

**Early Versus Late Start in an EFL Program:  
Factors that Contribute to Performance Outcomes**

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of  
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## **ABSTRACT**

### **Early Versus Late Start in an EFL Program: Factors that Contribute to Performance Outcomes**

Veronica Frediani

This cross-sectional study investigated the effects of the starting age of instruction (age of onset) and amount of instruction on the proficiency of young learners of English as a foreign language. Data were collected in Argentina in two intensive after-school language programs. Early starters (ES) began learning English at age 7-8, and late starters (LS) at age 12-13. The proficiency measures were two practice Cambridge ESOL exams: the Preliminary English Test (Level 1), and the First Certificate in English (Level 2). Comparisons were made taking into account the overall scores of both groups of participants, as well as the scores obtained on four tasks from each exam.

At the time of the Level 1 exam, ES had accumulated 1680-1960 hour of instruction, versus 840 hours for LS. Comparison of the overall scores showed an advantage for ES. The same pattern was observed with three of the four selected tasks. On the Level 2 exam, after an additional 420 hours of instruction, ES and LS participants performed similarly on the exams overall and on the selected tasks.

The findings are discussed in terms of the amount of instructional time each group had accumulated and the participants' cognitive development. It would appear that late starters' cognitive maturity enabled them to benefit from instruction that matched their abilities, thereby overcoming the disadvantage of fewer hours of instruction.

Issues related to the classification of tasks are also considered. The study has implications for second language program planners in foreign language contexts.

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Veronica Frediani

## DEDICATION

To my wonderful children,  
Victoria and Liam

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### *1.1 Background*

A second or foreign language can be learned in different contexts. Some people have their first contact with the language in a naturalistic context, that is, through informal exposure outside the classroom, while others learn the foreign language in an instructed setting and have few opportunities, if any, to hear or speak the target language outside the classroom. Moreover, a second or foreign language can be learned at different ages and stages of life. While some people start learning an additional language as children, either in a naturalistic or instructed setting, others do so in adolescence, adulthood, or even as senior citizens.

Worldwide, there is a strong popular belief that the younger a person starts to learn a second or foreign language, the better his/her performance will be in this language. For example, English as a second or foreign language is being introduced in the early grades of elementary school. Such is the case of Quebec, where children in French public schools now receive one hour a week of English in grade 1 (age six). Similarly, in Europe, second languages are being taught to students as young as 5 years of age.

Some of the studies that have investigated the benefits of an early start are described in the next chapter in the literature review. Oral production is one area of performance that seems to benefit from an early start to second or foreign language learning. However, there is evidence in the literature that late starters can catch up with early starters in some aspects of second language performance. If this is the case, is it necessary for children to start learning a foreign language in early elementary school, or

could they begin in secondary school and attain a similar level of proficiency? The thesis presented here addresses this larger theoretical and applied issue.

In the next section, the context of the current study is briefly outlined. The reader will need this information about the context, participants and instruments to understand the research questions presented at the end of the literature review.

### *1.2 Context*

The data for this thesis study were collected in Argentina, where the official language is Spanish, and English is typically learned in the classroom. In Argentina, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is one of the regular subjects in the public school curriculum. English is introduced in grade five (age 10) in the majority of public schools. Some schools start offering EFL instruction earlier, but regardless of the starting grade, the number of hours of EFL instruction does not normally exceed one or two hours a week.

In contrast, private bilingual elementary and secondary schools which follow the Ministry of Education's academic curriculum in the native language (Spanish) introduce English at the age of four. In these schools, students receive instruction in Spanish in the morning and in English (L2) in the afternoon, for a total of 16 hours of English instruction a week. A few private bilingual elementary and secondary schools offer French as a foreign language instead of EFL. French was more popular in the '60s and '70s, but since the 1980s, English as a foreign language has grown in importance and popularity and has become the main foreign language offered in schools.

The limited amount of EFL instruction offered in public schools is not sufficient to prepare children and adolescents who wish to continue their studies abroad or who wish to work for international organizations. Therefore, many parents decide to send their children to after-school programs in private language schools. These language programs vary in starting age and intensity. Most private language schools allow children to start their EFL programs “early”, at age 7-8, or “late”, at age 12-13. The number of hours of English language instruction offered per week ranges from four to eight hours. Clearly, the early starters accumulate more hours over their additional years of after-school study, but they do not always outperform late starters on their end-of-program exams.

The author of this thesis (hencefore the researcher) worked in one of these private schools which offer English instruction after regular school hours, and was surprised to find that, although there is a strong belief that the earlier students start learning a foreign language, the more proficient they will be, students who start later often perform as well as or better than early starters on exams. However, it was not clear to the researcher in which areas, or more particularly on which exam tasks, early and late starters performed similarly or showed differences.

### *1.3 Instruments and participants*

In order to be able to demonstrate their level of language proficiency after several years of instruction, most students of English who attend private language schools in Argentina take international examinations. The results of these examinations are provided in the form of certificates, some of which are recognized internationally. One of the main objectives of these language schools is, therefore, to prepare their students for these

exams and to show parents that not only early starters, but also late starters, can obtain successful results in these examinations.

The most popular and widely recognized exams that private schools prepare students for are the Cambridge ESOL Examinations. These exams are highly prestigious and are recognized by government ministries, educational establishments, and companies around the world as proof of ability to use English. They are reliable and they test the skills that these institutions and employers look for in a candidate. There are different levels of exams offered by Cambridge that reflect the different needs and abilities of learners. These certificates range from basic exams for beginners, through advanced certificates for those learners who have attained a high level of fluency (<http://www.cambridgeesol.org/exams/general-english/index.html>).

The two most popular Cambridge exams taken by students in private language schools in Córdoba, Argentina, are the Preliminary English Test and the First Certificate in English. The Preliminary English Test (PET), from the University of Cambridge, is the first, or *Level 1*, exam that students typically take after they have completed four (or more) years of English instruction in a language school. Usually, two years after taking the Level 1 exam, they take a second University of Cambridge exam, called the First Certificate in English (FCE), or *Level 2* exam. Early starters normally take this exam at age 16-17 and late starters take it at age 18-19.

Cambridge exams cover the four language skills, so students' performance is tested in speaking, writing, listening comprehension and reading comprehension. Each section of the exam covers one of the skills and consists of 2 to 5 tasks. When students take the PET and FCE examinations, they obtain an overall score, expressed as a PASS/FAIL grade for PET and as a letter (A, B, C, etc) for FCE. Given this system of

reporting results, it is not clear to an observer how students performed in each section of the exam, and more specifically, whether students in one program (early or late starters) performed better than students in the other on particular tasks within a section. Given that early and late starters have different learning strategies due to their cognitive age, and have different abilities related to their cognitive maturity and literacy skills, these factors may influence their performance on the different tasks, depending on the demands that the tasks make on the learners. An overall score, then, does not reflect the actual abilities of early and late starters, and does not show the advantages or disadvantages of one group over the other.

