etc.).

Table 4.7 Significance of learning English (n=19)

**S1 Ca ne m'intéressait pas. Qqe chose qu'on ne connaît pas, on ne s'intéresse pas.	S2 Oui, cela peut me servir dans mes études justement, si je veux aller à l'étranger. OUI. Pour pouvoir le parler là où on veut aller, se faire comprendre dans d'autres pays.	S3 Oui, surtout dans cette formation, et tous les docs techniques sont en anglais et les sociétés sont tournées vers internationales, c'est important.	S4 Si je dois faire un stage à l'étranger, l'anglais peut être très important.
S5 Oui. Pour le travail. Et aussi c'est une langue importante.	S6 Oui. C'est une langue internationale.	S7 Si il nous arrive de travailler dans un autre pays, savoir se faire comprendre. C'est une des langues mondiales. Pour, parler avec des gens dans un autre pays.	S8 Oui. C'est pour tout le monde, c'est une langue universelle.
S9 Oui!Oui! C'est une langue connue par tout le monde.	S10 Pas spécialement mais, ça aide quand même, quand on va à l'étranger, savoir parler avec les gens, l'anglais est une langue internationale. Ca peut servir pour comprendre des trucs.	S11 C'est important pour parler partout, nos futur travaux, pour pouvoir travailler, on en a besoin. Plus pour le travail.	S12 Oui, tout à fait.
S13 Oui, c'est important pour la poursuite des études, surtout pour la note de moyenne c'est important.	S14 Oui, oui, bien sûr. Pour pouvoir parler avec des gens de partout, dans le monde, surtout dans le domaine dans lequel on est, toutes les documentations, tout est en anglais, on en a vraiment besoin.	S15 Oui.	S16 Oui, c'est une langue internationale, qu'on utilisera dans le futur pour travailler, pour dialoguer entre sociétés, si on reçoit par exemple des informations ou des documentations techniques, ce sera toujours en anglais, donc c'est quand même une langue importante.
S17 L'anglais c'est important, y en a partout en informatique, et comme l'informatique progresse, c'est très important l'anglais.	S18 Pour le futur, pour le travail, vu qu'on sera obligés de parler anglais après. Pour la culture personnelle.	S19 Oui J'ai déjà fait un séjour linguistique en Angleterre, j'aimerais bien y retourner.	

Note: **S= Student. Question 7: "Is English an important language for you to learn?"

4.3.7 L2 WTC and L2 anxiety (n=19)

Question 8 asked whether the learners had sufficient L2 willingness to communicate (WTC) in English; and Question 9 aimed to discover if the learners had

L2 anxiety when they communicated in English. This part also attempted to discover if there were links between the learners' L2 WTC and L2 anxiety.

Ten students expressed that they liked talking in English (S2, S3, S4, S6, S7, S8, S10, S12, S14, and S19) (see Table 4.8). Six of these ten students stated that they never felt unease when they communicated in English in their language classes (S2, S4, S6, S7, S8, and S19). The other four, although they expressed favorable beliefs about talking in English, revealed that they did not always feel comfortable when they communicated in the L2. S3 revealed that he sometimes felt uncomfortable and attributed his shyness as a cause. S10 attributed his lower L2 competence as a cause for his discomfort in speaking. S12 stated that sometimes he felt uneasy when he was communicating in English but was unable to give a reason. S14 stated that he felt comfortable when he could not understand his interlocutors (he was referring to native speakers of English).

Table 4.8 L2 WTC and L2 anxiety (n=19)

**S1 A l'oral je n'y arrive pas trop, j'ai peur de parler, j'ai peur de faire des bêtises. Vos cours nous font prendre confiance en nous puisqu'il faut parler devant tout le monde. Oui, je me sens en confiance, je sais qu'on ne va pas se moquer de moi, cela me met en confiance.	S2 Oui, Oui. Non, cela ne me gêne pas.	S3 Quand il faut. Oui, un peu... mais bon... parce que je suis plutôt timide.	S4 Oui. Oui, même si je n'ai pas souvent l'occasion... en cours d'anglais uniquement. Nous sommes tous des élèves, nous sommes ici pour apprendre, nous faisons tous les mêmes erreurs, on n'est pas parfait.
S5 Ça dépend le sujet. Des fois je n'arrive pas et ça me gêne.	S6 Oui. Non	S7 Oui. Ça ne me dérange pas.	S8 Oui. Pas du problème.

S9 Non. Je suis de nature timide, je ne connais pas très bien la langue, j'ai un peu peur de parler devant tout le monde.	S10 Oui, j'aime bien. Non, mais j'ai du mal à trouver vite les mots en anglais, je ne prends pas le temps de réfléchir.	S11 Ça dépend avec qui. Dans la classe ça ne me dérange pas.	S12 Oui, j'aime bien parler, j'aime bien chanter, comme j'écoute de la musique anglaise, j'aime bien comprendre les paroles. Ça dépend, parfois quand je parle, ça me gêne.
S13 Pas trop, en fait j'aimerais que ça soit bien, je n'aime pas trop faire des fautes.	S14 J'aime bien parler en anglais, oui, quand je suis avec des gens qui comprennent ce que je dis et qui me parlent anglais facilement, parce que des fois par exemple, quand mon père me demande de réserver une chambre d'hôtel pour lui en anglais, des fois je tombe sur des gens qui parlent trop vite et ça les embête de répéter, donc ça c'est moins bien. Mais j'aime bien parler anglais avec des gens qui apprennent l'anglais comme moi, en fait.	S15 Je n'aime pas parler en général, je suis assez timide.	S16 Pas spécialement. J'ai beaucoup de lacunes et j'arrive pas à... je sais ce que je veux dire, j'ai les mots, mais j'arrive pas à les mettre en forme pour le dire. Ça me gêne.
S17 Non pas trop. Je n'ai pas de raisons.		S18 Non, parce que ça m'ennuie.	S19 Oui, j'aime bien. Je ne trouve pas ici avec qui parler, discuter, à part en classe. J'ai pas mal voyagé. J'aime bien discuter en anglais, mais ici je n'en n'ai pas l'occasion.

Note: **S= Student. Question 8: "Do you like talking in English?"; Question: 9 "Do you feel comfortable when you talk in English?"

Some students avoided giving direct answers and claimed that their enjoyment or discomfort depended on certain conditions. S5 revealed that he enjoyed talking when he perceived the topic interesting and within his ability to perform well. S11 stated that all depended on "with whom he talks to". For this student his interlocutor was an important factor both for the enjoyment and the feeling of ease. He explained that he did not feel uneasy in class when he talked to his class mates. This learner's discourse suggested a low L2 self-concept belief rather than a low L2 self-efficacy belief.

The students who stated that they did not like talking in English mainly attributed their lower perceived L2 competence and L2 anxiety as a cause for their unwillingness to communicate in English (S9, S13, S15, and S16).

The results obtained in this section indicated that lower L2 competence and L2 anxiety are two interconnected factors which influenced one another. Most of the students attributed their lower L2 competence as a cause for their unwillingness to communicate. The learners' discourses suggested that lower L2 competence and lower L2 self-efficacy beliefs were actually the major sources of L2 anxiety which influenced the learners' L2 WTC.

4.3.8 Parents' L2 competence (n=19)

The interview question ten asked if the learners' parents spoke English. The objective of this question was to view if there were any connections between the learners' parents' L2 competence and the learners' L2 beliefs, their stated L2 competence and their L2 willingness to communicate.

Only two students (S2 and S8) confidently acknowledged that their parents knew English (see Table 4.9). Analysis of these two students' (S2 and S8) responses to the other interview questions displayed positive L2 beliefs. These two students expressed high willingness to communicate in English (see Table 4.8). Nonetheless, S2 stated that she did not have a good level of English (she expressed that she believed to have an average level of English). S8 stated that he had high L2 competence. It is also worth mentioning that among all 19 participants S8 was the only student who stated that he had better English compared to the others in his class. It should also be noted that among these students only two students [S8 and S19 (this student stated that his parents spoke both Arabic and French)] stated to have a good level of English and similarly only two students (S2 and S8) stated that their parents spoke English. However, because of lack of enough consistent evidence, it is difficult to attribute these two students' positive responses to the fact that their parents represented a successful L2 learner

model for them. Rest of the participants' (n17) answers revealed that their parents either did not speak English at all or did not have a sufficient level to communicate in English (see Table 4.9).

Table 4.9 Parent's L2 competence (n=19)

**S1 Non.	S2 Oui (mon père)	S3 Non. Quelques mots.	S4 Ils parlent l'anglais comme ils l'ont appris à l'école. On sait bien qu'à l'école on apprend mal.
S5 Non.	S6 Non.	S7 Non, mon père se débrouille, mais ne parle pas sinon.	S8 Oui.
S9 Ils connaissent, plus ou moins.	S10 Non.	S11 Non.	S12 Non.
S13 Non.	S14 Ma mère, oui, elle connaît bien l'anglais, mais mon père pas trop.	S15 Non	S16 Ma mère un petit peu, sans plus. Mon père, pas mal dans le langage technique, pareil, de l'information, des télécommunications.
S17 Non.	S18 Un peu.	S19 Pas trop, non. Mes parents ont fait tous les deux leurs études en France, et à l'époque ils s'intéressaient pas beaucoup à l'anglais.	

Note: **S= Student. Question 10: "Do your parents know (speak) English?"

4.3.9 The learners' expectations from their present L2 situation (n=19)

Question 10 asked if the learners had any suggestions to make their English classes more useful/interesting. The aim of this question was to see if the learners perceived that their expectations were answered in their L2 situation.

The learners' stated beliefs about their present L2 situation mainly pointed to two issues: a) allocation of time and b) L2 needs. Some learners believed that they could benefit from their L2 classes better if the time allocated for the L2 was increased and the classes were scheduled throughout the whole academic year in regular

intervals⁶⁶ (S1, S6, S14, and S19). Some other students stated that they needed more practice on vocabulary (S2, S19), grammar (S3, S16, and S19), writing (S15) and more technical English (ESP⁶⁷) (S11). The interview data, in general, indicated that the learners perceived their present L2 situation appealing to their L2 needs and expectations (focusing primarily on communication based activities, using various types of activities and ICT⁶⁸)

Table 4.10 The learners' expectations from their present L2 situation (n=19)

**S1 Je ne sais pas. D'en avoir toute l'année, pas par périodes.	S2 Il est bien, peut-être plus de vocabulaire.	S3 Je ne sais pas. Faire un peu plus de grammaire peut être, je ne sais pas.	
S5 Non. On fait des choses variées.	S6 Surtout, c'est très concentré. Parfois il y en a et puis il n'y en a plus, il faudrait en avoir toute l'année.	S7 Non, je n'ai pas d'idée.	S8 Non. C'est varié ce qu'on fait, les ordinateurs...en bref c'est l'inverse du lycée.
S9 Je n'ai pas d'idées. Ce n'est pas mal, ça change du lycée.	S10 Non, pas du tout. Je trouve bien comme ça.	S11 C'est correct... on ne fait pas assez d'anglais technique et on en a besoin pour plus tard.	S12 Non. C'est bien comme ça
S13 Je le trouve très bien comme ça.	S14 Je pense qu'on devrait avoir plus d'heures d'anglais, parce que l'anglais, on n'en a pas eu énormément, on en a eu pendant un mois et demi et après on en a plus eu, et après encore	S15 J'aurais bien aimé un peu plus d'écrit, j'aime bien perfectionner l'écrit.	S16 Je ne sais pas. Je ne sais pas du tout. Je pense aussi. Un peu de grammaire, et de la syntaxe.
S17 Non, pas spécialement. Non. Les cours sont bien, il		S18 Ce n'est pas trop mal, c'est une langue parlée, il faut	S19 Ajouter des heures, ce serait bien, et ouvrir le débat pour améliorer

⁶⁶ At the IUT language curriculum is organised around different modules and sometimes between different modules there are periods without English classes. Moreover, some modules are scheduled for a shorter period of time with a lot of English classes per week; In short, the students either have periods with a lot of English classes or none at all.

⁶⁷ ESP: English for specific purposes

⁶⁸ ICT: Information and communications technology (e.g. the Internet)

y a de l'oral, ça fait participer.	pendant un mois et demi, ce n'est pas énorme. Il faudrait que ce soit continu, pas qu'il y ait des coupures comme ça.	s'entraîner.	l'accent, les capacités grammaticales, le vocabulaire.

Note: **S= Student. Question 11: "What can we do to make English classes more useful/interesting for you at the IUT?"

4.4 Teacher questionnaire and interview results

In this study each teacher represented a case and each teacher's questionnaire and interview results were presented together to complement each other. The teacher questionnaires were prepared in English (two teachers out of four were not French). The teachers were asked if they preferred to take the interviews in English or French (one teacher was interviewed in French).

The aim of the teacher questionnaire was: a) to obtain the teachers' statements of their beliefs about their L2 practices; b) to compare the teacher's stated beliefs with the learners' stated beliefs to detect discordances (if any) between the teachers' and the learners' stated beliefs; and finally; c) to see if the teachers' stated beliefs corresponded to the L2 practices suggested by recent L2 research. The results obtained from the online data were downloaded (as a Microsoft Office Excel format) for further analysis. Each teacher's responses were organized around themes and the results were displayed as line-graphs. The aim of this presentation was to facilitate interpretation and provide the reader with visual support.

The teacher interviews were recorded and transcribed. The teacher questionnaire data was supplemented with the interviews because the researcher believed that interview data would provide more interesting and rich data for analysis. The aim of the teacher interviews was to complement the questionnaire data and to gain better insights

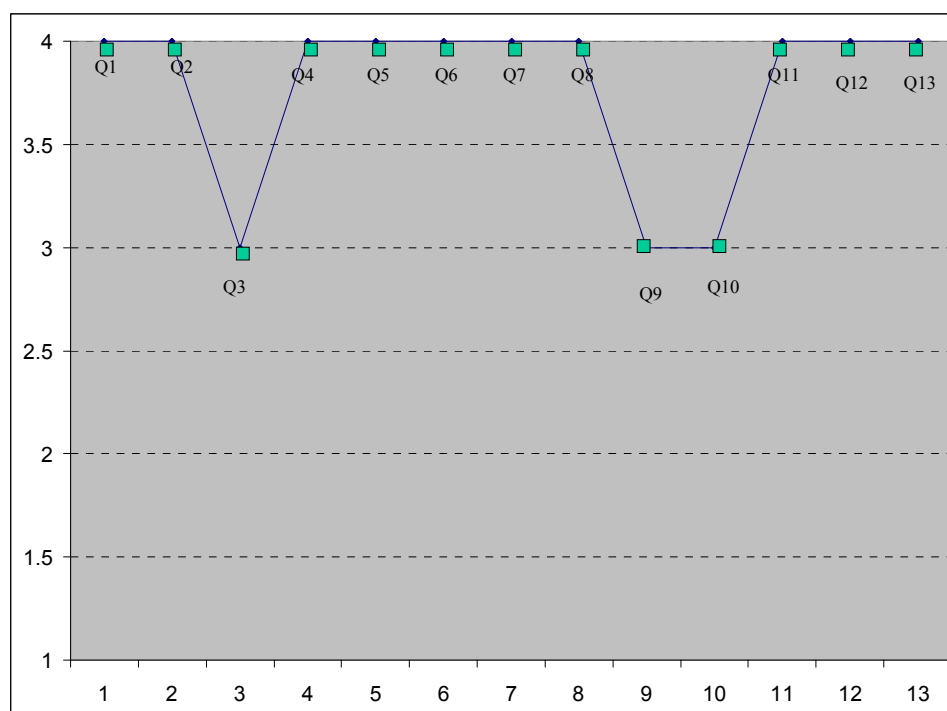
about the teachers' pedagogical beliefs about language teaching and to compare these beliefs with the learners' stated beliefs to view whether the teachers' and the learners' stated beliefs were concordant with each other.

4.4.1 Teacher 1

The first thirteen questions (Q1-Q13) asked the teachers about the L2 procedures/skills they used in L2 classes [e.g. how frequently they used (or if they used) some L2 components/skills]. The objectives of these questions were to view what L2 procedures the teachers favored in their L2 classes and; if these practices corresponded to the learners' stated beliefs and L2 practices suggested by recent trends in L2 teaching.

Teacher 1 stated that she used mainly authentic and technical reading texts in her L2 classes (see Figure 4.28). Her responses (questionnaire and interview) indicated that she often used translation exercises (oral and written) in her classes.

Figure 4.28 Teacher 1: L2 procedures/skills used



Note: Scale 1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Often; Q1. I use authentic reading texts. Q2. I use technical/scientific reading texts. Q3. I plan grammar points in advance and teach them systematically. Q4. I teach grammar points spontaneously as they appear. Q5: I explain grammar rules. Q6: I let my students deduce grammar rules themselves. Q7: I do listening activities. Q8: I do speaking activities. Q9: I teach vocabulary by using French equivalents. Q10: I do writing activities. Q11: I do translation exercises. Q12: I use the language lab. Q13: I do group work and pair work

This teacher's responses indicated that the teacher often provided the learners with all four skill practice. She however stated that she did writing activities less often than the other three skills (reading, speaking, and listening) and explained that she did writing activities less often because it was very difficult to obtain written work from the students. Her answers revealed that she preferred to deal with vocabulary without recourse-to-L1. She also stated that she mostly dealt with grammar points as they occurred rather than planning and dealing with them in a systematic manner.

“When there is a grammar point I want just to check with them. I just want them to find it in the text...a notion it depends... it could be a comparative or a tense then we just check. If they don't have the notion I can give them a small exercise to do ...”

Teacher 1 stated that she often used group and pair work activities and had her TPs (travaux pratiques) in the language laboratory (the multi-media room). She explained that she used the TPs for mainly self-study:

“TP is mainly Reflex English⁶⁹ they work on their own on different posts (i.e. work stations). I ask them not to do all the exercises... with some of them. For some of them who have no problem with grammar they just work on understanding, pronunciation. The ones who really have problems sometimes they ask me “I’ve got a problem with that” so I say ‘ok. Go there and do that’...but they work on their own. In fact they have to improve what they need. I use Reflex English You have reading, you have pronunciation, you have grammar, listening everything.”

Teacher 1 stated that ICT (Information and communications technology) is a useful teaching and learning tool in language classrooms. She however articulated that she was not a competent technology (e.g. ICT such as computers, the Internet etc.) user and stated that her students enjoyed technology in their language classrooms; therefore, she expressed a need for training in this area:

“The problem with me is internet I don’t know very well how to work with it (ICT). I know a few sites but...BBC ...but I’m not very at ease with internet. Not yet. That’s a problem. I should be better, but... So I often take it (teaching materials) from magazines. It’s not difficult to find materials from magazines. (I’d like to know more about) New technology...How to use new technology in an English class. I’m not very good at computers....and I know that it’s very motivating for them. They love being in front of the computer. But, for examples there are so many means for example...do you know in English ‘tableaux interactive’ you know a board you can use a laptop with it and a video

⁶⁹ A computer application designed for English language learners.

projector etc I don't know all that. I can't use it. It could be interesting and may motivate the students better.”

