

CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

III.i. RATIONALE

Learning a second language is a complex process that involves interaction among socio-linguistic, psycholinguistic, interpersonal, personal as well as cultural factors. In spite of advances in teaching methodologies, and development of sophisticated teaching aids, striking differences are seen across students in the level of the competencies achieved. Most researchers would agree that the student himself is the pivotal determiner of the success or failure of teaching and learning a language.

Of learner factors considered influential in the success of foreign \second language learning attitudes and motivation are considered the strongest predictors of success or failure . A large number of studies (Gardner 1968, Gardner and Lambert 1972; Gardner 1985, Oxford and Nyikos 1989) stress the importance of attitudes and motivation for the efficient learning of a second

language, and the subsequent interactional contacts with people who speak that language.

Language learning strategies have emerged as an equally important factor in language learning and teaching. From a broad social psychological perspective, learning strategies can be seen as actions taken by the learner to facilitate language learning, communication, as well as, social interaction. However, these strategies must be recognized as a part of a larger system, which includes several other variables on which the use and effectiveness of strategies depend.

The present study is an attempt to examine the significance of the attitudinal and motivational variables of the present sample and to describe the relationships between these variables in the present ESL context. For the purpose of the current work the levels of attitudes and motivation (with their components) are considered in light of the learning strategy use. The basic purpose for learning strategies is to make English language learning less difficult and more effective. Students' manipulation of available academic resources and social interaction forms the base line of language learning strategies.

In the context of the present study the researcher opts for a large scale study for exploring what the real situation is, discover

the significance of the variables studied and thus examine the relationships between these variables. By following this approach the researcher aims at describing areas in which further research can be carried out. Describing what the situation in reality is will certainly help in creating a general picture without having to take the risk of over-generalization. In contrast, a longitudinal study may provide a detailed description of a small sample the outcome of which may not be applicable to the larger population.

Helping the students to have strong motivation and positive attitudes would certainly enable them identify their need for language learning. Modifying students' outlook towards the target language and its speakers would help them adjust to the host culture and avail of the benefits of living and learning in that culture. As a result they can become active participants rather than passive receptors of the language. In addition, this process will help students take charge of their own learning and make the right decisions according to their needs and demands of the situation.

III.ii. ASSUMPTIONS

The present study is based on the following assumptions :

- 1) Attitudes in language learning are thoughts or feelings directed towards learning the language, towards the speakers of the language and towards the language learning environment.

- 2) Motivation determines the amount of effort invested in language learning, hence it creates the drive for perseverance in learning. Motivation includes; integrative motivation; instrumental motivation; motivational intensity.
- 3) Learning strategies are steps and actions taken by the learner at all levels to facilitate effective language learning.
- 4) Communicative competence is a form of social adjustment, hence it indicates social competence.
- 5) High degree of attitudes, motivation and learning strategies exert positive influence on one another.

III.iii. VARIABLES

The present study attempts to investigate the degree and intensity of the following variables, as well as, examine the relationships among them. These variables are :

1. ATTITUDES(ATT.TOT)

- a) Attitudes towards native speakers of English (ATT.NE)
- b) Attitudes towards learning the English language (ATT.LE)
- c) Attitudes towards English in the Indian ESL context and its speakers (ATT.ESL)

2. MOTIVATION (MOT.TOT)

- a) Motivational intensity (MOT.INTSY)

- b) Integrative motivation (INTG.MOT)
- c) Instrumental motivation (INST.MOT)

3. LEARNING STRATEGIES (L.St)

4. COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE (COMM.COMP)

1. ATTITUDES :

Many studies have pointed to the importance of attitudes for effective learning of a second or foreign language, and for subsequent intercultural contact with speakers of the same language.