As tasks make different cognitive demands on the students, it is important to find a way to classify the tasks in a way that captures the cognitive differences between early and late starters. The objective of a task analysis would be to tease apart age effects and amount of instructional time.

#### *1.4 Purpose of the study*

The purpose of the present research study is to compare the performance of participants in two programs (Program A: early starters with more instruction and Program B: late starters with less instruction) on the Cambridge University Level 1 exam (PET) and the Level 2 exam (FCE). Comparisons are made not only of participants' overall scores on all the sections of the exams (speaking, writing, listening comprehension and reading comprehension), but also on their scores on a variety of tasks that make up those sections, taking into consideration the demands that each of the tasks make on cognitive processing. A sub-set of those tasks, considered to be representative of

the entire exams, are also used to compare the performance of participants in both programs.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature relevant to this study: the effect of the age at which second language instruction begins; the amount of instructional time in different programs; the cognitive abilities of younger versus older second or foreign language learners; and the cognitive processing demands made by different tasks used to measure second language performance. The research questions of the thesis are presented at the end of Chapter 2.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### *2.1 Introduction*

The age at which students start receiving second language instruction is a factor in second language acquisition that has been found to influence their performance on a variety of proficiency tasks. In this thesis study, the focus of the analysis is on the cognitive demands that the tasks make on the learners, both early and late starters. Consequently, the age factor plays an important role in the analysis of the data, given that younger and older learners have different cognitive abilities. In the following literature review, studies that have looked at age, at amount of instruction, as well as Bialystok's (2001) framework, which acknowledges variability due to task cognitive requirements, will be described.

### *2.2 Age of onset in an instructional setting*

Age of onset refers to the age at which instruction in the second or foreign language begins. There is a general belief that an early start to second language learning is better than a late start. Such is the case in Quebec, for example, where ESL instruction in school was lowered from grade 4 to grade 3 in 2000, and then to grade 1 in September 2006. In Europe, after a conference which took place in Luxembourg in 1997, the Ministries of Education of the European Union adopted a resolution inviting the member states to encourage the early instruction of foreign languages and to integrate it as compulsory to benefit all students. For example, in Malta, foreign language instruction

now starts before the age of 6. It begins at age 6 in Austria, Norway and Luxembourg, and at age 7 in Italy, Finland, Sweden, Estonia, and other countries (<http://www.senat.fr/rap/r03-063/r03-0631.html#toc14>). This shows that, in fact, the “younger-better” belief is wide-spread. The following studies compared learning outcomes in programs in which learners started second language instruction at different ages.

Oller and Nagato (1974) compared the results of three cloze tests administered to three groups of EFL students in Japan (grades 7, 9 and 11). Each group received a different test: cloze I for seventh graders; cloze II for ninth graders; and cloze III for eleventh graders. These groups of students received a different number of hours of instruction. Some had received FLES (Foreign Language instruction in Elementary School) for six years and others had not. In the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, all students were mixed together, regardless of their previous second language instruction. Results of the study indicated that by the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, students who had not received FLES had overtaken those who had received early instruction. Findings suggest that, because both groups of students were placed together in the same class starting in the 8th grade, non-FLES students caught up, whereas FLES students just marked time. This showed a “lack of coordination between the elementary and the secondary programs” (p. 18). Oller and Nagato conclude that, although not generalizable to all contexts, these results “suggest that under certain conditions FLES may not be of lasting benefit” (p.18).

Burstall, Jamieson, Cohen and Hargreaves (1974) reported the results of a longitudinal study in which they compared the level of proficiency in French between early starters (age 8 – ES) and late starters (age 11 - LS). This project was called the Pilot Scheme for the teaching of French in primary schools, and it was carried out in England

and Wales. The purpose of the study was to find out “whether it would be feasible and educationally desirable to extend the teaching of a foreign language” (p. 11) to a student clientele which was wider in range of age and ability than the one being taught until then. A total of 17 000 students were involved in the study. At the time of testing, ES and LS had received the same number of hours of instruction. The measures used assessed the ability to understand spoken language, as well as the students’ achievement in spoken and written French. The findings indicated that younger learners “reached a higher level of achievement in spoken French” (p. 34) than students who had started receiving instruction at an older age. However, in all other aspects of language, older learners achieved a higher level of proficiency in French. The researchers found evidence that “with the passage of time, the influence of the age of the learner begins to outweigh that of the length of the learning period” (p. 122), as older learners tend to be more efficient than younger learners.

Lightbown and Spada (2006) point out that another variable may have influenced the learning outcomes in Burstall et al.’s study. In secondary school, ES were sometimes mixed with LS who had never had French instruction. In accommodating the late beginners, teachers may not have provided early starters with the type of instruction they needed, leading to loss of language skills and decreased motivation.

Harley and Hart (1997) carried out a study which looked at the relationship between language aptitude and second language outcomes in students who had started learning a second language at different ages. The participants were 65 students in grade 11. Thirty six of these students had started learning French in grade 1 (ES, early immersion), while the rest (29) had started in grade 7 (LS, late immersion). At the time of testing, they were all receiving 50% of their school instruction in English and 50% in

French. Tests were administered to all the groups at three different times: in the first testing session, three language aptitude tests were administered, as well as a background questionnaire; in the second session, tests of proficiency were given to the students, and individual oral testing was started; in the third session, oral testing was completed. The aptitude tests consisted of measures of memory (associative memory, memory for text) and analytical language ability; the measures of second language proficiency consisted of tests of vocabulary recognition, listening comprehension, cloze, and written production, as well as an individual oral test.

Harley and Hart (1997) had hypothesized that an early start to second language exposure would be related to higher scores in aptitude than a later start. The aptitude test results did not support this hypothesis: no significant difference between early and late starters was found, except for one measure of language analytic ability, the PLAB-IV Language Analysis subtest, where LS scored higher than ES. In this measure, students were given a small sample of language data in a language which was unknown to them, together with English explanations, and from that information they had to infer how the new language works. In the second language proficiency tests, ES performed better than LS on vocabulary recognition and sentence repetition, whereas LS scored significantly higher on the written task. Through correlations, Harley and Hart were able to find what predicted proficiency scores in each group. In the case of the early immersion students (ES), memory for text was the predictor of the scores on three measures: vocabulary recognition, cloze and listening comprehension. Language analysis was also a predictor, but only on listening comprehension. As for late immersion students (LS), “language analysis was the only statistically significant predictor of L2 proficiency scores” (p. 394),

particularly on vocabulary recognition, the cloze test, written task fulfillment, and written accuracy. Harley and Hart concluded that:

“(…) early immersion students’ L2 outcomes were much more likely to be associated with a memory measure than with a measure of analytical language ability, whereas the opposite was the case for the late immersion students, for whom analytical language ability was the only significant predictor of L2 proficiency” (p. 395).