She explained that in the TDs (travaux dirigés) she mainly dealt with authentic reading texts (mostly texts related to the learners' subjects of study). She explained that she used various magazines to select materials for her students and explained how she dealt with reading texts. The procedures she followed when dealing with reading suggested that she mainly used reading texts for comprehension check and vocabulary building rather than developing reading skills:

“Trying to understand ...guess from a title, pictures all that they read it... we try to gather what they understood. Five W's what, who, where why when we try to see what's coming ...all that...so we get all that, we try to make sentences with all that we gather the main ideas of the text. Then I prepare the questionnaire (questions) my specific questions that I want them to understand the main point of the text. Then we may work on...It depends ...I don't always work on the same way on texts. Some texts, for example are rich in vocabulary so I want to emphasize on vocabulary; we give synonyms or things like that...sometimes not so it's more ideas which are important ...”

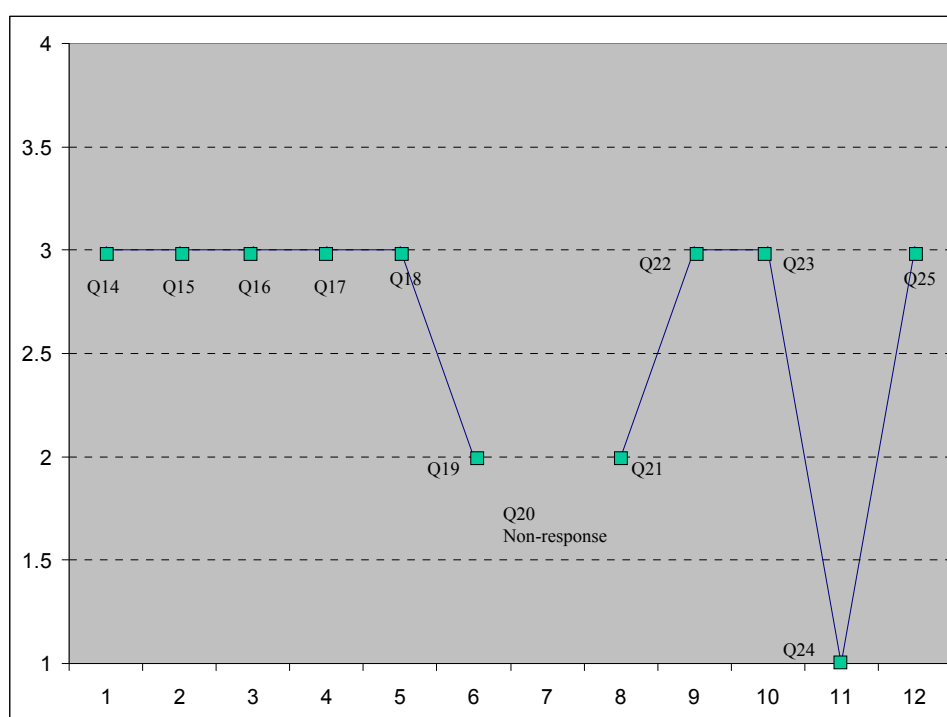
Q14-Q25 asked the teachers to express their beliefs about their students' goals of learning the L2, expectations from their L2 practices, L2 preferences, L2 attitudes, L2 competence and so forth. The aim of these questions was to see if the teachers' stated beliefs about their learners were in concordance with the learners' stated beliefs (see Figure 2.29).

This teacher stated that English is important for her students because of the Internet. She explained that her students liked searching on the Internet and they would like to know English because they wanted to use this facility more efficiently. She also

explained that most of her students played multi-player games, which required them to communicate with non-French players.

Teacher 1 stated that her students would choose to learn English even if English were not a compulsory part of their school curriculum. She explained that her students knew that English was an important language and they needed to learn it. Teacher 1 did not answer Q20 “My students like English classes”. During the interview, she stated that only half of her students liked English and the rest was not interested in English much.

Figure 4.29 Teacher 1: The teacher’s beliefs about her students’ L2 expectations, motivations, competences and attitudes



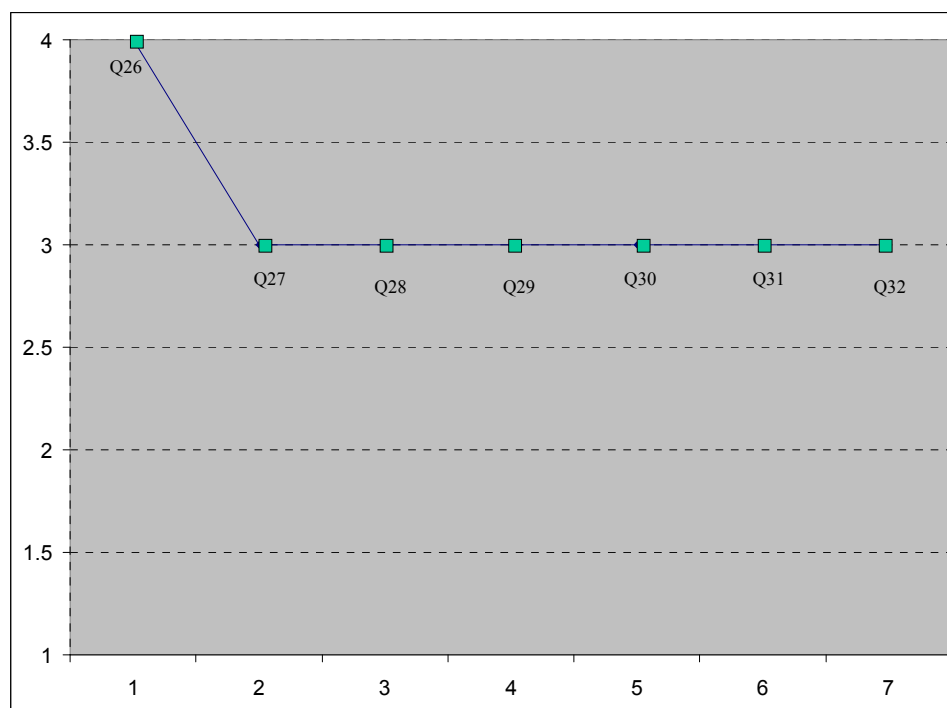
Note: Scale: 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly agree; Q14. English is important for my students because it will be useful for their future careers. Q15. English is important for my students because it is useful for their studies. Q16. English is important for my students because it is/will be useful when they travel. Q17. English is important for my students because it will help them know more about British/American life and culture. Q18. My students are good at English. Q19. My students would not choose to learn English if it were not a compulsory part of their curriculum. Q20. My students like English classes. Q21. My students are willing to communicate in English. Q22. My students enjoy working in groups/pairs. Q23. My students would like me to use their mother tongue in their English classes. Q24. My students have good opinion of American/British people. Q25. My students have positive attitudes towards the English language.

Teacher 1 stated that her students were not willing to communicate in the L2. During the interview, she suggested the learners' lower perceived L2 confidence and their difficulty in pronunciation as major reasons for their unwillingness to communicate in this language. This teacher, as well as other three teachers, stated that she stated that her students liked working in groups and would prefer their teachers to use the L1 in their L2 classes. This teacher strongly disagreed that her students had good opinions of British/American people. However, she stated that she believed her students had good attitudes towards the English language. Teacher 1 was the only teacher who stated that her students were good at English and that they had positive attitudes towards the English language.

Q26-Q32 asked about the teachers' pedagogical beliefs about importance of some common L2 skills/components (see Figure 4.30). The objectives of these questions were to explore the teachers' opinions on how importantly they perceive practices of some L2 skills/components and compare these beliefs with the responses obtained from the learner questionnaire to view if the teachers' and the learners' stated beliefs were in concordance with each other.

Teacher 1's responses revealed that she perceived the importance of vocabulary learning more than other L2 skill/component learning. Her interview data demonstrated that the teacher perceived reading practice as mainly for vocabulary learning. During the interview when the researcher asked which L2 skills/components she considered the most important she stated that she believed the reading skill to be the most important skill. She stated that she believed vocabulary to help learners improve their vocabulary. She asserted that she also perceived speaking and listening as important L2 skills and added that she had her students practice these skills regularly.

Figure 4.30 Teacher 1: The teachers' stated beliefs about L2 skill/component significance



Note: Scale: 1=Not important, 2= Not very important, 3= Important, 4= Very important; Q26. I believe that vocabulary learning is...; Q27. I believe that grammar learning is...; Q28. I believe that reading skill is...; Q29. I believe that speaking skill is...; Q30. I believe that listening skill is...; Q31. I believe that writing skill is...; Q32. I believe that doing translation exercises is...

Teacher 1 stated that doing translation exercises was as important as the L2 skills such as listening, speaking, writing and reading. Teaching through translation exercises has long been viewed with criticism and such practices were mainly associated with traditional ways of teaching and methods (e.g. grammar translation method; one of the most traditional L2 teaching methods which was based on contrasting the L1 and the L2 with use of translations). The SLL/FLL literature provides us with wealth of evidence stressing disadvantages concerning such practices. Teacher 1 explained why she found translation exercises useful as follows:

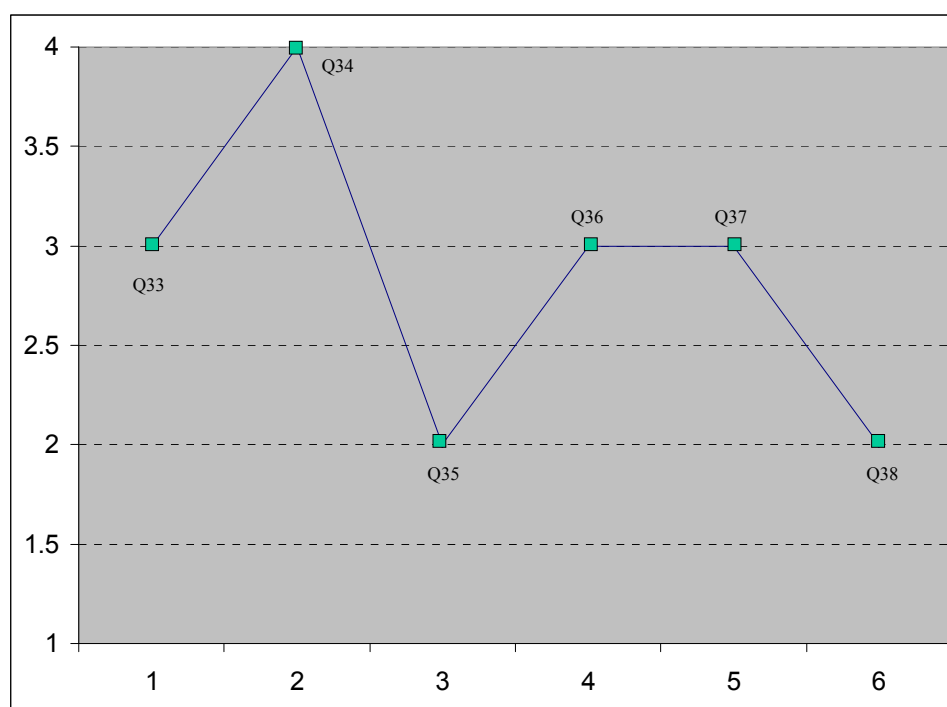
“...to see that if they can translate an idea from English to French to see if they have understood. And... finally a summary often in French because... I think that in their normal life they could have English texts and may be someone can ask them ‘I cannot

understand'... something like 'just can you tell me the main ideas of this?'...French of course...well sometimes in English sometimes in French it depends."

Q33-Q38 aimed to discover the teachers' statements of beliefs on which L2 skills/components their students found difficult to learn (see Figure 4.31). These questions aimed to uncover the teachers' statements of beliefs on the issue and compare these stated beliefs with the learners' stated beliefs concerning the same issue. The major aim was to view if the teachers' and the learners' stated beliefs were concordant with each other.

Teacher 1 stated that the L2 skill that her learners found the most difficult was the writing skill. Her interview data indicated that she perceived that her students were not good at writing and were unwilling to do writing tasks. Teacher 1 expressed that her students did not find L2 listening and grammar difficult (2=not difficult). The teacher also expressed a belief that reading, speaking and pronunciation represented the same level of difficulty to her students. The results obtained in this section suggested existence of discordance between this teacher's stated beliefs and her learners' regarding their perceptions of L2 skills/component difficulty.

Figure 4.31 Teacher 1: The teachers' stated beliefs about her students' L2 skill/component difficulties

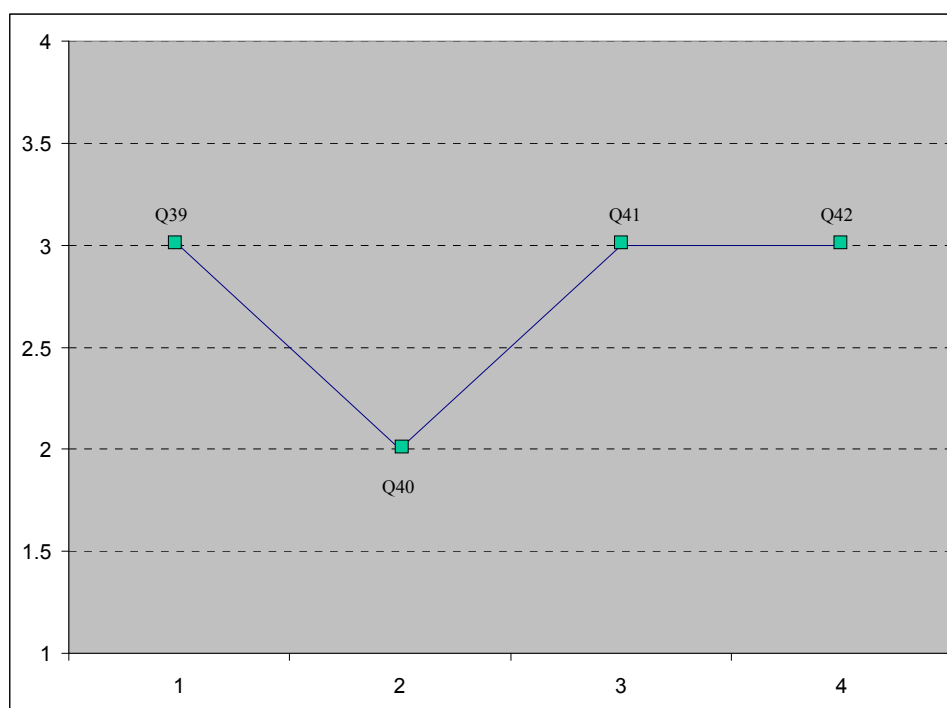


Note: Scale: 4=Very difficult, 3= Difficult, 2= Not difficult, 1= Not difficult at all; Q33 My students find reading in English; Q34. My students find writing in English...; Q35. My students find understanding spoken English...; Q36. My students find speaking in English...; Q37. My students find English pronunciation...; Q38. My students find English grammar...

Q39-Q42 aimed to discover the teachers' statements of their beliefs on L1 use (see Figure 4.31). The teacher 1 stated that using learners' mother tongue when giving instructions, teaching vocabulary, and establishing good relations with students is a useful procedure. However, she expressed that she believed that explaining grammar rules by using the L1 is not a useful procedure. This teacher explained that she preferred to give various self-explanatory examples through which the students get at meaning. She stated that sometimes she gave short explanations in English when explaining difficult grammar points. However, she claimed that using learners' L1 when giving instructions is useful:

“I mainly give them examples which help them guess the function. If it doesn’t work, then I explain it...in English of course. In general, I don’t use French...only, occasionally. Yes sometimes to give instructions. It is useful; because they understand easily...it’s more effective than using English...I cannot explain why.”

Figure 4.32 Teacher 1: The teachers’ stated beliefs about L1 use



Note: Scale: 1= Not useful at all, 2= Not very useful, 3= Useful, 4= Very useful; Q39. I believe that using students' mother tongue when giving instructions is...; Q40. I believe that using students' mother tongue to explain grammar rules is...; Q41. I believe that using students' mother tongue when teaching vocabulary is...; Q42. I believe that using students' mother tongue to establish good relations in class is...

Q43 was an open question, which asked the teachers to write down if they thought of other L2 situations in which L1 use could be useful. The major aim was to unveil the teachers’ opinions on the issue and compare these stated beliefs with the learners’ stated beliefs concerning the same issue. Teacher 1 did not suggest a further situation in which L1 use would be useful. Her statements suggested that she perceived she should keep her L1 use to minimum.

Q44-Q47 asked the teachers to write down the activities their students found: useful (Q44), not useful (Q45), enjoyable (Q46), not enjoyable (Q47). Q48-Q53 asked

if the teachers had attended an in-service training program designed for English language teachers. Teacher 1 stated that she believed that her students found reading, listening and translating useful and did not like grammar and writing activities. Contrary to the learners, this teacher expressed a belief that her students did not find speaking activities useful. This teacher also stated that she had never attended an in-service training program and expressed a need for an in-service training (Q56) on “How to help students express themselves orally and improve their writing skills.” The interview data revealed that Teacher 1 would be interested in a training program on ICT as a language learning teaching tool. She revealed that she had never consulted her learners’ opinions and had difficulty to understand how language instruction could be planned by consulting learner opinion. She believed that learners’ expect their teachers’ to decide on all issues related to student learning:

“Not really...well the problem is we do our... I’ll use French . Ils sont notés par nous même. Donc c’est nous qui fixons les objectives. Donc ...errh en fait eux ils veulent attendre les objectives que nous avons fixés. Donc dans ce cas la il faudrait modifies nos objectives par rapport qu’est-ce qu’ils ont besoin eux. Mais tant que c’est nous qui évaluons, automatiquement, eux ils veulent ce qui va leur servir à évaluations.”