Attitudes are multidimensional involving many facets. In the following section the researcher will deal with the three dimensions of attitudes which are included in the present work.

a) Attitudes towards the native speakers of English :

A common feature of learning English as a foreign language at school pertains to the fact that, students often do not have sufficient contact with the native speakers. However, studying English at school for almost seven years, with exposure to the native English culture through text books and mass media, would have resulted in attitude formation towards the native speakers of

English. Another influence is in the status of the English language as an international language. Littlewood (1989) maintains that learning a language in classroom setting results in attitudes that are related to the experiences in the classroom. These experiences create an image of the Language community derived from the teacher and the material through which language is taught.

b) Attitudes towards learning the English language :

It is one of the most important attitudinal factors in language learning. In many studies (Spolsky, 1969; Gardner and Lambert 1972; Gardner 1985) the importance of this variable is emphasised in terms of explaining the degree of proficiency and level of achievement.

Realizing the importance of learning the English language will certainly lead to a need for mastering the language. At the same time personal interest in the language will have to be accompanied by many other factors and variables that facilitate language learning.

c) Attitudes towards ESL in India and its speakers:

A learner with a favourable disposition towards the target language and its community is most likely to seek opportunities for interacting with that community

Earlier studies on second language learning (Spolsky 1969; Clement, et. la. 1977; Gardner 1985) reaffirm the significant role played by the positive attitudes towards the language and its speakers. This type of attitude is perceived as a major factor in explaining the level of achievement and degree of proficiency in second language learning.

2. MOTIVATION :

Motivation is identified as the single most influential factor in learning a new language in terms of proficiency and level of achievement (Gardner 1968, 1986; Gardner and Lambert 1972). Influence of motivation on the choice and use of learning strategies is defined by Oxford and Nyikas (1989). Motivation can be of two types : integrative and instrumental.

a) Integrative motivation :

The term integrative motivation refers to a genuine interest in the second language community. The learner wants to learn the second language in order to communicate with the target community more satisfactorily and to gain closer contact with the target culture.

Thus an integrative motivation for the second language may involve attachment, affiliation and identification with language group and their cultural activities.

Studies conducted on integrative motivation (Gardner and Lambert 1959, 1972; Gardner 1985) conclude that integrativeness plays an important role in terms of perception of one's effort, acquisition of the second language and level of proficiency achieved.

b) Instrumental motivation :

Instrumental motivation occurs when the goal for learning the second language is functional. That is, when the learner is more interested in how the second language can be a useful instrument towards furthering one's career, gaining necessary qualification, gaining high status, etc.

Instrumental motivation reflects utilitarian, pragmatic motives. It is characterised by a desire to gain social recognition or economic advantages through knowledge of a foreign language (Gardner and Lambert 1972:14). This type of motivation is found to correlate best with success in second language learning.

c) Motivational intensity :

Motivational intensity refers to the perseverance and effort the learner is willing to put in learning the second language. Knowing the type of motivation the students have is important for understanding their process of language learning. It is equally important to measure the degree of motivational intensity. Learners

may express a high degree of motivation, but are not willing to expend efforts for achieving the objective of learning the second language. In such case motivation is restricted to feelings and motives that are not translated into action.

Motivation is defined by McDonough (1981) as the "drive" that leads to action. Goals and objectives of all kinds prompt actions that will gradually lead in return to satisfying these goals and objectives. Therefore, it is perceived that motivational intensity relates to the pragmatic steps of reinforcing language learning. Learning strategies in this study are perceived in the light of the translated actions that are related to the drive motivation is believed to ignite.

3) LEARNING STRATEGIES :

Learning strategies are steps taken by the learner to aid the acquisition, storage, and retrieval of information (Rigney 1978). Learning strategies are used by successful and unsuccessful language learners (Vann and Abraham 1990). They also have considerable potential for enhancing the development of oral, structural and communicative skills in English as a second language (Nyikos and Oxford 1993).

The learning strategies identified by O'Maley et.al. (1985) through interviews, are classified in three general categories :

- a) Metacognitive: learners are aware of their own thinking and learning and they plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning endeavor.
- b) Cognitive: learners work with and manipulate the task, material, language input.
- c) Social and affective: learners interact with the teacher or other students to solve a problem or exercise some kind of effective control over their own learning behaviour.

Learning strategies are useful and applicable in both formal academic settings and informal non-academic environment. However, most of the research work on learning strategies is concerned with the formal academic setting. Therefore, the present study is concerned with learning strategies as developed through contact and communication in formal/ informal setting.

4) COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE :

Communicative competence is often equated with making use language opportunities (Hymes 1972). It is the competence or the ability of the learner to produce grammatically correct sentences in the target language that are appropriate to the specific setting \

situation. Communicative competence is looked at as the innate knowledge of the language system coupled with performance, which is the overt concrete manifestation or realization of competence.

Canale and Swain (1980) explain communicative competence in terms of three competencies: grammatical competence, socio-linguistic competence and strategic competence. The development of these competencies eventually leads to an organized coherent construction of form and meaning.

The theory of communicative competence postulates the communicative learning approach. This approach implicitly encourages the students to take responsibility for their own learning. It also encourages the use of a wide range of learning strategies. The lack of learning strategies may cause a situation in which a student with firm knowledge of grammar and vocabulary may get stuck and is unable to carry out communicative intent.

III.iv. DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESEARCH TOOL

A crucial part of the research work is the construction of a research tool that can yield the required and true data in the best way possible. It is also necessary especially when students are involved that the research tool be direct, clear and interesting.

In developing the research tool for the present study, the researcher had to take a few limiting factors into consideration :
First, Attitudes and motivation are latent in nature and are aspects of behaviour. The measuring tool has to be specific and should avoid generality. A specific attitude under investigation may include other types of attitudes. Therefore, the tool ought to address these attitudes clearly. In addition, the large number of variables taken up in the present study required a systematic, organized and a structured approach for data collection.

Second, Given the large number of the sample and the distance between the locations of the students in different cities, it was perceived as important by the researcher to develop a tool that could be administered with ease and speed. Besides the tool must insure maximum involvement.

A research tool in the form of a questionnaire was found suitable for achieving the objectives of the present study. However,

questionnaires have advantages that concern the contents, and some disadvantages which are procedural in regard to administering the tool. These disadvantages could be overcome.

Advantages of a questionnaire are :

1. Questionnaires are self-administered and can be given to large groups at the same time.
2. When anonymity is assured, subjects tend to share information of sensitive nature more easily.
3. Less expensive to administer than other procedures such as interviews.
4. The data are more uniform and standard, since the same questionnaire is given to all subjects.
5. Since questionnaires are usually given to all subjects, at the same time the data are more accurate.

Disadvantages of questionnaires are:

1. A relatively low response rate especially for mailed questionnaires.
2. Questionnaires are inappropriate for subjects who can not read or write, or for subjects who are weak in the language in which questionnaires are constructed.

3. Statements of questionnaires carry the risk of being misunderstood, especially when immediate clarification is not provided by the researcher.

Overcoming the disadvantages of the questionnaire in the present study will be discussed later in administration of the tool.

For ensuring clarity of the research tool, all statements along with the instructions were translated into Arabic and were provided alongside the English version (Appendix,b). This procedure was appreciated by all respondents, as it made comprehension and understanding of the tool clearer, as a results of which responding was easier.

III.v. CONSTRUCTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

For measuring the attitudinal and motivational variables, the researcher draws upon the research conducted by Gardner (1985), Gardner and Lambert (1972). Measuring the variables of attitudes and motivation proves effective using Likert-type procedure (Gardner, Lalonde and Moorcroft, 1985; Gardner and MacIntyre, 1991; MacIntyre 1993). Evidence from these studies suggests that as far as internal consistency and reliability are concerned, Likert assessments provide comparable measures.

The language learning strategy scale developed by the researcher includes 31 items. Items are constructed in Likert - type format. Items are drawn from systematic lists identified by earlier research by Rubin (1975), Stern (1975), O'Malley, et.al. (1985). The five point scoring system followed for attitudinal motivational scales is also adopted for the learning strategy scale. However, responses are changed to suite the objective of measuring the frequency of learning strategy use. Responses range from "Always" to "Never".

The students' self-rating on the communicative competence scale in English is measured by scores on the communicative competence scale developed by Vanikar and Palia (1989). The scale stresses the following aspects; participation, persuasiveness, presentation of self, tolerance, adaptability, risk taking, responsibility. These aspects focus on interpersonal / socio-linguistic skills in English (Palia, 1989).