Findings from The Barcelona Age Factor (BAF) project are pertinent to the present study. For this reason, it is described in detail. In the BAF project, a team of researchers looked at the effects of age on the acquisition of English as a foreign language by bilingual Catalan-Spanish learners. The study includes 1700 participants divided into five groups that started receiving English instruction at different ages: between 2 and 6 years of age; at age 8; at age 11; at age 14; and after age 18. Participants in all groups completed a series of tests, both oral and written, at different times during the period of instruction. For two of the groups in this study (called early starters -age 8- and late starters -age 11), participants were tested on three occasions: after 200, 416 and 726 hours of instruction. Thus, both age and amount of instruction were carefully controlled. The findings related to these two groups are the most relevant to the current thesis study.

Data from the BAF project have been reported in several recent papers. Celaya, Torras, and Pérez-Vidal (2001) analyzed the written production of early starters (age 8) and late starters (age 11). The written performance of 479 participants was measured after 200 hours of instruction (time 1) and again after 416 hours of instruction (time 2). What was analyzed in their production was complexity, fluency and accuracy. Results showed that at time 1 and time 2, late starters (LS) outperformed early starters (ES) in the three areas that were analyzed, indicating “that older learners make faster progress than the

younger learners in the first stages of language acquisition” (p. 205). These findings are in line with previous studies that also compared the performance of learners of different starting ages who received the same number of hours of instruction. These studies found that rate increases with age, given that older students learn faster than younger ones (Bland and Keislar, 1966; Ekstrand, 1978; Stankowksi Gratton, 1980).

Navés, Torras and Celaya (2003) also compared the written performance of 520 participants who started receiving English instruction at ages 8 and 11. Their aim was to look at the long-term effects of an earlier start on written performance as an indicator of language development. The participants’ production was analyzed after 200, 416 and 726 hours of instruction. The researchers looked at fluency, accuracy, syntactic complexity and lexical complexity. The first goal of the study was to examine whether ES (age 8) would score similarly to LS (age 11) after 716 hours of instruction. Results indicated that LS significantly outperformed ES in accuracy, fluency and lexical complexity, and in most measurements of syntactic complexity. The second goal of this study was to find out how the learners’ writing skills developed within the groups. Results showed that there was a gain in accuracy and fluency in the younger group and that in the older group, the gain was seen in syntactic complexity indicators. The third aim was to “find out how the different measures of writing ability correlated with each other and to check the extent to which the strength of the correlation changed depending on the learners’ age group” (p. 15). Results indicated that the relationship between accuracy, fluency, and syntactic and lexical complexity changes depending on the learners’ age. Fluency and accuracy measures, for instance, are strongly correlated if measured in early starters’ writing; in contrast, fluency and accuracy are weakly correlated in the writing of late starters, suggesting that overall, “the more younger learners write, the more accurate their writing

may also be. Being able to write longer compositions seems to be closely related to being more accurate when learners are young but not so closely related when they are older” (p. 25). To summarize, LS performed significantly higher than ES, and with time, they made improvements in syntactic ability. While the written performance of ES was lower than that of LS, it was strongly correlated with fluency and accuracy.

Navés and Miralpeix (2002) also looked at the written performance of early and late starters – most precisely in the areas of vocabulary, fluency and syntactic complexity. Participants were divided into four groups: ES who received 200 hours of instruction (G1), ES who received 200 hours of instruction plus 100 hours of exposure (G2), LS who received 200 hours of instruction (G3) and LS who received 200 hours of instruction plus 100 of exposure (G4). Students were given 15 minutes to write a composition in English on the topic “Me, my past life and my future”. Results showed the following: (1) older learners with more exposure were not more proficient than the participants in the other groups; (2) in terms of syntactic complexity, there were no significant differences between the groups; (3) There were no significant differences between younger students with greater exposure and older students with less exposure (groups 2 and 3). “Greater exposure to the language or age alone does not seem to account for the differences found between groups in the short term” (p.10). This study does not support previous findings which showed a faster learning rate in older learners, as there were no significant differences among the groups. The extra hours of exposure (100) did not appear to be sufficient enough to make a difference in their performance.

When looking at the data gathered in the BAF project after 200 and 416 hours of instruction, Muñoz (2003) found a faster rate of learning in older learners (LS): after the same number of hours of instruction, LS scored higher than ES on paper and pencil tasks

– a cloze test, a grammar test, a dictation and a composition – as well as on an oral task – a story-telling elicited from a series of pictures. However, results on a listening comprehension test (in which participants were asked to choose the one picture out of three that best suited what they heard on a tape) did not indicate a clear difference between the two groups.

In another study carried out in Spain, but not part of the BAF project, García Mayo (2003) looked at two groups of learners of English as a third language (Basque/Spanish bilinguals), who received instruction in the same school. The groups differed in their starting age of exposure to the third language (8-9 and 11-12), but at the times they were tested, they had received the same number of hours of instruction (approx. 396 hours at time 1, and 594 hours of instruction at time 2). Students were given a grammaticality judgement task, with 30 items (17 sentences and 13 distractors) and were asked to state whether the sentences were correct, incorrect or they had doubts about them and were asked to correct any sentences they judged to be incorrect. The results indicated that “the statistically significant differences are in favour of the older learners: they behave in a more target-like fashion as far as providing accurate grammaticality judgements of the sentences under study” (p.104).

While all the studies described above compared the performance of early and late starters, the results obtained differ:

- An early start may not always have a lasting benefit (Oller & Nagato, 1974)
- ES outperform LS on measures of spoken ability (Burstall et al., 1974)

- LS outperform ES on measures of written ability (Burstall et al., 1974; Celaya et al., 2001; Navés et al., 2003) and on grammaticality judgment tasks (García Mayo, 2003). However, Navés and Miralpeix (2002) found no significant differences between the written performance of ES and LS.
- Older learners are more efficient than younger learners (Burstall et al., 1974)
- Older learners have a faster learning rate (Celaya, Torras, Pérez-Vidal, 2001; Muñoz, 2003)
- ES and LS perform similarly on listening comprehension tasks (Muñoz, 2003).
- Early starters' (ES) outcomes are associated with memory measures (Harley & Hart, 1997).
- Late starters' (LS) outcomes are associated with analytical language ability (Harley & Hart, 1997).