4.4.2 Teacher 2

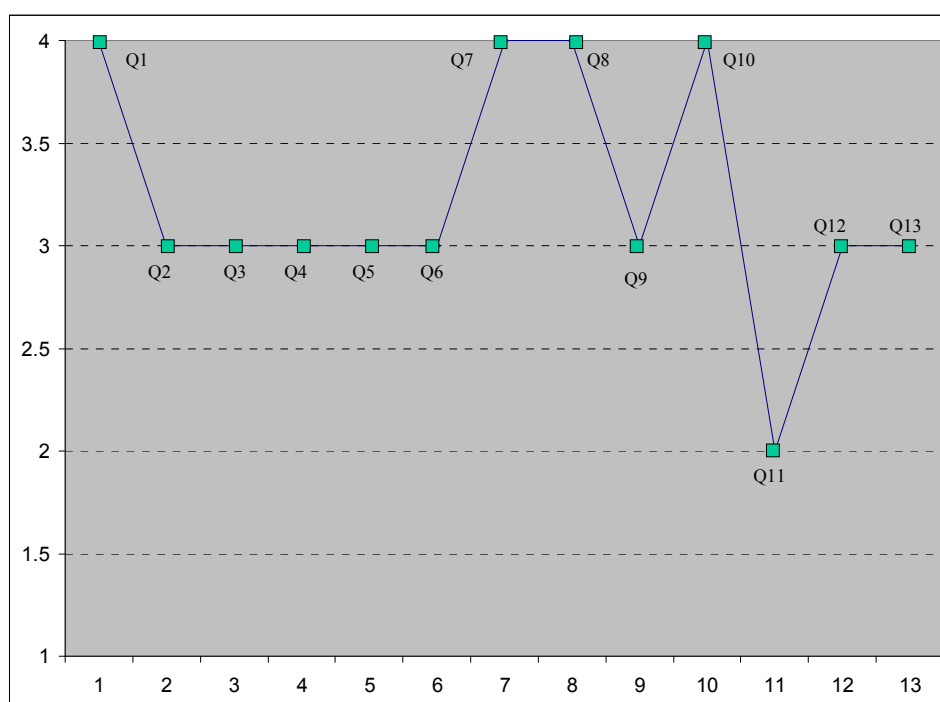
Teacher 2 stated that she mainly used authentic texts in her classes (see Figure 4.33). This teacher’s responses indicated that she did L2 skill practice in an integrated way. However, she expressed opinion in favor of listening and speaking, which she believed to be two important and interrelated skills. Her interview responses revealed that this teacher mainly used a theme-based approach in teaching (e.g. integrated reading, writing, listening and speaking practice on a selected theme):

“If the topic is computers for example I start the lesson with some questions about computers...they tell me what they know etc. And then...afterwards we do reading...trying to understand...a few comprehension questions afterwards I always do a listening job on the same topic, and I always do speaking ...a role-play or a small talk whatever. That’s about it among other things I think. I try to stay within the same subject because you know once you I mean when you start something you need to go on with it and stay within the same sub...subject...because I think...when you start something and when you go on with it at the end of the lesson they can see it as a whole if you jump from one thing to another I think... How would I say they cannot ...see the relation well...and the most important thing they use the language in all its forms. And I believe they learn better this way.”

She stated that she sometimes explained vocabulary and gave explanations in the learners’ L1:

“I think sometimes it’s necessary because sometimes they have difficulties understanding certain things. Sometimes you really need to explain them. But every time I use French I’ve said the same thing in English already. And then I try to explain in some other ways in French not really translating but trying to explain with some other words.”

Figure 4.33 Teacher 2: L2 procedures/skills used



Note: Scale 1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Often; Q1. I use authentic reading texts. Q2. I use technical/scientific reading texts. Q3. I plan grammar points in advance and teach them systematically. Q4. I teach grammar points spontaneously as they appear. Q5. I explain grammar rules. Q6. I let my students deduce grammar rules themselves. Q7. I do listening activities. Q8. I do speaking activities. Q9. I teach vocabulary by using French equivalents. Q10. I do writing activities. Q11. I do translation exercises. Q12. I use the language lab. Q13. I do group work and pair work

Teacher 2, as well as Teacher 1, stated that she used the multi-media for her TPs. However, differently from Teacher 1 this teacher used ICT (information and communications technology) such as the Internet, on-line dictionaries and other English web⁷⁰ sites as learning tools rather than using ready made CALL (computer assisted language learning) applications designed for language learners as a self-study. This teacher asserted that she did not like lessons based on grammar teaching:

“I don’t like grammar teaching much. Sometimes it is important to explain certain small things but really doing lessons on grammar, don’t like that very much ...and they don’t like it either. It’s more important to do little quizzes on certain parts of grammar but not

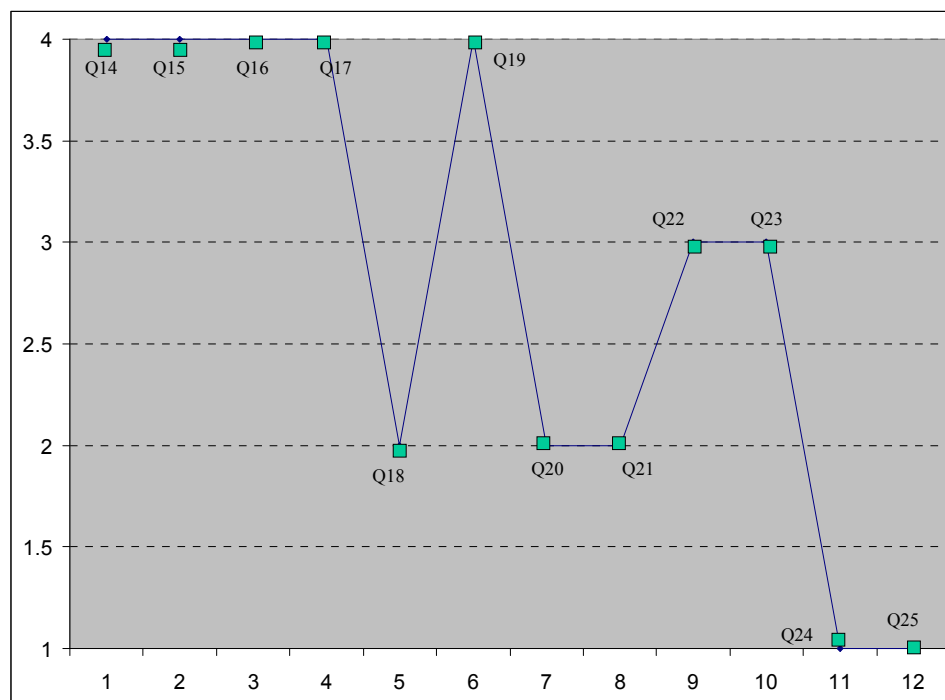
⁷⁰ Web: World wide web (WWW) computer network consisting of a collection of internet sites that offer text and graphics and sound and animation resources through the hypertext transfer protocol.

really doing grammar lessons... No! no not at all!. Sometimes when I see something like... for instance with verbs a problem, what tenses to use etc. I may include that into my lesson ...but I'd not spend a lot of time on it. Very, very short time...I'd rather see them using... then I'd deal with the problems if I feel it's necessary."

During the interview, Teacher 2 explained that she also used e-mail applications for writing purposes. She expressed that her students liked writing activities via e-mails.

Teacher 2 believed that her students had negative attitudes towards learning English (see Figure 3.4). She also believed that the learners had negative opinions about the L2 speakers and negative attitudes towards the English language. However, she strongly agreed that the learners might be interested to learn more about the L2 people and culture. These two beliefs somehow contradicted to her strong beliefs that her students were motivated to learn English because they believed that English would be useful for their future careers, studies and when they travel.

Figure 4.34 Teacher 2: The teacher's beliefs about her students' L2 expectations, motivations, competences and attitudes



Note: Scale: 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly agree; Q14. English is important for my students because it will be useful for their future careers. Q15. English is important for my students because it is useful for their studies. Q16. English is important for my students because it is/will be useful when they travel. Q17. English is important for my students because it will help them know more about British/American life and culture. Q18. My students are good at English. Q19. My students would not choose to learn English if it were not a compulsory part of their curriculum. Q20. My students like English classes. Q21. My students are willing to communicate in English. Q22. My students enjoy working in groups/pairs. Q23. My students would like me to use their mother tongue in their English classes. Q24. My students have good opinion of American/British people. Q25. My students have positive attitudes towards the English language.

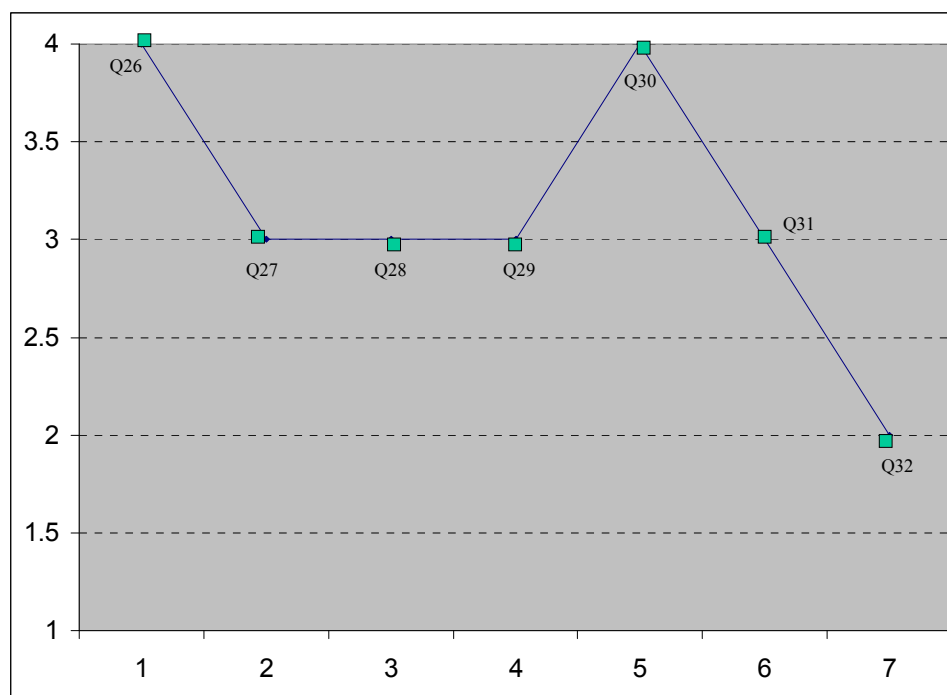
Teacher 2, differently from Teacher 1, believed that her students were not good at English. During the interview, the teacher explained that half of her students were not motivated to learn English:

“...but the other half do not seem to be very interested...because they don’t see the use of it because their idea is staying here and not going out of France.”

This teacher strongly believed that her students would not be willing to learn English if it were not a compulsory part of their school curriculum (this belief contradicted to the learners’ stated beliefs concerning this issue). Like teacher 1, she

also believed that the learners expected her to use their mother tongue in their L2 classes. She also believed that her students enjoyed working in groups and pairs.

Figure 4.35 Teacher 2: The teachers' stated beliefs about L2 skill/component significance



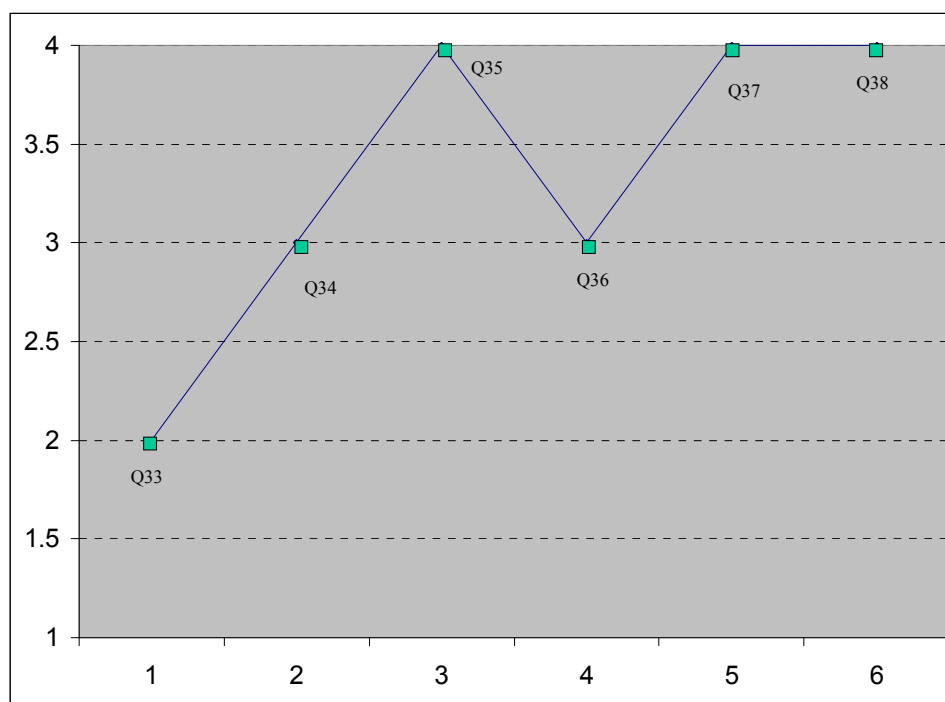
Note: Scale: 1=Not important, 2= Not very important, 3= Important, 4= Very important; Q26. I believe that vocabulary learning is...; Q27. I believe that grammar learning is...; Q28. I believe that reading skill is...; Q29. I believe that speaking skill is...; Q30. I believe that listening skill is...; Q31. I believe that writing skill is...; Q32. I believe that doing translation exercises is...

Teacher 2's interview discourse indicated that this teacher interpreted translation exercises as classroom procedure in which the teacher uses the learners' mother tongue to give explanations to make clarifications. She clearly stated that she did not find translation exercises (from English to learners' language or vice versa) useful L2 learning activities. Although she stated that she did not believe in traditional grammar lessons, she acknowledged importance of acquiring linguistic forms, as well as acquiring other L2 skills/components. However, she stressed that grammar teaching should not become the aim of language teaching. This teacher believed that listening is

the best way to acquire a language naturally; therefore, she ranked listening as the most useful L2 skill to learn.

Teacher 2 believed that the learners found the reading skill the easiest (see Figure 4.36). This teacher's stated belief regarding reading echoed the learners' stated beliefs. However, her responses concerning other L2 skill/component difficulty indicated that this teacher overestimated L2 skill/component difficulty perceived by her students.

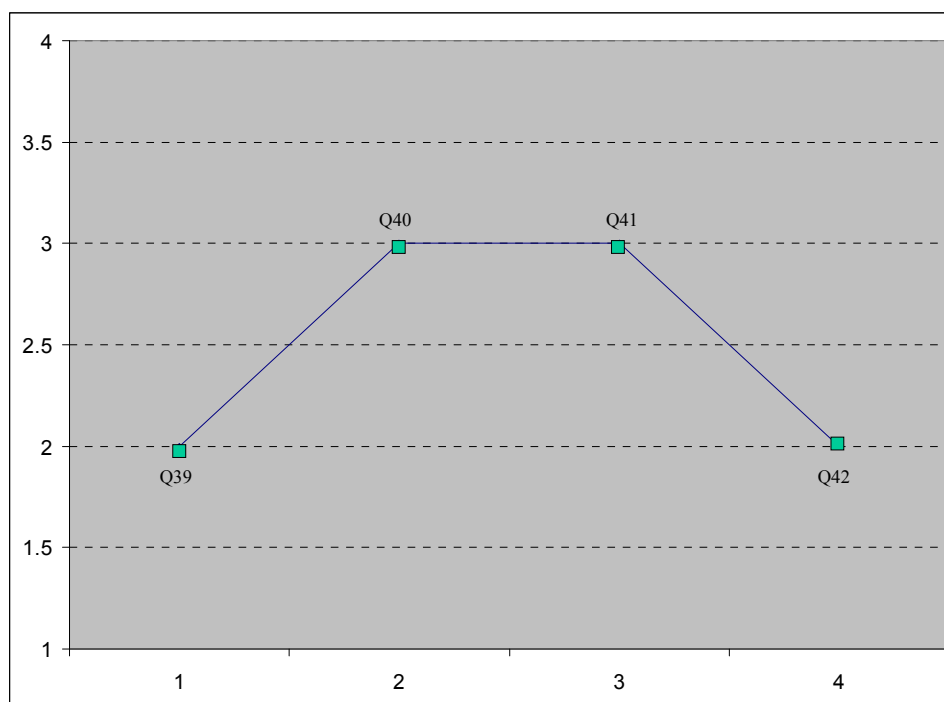
Figure 4.36 Teacher 2: The teachers' stated beliefs about her students' L2 skill/component difficulties



Note: Scale: 4=Very difficult, 3= Difficult, 2= Not difficult, 1= Not difficult at all; Q33. My students find reading in English...; Q34. My students find writing in English...; Q35. My students find understanding spoken English...; Q36. My students find speaking in English...; Q37. My students find English pronunciation...; Q38. My students find English grammar...

Teacher 2 expressed beliefs in favor of L1 use in certain L2 situations (see Figure 4.37). She stated that sometimes using the learners' mother tongue could be necessary and effective. Her responses indicated that she preferred to use the L1 only for teaching/learning purposes and did not believe in effectiveness of L1 to establish a good rapport with her students or to manage class activities (e.g. giving instructions, setting tasks etc.).

Figure 4.37 Teacher 2: The teachers' stated beliefs about L1 use



Note: Scale: 1= Not useful at all, 2= Not very useful, 3= Useful, 4= Very useful; Q39. I believe that using students' mother tongue when giving instructions is...; Q40. I believe that using students' mother tongue to explain grammar rules is...; Q41. I believe that using students' mother tongue when teaching vocabulary is...; Q42. I believe that using students' mother tongue to establish good relations in class is...

Teacher 2 did not suggest further useful situation in which L1 use would be useful. Teacher 2, like Teacher 1, believed that she should keep her L1 use to minimum. Teacher 2's responses to the open questions (questionnaire) indicated that the teacher was aware of her students' likes and dislikes and what they found useful. Teacher 2

explained that her students found listening activities useful, but did not find traditional grammar exercises (the systematic teaching of grammar) useful. She also asserted that her students did not like speaking in front of others. Teacher 2, like Teacher 1, revealed that she had never attended an in-service program designed for language teachers. She stated that she would be interested in attending a training program that would enable her to learn more about teaching adult learners:

“...It’s not really about the language itself but...erhh pedagogical...classroom management and everything. Those sorts of things I had to learn on my own. There aren’t any. ...I think there isn’t enough training about classroom management for teachers of adult learners I think.”

