6.1 Conclusions and recommendations for further research

The experiment described in the last chapter proved beyond doubt that it is possible to teach the manipulated production of isolated items in the target language code almost completely free of errors. This study concludes that such a teaching scheme forms the first step towards mastery in the use of the code for communication, on the basis of the following three assumptions:

(1) The various items in the inventory of rules representing the correct production of the code can be arranged in a linear order and taught one at a time to form a 'total' mastery in the production of the code in an additive/cumulative manner.

(2) A 'total' mastery in the production of the code thus acquired forms the basis for the use of the code for communication or conveying meaning; the knowledge of the code is granted in communicational activities.

(3) 'Communication' begins as pseudo-communication in which habitualization occurs in the linking of a
great many oft-used units of meaning with their
comonest representations in terms of the units
of the code in question; genuine communication
takes off from here.

It is recommended that there should be further research/
experimentation to validate the above assumptions.

This study argues that this is the only order in
which 'steps' leading to spontaneous communication in the
target language can be taken in ESL situations of the kind
under consideration here, and recommends that the 'sub-
sequent steps' in the process should be experimented with in
other similar studies in the same way as the 'first step'
was experimented with in this study.

6.2 Concluding remarks

I should like to conclude by quoting Corder (1981):

It is my suggestion and one which accords with
all that we know of language acquisition that
it is essentially one of elaboration or com-
plexification, not one of simplification...(p.110).

..... if simplification plays any part in
second language acquisition as a process or
learning strategy, then it is not the target
language system which is being simplified but
that of the mother tongue, i.e., that which is
already known; and the simplification is towards
some basic, universal, language-neutral, natural
semantax, which represents the starting point
for second language acquisition. (pp. 112-113).
I quote also from the blurb introducing Corder's (1981) book on Error Analysis and Interlanguage:

... This leads to the proposal that the starting point for all language learning is some basic, simple, possibly universal code and that the acquisition of a standard language develops out of this by a process of increasing elaboration.

And I would add: "...increasing elaboration" and complexification. Yes, it is through increasing elaboration and complexification (starting from a simple, possibly universal basis) that a symbolic code for real-life communication is mastered and put to use by humans.

It goes without saying, then, that the starting point for language acquisition, or the process of elaboration and complexification, would be something simple, because elaboration can occur only from the simple to the complex. Even while constantly being exposed to communicational situations, the learner starts from the simple to go on to the complex. The first language learning child does this on his own with the help of his rich exposure to the language. The second language learner cannot do this on his own by being exposed to his target language in a scanty measure; it would certainly be wiser to lead him consciously and deliberately from the simple
to the complex. This order of tackling the target code should 'do the job' for him more efficiently and with less time, effort and frustration than otherwise. The communicationists, starting from the complex end, often end up by frustrating the second language learners' efforts to master the target code.