To summarize, LS outperform ES on written tasks as well as on those which require more analytical language ability (grammaticality judgment tasks), but not on spoken tasks, where ES outperform LS, and on listening comprehension tasks, where ES and LS perform similarly.

The following studies compared the performance of ES and LS who had received different amounts of instruction.

### *2.3 Amount of instruction*

Carroll (1967) found that when both the amount of instruction and the age of onset differ, those who received more hours of instruction show advantages. Carroll compared the scores of nearly 3000 college and university students who had started second language instruction at different ages (elementary school, secondary school or college). These students majored in foreign languages and were tested with the MLA Proficiency Tests for Teachers of Advanced Students. Depending on their language of specialization, the students were tested in French, German, Italian, Spanish or Russian. The students who had started instruction earlier performed better than the others in all four skills. The interpretation given to these results was that younger learners are not necessarily better at learning the language, but that the total amount of time spent actively learning it can explain their superior performance. In Carroll's view, more than starting age of instruction, the amount of instruction may have a stronger impact on the learners' performance.

Other studies which looked at length of exposure to French as a second and foreign language are in line with these findings. Carroll (1975) looked at the factors that influenced learners' proficiency in French as a foreign language in eight countries where the language is not spoken. Once again, the most important factor in the development of proficiency was the amount of instructional time. Lambert and Tucker (1972), as well as Barik and Swain (1975), and Swain and Barik (1976), carried out experimental studies in French immersion programs in Quebec and Ontario. They found that the level of French attained by English-speaking children in French immersion programs was higher than that

of children who had received many fewer hours of instruction per week in regular, or “core”, French as a second language programs.

Similar findings were obtained by White and Turner (2005). They found that grade 6 French L1 learners of English in an intensive program (400 hours in one year) made significantly higher gains than grade 6 children in a regular program (108 hours total – one hour per week in grades 3, 4, and 5) on three oral proficiency tasks. In comparisons of immersion with core French, and intensive and regular ESL programs, the time differences are very large. In the next study, the time differences are smaller.

Collins, Halter, Lightbown and Spada (1999) compared the performance of students from two ESL programs in Quebec in which the amount of instructional time and the distribution of that time differed. Participants in the “distributed” program were grade 6 students who were given ESL instruction spread across 10 months. Participants in the other program, called “massed”, were students in grade 6 who received 5 months of ESL instruction and 5 months of the regular school curriculum in French. A third group of participants belonged to the “massed plus” program, where grade 6 students also received 5 months of ESL instruction and completed the regular French curriculum during the other 5 months of the school year. Participants in this program attended a school where all students were in grade 6. They either received ESL during the first or last 5 months of the school year. In this school, students were encouraged to speak English outside of the classroom. The three programs seemed to offer the same number of hours of ESL, distributed differently, but that was not the case. Participants in the “distributed” program received approximately 300 hours of ESL, whereas participants in the “massed” program received nearly 400 hours. Those in the “massed plus” program received 400 hours of ESL, but were also exposed to English in the school setting.

All participants from the three programs were pretested at the beginning of their ESL instruction and posttested as they were reaching the end of the program. For the pretest, an Aural Vocabulary Recognition test was used. For the posttest, the researchers used a Yes/No Vocabulary Recognition test, a multiple choice listening comprehension test, and a narrative task. The findings obtained in this study showed superior performance by participants in the “massed plus” program. Although Collins et al. (1999) interpreted their findings cautiously and warned against assuming “a linear relationship between amount of instructional time and amount of learning” (p. 673), it would seem that more exposure to English had a positive effect.

A study carried out by Lapkin, Hart and Swain (1991) that looked at early (beginning in kindergarten) and middle (beginning in grade 5) French immersion found advantages for early starters. This large-scale study involved 26 grade 8 classes in the Toronto area. The researchers administered French tests which were developed to be as communicative as possible and which covered receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) skills. The following tasks were involved: multiple choice listening comprehension questions related to audio-recorded passages, a cloze test measuring reading comprehension, an open writing task, an open speaking task, and a sentence repetition task. Results indicated that “overall, early immersion students outperform middle immersion students in varying degrees in all four skill areas (listening, speaking, reading and writing)” (p.31), except for skills related to stating and supporting opinions, which seem to be transferable from L1. The findings show that when amount of instructional time differs between the groups of participants, those who received more hours of instruction (ES) perform significantly higher.

Muñoz (2008) points out that in addition to amount of instruction, we should consider the type of instruction available to classroom-instructed learners. She claims that it is important to clearly identify whether the instruction is *significant* or *insignificant*, and whether there is any change in the language learning setting over time. The term *significant* refers to exposure to the second language that provides learners with a variety of contexts of use and interaction. Muñoz notes that in most studies of second or foreign language learning in an instructional setting, the age of onset is taken as the age at which instruction begins. However, the significance of the instructional may vary between programs, and it may change over time, as learners move from one type of program to another. Thus, it is important to identify the type of instruction in the target language, as well as the amount.

The following studies discuss the cognitive ability of older learners.

#### *2.4 Cognitive ability*

Work by Ausubel (1964) suggests that older second language learners are more efficient than younger learners. He points out that older learners have a richer vocabulary in their first language than children do, especially when it comes to abstract concepts. This is an advantage; while children need to learn the concepts as well as the language to express them, older learners can focus on the new language system and symbols that represent those concepts. As well, older learners are able to make grammatical generalizations of the structure of the new language. In contrast, young children discover syntactical rules through repetitious exposure to the language.

Along the same line, Swain (1981) argues that older learners' cognitive advantage lies in the fact that they have already mastered the skills of reading and writing in the L1, so they can transfer this knowledge to those similar skills demanded by the L2. She also points out that, in comparison to children, older learners have a richer vocabulary and a better knowledge of grammar, which can be transferred to the second language as well.

Cummins (1980) distinguishes two dimensions of linguistic proficiency: cognitive academic linguistic proficiency (CALP) and basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS). CALP includes aspects related to the development of cognitive and literacy skills, that is, the skills needed in school. An essential aspect of the cognitive demands made on students is the language used to explain, to classify, to generalize, to abstract, and to manipulate ideas. In contrast, BICS includes aspects of language proficiency that are cognitively undemanding, such as oral fluency, accent, and some aspects of sociolinguistic competence.