Teacher 2 stated that she consulted her students’ opinions regularly and selected materials and planned her teaching accordingly:

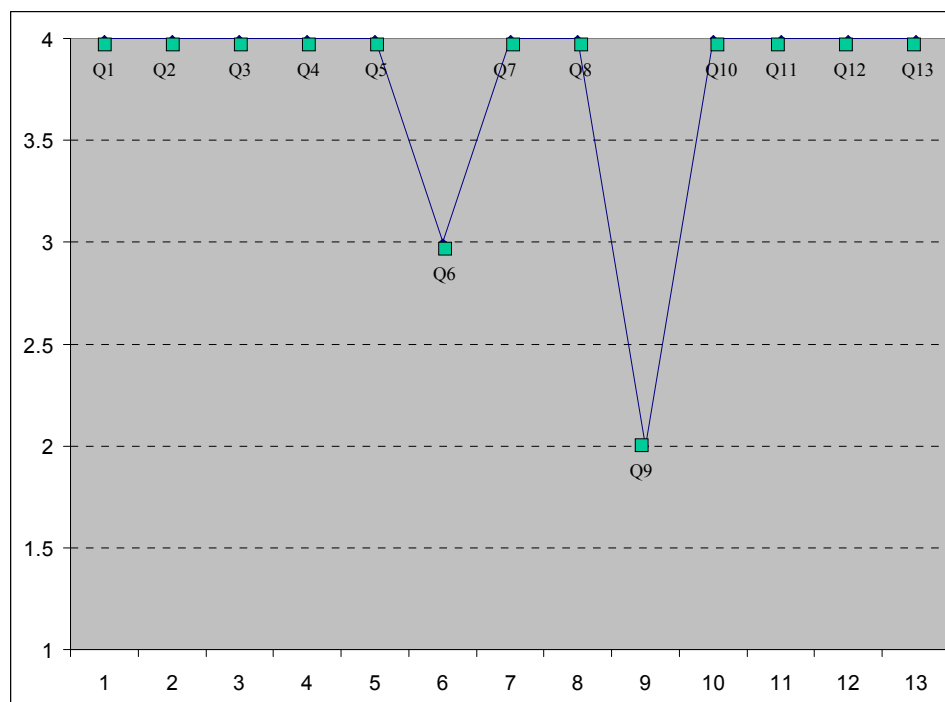
“Yes, yes...as I said earlier, like today I ask their opinions. Yes, yes I often ask their opinions. I consider also what they ask for...the materials they need, like today they’ve asked me to do something about elections. I think that’s a good idea. I think it’s their interest...its important what they want...it’s not really important what we want or what we want to do with them. I think it’s very important to listen to them.

4.4.3 Teacher 3

Teacher 3 chose to take the teacher interviews in French. Because of time constraints, the researcher used a phone-interview with this teacher. Teacher 3 stated that she often (4=often) used authentic reading texts and technical reading materials. She also stated that she regularly did listening, speaking and writing activities. Both her interview and questionnaire data indicated that she normally planned grammar teaching in advance and taught it systematically (see Figure 4.38). Her responses also indicated

that she dealt with grammar points whenever they appeared. Teacher 3 claimed that she rarely taught vocabulary by giving French equivalents (however, this response contradicted to her belief that using L1 is useful when teaching vocabulary--see Figure 4.42 Q41, page 350).

Figure 4.38 Teacher 3: L2 procedures/skills used



Note: Scale 1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Often; Q1. I use authentic reading texts. Q2. I use technical/scientific reading texts. Q3. I plan grammar points in advance and teach them systematically. Q4. I teach grammar points spontaneously as they appear. Q5: I explain grammar rules. Q6: I let my students deduce grammar rules themselves. Q7: I do listening activities. Q8: I do speaking activities. Q9: I teach vocabulary by using French equivalents. Q10: I do writing activities. Q11: I do translation exercises. Q12: I use the language lab. Q13: I do group work and pair work

Her response to Q6 indicated that she mostly preferred explaining grammar rules than letting her students try to discover these on their own. Her interview discourse also suggested that this teacher employed mainly a teacher-centered style in her TDs:

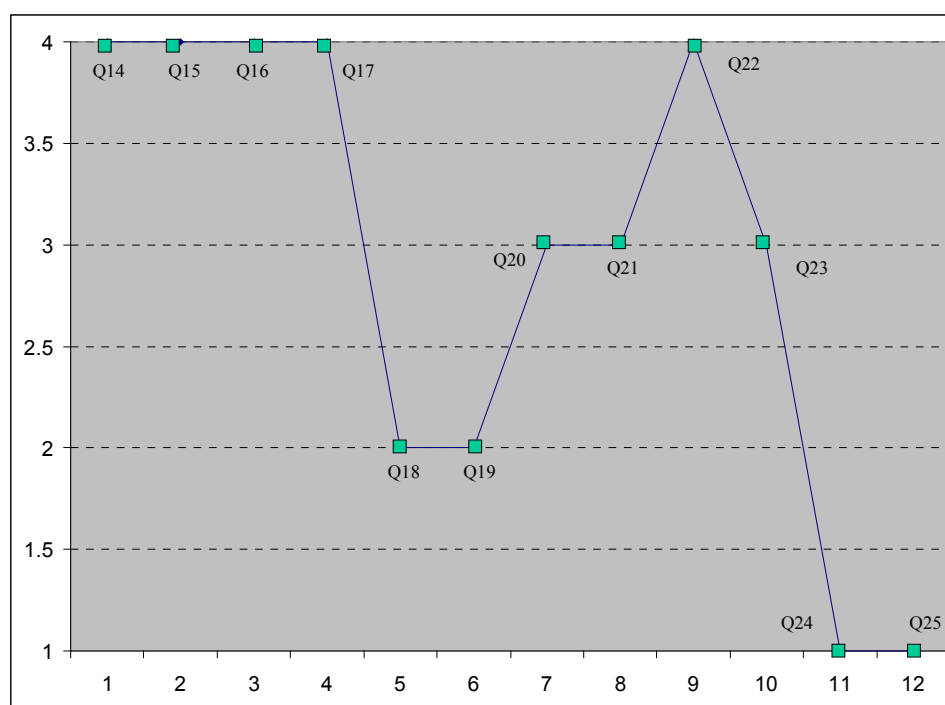
“En TD, je leur donne un texte à lire accompagné de questions. Après qu'ils aient répondu aux questions, j'explique le vocabulaire. Parfois, je leur demande de construire des phrases avec le nouveau vocabulaire. Parfois, je leur demande de traduire le texte. J'explique la grammaire et je leur donne des exercices à faire. J'utilise toujours des textes

scientifiques. Parfois, je leur demande de faire une présentation sur le sujet, ou bien je leur demande de chercher des informations sur le sujet sur Internet...puis de préparer et présenter le sujet en classe ou par écrit. En TP, j'utilise "Reflex English", ils travaillent alors tout seuls. S'ils en ont besoin, je leur fournis quelques explications. Ils aiment beaucoup l'approche multimédia et demandent régulièrement des exercices d'écoute.”

The findings indicated that at times her stated beliefs contradicted to her stated classroom practices. During the interview, the teacher stated that in TDs she mostly spent time on reading comprehension questions and doing translation activities (e.g. translating reading texts to French). However, her response to Q32 was contradictory (see Figure 4.41, page). Her response to Q32 indicated that she did not find doing translation exercises a useful L2 procedure.

Regarding the questions about the learners' L2 motivations (Q14, Q15, Q16), competences (Q18) and attitudes (Q24, Q25) this teacher's stated beliefs mostly showed similarities with Teacher 2 and Teacher 4. However, differently from all other three teachers, Teacher 3 believed that her students liked English classes and were willing to participate in class activities (see Figure 4.39). Like Teacher 2 and Teacher 4 (see below), this teacher disagreed that her students were good at English and like these two teachers she, as well, believed that her students had negative attitudes towards the English language.

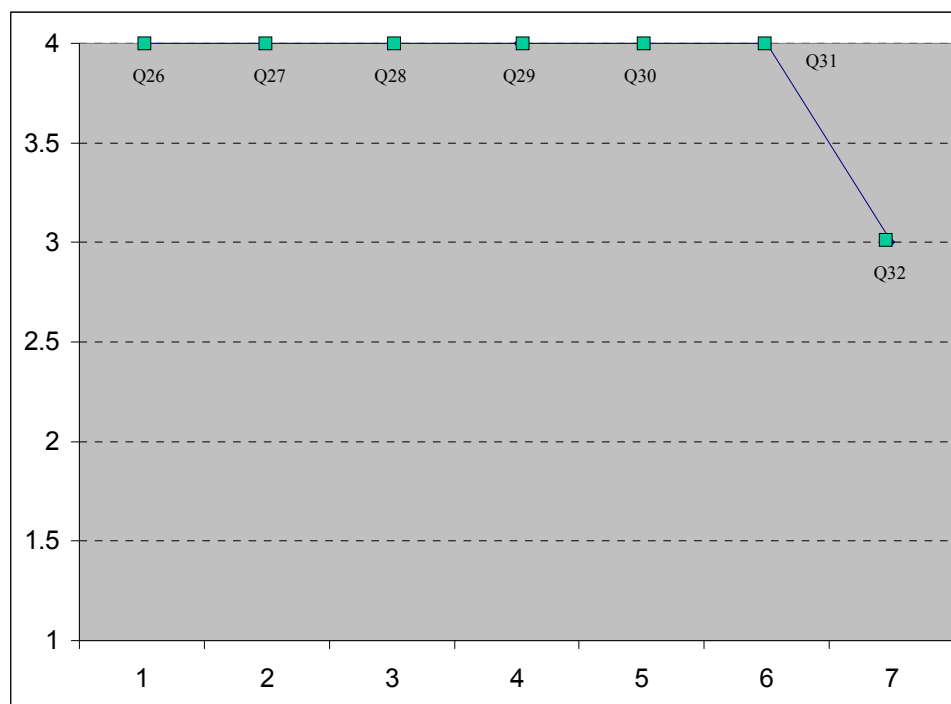
Figure 4.39 Teacher 3: The teacher's beliefs about her students' L2 expectations, motivations, competences and attitudes



Note: Scale: 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly agree; Q14. English is important for my students because it will be useful for their future careers. Q15. English is important for my students because it is useful for their studies. Q16. English is important for my students because it is/will be useful when they travel. Q17. English is important for my students because it will help them know more about British/American life and culture. Q18. My students are good at English. Q19. My students would not choose to learn English if it were not a compulsory part of their curriculum. Q20. My students like English classes. Q21. My students are willing to communicate in English. Q22. My students enjoy working in groups/pairs. Q23. My students would like me to use their mother tongue in their English classes. Q24. My students have good opinion of American/British people. Q25. My students have positive attitudes towards the English language.

Teacher 3 stated that all L2 skill/components are very important (4=very important) except doing translation exercises (see Figure 4.40). However, both her interview discourse and her response to Q11 indicated that she regularly did translation exercises in her English classes. When she was asked, why she did translation exercises she explained that her students liked doing translation exercises and added that such activities could help students develop their ability to make translations.

Figure 4.40 Teacher 3: The teachers' stated beliefs about L2 skill/component significance



Note: Scale: 1=Not important, 2= Not very important, 3= Important, 4= Very important; Q26. I believe that vocabulary learning is...; Q27. I believe that grammar learning is...; Q28. I believe that reading skill is...; Q29. I believe that speaking skill is...; Q30. I believe that listening skill is...; Q31. I believe that writing skill is...; Q32. I believe that doing translation exercises is...;

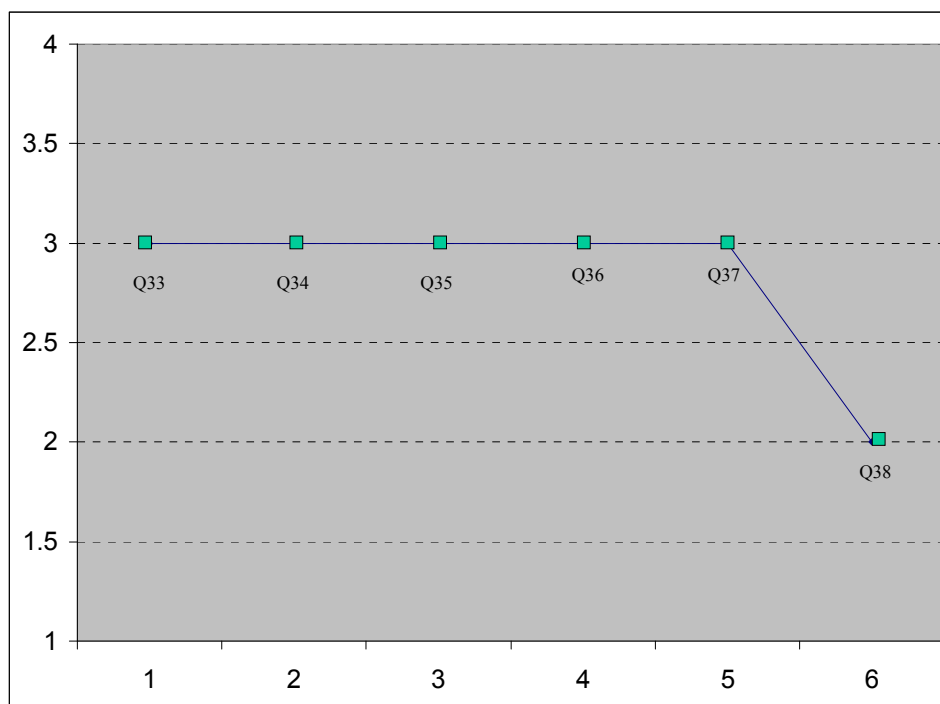
Teacher 3 believed that her students found all L2 skills/components difficult except grammar. She explained this belief by referring to her classroom practice:

“Je ne crois pas qu'ils ont des problèmes avec la grammaire. Quand j'explique, ils ont l'air de comprendre. Après mes explications, je leur demande toujours de faire des exercices. Quelles sortes d'exercices ? Je leur demande de faire des phrases. Je leur demande de corriger les erreurs. Je leur donne par exemple des textes avec des erreurs de temps et je leur demande de corriger. Oui il semblerait qu'ils travaillent bien.”

Her discourse suggested that the teacher believed in usefulness of systematic grammar teaching and equated learners' ability to respond to decontextualized grammar structures correctly with the ability to use linguistic forms. Her discourse also indicated

that she believed in the explicit teaching of sentence level grammatical structures and de-contextualized grammar practice.

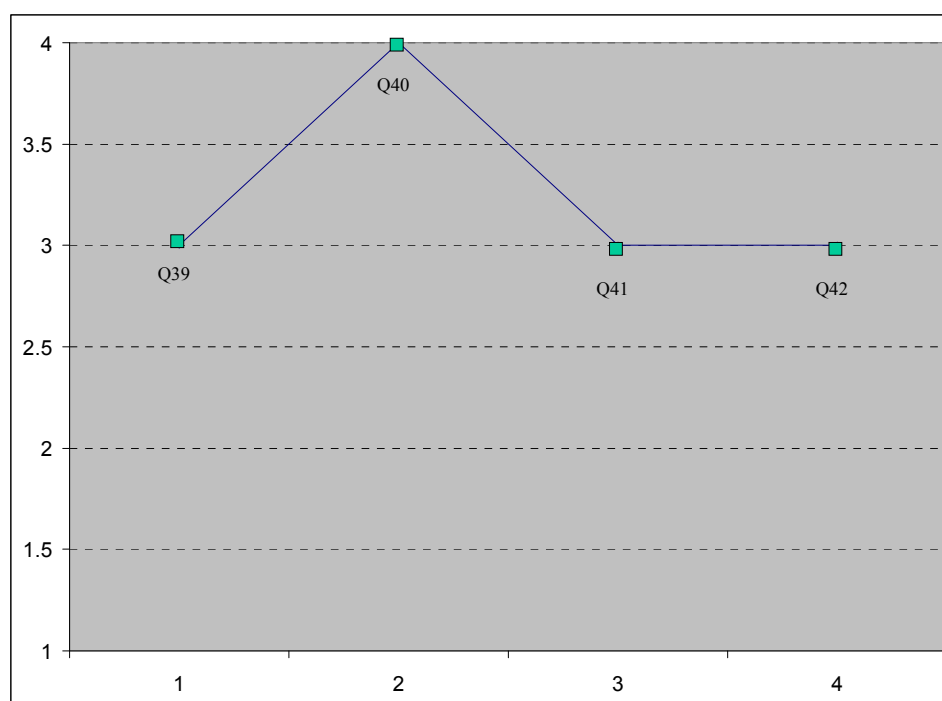
Figure 4.41 Teacher 3: The teachers' stated beliefs about her students' L2 skill/component difficulties



Note: Scale: 4=Very difficult, 3= Difficult, 2= Not difficult, 1= Not difficult at all; Q33. My students find reading in English...; Q34. My students find writing in English...; Q35. My students find understanding spoken English...; Q36. My students find speaking in English...; Q37. My students find English pronunciation...; Q38. My students find English grammar...

Teacher 3's responses regarding L1 use also revealed some contradictory beliefs. The teacher stated that she never used her students' L1 when dealing with vocabulary (Q9—see Figure 4.38); however in this section she expressed an agreement regarding the usefulness of the L1 in vocabulary teaching (see Figure 4.42). Like all other teachers, Teacher 3 mostly agreed that using her students' L1 was useful. Differently from all other three teachers, this teacher strongly agreed that L1 was especially useful when explaining grammar rules.

Figure 4.42 Teacher 3: The teachers' stated beliefs about L1 use



Note: Scale: 1= Not useful at all, 2= Not very useful, 3= Useful, 4= Very useful; Q39. I believe that using students' mother tongue when giving instructions is...; Q40. I believe that using students' mother tongue to explain grammar rules is...; Q41. I believe that using students' mother tongue when teaching vocabulary is...; Q42. I believe that using students' mother tongue to establish good relations in class is...

Teacher 4's responses to open-questions (in the questionnaire) showed that some of this teacher's stated beliefs somehow were discordant with those of her learners'. The teacher believed that her students found grammar and translation activities useful. However, her stated belief that her students found listening and speaking useful was concordant with her students' stated beliefs. However, she asserted that her students, although they found grammar useful, did not like grammar exercises. She also stated that her students did not like writing activities. Teacher 3 did not show any interest in a teacher training program. Teacher 3, as well as Teacher 1, revealed that she did not consult her students' ideas. She explained that the students would not know what was good for them.

4.4.4 Teacher 4

Teacher 4 conceded that she never used authentic texts (see Figure 4.43). She maintained that the texts she used were mainly technical documents (she did not consider technical documents authentic). She asserted that she did not believe in the use of “classical grammar teaching” and explained that:

“Yes and no. Grammar is part of the language but it is not everything. I teach grammar but it is never the focus of my lessons. And, I think how we deal with it matters the most. I do not believe in classical grammar teaching. ‘Classical grammar’ teaching!! Oh it is when you design your lessons around grammar points and you explain them one by one and you do a lot of exercises and you do just that I suppose.”