III.vi. DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOL & SCORING SCHEME

For measuring the degree of attitudes and motivation, as well as the frequency of learning strategy use, a Likert-type five point scale was developed by the researcher.(Appendix,a)

The questionnaire consists of the following sections :

1. ATTITUDES (ATT.TOT). This measure consists of 41 items. It includes the total items of three attitudinal measures: attitudes towards native speakers of English; attitudes towards learning the English language; and attitudes towards the Indian ESL environment. A total score of (165 - 205) indicates an overall positive attitude. The three attitudinal measures are :

a) ATTITUDES TOWARDS NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH (ATT.NE). This measure consists of 9 items measuring the student perception of the native speakers of English. A high score of (37 - 45) indicates favourable attitudes.

b) ATTITUDES TOWARDS LEARNING ENGLISH (ATT.LE). In this measure the 5 items included aim at measuring the desire to learn English. A high score of (20 - 25) means a strong desire to learn the English language.

c) ATTITUDES TOWARDS ESL IN INDIA (ATT.ESL). The items included in this measure are 27 probing into the student's view of the Indian variety of English and their perceptions of the English speaking Indians. A score of (108 - 135) indicates favourable attitudes.

2. MOTIVATION (MOT.TOT). This scale is developed to measure the degree of students' motivation for learning English. It includes three

measures : motivational intensity: integrative motivation, and: instrumental motivation. The total number of items of all the three measures are 28. A high score of (112 - 140) indicates an overall high degree of motivation. The motivation scale includes the following measures:

a) MOTIVATIONAL INTENSITY (MOT.INTSY): A 20 item scale measuring the intensity of students' motivation, in terms of looking for opportunities to use English and effort extended for learning, willingness to inter into situations for learning English. A score of (80 - 100) reflects a high degree of motivational intensity.

b) INTIGRATIVE MOTIVATION (INTG.MOT): This scale consists of 4 items focussing on the importance of learning English for social interaction and interest in the host culture and its people. Being integratively motivated is indicated by high score of (15 - 20).

c) INSTRUMENTAL MOTIVATION (INST.MOT): In this measure 4 items are included. Emphasis is given to the importance of learning English for utilitarian purposes, such as furthering one's career, gaining social status, etc. A score of (15 - 20) reflects a high degree of instrumentality.

3. LEARNING STRATEGIES (L.St): Students are presented with 31 items, five-point scale with responses ranging from Always to Never.

The scale is developed to measure the frequency of learning strategy use. On this scale, a high score of (125 - 155) indicates high frequency, a score of (94 - 124) reflects moderate frequency, and a total of (93) and below reflects low frequency use of learning strategies.

4. COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE (Comm. Comp): The items on this scale concern the receptive as well as productive skills in English and focus on formal and informal language use. The 21 items included in the scale attempt to obtain information regarding the learners' self-rating and their perception of their own abilities and competence in using English, their view of their own patterns of behaviour in interaction with peers / teachers and their degree of confidence. A high score of (84 - 105) indicates a high level of communicative competence

For the present work, Likert-type scale is adopted for attitudes and motivation. Students are asked to respond by indicating whether they; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (DA), Strongly Disagree (SDA). Responses are assigned one to five points (1-5) according to the wording of the statement. For measuring the frequency of Learning Strategies and communicative competence another set of responses are adopted to measure frequency. Responses are, Always (ALW), Most of the time

(MOT), Sometime (Smt), Rarely (RR), Never (NR), these are also assigned the weight of one point to five points (1-5).

III.vii. SAMPLE

The sample of the study consists of 211 male students, drawn from a monolingual background with Arabic language as their mother tongue. The entire sample is from a typical EFL context - Jordan, where they received instruction in English as a foreign language for not less than 7 years. The students are enrolled in five different universities in India. These five universities are chosen on the basis of English being the medium of instruction, and the availability of a large number of Arab students. The sample is homogenous in terms of mother tongue (Arabic), country of schooling (Jordan), number of years of studying EFL (7 years). In addition, none of the students included in the sample received any kind of formal instructions or guidance on any of the variables examined in this study, especially on learning strategies.