Cummins argues that once CALP is learned in one language, it is applicable to any other language. Consequently, older second language learners, who have more highly developed L1 CALP, show evidence of L2 CALP faster than younger learners and make more rapid progress in learning a second language than younger learners in CALP-related skills.

Cummins (1983) states that in context-embedded communication, learners perform cognitively undemanding tasks which are largely mastered and do not require very active cognitive involvement to be performed successfully. In contrast, context-reduced communication involves cognitively demanding tasks and activities which have not become automatized, therefore requiring active cognitive involvement. For Cummins, cognitive maturity helps in the performance of context-reduced and cognitively demanding

types of tasks. Since language proficiency tasks tend to be of this type, they could be expected to favour older learners.

Cognitive ability plays an important role in second language learning, mainly in the way learners perceive the language and are able to analyze it. Learners of different ages will see and analyze language differently, given their level of maturity, their level of literacy and their metalinguistic awareness. Young children learn implicitly, and this type of second language learning requires a great amount of input (Dekeyser 2000; Muñoz 2008). On the other hand, older learners are able to rely on their language skills acquired through literacy, as well as on their richer vocabulary and knowledge of grammar (Ausubel 1964; Swain, 1981) to learn the second language. Thus, children and older learners differ in the way they approach the language, relate to it and analyze it, and the learning strategies they acquired and applied in the early stages of second language learning appear to influence their learning experience, even in later stages.

The section that follows discusses the demands that tasks make on the learners.

### *2.5 Task demands*

Studies that have looked at the performance of learners on various second language tasks have compared scores between early and late starters, taking age as the main factor in determining the differences in performance between both groups. However, tasks vary from study to study, and as noted above, results are often contradictory. In the age of onset research, what has not yet been addressed is that tasks used to assess the learners' performance make different cognitive demands on the learners. Some tasks require more control of attention than others, and tasks may also

vary in terms of the amount of language analysis that is required. Bialystok (2001) stated that “if there is no agreement about what is included in language proficiency, then any explanation that attempts to probe some of the more profound mysteries of language will be incomplete” (p. 14). For this reason, she suggests that we look at language proficiency from a process-oriented perspective.

What is important to consider in the age-of-onset studies reviewed above is that different tasks have been used, as well as different data analysis procedures, making comparison across studies problematic. Since tasks may differ in terms of the cognitive demands they make on the learner, younger and older starters may perform differently on the same task, according to the requirement it makes on memory and analysis. The analysis/control framework that Bialystok (2001 and elsewhere) has proposed is relevant here because it acknowledges the variability that may be accounted for by task requirements.

In the framework, the analysis dimension refers to the level of structure and organization of the mental representations of linguistic knowledge that is required when performing a task. Tasks, such as having a conversation, that require implicit language knowledge, are at the low-analysis end of the continuum, while those that require explicit knowledge, such as writing a story or a poem, are at the high-analysis end. Control refers to the level of attention to and inhibition of linguistic information required to undertake that same task. Language tasks that make low demands on attention, such as conversations in which the focus is on meaning, are at the low end of the control continuum, whereas tasks that require a separation between meaning and form, such as grammar tests, are at the high end. This can be related to Cummins’ (1980) BICS and CALP, given that BICS includes aspects of language proficiency such as oral fluency,

accent, and some aspects of sociolinguistic competence (low in control), and CALP includes more abstract aspects of language proficiency, such as classifying, explaining, and manipulating ideas (high in control).

On the analysis dimension, there are three levels that can be identified when organizing and structuring mental representations: *conceptual*, *formal* and *symbolic*. “Conceptual representations are based on the meanings that comprise ordinary thought and communication. As the structure of these meanings becomes more articulated, the representations become grouped into formal categories” (Bialystok, 1994, p. 159). Following Bialystok, for example, the relation between *cow* and *milk* is a conceptual representation because the words are connected through meaning. However, the relation between *cow* and *horse* derives from a formal representation, given that they are taxonomically associated. The third level, that of symbolic representations, is different from the other two in that it is not organized around the meaning of words. The symbolic relation between the words mentioned above (*cow*, *milk*, and *horse*) is that they are all nouns.

Depending on what we use language for, it is important how it is stored or represented. Formal representations, or even symbolic ones, are required for some uses of language. For instance, reading requires more symbolic representations of language than speaking does. This is due to the fact that the meanings in writing are more formal and the context is not always sufficient for correct interpretation. “Properties of the text itself take on a more important role in determining meanings” (Bialystok, 1994, p.160). In order to access those properties, they need to have been represented, and only symbolic representations do that. Symbolization increases when analysis is applied to the representations. The most explicit representations are symbolic ones. When this change in

representation occurs, it shows evidence that the learner has reached a higher level of analysis, although in fact, “it is the result of the process of analysis being applied for a longer time, or more completely, to the mental representation” (p. 160). As the analysis of mental representations increases, the access to knowledge increases as well. A less analyzed form of the knowledge of language limits the functions that can be achieved by the learner.

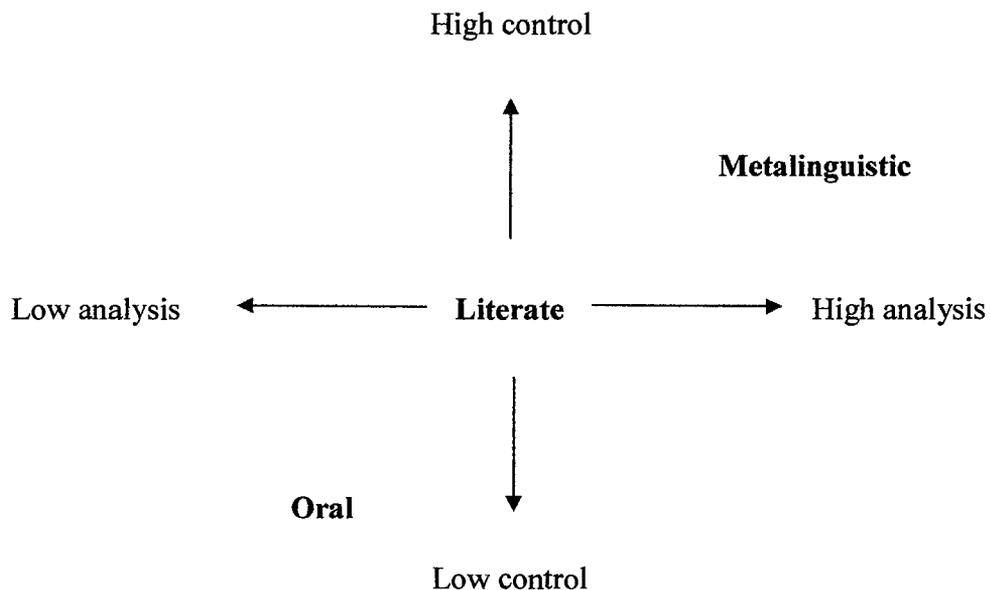
Knowledge originates in mental representations. In order to acquire that knowledge, attention has to be focused on the specific representation that is relevant to a particular purpose. The process of selective attention that takes place to retrieve a specific representation is referred to as control.