Teacher 4 admitted that she never did listening activities with the IUT students because she was not a competent computer user (At the IUT listening activities are done in the multi-media room which is equipped with computers). She explained that she only did the TDs (she shared a class with another teacher who did the TPs). This teacher’s responses indicated that she often integrated speaking activities with reading:

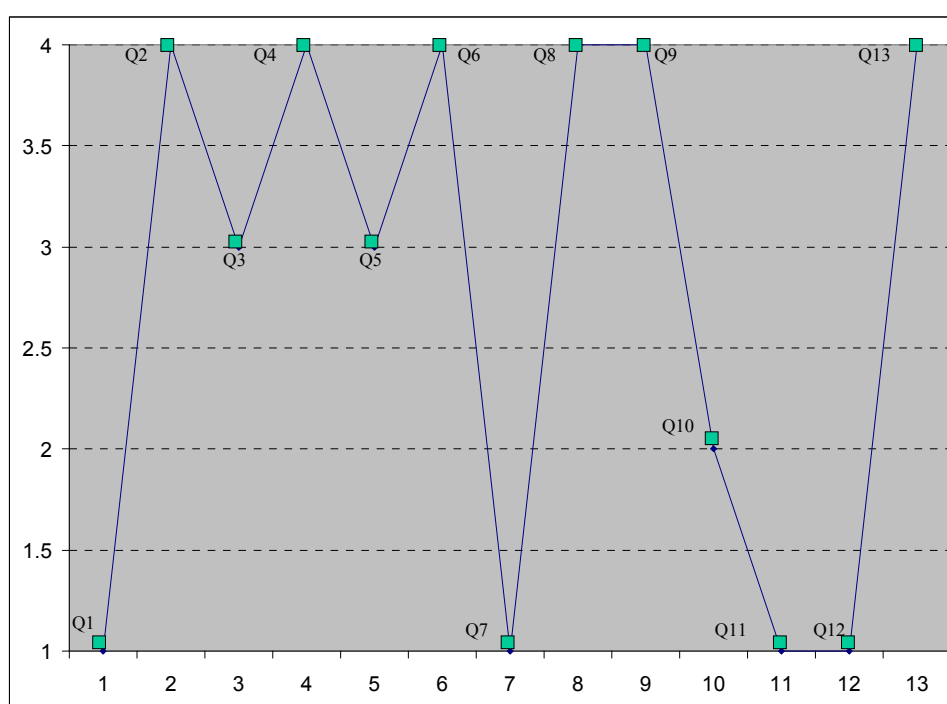
“I think I do mostly reading and speaking together. Students read to get some information about the topic and then I organize pair or group work and do some speaking. I also do one to one conversations with them on various topics.”

She stated that she rarely did writing activities. She explained that her students did not like writing and most of the time they spent a lot of time without producing much. However, she asserted that her students enjoyed speaking tasks like oral presentations, debates and speaking activities that require them to express their opinions. She explained that she never did translation exercises in her classes. Her discourse suggested that she dealt with grammar and vocabulary after student practice

and focused mainly on problem areas. She described her typical English class as follows:

“Typical lesson! I think my lessons vary depending on what I am doing with them. But, I think I start with a reading and then speaking and perhaps towards the end I deal with the students problems like grammar, vocabulary etc. But of course there are lots of other things as well. It really depends what I am doing that day.”

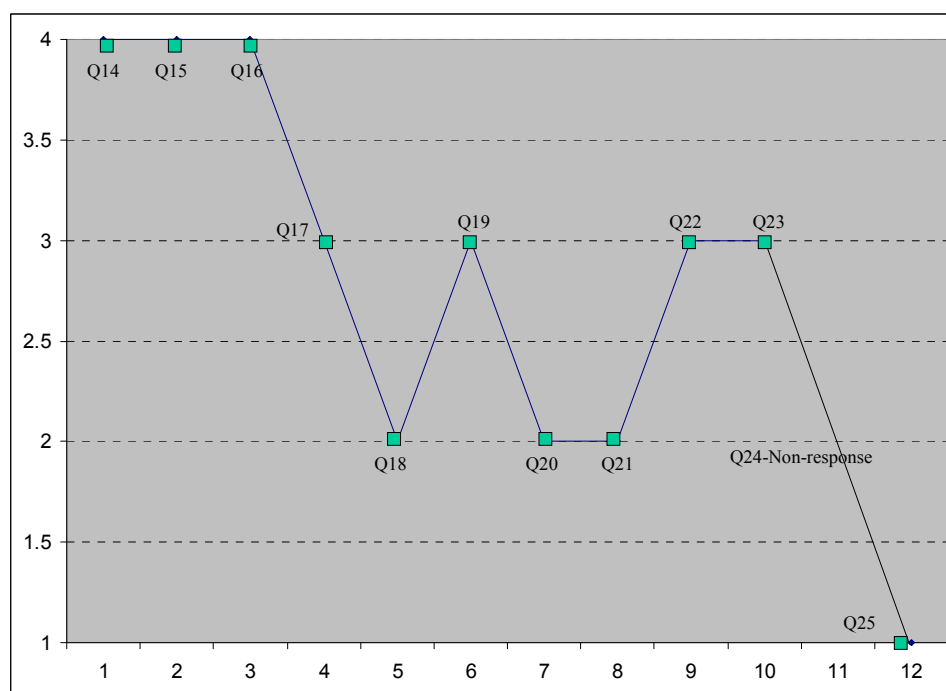
Figure 4.43 Teacher 4: L2 procedures/skills used



Note: Scale 1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Often; Q1. I use authentic reading texts. Q2. I use technical/scientific reading texts. Q3. I plan grammar points in advance and teach them systematically. Q4. I teach grammar points spontaneously as they appear. Q5: I explain grammar rules. Q6: I let my students deduce grammar rules themselves. Q7: I do listening activities. Q8: I do speaking activities. Q9: I teach vocabulary by using French equivalents. Q10: I do writing activities. Q11: I do translation exercises. Q12: I use the language lab. Q13: I do group work and pair work

Teacher 4 strongly agreed that English is important for her students for instrumental reasons such as for their future jobs, for their studies and for their travels (see Figure 4.44). This teacher’s responses to these items (Q14, Q15, and Q16) reflected similar beliefs obtained from the learner responses.

Figure 4.44 Teacher 4: The teacher's beliefs about her students' L2 expectations, motivations, competences and attitudes



Note: Scale: 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly agree; Q14. English is important for my students because it will be useful for their future careers. Q15. English is important for my students because it is useful for their studies. Q16. English is important for my students because it is/will be useful when they travel. Q17. English is important for my students because it will help them know more about British/American life and culture. Q18. My students are good at English. Q19. My students would not choose to learn English if it were not a compulsory part of their curriculum. Q20. My students like English classes. Q21. My students are willing to communicate in English. Q22. My students enjoy working in groups/pairs. Q23. My students would like me to use their mother tongue in their English classes. Q24. My students have good opinion of American/British people. Q25. My students have positive attitudes towards the English language.

Teacher 4 believed that her students were less motivated to learn English for intrinsic reasons such as interest in the L2 culture and L2 people (see Figure 4.4.4). She also believed that her students had negative attitudes towards learning English and added that her students had low willingness to communicate (WTC) and low L2 competence (the teacher did not respond to Q24: My students have good opinion of American/British people). During the interview, she explained that she did not know the answer to this question. Like all other three teachers Teacher 4 as well agreed (3=agree) that her students would like her to use their mother tongue. She asserted that she used

the learners' mother tongue because her students needed it. Teacher 4's responses concerning her learners' L2 expectations, L2 competence and L2 attitudes shared many similarities with the learners' responses. Teacher 4, like Teacher 2 and Teacher 3, believed that her students were not good at English (overall student responses also suggested that the learners themselves believed that they had low L2 competence). This teacher's responses to the questions in this section clearly indicated that the teacher was well aware of her students' L2 expectations, goals, motivations, competences and attitudes.

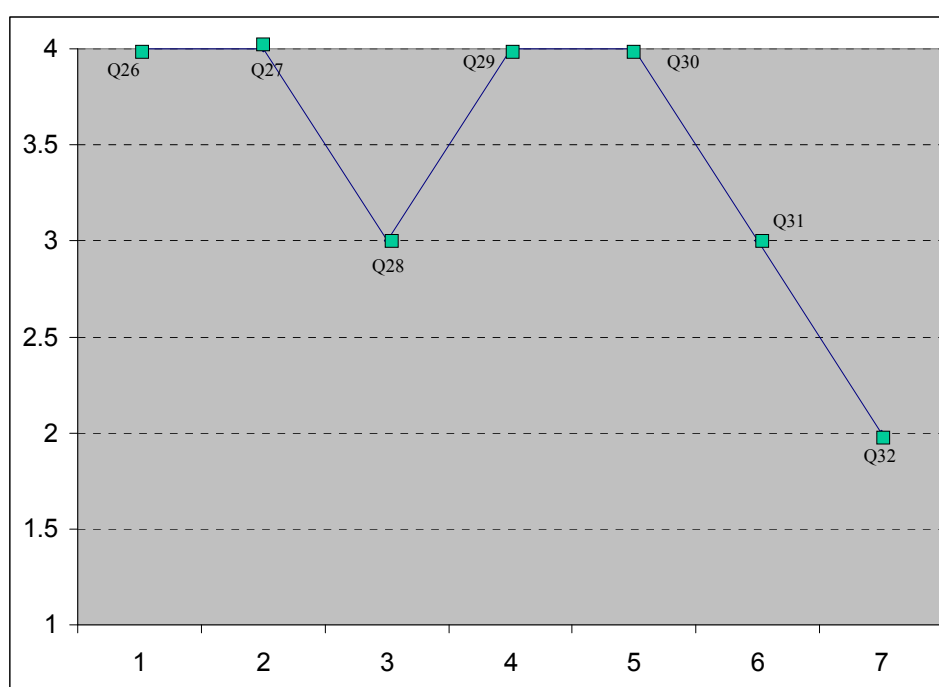
However, her responses about L2 skill/component significance revealed existence of some discordances between her stated beliefs and her stated classroom practices. The teacher's questionnaire responses indicated that she perceived listening skills as very important. However, her responses to an earlier question (see Q7 Figure 4.43) contradicted to this belief. Her response to Q7 showed that she never did listening with her students. The teacher claimed that she did not believe in excessive grammar teaching and traditional grammar teaching methods and explained that she dealt with grammar points as they appeared. However, her response to Q27 (I believe that grammar learning is...) revealed that she perceived grammar learning as very important. During the interview, she explained her views about grammar teaching/learning as follows:

“Yes and no. Grammar is part of the language it is important, but it is not everything. I teach grammar but it is never the focus of my lessons. And, I think how we deal with it matters the most. I do not believe in classical grammar teaching. ‘Classical grammar’ teaching!! Oh it is when you design your lessons around grammar points and you explain them one by one and you do a lot of exercises and you do just that I suppose.”

The teacher also explained that she did not perceive writing as important as other L2 skills/components. She also stated that she never did translation exercises and expressed her views about translation exercises as follows:

“Perhaps, sometimes I check if they have understood what they are supposed to be doing, but a part from that I don’t think I give them anything to translate. I really don’t see any use of doing translation exercises. Don’t know how it could be useful for them”

Figure 4.45 Teacher 4: The teachers’ stated beliefs about L2 skill/component significance

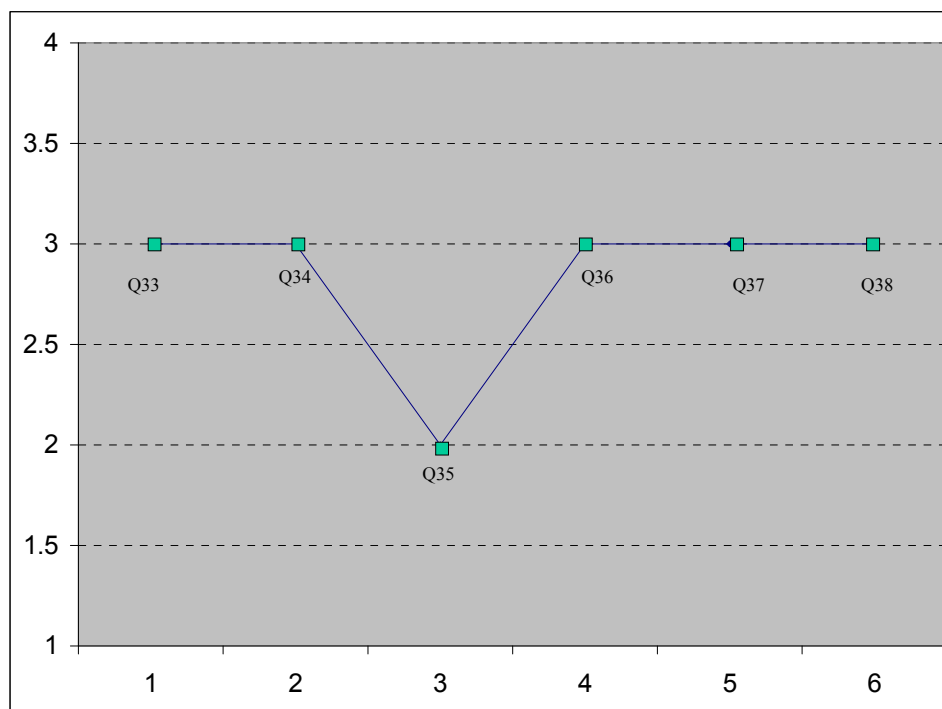


Note: Scale: 1=Not important, 2= Not very important, 3= Important, 4= Very important; Q26. I believe that vocabulary learning is...; Q27. I believe that grammar learning is...; Q28. I believe that reading skill is...; Q29. I believe that speaking skill is...; Q30. I believe that listening skill is...; Q31. I believe that writing skill is...; Q32. I believe that doing translation exercises is...

Teacher 4’s responses also revealed some contradictory beliefs. The teacher believed that her students found all L2 skill/components equally difficult (3=difficult) except listening (2=not difficult) (see Figure 4.46). During the interview, however, she stated that her students found speaking and pronunciation more difficult than other L2 skills/components. Moreover, her response to Q11 indicated that she had never done

any listening activities with her students to know whether her students found listening difficult or not.

Figure 4.46 Teacher 4: The teachers’ stated beliefs about her students’ L2 skill/component difficulties



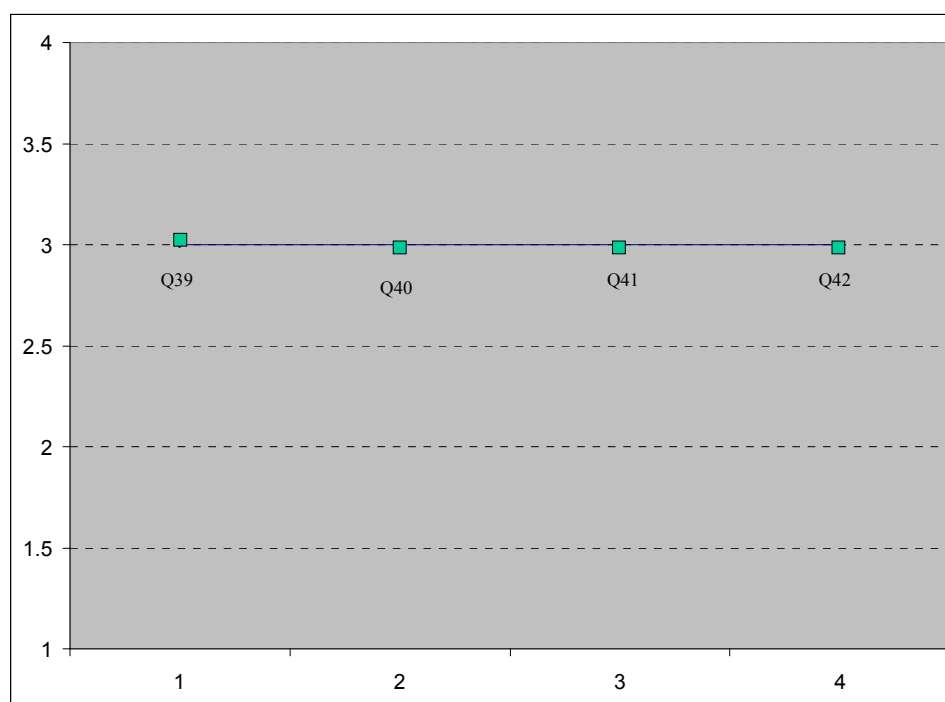
Note: Scale: 4=Very difficult, 3= Difficult, 2= Not difficult, 1= Not difficult at all; Q33. My students find reading in English...; Q34. My students find writing in English...; Q35. My students find understanding spoken English...; Q36. My students find speaking in English...; Q37. My students find English pronunciation...; Q38. My students find English grammar...

Teacher 4 believed that when it is not overused L1 could be useful in L2 classrooms:

“Yes. I think it is useful. Especially when I have discipline problems it helps. Well, there are other times as well. For instance giving a quick equivalent or a definition sometimes is quick and saves time. Well, of course, these should be kept as short instances.”

The teacher’s responses to the relevant questionnaire items (Q39, Q40, Q41, and Q42) also indicated that the teacher believed in usefulness of the L1 in L2 classrooms (see Figure 4.47).

Figure 4.47 Teacher 4: The teachers' stated beliefs about L1 use



Note: Scale: 1= Not useful at all, 2= Not very useful, 3= Useful, 4= Very useful; Q39. I believe that using students' mother tongue when giving instructions is...; Q40. I believe that using students' mother tongue to explain grammar rules is...; Q41. I believe that using students' mother tongue when teaching vocabulary is...; Q42. I believe that using students' mother tongue to establish good relations in class is...

Concerning the open questions, Teacher 4 stated that her students found oral presentations and research in English websites useful (Q44); did not find traditional grammar exercises useful (Q45) and did not like conventional grammar explanations (Q47). She also believed that her students liked debates and discussions (Q46).

When the researcher asked if she believed in consulting learners' opinions, she expressed her opinion as follows:

“Well!! Yes and no. Sometimes what they ask for is beyond what I could do for them. Like here at the IUT de Mont de Marsan the Students wanted to use computers. There was nothing I could do about it because I’m not good at computers...”

She also stated that she would like to attend a training course where she could learn more about English for specific purposes (ESP) such as specific scientific and

technological vocabulary and classroom management skills concerning students as opposed to pupils.

4.5 Conclusion

The findings obtained indicated that these learners had fairly negative dispositions towards English language learning, and they mainly had low L2 self-efficacy beliefs. The findings also suggested that the participants mostly had lower perceived L2 competence and lower perceived willingness to communicate in the L2. Another significant outcome of this study was the participants' common core belief about the importance of listening and speaking skills. The results indicated that these learners perceived language learning for mainly oral communication. The findings concerning the learners' stated beliefs about their past versus present L2 practices were also important because they indicated that, with the change of learning/teaching conditions, positive belief and attitude change could be possible. The overall data obtained did not indicate serious discordances between the teachers' stated beliefs/practices and the learners' stated beliefs/expectations. However, some elements within the teachers' stated L2 beliefs indicated some dysfunctional pedagogical beliefs about language teaching.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

This chapter includes discussion of the major findings, implications for theory and classroom practice, limitations and recommendations for further belief research.

The purpose of this mixed-methods exploratory study was to explore both the learners' and the teachers' statements of their L2 beliefs at the IUT (Institut Universitaire de Technologie), Mont de Marsan, Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour. The results obtained indicated that, although these learners had fairly negative dispositions towards the English language and English language learning, the great majority of them perceived English as a requisite for their studies and for their future careers. The findings also indicated that the participants mostly had lower perceived L2 competence and lower perceived willingness to communicate (WTC) in the L2. However, the data suggested that the learners had more positive beliefs about their present L2 situation (IUT) than they did about their past L2 situations. The learners attributed their like to their present L2 situation to external factors such as the relevance of their L2 practices to their needs and interest, and the use of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) in their language classes. The learners who expressed lower interest in the L2 attributed this feeling to internal factors such as low L2 competence and low self-efficacy beliefs.