Sample distribution according to various university is as under :

Name of University	Original no. of Students in the University.	No. of Students from whom the data was collected.
M.S. University of Baroda	60	42
University of Poona	52	34
University of Rajasthan	45	20
University of Bangalore	80	48
University of Mysore	112	67
Total	359	211

Table(1)

Distribution of the total sample according to university and number

III.vii.i. CLASSIFICATION OF THE SAMPLE

The total sample of 211 students is classified into three different cases. In each of the three cases, the classification gives consideration to a different factor of the student's profiles.

The classifications of the sample according to length of stay in India, Field of study, and age are based on three assumptions.

1. Students are classified according to length of stay in India on the basis of the length of exposure to the second language. Students

with varying periods of stay also vary in the degree of exposure and understanding of the surrounding environment. Acculturation and adjustment in the host culture deepen with time and in most cases become stable and steady. As a result, significant differences in the variables investigated can emerge. Acculturation in the new environment involves establishing friendships and acquaintance, which lead to an increase in the number and frequency of contact opportunities. Therefore, change in attitudes, degree of motivation and application of effective learning strategies may depend on how long students have been exposed to the target language and its speakers.

2. Classifying the sample according to field of study is based on the perception that different courses of study have varied academic demands. Some of these demands involve distinct opportunities of interaction. Students attending courses of humanities may be required to attend classes with the aim of listening to the lectures without the need to take part in the proceedings. Therefore, opportunities for interaction in and out of the class may be more or less limited and subject to the students' own initiative. In contrast, students attending science courses have a different set of academic demands. For science students, attending laboratory sessions for example, involves interacting both with teachers and peers. As a consequence, contact opportunities are expanded and diversified. Thus, perceptions of the English language and its speakers and use

of learning strategies may differ according to the needs of the student and demands of the situation.

3. The classification of students according to their age is made on account of the differences and changes that may emerge in the variables investigated. Many individual characteristics develop with age. Experiences also increase with progress in age which entail maturity and rationality of judgments. It is perceived in the present study that progress in age may result in change in the social abilities of the students. Hence, the social variables with their many components may exhibit different results as age of students change. The increase of experience leads to changes in the way goals and objectives are perceived. New goals may be realized and new opportunities emerge. Therefore, it is hypothesized that age may yield different pictures in relation to the variables investigated in the present study.

Sample is classified in the following manner:

CASE 1 : (Total 211) Classified according to students' length of stay in India

Case 1 - (a) 1 - 3 years of stay in India (No. 95)

Case 1 - (b) 4 - 6 years of stay in India (No. 88)

Case 1-(c) 7 years and above of stay in India (No. 28)

CASE 2 : (Total 211) Classified according to students' field of study

Case 2 - (a) Humanities (No. 131)

Case 2 - (b) Sciences (No. 80)

CASE 3 : (Total 211) Classified according to students' age :

Case 3 - (a) 18 - 26 years of age (No. 130)

Case 3 - (b) 27 years and above (No. 81)

III.viii. ADMINISTRATION OF THE TOOL

A questionnaire consisting of various aspects of student's attitudes, motivation, learning strategies and communicative competence was developed for gathering data for the present study. To ensure an adequate response on the different scales in terms of number and quality of responses, and to eliminate the disadvantages of the questionnaire as a research tool, the researcher travelled to the five universities from which the sample was drawn. Respondents were individually handed copies of the questionnaire by the researcher. They were assured total confidentiality of their responses. They were also requested to ask for any clarification in case of ambiguities or misunderstanding of any item.

Prior to responding to the various scales, students were asked to fill in information regarding their age, field of study, number of years in India, etc. They were asked to make their responses during their free time to ensure thorough and careful responses.

To fill the questionnaire some students took few hours and some one \ two days according to their free time. Out of the 359 copies distributed, 211 copies were received and tabulated. The data was then classified according to student's length of stay in India, field of study, and age group.

Data is analyzed by using mean, standard deviation, Pearson's coefficient of correlation to measure relationships among all the variables. Percentage of frequency of learning strategy use is also calculated in addition to the chi-square values of all responses on the learning strategy scale. For the regression analysis the SPSS computer package is used.

Results and findings will be discussed in the next chapter (Chapter IV).