The need for control of attention becomes more apparent when there is a situation that has several alternative representations. In the face of conflict or ambiguity, many mental representations may be activated. In the case of reading, attention must be balanced between forms and meanings, letters and sounds, words and sentences. In spoken language, attention is mainly directed to meaning, so there are fewer demands on selective attention.

When less control is used for dealing with a problem, it is solved more fluently and automatically. Once learners are more capable of developing that control of attention, they can execute their intentions and direct their performance. “This change in selective attention is referred to as evidence that the learner has a higher level of control” (Bialystok, 1994, p. 161).

According to Bialystok (2001), it is possible to classify and locate language tasks on the framework by taking into account the degree of involvement of the two dimensions, analysis and control. If this is indeed the case, the different areas of language

use that are measured on second language proficiency exams, such as oral, literate and metalinguistic, can be analyzed with some degree of specificity according to the cognitive demands that the particular task requires in terms of analysis and control. This is shown in Figure 1. Following Bialystok, an example of an oral task requiring low analysis and low control would be an interview in which the learner speaks about a familiar topic, such as his/her family. In contrast, an oral task requiring high analysis and high control would be one in which a learner must explain to an interviewer why specific linguistic forms have been used in a gap-filling task. In the latter instance, the learner is required to shift attention back and forth from meaning to form.



*Figure 1.* Three Domains of Language Use Indicating Values on Analysis and Control (Bialystok, 2001, p. 16)

In practice, the demands that tasks make on analysis and control often cannot be teased apart. Bialystok pointed out that tasks that demand high levels of one demand high levels of the other because the two processes are logically connected to one another:

“Attention presumes attention *to* something, so greater levels of attentional control are invoked only when there are greater levels of representational complexity” (Bialystok, 2001, p. 133). The need for more attention to a particular task often means that the task is more complex, and conversely, if it is more complex, it is because it requires higher analysis. So, higher control occurs as a response to higher analysis. If this is the case, it follows that the level of analysis needed to perform a task should be looked at first since it will most likely determine the level of control needed for the same task.

According to Bialystok (2001), use of the analysis/control framework would permit more precise research questions to be asked regarding the appropriate measures of proficiency to be constructed. For instance, research that has tried to prove or disprove the critical period hypothesis for second language acquisition has often looked at one or two aspects of language proficiency, mistakenly transferring those results to all other aspects of language that have not been analyzed. Bialystok concludes that:

“This approach would likely eliminate simplistic conclusions that force a choice between two opposing positions and compel us to consider a more complete set of factors in our conception of language learning. Allowing for a more nuanced explanation by removing false dichotomies and incorporating degrees of variation along specified dimensions will advance theorizing around many questions” (p. 18).

The present study compares the performance of early starters, who received more L2 instruction, and late starters, who received less L2 instruction, on a variety of tasks. It should be possible to situate each task in one of the four quadrants of Bialystok’s framework. It is predicted that in considering the demands that each task makes on analysis and control, we will be able to better understand differences in task performance that reflect the age at which the learners in each group began studying their second language, English, in school.

## *2.6 Conclusion*

There are a number of contradictions in the studies reviewed above which compare early and late second language starters. One possible explanation for the different findings is that different language skills were investigated. While there is a tendency for late starters to perform better on grammar, composition and some oral tasks (e.g.: Celaya, Torras, and Pérez-Vidal, 2001; Muñoz, 2003), there is no clear difference in performance between early and late starters on listening comprehension tasks. Task demands clearly do not provide the only explanation, however, as some studies where the amount of instruction differs have found that early starters outperform late starters in all four skills (e.g.: Lapkin, Hart and Swain, 1991); others have found that amount of instruction has a positive effect on performance, regardless of the age of onset (Carroll, 1967), or when age of onset is the same (White & Turner, 2005). To date, the relevance of the cognitive demands of the language proficiency measures used to compare early and late starters has not been directly investigated.

This thesis study aims to address this gap in the literature. The study compares the performance of participants who started receiving English instruction at two different ages on tasks involving reading comprehension, writing, grammar, listening comprehension and oral activities, all tasks that make different cognitive requirements and demand different levels of analysis and control. In particular, the study considers the effects of a greater amount of instructional time in the case of the early starters (said to be in Program A) versus the effects of greater cognitive maturity in the case of the late starters (said to be in Program B) on learners' performance on proficiency measures at two levels.

## *2.7 Research questions*

Nine research questions are addressed in this study. They are presented below.

Participants in Program A have accumulated a greater amount of instructional time than participants in Program B when they take the Level 1 exam (PET) and the Level 2 exam (FCE). However, participants in Program B are older and therefore have a cognitive advantage over younger learners. Accordingly, the first two research questions arose:

1. Will there be a significant difference in the overall scores of participants in Program A and B on the Level 1 exam (PET)?
2. Will there be a significant difference in the overall scores of participants in Program A and B on the Level 2 exam (FCE)?

Bialystok (2001) proposes a framework in which tasks can be classified according to the demands they make on analysis and control. In exams which contain a number of component tasks in the four language skill areas, this framework may help identify the differences in performance between groups of participants with different ages of onset (early and late starters). This led to the third research question:

3. Can the tasks on the Level 1 and Level 2 exams be classified with respect to their demands on analysis and control?

The next research questions are based on the anticipated classification of the tasks in each of the exams according to the demands they make on analysis and control. It was predicted that a subset of four tasks representing the high (H1 and H2) and low (L1 and

L2) extremes could be identified to represent each test battery. Research questions 4 to 9 are related to the four tasks:

4. Will there be a significant difference in the combined score of Tasks H1, H2, L1 and L2 of participants in Program A and B on the Level 1 exam (PET)?
5. Will there be a significant difference in the combined score of Tasks H1, H2, L1 and L2 of participants in Program A and B on the Level 2 exam (FCE)?

Given the older learners' (late starters) analytic language ability associated with their performance (Harley & Hart, 1997) and their cognitive advantage (Swain, 1981),

6. Will participants in Programs A and B perform differently on Level 1 exam (PET) tasks that make high demands on analysis (H1 and H2)?
7. Will the same pattern be observed on the Level 2 exam (FCE)?