Another significant outcome was the learners' expressions of beliefs about the importance of listening and speaking skills. The majority of the learners asserted that knowing English meant being able to understand and speak this language. The findings suggested that, despite the existence of some discordances between the learners' and

their teachers' stated beliefs, the teachers' self-reported L2 practices were mostly in concordance with these learners' stated interests and beliefs about their reasons for learning English. The data also indicated that these learners mostly preferred learner-centered and communicative language learning. However, some elements in some of the teachers' self-reported classroom practices indicated tendencies to one-way teacher-centered approaches to teaching.

5.2 Major findings and discussion

5.2.1 Influence of self-referent beliefs on L2 WTC

The findings obtained from the students' statements suggested that this group of learners mostly had negative self-referent beliefs. The majority of the learners stated that they believed that they had low L2 competence and low L2 self-efficacy beliefs. Bandura (1986) viewed the beliefs that individuals have about their capabilities as the most critical elements on human behavior and motivation. According to Bandura, these beliefs comprise a self-system, and the individual's behavior is the result of the interaction between this system and external influences. He acknowledged that self-beliefs that individuals create, and hold to be true for themselves regulate their behaviors. These self-referent beliefs are also considered to play a vital role in individuals' successes and failures (Pajares & Schunk 2002).

The learners' interview discourse also indicated that these learners had low willingness to communicate in English because of their lower perceived L2 competence and lower self-efficacy beliefs. MacIntyre *et al.* (1998) argued that the ultimate goal of any L2 learning situation should be to produce learners who seek out communication opportunities and who are willing to communicate in L2. Clément, Baker, and

MacIntyre (2003) claimed that higher perceived confidence (one's self-efficacy belief that s/he can communicate appropriately in a given situation) and low anxiety promote willingness to communicate.

The learners, in general, claimed that they did not feel much L2 anxiety during L2 oral activities; however, the majority asserted that it was important for them to perform well and not having the required skills inhibited them from being willing to engage in L2 communications. Dörnyei and Otto (1998) emphasized the role of control-beliefs. They noted that, before the learner decides to act, s/he also judges the amount of control s/he could exert to perform the task. They claimed that the learner needs to believe that s/he has the sufficient control to exert the necessary effort before setting on an action. Similarly, Ajzen (2001, 2002) explained that the learner chooses to act or not to act on the basis of his/her outcome expectation. The data suggested that these learners' lower willingness to communicate was also linked to their control beliefs. The learners' responses indicated that they lacked the necessary L2 strategies to complete L2 (oral) tasks successfully.

In the case of these IUT students, who stated that they believed that they should not make mistakes, risk-avoidance represented an obstacle for their L2 enjoyment; their willingness to engage in oral L2 communication; and consequently their progress in the L2. The learners' attitudes toward risk-taking also indicated a link with their self-concept beliefs (lack of confidence because of low achievement). The learners' interview data suggested that the learners viewed mistakes as a sign of 'bad performance' and avoided mistakes in order not to lower their L2 self-concept. There is abundant evidence to claim that risk-taking provides the learners with the opportunity to try out and test the language they are learning and this serves as valuable means to learn

(Oxford & Shearin 1994). The literature also provides us with evidence that negotiation of meaning could be a useful and effective way to acquire a language (see Part 4 for full discussion on the topic). Empirical studies have also illustrated that risk-takers, in terms of language learning, progress more quickly (see Ely 1986). These learners' low self-referent beliefs and their tendency to avoid risk-taking could be considered dysfunctional predispositions, which constituted a part in their L2 metacognitive knowledge.

5.2.2 The learners' stated beliefs and their L2 motivational orientations and approaches to L2 learning

This study has some data to suggest that these learners' orientations of motivation were directly linked with their stated beliefs (perceived goals, expectations etc). Ryan & Deci (2000) noted that beliefs, expectations, and goals play an important role on the type of motivations people have and that people have different amounts and different types of motivation. In the case of these learners, who had specific goals and expectations regarding learning English (such as its instrumental value to succeed in their studies and to get a job), their stated beliefs regarding course expectations, course content, and goals for studying English appeared to be factors influencing their levels of motivations and motivational orientations. The data obtained via this study indicated that the majority of these learners had fairly lower motivations and mainly extrinsic motivational orientations towards learning English. In short, the overall data indicated that these learners perceived the L2 as a means rather than an end itself.

The findings suggested that few learners were interested in learning English for intrinsic purposes. The data also suggested that the learners who stated that they were good at English and the ones who stated that they liked English had more intrinsic

interest in English than the ones who stated that they were not good at English and they did not like English. Educators have often viewed intrinsic motivation as an important phenomenon that acts as a catalyst resulting in high-quality learning. Entwistle (2003) argued that approaches learners adopt to their learning, for the most part, depend on learners' motivational orientations—namely intrinsic and extrinsic orientations of motivation. He stated that learners with intrinsic interest adopt a deep approach to learning. In the educational literature, deep approach to learning is described as a deep motive based on intrinsic motivation and curiosity. It is assumed that there is a personal commitment to learning and the learner relates new material to existing prior knowledge (see Part 4 for detailed discussion on importance of prior knowledge and the role it plays in effective learning) to make this new information meaningful and personal. This study discovered only one type of intrinsic interest which was common to most participants; the findings indicated that the majority of these learners had high intrinsic interest in listening to English music. Another interesting information obtained via the learners' statements was the learners' interest in the ICT. The ICT today, among many other educational advantages (see Demaizière 1996; Demaizière & Narcy-Combes 2005 for the role of ICT), is viewed as a way to reduce distances between individuals and the L2 community (see Michan 2005). According to Andersen's nativization model (1983) social distances between the L2 learner and the foreign/second language community is a central predictor of the degree of success in L2 language learning. In the same vein, Beacco (2000) acknowledged that in L2 learning conditions where L2 is not used outside of class learners perceive the L2 distant from their realities. In such cases, many specialists recommend use of the ICT as a means to fill the gap between the learners' perceptions of the distance between him/herself and the foreign/second language culture by providing learners with authentic contact with the L2. Some L2 activities such as the

Internet forums, email correspondence with individuals who are from English speaking cultures (or non-English speaking individuals who use English as a means to communicate) can be used to promote intrinsic interest in the L2 and decrease the perceived distance between the learner and the L2 culture.

Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, has been viewed as less efficient. According to the educational research findings extrinsically motivated learners use a surface approach to learning. Such learners carry out tasks because of external consequences (e.g. good grades). Thus, they do not see interconnections between the meanings and implications of what is learned. To conclude, these learners' lack of sufficient intrinsic interest in the L2 appeared to be negatively affecting their perceived enjoyment in learning the language and consequently, their levels of English.

2.2.3 Influence of the social milieu and subjective norms on the learners' beliefs and L2 attitudes

The overall data obtained from the interview and the questionnaire data suggested that the learners' social milieu was not adequately supportive of L2 learning. The learners' statements indicated that that people around them in general did not have good opinions of English speaking people and the English language itself. According to Ajzen's theory of planned behavior (TpB), normative beliefs, in other words, perceived expectations of significant others (parents, family, friends etc.), have a considerable influence on the individual's actions (Ajzen 2002). Research findings have demonstrated that beliefs that language learners hold about a target foreign language and its culture affect their attitudes towards that language (Csizér & Dörnyei 2005; Gardner 2001).

According to the learners' responses, the majority of these learners' parents could not speak English. In the same vein, the results obtained on this issue also revealed that the majority of these learners' believed that they were not good at English. Gardner 2001a asserted that if everyone within the individual's milieu is expected to learn more than one language or/and if most members of the family can speak a foreign language then it will be likely for the individual to engage in successful language learning (see Part 4 for detailed information on social psychological perspective on language acquisition). Thus, on the whole, the learners' overall responses concerning their beliefs about their L2 competences and their perceptions of the significant others' opinions about the L2 and significant others' L2 competence mostly pointed to negative beliefs.

Gardner and his associates have conducted several research studies and found significant correlation between the L2 learners' social/cultural context, and their L2 motivations and L2 achievements. The results obtained in this research work also indicated that these learners in general did not perceive high levels of L2 competence and high intrinsic interest in the L2. However, this study attempted to explore the beliefs that circulated in the learners' immediate social environment and did not attempt to cover social/cultural beliefs (social representations) within their social/cultural context. However, these learners' low intrinsic interest and low L2 competence can partly be explained by the negative cultural/social beliefs (social representations) which circulate within their social/cultural environment.

5.2.4 The learners' stated beliefs and their L2 attributions

Overall results suggested that, in general, the learners had fairly negative beliefs about learning English. However, the comparative analysis of the learners' responses

about their past versus present L2 practices indicated that these learners perceived more positive beliefs about their present L2 practices. During the interviews, some learners openly expressed that they liked English classes at the IUT more than they did in secondary/high school. The learners' responses suggested that they had more pleasure in learning English in their present L2 situation. They mainly attributed this feeling to external factors such as relevant, interesting and useful L2 practices that their present L2 situation offered. This research study is important in highlighting the significance of external factors such as teaching, the teacher and the language learning environment and their role on the learners' motivations and attitudes towards L2 learning. The results obtained on this issue were also important because they suggested that belief and attitude change could be possible with the change of conditions. According to expectancy-value models, conditions that correspond to individuals' goals and expectations influence individuals' behaviors positively and that individuals have lower motivation to engage in activities when they perceive that the unfavorable conditions remain unchanged.

The learners' other L2 related attributions mainly centered on themselves. These learners in general attributed their lower perceived L2 competence to their low L2 self-efficacy and lack of L2 ability. According to Weiner's attribution theory, motivational orientations and motivational levels can be affected by the types of attributions individuals make (e.g. a student who is attributing his/her failure in learning a foreign language to the conditions of learning, or a good/fair teacher, or the methods used etc.). The learners' interview data suggested that these learners in general had the tendency to attribute failure either to external uncontrollable factors such as teaching/learning conditions or internal uncontrollable factors such as low ability and low self-efficacy. The interview data revealed that among these nineteen students only one student

attributed his low L2 competence to lower exerted effort. Thus, these learners' tendencies to attribute their contentment and dissatisfaction to uncontrollable factors (internal and external) can be considered a dysfunctional attributional style. Dörnyei (2006) asserted that failure that is ascribed to stable uncontrollable factors such as low ability hinders future achievement behavior; whereas failure that is attributed to unstable and controllable factors such as effort is less damaging in that it can be regulated.

5.2.5 The learners' commonly stated L2 core beliefs.

Another significant outcome of this study is the participants' common core beliefs about the importance of listening and speaking skills which they also perceived as difficult skills to acquire. The results indicated that the learners did not favor traditional focus-on form approach (see Part 4 for the discussion about some disadvantages of form-focused approaches) and believed in learning through communicating. The participants of this study mostly expressed positive beliefs about communicative and learner-centered classroom practices (see Part 4 for the advantages and the role communicative learner-centered approaches play on language acquisition). The majority of them expressed that they believed that learning through listening and speaking tasks was more useful than the traditional systematic teaching of grammar (see Part 4 for the disadvantages of de-contextualized systematic grammar teaching). The findings also indicated that in their present L2 classes, these learners had listening and speaking practice and the majority of them expressed that they found these practices useful (see Part 4 for the role of learner interactions in language acquisition).

However, the learners' stated beliefs about the importance and usefulness of L2 communication skills and the fact that, in general, they did not perceive L2

skills/components difficult appeared to be contradicting the fact that they had decreased L2 willingness to communicate (WTC). The data obtained suggested that, lower perceived L2 competence, perceived importance of correct L2 performance, and self-efficacy beliefs to be interconnected and interacting features contributing to the learners' lower perceived L2 enjoyment and decreased L2 WTC. In short, globally, the data suggested that these learners lacked proper learning strategies to cope with the demands of communicative activities.

The learners' responses about L1 use suggested that, these learners mostly did not perceive L1 use a significantly useful procedure in L2 learning. Closer look into the data suggested that the learners who expressed less positive L2 beliefs and lower L2 competence perceived L1 use more useful (e.g. IDLE and MENG respectively) than the learners who expressed more positive L2 beliefs and higher L2 competence (ILE and MEG respectively).

5.2.6 The teachers' stated beliefs and their approaches to teaching

The findings obtained via the teacher questionnaire and teacher interviews suggested some discordance between the teachers' espoused theories and their actual theories-in-use. In other words, at times there were discordances between their stated beliefs and their descriptions of their classroom practices. These four teachers seemed to have slightly different pedagogical beliefs and approaches to teaching. Their statements of their beliefs also indicated that they were not clear about their pedagogical beliefs. This aspect indicated insufficient principled knowledge about theoretical/pedagogical findings and their implication on current L2 learning/teaching practices (see Part 4 for the review of SLA research).

Teacher 3's discourse indicated that the teacher mainly had a teacher-centered approach in TDs. Her description of her typical lesson indicated that her teaching was mainly based on systematic explanation of grammar rules, translation exercises and de-contextualized grammar teaching (see Part 4 for the disadvantages of using de-contextualized grammar teaching). Some elements in Teacher 1's discourse also indicated that she believed in vocabulary learning and she used reading skill practice to increase learners' vocabulary. Her description of her typical lesson revealed that she also used reading texts for text analysis (such as searching for vocabulary, grammar points to teach etc). Both Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 stated that they did translation exercises/activities in their classroom but both failed to explain the pedagogical reasons behind these practices successfully. Thus, some elements in Teacher 1 and Teacher 3's discourses indicated existence of elements which corresponded to the traditional teacher-centered language teaching. Teacher 3's lack of interest in teacher training programs could also be considered a dysfunctional teacher attitude.

Except for Teacher 2, the other three teachers were not convinced that consulting learner beliefs could help enhance classroom practices. Their discourses indicated that the belief that the teacher is the only source of information in the classroom. Their views about this issue suggested a hidden agenda indicating that they viewed language teaching mainly as a one-way flow of information (Teacher →Students).

Teacher 2's description of her classroom practices suggested that she mainly favored learner-centered classroom teaching. This teacher believed in integrating all four skills and doing her lessons on a selected theme. She also stated that she regularly consulted her students' opinions and selected classroom materials accordingly.

However, this teacher like other three teachers, was unable to give principled pedagogical explanations on why she did what she did in her language classrooms.

5.2.7 The teachers' stated beliefs and discordances between their students' stated beliefs

Overall, both the teachers and the learners expressed similar views about the learners' L2 expectations and goals. The teachers, as well as the students, expressed beliefs about usefulness of listening and speaking skills and both the student and teacher responses indicated that the L2 practices at the IUT provided the learners with these two skills. The teachers maintained that they often provided their learners with listening (except Teacher 4) and speaking skills and the data indicated that with the use of CALL facilities the learners were provided with some freedom to exercise control over their learning. However, the researcher did not have the possibility to carry out classroom observations to observe how these skills were actually practiced in the L2 classes and whether these practices corresponded to recent research findings on effective student learning (see Part 4). The data obtained from the student responses suggested that the learners found these three practices (listening, speaking and CALL) useful for L2 learning. The fact that they also found speaking tasks difficult indicated some problems of insufficient learner strategy training. The teachers' responses indicated that they perceived vocabulary, grammar and reading as the three most important L2 skills/components whereas the learners ranked listening, speaking and vocabulary as the most important in L2 learning.

Another stated belief that was common to both the teachers and the students was the learners' low L2 competence (except Teacher 1—she stated that she believed the

students were good at English). Both the teachers and the learners agreed that the learners had lower L2 competence in English.

Except for one teacher (Teacher 3), the teachers expressed that they believed that grammar teaching should focus on learners' needs and should not be taught systematically. However, the teachers expressed more favorable beliefs in the usefulness of grammar teaching than the students did. This indicated a discord between the learners' and the teachers' perceptions of grammar teaching. Grammar teaching has been one of the controversial issues in SLA research (see Part 4). The literature provides us with some research-based principles on how to approach grammar teaching (see Part 4 and also Culioli 1990 for the theory of enunciative teaching—the theory of language use).

The teachers also expressed that the learners mostly had negative attitudes towards the L2, the L2 community and L2 learning (except Teacher 1). The learners' responses indicated existence of similar negative attitudes and beliefs within their milieu. Mostly the teachers stated that their students found L2 skills/components more difficult than their students actually did. The data also indicated some discordance between the teachers and the learners' stated beliefs about L1 use. The teachers expressed stronger views in favor of L1 use than their students did.

5.3 Pedagogical implications

Two major findings of this study were the learners' common statements of beliefs about the importance of communication skills and their perceived extrinsic interest in this language. These learners' responses indicated that the learners desired to have their L2 tasks directly linked to their subjects of study and to have listening and

speaking tasks, which could help them improve their communicative skills. The learners' responses also indicated that they did not benefit from grammar-focused teaching (see Part 4 for focus-on form approach) and expressed like for more learner-centered language learning practices (see Part 4 for different language learning practices which emphasize learner-centered teaching/learning).

SLL/FLL research has demonstrated that learners are motivated to learn what they perceive as significant for them. It is commonly argued that understanding language learners' beliefs is vital in order to be able to adopt appropriate language education policies and plan and implement consistent language instruction (see Part 4 for different ideas for involvement of learner perception in language learning procedures). Relevant research on student learning has demonstrated that the learning situation has a significant impact on learners' attitudes towards the L2 they are learning (William & Burden 1999). Thus, on the basis of the findings obtained I suggest that the curriculum be designed in collaboration between the subject matter teachers and the language teachers to include content relevant to these learners' interests and subjects of study. Content-based instruction (CBI) (see Part 4 for CBI and the theories and principles this approach is based on), where topics are primarily chosen to accommodate the learners' needs and interests, provides some useful ideas on how language skills proficiency and content learning are developed in parallel (see Richards & Rodgers 2001). Content-based instruction is one of the recent trends in second/foreign language teaching (see Richards & Rodgers 2001). Differently from earlier major trends in language teaching (e.g. the grammar-translation method and the audiolingual method), content based instruction does not emphasize systematic teaching practices (e.g. the systematic teaching of grammar—the focus-on-form approach). The principles which constitute the framework of this approach are based on research done

in fundamental disciplines such as SLA research, linguistics, psychology, educational psychology, social psychology, and sociology (See Part 4 and Johnson & Johnson 2004). CBI emphasizes the importance of providing L2 learners with opportunities to interact with authentic, contextualized, and linguistically challenging materials in a communicative context and it views second/foreign language acquisition/learning as a social and cognitive activity (See Part 4 for detailed information on communicative approaches, social and cognitive activity). Within this social and cognitive activity, prior knowledge (see Part 4 for importance of prior knowledge) and strategy use are regarded as critical to the learner's L2 development and acquisition.