Greater amount of instructional time has shown to be an important factor in determining higher levels of achievement (e.g. Carroll, 1967; Collins et al.; White & Turner, 2005). Early starters with more hours of instruction outperform later starters on all skills (Lapkin, Hart & Swain, 1991). Accordingly, the last two research questions are:

8. Will participants in Programs A and B perform differently on Level 1 exam (PET) tasks that make low demands on analysis (L1 and L2)?
9. Will the same pattern be observed on the Level 2 exam (FCE)?

The next chapter presents the methodology used to investigate the research questions in this study.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### *3.1 Introduction*

This chapter describes the participants and the context where the study was carried out, the instruments used to compare the performance of the groups in question and the procedure of analysis of those instruments.

### *3.2 Participants and context*

The participants in this study are students of English as a foreign language between 14 and 18 years old whose first language is Spanish. They live in Córdoba, Argentina, a country where the official and main language is Spanish. English is not heard outside of the classroom as there are no contexts where the language is normally spoken. The only contact students might have with English is through movies, songs and the Internet.

The school in which the study was conducted is a private language school that offers two after-school English programs, allowing children to start at two different ages. The language teachers in this school all learned English as a foreign language (EFL) in Argentina and are non-native speakers of English. Many of them have traveled to English-speaking countries for short periods of time. They all have university degrees in Teaching English as a Foreign (TEFL), and one or two have a graduate degree.

The communicative approach is widely used by the teachers. That is, overall, the focus is on meaning, and fluency is emphasized over accuracy. Students are encouraged

to participate actively and creatively in class, and teachers give instructions and explanations in English. Projects, plays, novels, as well as outings are an important part of the curriculum. Activities are age-appropriate and match the students' interests and abilities. Accordingly, young learners begin by learning English songs and playing games that involve repeating language patterns, and only later is some form-focused instruction introduced. Preparation for the Level 1 exam (PET) begins two years before the exam. It is only at this time that these learners can handle the cognitive demands of the exam's tasks. Older starters spend comparatively more time on form-focused instruction and language practice from the beginning, doing listening comprehension and reading comprehension exercises, writing compositions, and speaking with other peers and the instructor. Form-focused instruction, which sometimes includes metalinguistic explanations, is always used as a tool for improving performance on communicative tasks.

English must be spoken during the break and anywhere within the school's premises. The majority of students follow this rule and there are often special "English all the time" campaigns, in the form of competitions, in order to remind and encourage students to use the L2 at all times.

Most students are enthusiastic about learning the language, have a feeling of belonging to the school, and enjoy attending English classes. One of the reasons behind this is that parents encourage their children to learn English, often with future projects in mind, such as trips abroad or exchange study programs. An explanation for the students' strong feeling of belonging to the school is that they spend a great amount of time there over several years of their childhood and adolescence. They bond with their peers and

even with the staff, which constantly organizes events, such as festivals, sports competitions and plays, to motivate the students.

The school is well established and well regarded in the community. It has the reputation of offering the best after-school English programs for children and adolescents of any private school in Córdoba. Students who attend this school are proud of being part of it and know that they are privileged.

As noted above, there are two different programs in this school, depending on the age at which students start learning English. Students in **Program A** (N = 69) begin learning EFL at the age of 7-8 (second grade). They have classes from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays, for a total of 8 hours of instruction a week (280 hours/year). After 6 (1680 hours) or 7 (1960 hours) years of language instruction, they take the Cambridge Preliminary English Test (PET), called here the Level 1 exam. They continue receiving language instruction for 2 more years (420 hours of instruction), after which they take a second Cambridge exam, the First Certificate in English (FCE), called here the Level 2 exam. The Level 1 and Level 2 exams are described in Section 3.2. The students in Program A will be referred to as “early/more” given that they are early starters and received more hours of instruction.

Students in **Program B** (N = 41) begin learning EFL at the age of 12-13 (first year of high school). They have classes from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. three times a week, for a total of 6 hours of instruction a week (210 hours/year). After 4 years (840 hours) of language instruction, they take the Level 1 (PET) exam. Then, in a course that follows the same syllabus as is used for students in Program A, they have two more years of instruction (420 hours) to prepare for the Level 2 exam (FCE). It is important to note that although both groups of participants followed the same curriculum and received the same

number of hours of instruction during the two years between the Level 1 and the Level 2 exams, they were never mixed in the same class. Students in Program B will be called “late/less”, due to their later start and to the fact that they receive less instruction than early starters. Table 1 summarizes the amount of instruction received by participants in both programs at the Level 1 and the Level 2 exams.

Table 1

*Summary of Total Hours of Instruction for Programs A and B*

	Program A – early/more (age of onset = 7-8) N = 69	Program B – late/less (age of onset = 12-13) N = 41
Total hours of instruction received at time of Level 1 (PET) exam	1680 / 1960 (age 14-15)	840 (age 16-17)
Total hours of instruction received at time of Level 2 (FCE) exam	2100 / 2380 (ages 16-17)	1260 (ages 18-19)

It is important to note that there are more students in Program A than in Program B. Students in both programs are divided into groups of approximately 15 students. They spend half of their instructional time with their teachers, and the other half, together with another group of the same age and level, in a larger group of 30 students, with a teaching assistant, who is in charge of practising the content of what they have learned with their teachers. Even if the total number of students in Program B is smaller, class size does not differ significantly.

### *3.3 Instruments*

Two proficiency measures were used in the study: at Level 1, the Preliminary English Test (PET) (see Appendix 2); at Level 2, the First Certificate in English (FCE) (see Appendix 3). Both are exams offered by the University of Cambridge. These proficiency measures were developed by applied linguists and ESL instructors who are closely linked to the teaching, learning and testing fields. One of “the most distinctive features about the Cambridge certificate exams is their close connection to the educational context” (Chalhoub-Deville & Turner, 2000, p. 529). Indeed, at the school where this thesis study was conducted, the syllabus is designed to prepare candidates for these exams, so instructors as well as students are encouraged to view the results of the exams as indicators of learning.

In the thesis study, practice versions of each exam (PET and FCE) were used since no one except Cambridge employees has access to the official exams. These practice exams were taken in August in preparation for the official exams that were administered in December of the same year. They were taken under conditions that simulated those of the official exams. That is, the timed schedule of each section of the exam was followed, and students had no access to extra material (dictionaries, textbooks). Given that these practice exams are discarded at the end of the school year, the director of the school agreed to make them available to the researcher to be used for the thesis study. Students’ names were removed and replaced by codes.