A theme-based approach, which is mainly used within a CBI framework (Richards & Rodgers 2001), might help these learners to get the necessary preparation and language input (relevant to their needs and interests) before they are engaged in a speaking/listening task. It is commonly argued that having prior knowledge on a topic helps understand the content better (e.g. listening) and also provides useful input before fulfilling a task (e.g. speaking). Thus, organizing language instruction around themes relevant to these learners' needs (and interests) and introducing listening/speaking tasks on the same topics may help these learners understand listening content better and increase their willingness to communicate when they engage in oral tasks. Communicative language tasks such as role-plays and interviews (on their subject matter themes-- e.g. resolving technical problems, giving technical advice etc) might be used within a CBI framework to help the learners develop necessary communication strategies (see Part 4 for role of interaction in language acquisition).

Another important outcome of this research was the learners' low L2 self-efficacy beliefs. Many learners attributed their lower L2 interest to lower L2

competence and lack of L2 ability. It is recommended that teachers use variety of task types to enhance learners' self-efficacy beliefs. Some of these are open-ended activities which allow each learner to perform at his/her own level and have room for a variety of possible learner responses. Challenging tasks which require cognitive engagement (see Part 4 for the role of cognitive engagement) are specially recommended because accomplishing them proved to improve students' self-beliefs. Activities such as trying to resolve a technical problem through discussions require both content knowledge and language ability. Having enough prior knowledge on the topic and perceiving the ability to resolve the problem in question can motivate students to engage in oral tasks of this type. Such activities (which require use of prior knowledge) promote meaningful learning and enhance L2 self-concept. Tasks that help learners develop efficient L2 strategies and show learners that ability can be enhanced when appropriate strategies are used, are useful to improve learners' self-efficacy beliefs. Creating an atmosphere where students work collaboratively rather than competing against each other and giving constructive feedback when learners do poorly are also highly recommended to enhance self-concept beliefs.

In order to increase the learners' intrinsic interest in the L2, English songs can be introduced as listening tasks. The SLL/FLL literature provides us with some valuable ideas on how to integrate music in language classrooms (Arleo 2000). The IUT's ICT facilities can be used to allow more learner-centered internet based activities such as having access to internet forums through which the learners can communicate with other university students (e.g. forums about music, cinema, technology etc). Noels *et al.*'s study (2001) discovered significant links between perceived autonomy and competence, and intrinsic orientations to language learning. Noels *et al.* claimed that learners' perceptions of their autonomy support feelings of intrinsic motivation, which

in return sustains learners' efforts at the learning task. Providing ways through which learners can exercise some control over their learning environment is also highly recommended in order to enhance both self-efficacy beliefs and intrinsic interest in learning (Bandura 2006). In short, the learners should be provided with opportunities to exercise control over their learning by increasing the autonomous aspects of L2 learning. Such an approach might also help the learners to see the L2 more than a means to get a job or good grades, but a means to have real human interaction.

Some of the implications for dealing with these learners' stated beliefs and promoting positive L2 beliefs can be summarized as follows:

1. Need to consult learner opinion (see Part 4)

The teachers should be encouraged to use instruments to identify the students' goals, expectations, needs, classroom activity preferences, and develop self-awareness in learners to appropriate their dysfunctional beliefs such as low L2 self-efficacy beliefs, dislike for the L2 and L2 culture.

2. Need for selection of pedagogically adequate materials that appeal to the learners' needs and interests to enhance self-efficacy beliefs. (see Part 4)

The teachers need to choose L2 topics that accommodate these learners' needs and interests (e.g. technical materials, topics relevant to their personal experiences, and activities which enable the learners to improve their L2 communication skills).

3. Need for focus on pragmatic meaning and context-based teaching/learning (see Part 4 and Culioli 1990)

The teachers need to primarily focus on ‘meaning’ and aim at providing opportunities for learners to ‘focus on meaning’ via the use of communicative language activities (R. Ellis 2005a, 2005b, 2005c). Recent literature emphasizes the importance of focus on pragmatic meaning and the importance of contextualized learning (see Culioli 1990). This approach also necessitates teachers to focus on grammar within context (see Part 4 and Culioli 1990).

4. Need for more principled approach to the use of ICT

The teachers need to use ICT facilities and learner-centered tasks through which the learners can exercise some control over their learning (see Demaizière 1996; Demaizière & Narcy-Combes 2005).

5. Need for learner training to enhance learning strategies and consequently self-efficacy beliefs.

The students’ low willingness to communicate can be enhanced through developing strategies and through the insertion of meaningful communicative tasks relevant to their needs and interests (see Part 4 for the discussions about the components/principles of a communicative classroom).

6. Need for professional development

The teachers need to be encouraged to show interest in professional development in order to be able to increase their awareness in language teaching, and base their professional knowledge on research-based principles.

5.4 Limitations

5.4.1 Complexity of the belief phenomenon and subliminal elements involved in the belief construct

This study aimed at eliciting the learners' statements of their L2 beliefs to gain insights about their understandings and interpretations of their L2 situations. Beliefs are proved to be linked to many different peripheral beliefs and other belief related issues such as attitudes and motivations, emotions. Although the research attempted to detect links between the learners' and the teachers' stated beliefs and various belief related issues, at times, the complexity of the belief phenomenon caused some problems of interpretation.

5.4.2 Reliance on stated L2 beliefs and not having the possibility to observe actual classroom behaviors

This study used the learners' and teachers' stated beliefs about their L2 experiences. Therefore, the data obtained through this study were merely based on the statements and the responses obtained via questionnaires and interviews. Because of some practical constraints, the researcher did not carry out classroom observations to observe the teachers' actual classroom practices. The research, therefore, failed to obtain observable data to compare the teachers'/learners' stated beliefs and their actual classroom behaviors (the teachers were not willing to have their classrooms observed).

5.4.3 Involvement of broader contextual/societal factors

Some elements in the data obtained pointed out links between the learners' lower intrinsic interest in the L2 and the social/cultural beliefs (social representations),

which circulate in their social environment. Because this research work did not cover social/cultural beliefs about English and English language learning in a larger social context (e.g. parents' L2 beliefs, L2 beliefs of other members of the society etc.), the researcher did not get sufficient information on the issue.

5.5 Recommendations for further research

5.5.1 Inclusion of classroom observation to view if ‘what is said’ and ‘what actually happens in the classroom’ concord with each other.

This study explored some invaluable data on both the learners' and the teachers' stated beliefs. The researcher feels that a belief research of this kind would be more enlightening if it could take in classroom observation as part of its research paradigm.

5.5.2 Further research on the role of the milieu is necessary in order to be able to gain better insights about the roles these factors play on learner attitudes, motivations and behaviors.

The data obtained indicated some problems with intrinsic interest. However, the present study did not succeed in obtaining sufficient data to detect real reasons behind this dysfunctional L2 phenomenon. The data obtained, to some extent, pointed to the social milieu and social/cultural beliefs (social representations). Thus, the researcher suggests further research on this topic to gain better insights about the reasons behind this phenomenon.

5.5.3. Learners' statements of their beliefs about actual classroom procedures.

The researcher also suggests that the learners' opinions should be consulted to obtain data about actual classroom materials/activities used to gain insights about the

types of L2 activities, procedures these learners perceive to be useful and interesting (e.g. use of ICT, listening/speaking activity types, teacher/learner roles etc.).

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Questionnaire Anglais

May 2005--IUT de Mont de Marsan

Cher étudiant(e),

Ce questionnaire est conçu pour étudier vos opinions au sujet de la langue anglaise et, vos expériences en tant qu'apprenant.

Svp, répondez honnêtement. Votre identité restera confidentielle.

Z. Gabillon.

Cochez (X) la réponse qui vous correspond le mieux.

1. L'anglais est utile pour mes études.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
2. L'anglais me sera utile dans ma carrière.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
3. Séjourner dans un pays de langue anglaise me serait profitable.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
4. Apprendre l'anglais est un plaisir.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
5. L'anglais est agréable à entendre.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
6. L'anglais est facile à prononcer.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
7. J'estime que l'anglais est important car il me permet de connaître les anglophones.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
8. Il est plus facile d'apprendre l'anglais lorsque les explications sont en français.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
9. L'anglais est facile à apprendre.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout

10. J'apprends l'anglais uniquement parce que j'y suis contraint	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
11. L'anglais peut m'être utile à l'occasion de voyages à l'étranger	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
12. Ecrire en anglais est plus facile que parler.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
13. Parler à de vrais anglophones est un plaisir.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
14. Traduire aide à apprendre l'anglais.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
15. Comprendre l'anglais écrit est plus facile que comprendre l'anglais parlé	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
16. Parler anglais est un plaisir.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
17. La grammaire anglaise est facile à apprendre.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
18. Apprendre le vocabulaire est très important.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
19. Apprendre la grammaire est très important.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
20. Parler est très important.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
21. Ecrire est très important.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
22. La compréhension. est très importante.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout
23. Lire est très important.	Fortement d'accord	D'accord	Pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout

Appendix B

Questionnaire Anglais

IUT de Mont de Marsan

Cher étudiant(e),

Ce questionnaire est conçu pour étudier vos opinions au sujet de la langue anglaise et, vos expériences en tant qu'apprenant.
Svp, répondez honnêtement. Votre identité restera confidentielle.

Gabillon, Juin 2006

Choisir la réponse qui vous correspond le mieux.

	Très difficile	Difficile	Pas difficile	Pas du tout difficile
En tant qu'apprenant, je trouve que comprendre l'anglais est ...	☐	☐	☐	☐
En tant qu'apprenant, je trouve que la grammaire anglaise est ...	☐	☐	☐	☐
En tant qu'apprenant, je trouve que la prononciation de l'anglais est ...	☐	☐	☐	☐
En tant qu'apprenant, je trouve que lire l'anglais est ...	☐	☐	☐	☐
En tant qu'apprenant, je trouve que parler anglais est ...	☐	☐	☐	☐
En tant qu'apprenant, je trouve qu'écrire en anglais est ...	☐	☐	☐	☐

Choisir la réponse qui vous correspond le mieux.

	Pas d'accord du tout	Plutôt pas d'accord	Plutôt d'accord	Tout à fait d'accord
L'anglais est utile pour mes études.	☐	☐	☐	☐
L'anglais me sera utile dans ma carrière.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Séjourner dans un pays de langue anglaise me serait profitable.	☐	☐	☐	☐
L'anglais est agréable à entendre.	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'estime que l'anglais est important car il me permet de connaître les anglophones.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Il est plus facile d'apprendre l'anglais lorsque les explications sont en français.	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'apprends l'anglais uniquement parce que j'y suis contraint.	☐	☐	☐	☐
L'anglais peut m'être utile à l'occasion de voyages à l'étranger.	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'aime la langue anglaise.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Apprendre la culture des anglophones serait intéressant.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Parler anglais est un plaisir.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Choisir la réponse qui vous correspond le mieux.

	Pas d'accord du tout	Plutôt pas d'accord	Plutôt d'accord	Tout à fait d'accord
Apprendre le vocabulaire anglais est très important.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Apprendre la grammaire anglaise est très important.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Parler anglais est très important.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ecrire en anglais est très important.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lire l'anglais est très important.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Comprendre l'anglais est très important.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Choisir la réponse qui vous correspond le mieux.

	Jamais	Rarement	Parfois	Souvent
Je me sens mal à l'aise si je fais des erreurs en parlant anglais.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quand je parle en anglais, je fais attention à n'utiliser que des structures grammaticales et du vocabulaire que je maîtrise.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Je lis des livres, des revues et des journaux en anglais.	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'essaie de créer des occasions de parler anglais.	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'écoute des chansons en anglais.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Je regarde des films en anglais.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Choisir la réponse qui vous correspond le mieux.

	Pas vrai	Vrai
Les gens de mon entourage estiment que connaître l'anglais est important.	☐	☐
Mes parents connaissent l'anglais.	☐	☐
Les gens de mon entourage ont une bonne opinion des anglophones.	☐	☐
Mes parents pensent que l'anglais est important.	☐	☐

Choisir la réponse qui vous correspond le mieux.

Mon anglais est ...

☐ Pas bon du tout ☐ Pas bon ☐ Bon ☐ Très bon

Choisir la réponse qui correspond le mieux à vos cours d'anglais au lycée/collège.

	Jamais	Rarement	Parfois	Souvent
Au lycée/collège, j'aimais les cours d'anglais.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Au lycée/collège, en classe d'anglais, je participais au cours.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Au lycée/collège, en classe d'anglais, j'ai abordé des sujets utiles.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Concernant votre expérience au lycée/collège.

Au lycée/collège, en classe d'anglais, j'ai fait des exercices de grammaire.

☐ Jamais ☐ Rarement ☐ Parfois ☐ Souvent

Concernant votre expérience au lycée/collège.

Les exercices de grammaires étaient...

☐ Pas du tout utile ☐ Peu utile ☐ Utile ☐ Très utile

Concernant votre expérience au lycée/collège.

Au lycée/collège, en classe d'anglais, j'ai fait des exercices pour améliorer ma compréhension de l'anglais parlé.

☐ Jamais ☐ Rarement ☐ Parfois ☐ Souvent

Concernant votre expérience au lycée/collège.

Les exercices de compréhension de l'anglais parlé étaient...

☐ Pas du tout utile ☐ Peu utile ☐ Utile ☐ Très utile

Concernant votre expérience au lycée/collège.

Au lycée/collège, en classe d'anglais, j'ai fait des exercices assistés par ordinateur.

☐ Jamais ☐ Rarement ☐ Parfois ☐ Souvent

Concernant votre expérience au lycée/collège.

Les exercices assistés par ordinateur étaient...

☐ Pas du tout utile ☐ Peu utile ☐ Utile ☐ Très utile

Concernant votre expérience au lycée/collège.

Au lycée/collège, en classe, mes professeurs d'anglais utilisaient le français.

☐ Jamais ☐ Rarement ☐ Parfois ☐ Souvent

Concernant votre expérience au lycée/collège.

Le fait que mes professeurs d'anglais utilisaient le français était...

☐ Pas du tout utile ☐ Peu utile ☐ Utile ☐ Très utile

Concernant votre expérience au lycée/collège.

Au lycée/collège, en classe d'anglais, j'avais la permission d'utiliser le français.

☐ Jamais ☐ Rarement ☐ Parfois ☐ Souvent

Concernant votre expérience au lycée/collège.

En classe d'anglais, utiliser le français était...

☐ Pas du tout utile ☐ Peu utile ☐ Utile ☐ Très utile

Concernant votre expérience au lycée/collège.

Au lycée/collège, j'ai fait des exercices pour améliorer mon anglais oral.

☐ Jamais ☐ Rarement ☐ Parfois ☐ Souvent

Concernant votre expérience au lycée/collège.

Les exercices pour améliorer mon anglais oral étaient...

☐ Pas du tout utile ☐ Peu utile ☐ Utile ☐ Très utile

Choisir la réponse qui correspond le mieux à vos cours d'anglais à l'IUT.

	Jamais	Rarement	Parfois	Souvent
A l'IUT, j'aime les cours d'anglais.	☐	☐	☐	☐
A l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, je participe au cours.	☐	☐	☐	☐
A l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, j'aborde des sujets utiles à mes études.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Concernant votre expérience à l'IUT.

A l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, je fais des exercices de grammaire.

☐ Jamais ☐ Rarement ☐ Parfois ☐ Souvent

Concernant votre expérience à l'IUT.

Les exercices de grammaires sont...

☐ Pas du tout utile ☐ Peu utile ☐ Utile ☐ Très utile

Concernant votre expérience à l'IUT.

A l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, je fais des exercices pour améliorer ma compréhension de l'anglais parlé.

☐ Jamais ☐ Rarement ☐ Parfois ☐ Souvent

Concernant votre expérience à l'IUT.

Les exercices de compréhension de l'anglais parlé sont...

☐ Pas du tout utile ☐ Peu utile ☐ Utile ☐ Très utile

Concernant votre expérience à l'IUT.

A l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, je fais des exercices assistés par ordinateur.

☐ Jamais ☐ Rarement ☐ Parfois ☐ Souvent

Concernant votre expérience à l'IUT.

Les exercices assistés par ordinateur sont...

☐ Pas du tout utile ☐ Peu utile ☐ Utile ☐ Très utile

Concernant votre expérience à l'IUT.

A l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, mes professeurs utilisent le français.

☐ Jamais ☐ Rarement ☐ Parfois ☐ Souvent

Concernant votre expérience à l'IUT.

Le fait que mes professeurs d'anglais utilisent le français est...

☐ Pas du tout utile ☐ Peu utile ☐ Utile ☐ Très utile

Concernant votre expérience à l'IUT.

A l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, j'ai la permission d'utiliser le français.

☐ Jamais ☐ Rarement ☐ Parfois ☐ Souvent

Concernant votre expérience à l'IUT.

En classe d'anglais, utiliser le français est...

☐ Pas du tout utile ☐ Peu utile ☐ Utile ☐ Très utile

Concernant votre expérience à l'IUT.

A l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, je fais des exercices pour améliorer mon anglais oral.

☐ Jamais ☐ Rarement ☐ Parfois ☐ Souvent

Concernant votre expérience à l'IUT.

Les exercices pour améliorer mon anglais oral sont...

☐ Pas du tout utile ☐ Peu utile ☐ Utile ☐ Très utile

Votre formation

☐ GTR 1 ☐ GTR Licence ☐ BIO 2 ☐ SGM 1 ☐ SGM Licence
☐ GTR 2 ☐ BIO 1 ☐ BIO Licence ☐ SGM 2

Nombre d'années d'étude d'anglais

Sexe

☐ H ☐ F

Age

Nationalité

☐ Français ☐ Etranger

Merci

Appendix C

Questionnaire Anglais

Juin 2006--IUT de Mont de Marsan

Cher étudiant(e),

Ce questionnaire est conçu pour étudier vos opinions au sujet de la langue anglaise et, vos expériences en tant qu'apprenant.

Svp, répondez honnêtement. Votre identité restera confidentielle.

Z. Gabillon.

1. En tant qu'apprenant, je trouve que comprendre l'anglais est ... ☐ 1. Très difficile ☐ 2. Difficile ☐ 3. Pas difficile ☐ 4. Pas du tout difficile	6. En tant qu'apprenant, je trouve qu'écrire en anglais est ... ☐ 1. Très difficile ☐ 2. Difficile ☐ 3. Pas difficile ☐ 4. Pas du tout difficile
2. En tant qu'apprenant, je trouve que la grammaire anglaise est ... ☐ 1. Très difficile ☐ 2. Difficile ☐ 3. Pas difficile ☐ 4. Pas du tout difficile	7. L'anglais est utile pour mes études. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord
3. En tant qu'apprenant, je trouve que la prononciation de l'anglais est ... ☐ 1. Très difficile ☐ 2. Difficile ☐ 3. Pas difficile ☐ 4. Pas du tout difficile	8. L'anglais me sera utile dans ma carrière. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord
4. En tant qu'apprenant, je trouve que lire l'anglais est ... ☐ 1. Très difficile ☐ 2. Difficile ☐ 3. Pas difficile ☐ 4. Pas du tout difficile	9. Séjourner dans un pays de langue anglaise me serait profitable. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord
5. En tant qu'apprenant, je trouve que parler anglais est ... ☐ 1. Très difficile ☐ 2. Difficile ☐ 3. Pas difficile ☐ 4. Pas du tout difficile	10. L'anglais est agréable à entendre. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord
	11. J'estime que l'anglais est important car il me permet de connaître les anglophones. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord

12. Il est plus facile d'apprendre l'anglais lorsque les explications sont en français. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord	24. Je me sens mal à l'aise si je fais des erreurs en parlant anglais. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent
13. J'apprends l'anglais uniquement parce que j'y suis contraint. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord	25. Quand je parle en anglais, je fais attention à n'utiliser que des structures grammaticales et du vocabulaire que je maîtrise. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent
14. L'anglais peut m'être utile à l'occasion de voyages à l'étranger. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord	26. Je lis des livres, des revues et des journaux en anglais. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent
15. J'aime la langue anglaise. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord	27. J'essaie de créer des occasions de parler anglais. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent
16. Apprendre la culture des anglophones serait intéressant. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord	28. J'écoute des chansons en anglais. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent
17. Parler anglais est un plaisir. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord	29. Je regarde des films en anglais. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent
18. Apprendre le vocabulaire anglais est très important. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord	30. Mon anglais est ... ☐ 1. Pas bon du tout ☐ 2. Pas bon ☐ 3. Bon ☐ 4. Très bon
19. Apprendre la grammaire anglaise est très important. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord	31. Les gens de mon entourage estiment que connaître l'anglais est important. ☐ 1. Pas vrai ☐ 2. Vrai
20. Parler anglais est très important. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord	32. Mes parents connaissent l'anglais. ☐ 1. Pas vrai ☐ 2. Vrai
21. Ecrire en anglais est très important. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord	33. Les gens de mon entourage ont une bonne opinion des anglophones. ☐ 1. Pas vrai ☐ 2. Vrai
22. Lire l'anglais est très important. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord	34. Mes parents pensent que l'anglais est important. ☐ 1. Pas vrai ☐ 2. Vrai
23. Comprendre l'anglais est très important. ☐ 1. Pas d'accord du tout ☐ 2. Plutôt pas d'accord ☐ 3. Plutôt d'accord ☐ 4. Tout à fait d'accord	35. Au lycée/collège, j'aimais les cours d'anglais. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent

36. Au lycée/collège, en classe d'anglais, je participais au cours. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent 37. Au lycée/collège, en classe d'anglais, j'ai abordé des sujets utiles. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent 38. Au lycée/collège, en classe d'anglais, j'ai fait des exercices de grammaire. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent 39. Les exercices de grammaires étaient... ☐ 1. Pas du tout utile ☐ 2. Peu utile ☐ 3. Utile ☐ 4. Très utile <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q38=Rarement; ou Parfois; ou; Souvent</i> 40. Au lycée/collège, en classe d'anglais, j'ai fait des exercices pour améliorer ma compréhension de l'anglais parlé. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent 41. Les exercices de compréhension de l'anglais parlé étaient... ☐ 1. Pas du tout utile ☐ 2. Peu utile ☐ 3. Utile ☐ 4. Très utile <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q40=Rarement; ou Parfois; ou; Souvent</i> 42. Au lycée/collège, en classe d'anglais, j'ai fait des exercices assistés par ordinateur. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent 43. Les exercices assistés par ordinateur étaient... ☐ 1. Pas du tout utile ☐ 2. Peu utile ☐ 3. Utile ☐ 4. Très utile <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q42=Rarement; ou Parfois; ou; Souvent</i> 44. Au lycée/collège, en classe, mes professeurs d'anglais utilisaient le français. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent	45. Le fait que mes professeurs d'anglais utilisaient le français était... ☐ 1. Pas du tout utile ☐ 2. Peu utile ☐ 3. Utile ☐ 4. Très utile <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q44=Rarement; ou Parfois; ou; Souvent</i> 46. Au lycée/collège, en classe d'anglais, j'avais la permission d'utiliser le français. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent 47. En classe d'anglais, utiliser le français était... ☐ 1. Pas du tout utile ☐ 2. Peu utile ☐ 3. Utile ☐ 4. Très utile <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q46=Rarement; ou Parfois; ou; Souvent</i> 48. Au lycée/collège, j'ai fait des exercices pour améliorer mon anglais oral. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent 49. Les exercices pour améliorer mon anglais oral étaient... ☐ 1. Pas du tout utile ☐ 2. Peu utile ☐ 3. Utile ☐ 4. Très utile <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q48=Rarement; ou Parfois; ou; Souvent</i> 50. À l'IUT, j'aime les cours d'anglais. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent 51. À l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, je participe au cours. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent 52. À l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, j'aborde des sujets utiles à mes études. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent 53. À l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, je fais des exercices de grammaire. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent

54. Les exercices de grammaires sont... ☐ 1. Pas du tout utile ☐ 2. Peu utile ☐ 3. Utile ☐ 4. Très utile <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q53=Rarement; ou Parfois; ou; Souvent</i> 55. À l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, je fais des exercices pour améliorer ma compréhension de l'anglais parlé. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent 56. Les exercices de compréhension de l'anglais parlé sont... ☐ 1. Pas du tout utile ☐ 2. Peu utile ☐ 3. Utile ☐ 4. Très utile <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q55=Rarement; ou Parfois; ou; Souvent</i> 57. À l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, je fais des exercices assistés par ordinateur. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent ☐ 1. Pas du tout utile ☐ 2. Peu utile ☐ 3. Utile ☐ 4. Très utile <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q56=Rarement; ou Parfois; ou; Souvent</i> 58. Les exercices assistés par ordinateur sont... ☐ 1. Pas du tout utile ☐ 2. Peu utile ☐ 3. Utile ☐ 4. Très utile <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q57=Rarement; ou Parfois; ou; Souvent</i> 59. À l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, mes professeurs utilisent le français. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent 60. Le fait que mes professeurs d'anglais utilisent le français est... ☐ 1. Pas du tout utile ☐ 2. Peu utile ☐ 3. Utile ☐ 4. Très utile <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q59=Rarement; ou Parfois; ou; Souvent</i>	61. À l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, j'ai la permission d'utiliser le français. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent 62. En classe d'anglais, utiliser le français est... ☐ 1. Pas du tout utile ☐ 2. Peu utile ☐ 3. Utile ☐ 4. Très utile <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q61=Rarement; ou Parfois; ou; Souvent</i> 63. À l'IUT, en classe d'anglais, je fais des exercices pour améliorer mon anglais oral. ☐ 1. Jamais ☐ 2. Rarement ☐ 3. Parfois ☐ 4. Souvent 64. Les exercices pour améliorer mon anglais oral sont... ☐ 1. Pas du tout utile ☐ 2. Peu utile ☐ 3. Utile ☐ 4. Très utile <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q63=Rarement; ou Parfois; ou; Souvent</i> 65. Age _____ 66. Sexe ☐ 1. H ☐ 2. F 67. Nationalité ☐ 1. Français ☐ 2. Etranger 68. Nombre d'années d'étude d'anglais _____ 69. Votre formation ☐ 1. GTR 1 ☐ 2. GTR 2 ☐ 3. GTR Licence ☐ 4. BIO 1 ☐ 5. BIO 2 ☐ 6. BIO Licence ☐ 7. SGM 1 ☐ 8. SGM 2 ☐ 9. SGM Licence

Appendix D

Learner Interview Questions

English	French
1. What does knowing English mean to you?	1. Selon vous, que signifie savoir l'anglais ?
2. Do you like English?	2. Aimez vous l'anglais ?
3. Did you like English when you were at collège/lycée?	3. Aimiez vous l'anglais lorsque vous étiez au collège/lycée ?
4. Do you think your English is good?	4. Pensez vous que votre niveau d'anglais est bon ?
5. As a learner which language skill/component do you find the most difficult? (e.g. listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary etc.)	5. En tant qu'apprenant, quel aspect d'une langue trouvez vous le plus difficile à maîtriser (compréhension, expression, lecture, écriture, grammaire, prononciation, vocabulaire) ?
6. Which language skill/component do you think is the most important? (e.g. listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary etc.)	6. Selon vous, quel aspect d'une langue est le plus important (compréhension, expression, lecture, écriture, grammaire, prononciation, vocabulaire) ?
7. Is English an important language for you to learn?	7. Est-ce que l'anglais est une langue importante pour vous ?
8. Do you like talking in English?	8. Aimez vous parler en Anglais ?
9. Do you feel comfortable when you speak in English?	9. Etes vous à l'aise lorsque vous parlez en anglais ?
10. Do your parents know English?	10. Est-ce que vos parents connaissent l'anglais ?
11. What is your opinion about English language teaching at the IUT? What can we do to make English classes more useful/interesting for you?	11. Quelle est votre opinion au sujet de l'enseignement de l'anglais à l'IUT ? Que pourrions-nous faire pour rendre l'anglais plus utile/intéressant pour vous ?

Appendix E

Teacher Questionnaire

June 2006—IUT de Mont de Marsan

Dear colleague,

This questionnaire has been designed to investigate your opinions regarding your language teaching experience at the IUT de Mont de Marsan. Therefore, your co-operation would be much appreciated. Please, answer honestly. Your identity will remain confidential.

Z. Gabillon

1. I use authentic reading texts. ☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Rarely ☐ 3. Sometimes ☐ 4. Often	10. I do writing activities. ☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Rarely ☐ 3. Sometimes ☐ 4. Often
2. I use technical/scientific reading texts. ☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Rarely ☐ 3. Sometimes ☐ 4. Often	11. I do translation exercises. ☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Rarely ☐ 3. Sometimes ☐ 4. Often
3. I plan grammar points in advance and teach them systematically. ☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Rarely ☐ 3. Sometimes ☐ 4. Often	12. I use the language lab. ☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Rarely ☐ 3. Sometimes ☐ 4. Often
4. I teach grammar points spontaneously as they appear. ☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Rarely ☐ 3. Sometimes ☐ 4. Often	13. I do group work and pair work. ☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Rarely ☐ 3. Sometimes ☐ 4. Often
5. I explain grammar rules. ☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Rarely ☐ 3. Sometimes ☐ 4. Often	14. English is important for my students because it will be useful for their future careers. ☐ 1. Strongly disagree ☐ 2. Disagree ☐ 3. Agree ☐ 4. Strongly agree
6. I let my students deduce grammar rules themselves. ☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Rarely ☐ 3. Sometimes ☐ 4. Often	15. English is important for my students because it is useful for their studies. ☐ 1. Strongly disagree ☐ 2. Disagree ☐ 3. Agree ☐ 4. Strongly agree
7. I do listening activities. ☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Rarely ☐ 3. Sometimes ☐ 4. Often	16. English is important for my students because it is/will be useful when they travel. ☐ 1. Strongly disagree ☐ 2. Disagree ☐ 3. Agree ☐ 4. Strongly agree
8. I do speaking activities. ☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Rarely ☐ 3. Sometimes ☐ 4. Often	17. English is important for my students because it will help them know more about British/American life and culture. ☐ 1. Strongly disagree ☐ 2. Disagree ☐ 3. Agree ☐ 4. Strongly agree
9. I teach vocabulary by using French equivalents. ☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Rarely ☐ 3. Sometimes ☐ 4. Often	

18. My students are good at English. ☐ 1. Strongly disagree ☐ 2. Disagree ☐ 3. Agree ☐ 4. Strongly agree	28. I believe that reading skill is... ☐ 1. Not important ☐ 2. Not very important ☐ 3. Important ☐ 4. Very important
19. My students wouldn't choose to learn English if it weren't a compulsory part of their curriculum. ☐ 1. Strongly disagree ☐ 2. Disagree ☐ 3. Agree ☐ 4. Strongly agree	29. I believe that speaking skill is... ☐ 1. Not important ☐ 2. Not very important ☐ 3. Important ☐ 4. Very important
20. My students like English classes. ☐ 1. Strongly disagree ☐ 2. Disagree ☐ 3. Agree ☐ 4. Strongly agree	30. I believe that listening skill is... ☐ 1. Not important ☐ 2. Not very important ☐ 3. Important ☐ 4. Very important
21. My students are willing to communicate in English. ☐ 1. Strongly disagree ☐ 2. Disagree ☐ 3. Agree ☐ 4. Strongly agree	31. I believe that writing skill is... ☐ 1. Not important ☐ 2. Not very important ☐ 3. Important ☐ 4. Very important
22. My students enjoy working in groups/pairs. ☐ 1. Strongly disagree ☐ 2. Disagree ☐ 3. Agree ☐ 4. Strongly agree	32. I believe that doing translation exercises is... ☐ 1. Not important ☐ 2. Not very important ☐ 3. Important ☐ 4. Very important
23. My students would like me to use their mother tongue in their English classes. ☐ 1. Strongly disagree ☐ 2. Disagree ☐ 3. Agree ☐ 4. Strongly agree	33. My students find reading in English... ☐ 1. Very difficult ☐ 2. Difficult ☐ 3. Not difficult ☐ 4. Not difficult at all
24. My students have good opinion of American/British people. ☐ 1. Strongly disagree ☐ 2. Disagree ☐ 3. Agree ☐ 4. Strongly agree	34. My students find writing in English... ☐ 1. Very difficult ☐ 2. Difficult ☐ 3. Not difficult ☐ 4. Not difficult at all
25. My students have positive attitudes towards the English language. ☐ 1. Strongly disagree ☐ 2. Disagree ☐ 3. Agree ☐ 4. Strongly agree	35. My students find understanding spoken English... ☐ 1. Very difficult ☐ 2. Difficult ☐ 3. Not difficult ☐ 4. Not difficult at all
26. I believe that vocabulary learning is... ☐ 1. Not important ☐ 2. Not very important ☐ 3. Important ☐ 4. Very important	36. My students find speaking in English... ☐ 1. Very difficult ☐ 2. Difficult ☐ 3. Not difficult ☐ 4. Not difficult at all
27. I believe that grammar learning is... ☐ 1. Not important ☐ 2. Not very important ☐ 3. Important ☐ 4. Very important	37. My students find English pronunciation... ☐ 1. Very difficult ☐ 2. Difficult ☐ 3. Not difficult ☐ 4. Not difficult at all
	38. My students find English grammar... ☐ 1. Very difficult ☐ 2. Difficult ☐ 3. Not difficult ☐ 4. Not difficult at all

39. I believe that using students' mother tongue when giving instructions is... ☐ 1. Not useful at all ☐ 2. Not very useful ☐ 3. Useful ☐ 4. Very useful	48. Have you ever attended an in-service training programme for English language teachers? ☐ 1. ☐ 2. Yes No
40. I believe that using students' mother tongue to explain grammar rules is... ☐ 1. Not useful at all ☐ 2. Not very useful ☐ 3. Useful ☐ 4. Very useful	49. What was it/were they about? ** _____ _____ <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q48 = "Yes"</i>
41. I believe that using students' mother tongue when teaching vocabulary is... ☐ 1. Not useful at all ☐ 2. Not very useful ☐ 3. Useful ☐ 4. Very useful	50. How long did it/they last? ** _____ _____ <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q48 = "Yes"</i>
42. I believe that using students' mother tongue to establish good relations in class is... ☐ 1. Not useful at all ☐ 2. Not very useful ☐ 3. Useful ☐ 4. Very useful	51. Was it/were they useful? ** _____ _____ <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q48 = "Yes"</i>
43. Are there other times when you believe it can be useful to use the students' mother tongue in class? Use the box below to write your answer down. _____ _____	52. Would you like to attend an (another) in-service training programme for English language teachers? ☐ 1. ☐ 2. Yes No
44. My students find these activities useful. _____ _____	53. What would you like it to be about? ** _____ _____ <i>**La question n'est pertinente que si Q52 = "Yes"</i>
45. My students don't find these activities useful. _____ _____	54. Which of the following groups of students have you taught this year (2005-2006)? You may select more than one option. ** ☐ 1. GTR1 ☐ 2. GTR2 ☐ 3. GTR Licence ☐ 4. Bio1 ☐ 5. Bio2 ☐ 6. Bio Licence ☐ 7. SGM1 ☐ 8. SGM2 ☐ 9. SGM Licence <i>**Vous pouvez cocher plusieurs cases.</i>
46. My students like these activities. _____ _____	55. Years of English language teaching experience: _____
47. My students don't like these activities. _____ _____	

Appendix F

Teacher Interviews

English	French
1. Do you think that the majority of your SS like English classes? 2. What do you think are the major motivation for your learners' to learn English? 3. Would they learn want to learn English even if it were not a compulsory part of their school education? 4. Which language skills/language learning components do you think are the most important for them to learn? (e.g. reading, speaking, writing, listening, grammar, vocabulary) 5. Which skills/components do you think your students find the most difficult? 6. Do you think grammar teaching is important? 7. Do you think it is necessary to use learners' mother tongue? 8. In which occasions do you use the learners' mother tongue? Could you give a few examples? 9. Can you describe a typical lesson of yours? 10. Do you think it is important to consult learners' opinions before shaping language instruction? 11. Do you think that your students have positive opinions about the English language and English speaking people? What makes you think that? 12. Do you think that French people in general have positive opinions about the English language, English language speaking people in general and learning English? 13. As a language teacher is there anything that you would like to know more about to improve your language instruction?	1. Pensez-vous que la majorité de vos étudiants aime les cours d'anglais ? 2. Quelles sont à votre avis les principales motivations de vos apprenants pour apprendre l'anglais ? 3. Souhaiteraient-ils apprendre l'anglais si ce n'était pas obligatoire dans leur cursus éducatif ? 4. Selon vous, quels sont les éléments les plus importants à acquérir ? (lire, parler, écrire, écouter, grammaire, vocabulaire) ? 5. Selon vous, quels sont les aspects que vos étudiants trouvent le plus difficiles ? 6. Pensez-vous qu'enseigner la grammaire est important ? 7. Pensez-vous qu'il est nécessaire d'utiliser la langue maternelle des apprenants ? 8. Dans quelles occasions utilisez-vous la langue maternelle des apprenants ? Pourriez-vous donner quelques exemples ? 9. Pourriez-vous décrire une leçon type dispensée par vous ? 10. Pensez-vous que c'est important de consulter l'opinion des apprenants avant de définir votre stratégie de cours ? 11. Pensez-vous que vos étudiants ont une opinion positive au sujet de l'anglais et des anglophones ? Sur quoi basez vous votre impression ? 12. Pensez-vous que les français en général ont une opinion positive au sujet de l'anglais, des anglophones 13. En tant qu'enseignant de langue, y aurait-il quelque chose que vous voudriez approfondir afin d'améliorer votre enseignement ?

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