PET and FCE are divided into sections called “papers”. PET consists of three papers and FCE of five. Within each paper, there are different exercises or tasks, referred

to as parts. Following is a detailed description of each paper and each part within each paper, both for PET and FCE.

It is important to note that for the practice exams used here, no description was provided by the school of the parts that make up the Speaking paper in either the PET or FCE exam. Furthermore, only the final score for the Speaking paper was made available to the researcher. That is, there is no indication of what score was given for each part. The Speaking score is thus a portion of the overall score of each exam, but it is not analyzed independently. However, a general description of the Speaking paper is given below.

### *3.3.1 Level 1 exam: Preliminary English Test (PET)*

The Cambridge Preliminary English Test (PET) is an intermediate level exam from Cambridge ESOL examinations. It measures the ability “to cope with everyday written and spoken communications” ([www.cambridge-efl.org](http://www.cambridge-efl.org)). Many students wish to take this exam because successful candidates are awarded a certificate by the University of Cambridge. In the official exam, students are given the following grades: PASS, PASS WITH MERIT or FAIL. Those students who earn a passing grade are awarded the PET certificate, which is recognized worldwide and serves as proof of an intermediate level of English proficiency. PET covers the four language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. It also assesses grammar and vocabulary. The exam contains three papers, which are described below. The amount of time allowed for each paper is indicated in parentheses.

**Paper 1: Reading and Writing** (1 hour 30 minutes): This component measures the ability to read and understand texts from newspapers, magazines, brochures and signs.

Candidates are expected to infer the meaning of new or unfamiliar words from the text and understand its message and possible effects of the text on the reader. In the reading part of this paper, students have a variety of tasks, such as filling in the gaps in simple texts and completing forms. There are 35 questions in the reading section worth 25% of the total for the exam. For the writing part, students are asked to write a short report or letter of around 100 words. This part of this paper is worth 25 marks, representing 25% of the total. The entire Paper 1 is then worth 50% of the final grade. Tables 2 and 3 describe the tasks in Paper 1.

Table 2

*PET Paper 1: Description of Reading Comprehension Tasks*

Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4	Part 5
Students look at the text in each question and interpret what it says by choosing the correct answer (multiple choice).	Students match a description (of a home, for example) (A-H) with the most suitable person (6-10). Paraphrases are used.	Students read the text and decide if each sentence is correct or incorrect (true or false).	Students read the text and the questions below. For each question, they choose the letter corresponding to the correct answer (multiple choice).	Students read the text and choose the correct word for each space provided. This is a fill-in-the-blanks exercise where four options are given for each space provided.

Table 3

*PET Paper 1: Description of Writing Tasks*

Part 1	Part 2	Part 3
For each sentence given, students complete a second sentence so that it means the same as the first one using no more than three words.	Students write a note (35-45 words) including three instructions/points that they were given.	Students choose to write about one of two options. 1. They write a story (100 words) that starts with a specific sentence that they are given. 2. They write a letter (100 words) replying to a friend's questions.

**Paper 2: Listening comprehension** (30 minutes): This section measures the ability to comprehend audio material (e.g., public announcements and dialogues) delivered at a moderate rate. Candidates are expected to understand the information, as well as the attitudes and intentions of the speakers. There are four parts in this section. This section is worth 25 marks (25% of the final grade). Table 4 describes the tasks in Paper 2.

Table 4

*PET Paper 2: Description of Listening Comprehension Tasks*

Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4
Students answer each question they hear by choosing the correct answer. The answers are given in picture form and three options are provided (multiple choice).	Students choose the correct answer for each question (3 options are given per question). All the questions are related to the same text (e.g. a radio presenter talking about a particular subject). Both questions and answers are written.	Students listen to an excerpt and fill in the missing information in the spaces provided (one or several words have to be used).	Students hear a conversation between three people. They decide if the sentences given that are related to what they heard are correct or incorrect.

**Paper 3: Speaking (10-12 minutes):** This component measures the ability to interact orally with an examiner and with a peer. Candidates are expected to answer questions about themselves, to ask questions, and to talk about their likes and dislikes. This section of the exam consists of four parts, for a total of 25 marks (25% of the total exam grade). The first part is an interview with the examiner (personal questions to each candidate). In the second part, candidates are given a situation, and they interact with each other (discuss, plan, agree, disagree). For the third part, candidates are given photographs that are related to the same topic, and they talk to each other about them. In the last part of this paper, candidates talk with each other about their likes, dislikes, habits, etc. There are two examiners in the room, and both of them award marks. Only one of the examiners acts as the interlocutor. Scales for each of the following categories are considered when awarding marks: grammar and vocabulary (the accurate and

appropriate use of grammatical structures and vocabulary); discourse management (the use of extended utterances where appropriate, and a coherent flow of language); pronunciation (the ability to produce comprehensible utterances to fulfil the task); and interactive communication (the ability to take part in the interaction, initiating and responding appropriately).

As noted above, only the total scores for the speaking section of PET were made available to the researcher. There are no scores for the individual parts.

### *3.3.2 Level 2 exam: First Certificate in English (FCE)*

The second measure of comparison that was used in this study is the Cambridge First Certificate in English (FCE), which is an upper intermediate level exam from Cambridge ESOL examinations, and successful completion indicates a higher level of proficiency than PET. The First Certificate in English consists of five papers: Reading, Writing, Use of English, Listening and Speaking. The amount of time allowed for each paper is indicated in parentheses below. The five FCE papers total 200 marks, after weighting. Papers 1-5 are each weighted to 40 marks. The candidate's overall FCE grade is based on the total score of all five papers, out of a possible 200 marks. Candidates do not pass or fail in a particular paper, but rather in the examination as a whole. The grades that are given to the students are the following: A, B, C, D, E and F. Students are considered to pass the FCE if they receive a grade of C or above.

**Paper 1: Reading** (1 hour 15 minutes): This component measures the ability to understand written texts (fiction and non-fiction books, journals, newspapers and magazines). Candidates should be able to understand the gist, details and text structure,

and infer the meaning. There are four parts in this section. Table 5 describes the tasks in Paper 1.

Table 5

*FCE Paper 1: Description of Reading Comprehension Tasks*

Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4
Students read an article and choose the most suitable heading for each part of the article. An extra heading (distractor) is provided.	Students read an article and choose the best answer for each question. Four options are given per question. (Multiple choice).	Students read an article in which some paragraphs have been removed. They choose which paragraph best fits each gap. An extra paragraph is given as a distractor.	Students read newspaper articles about different people and answer questions by choosing which person the question refers to.

**Paper 2: Writing** (1 hour 30 minutes): This component measures the ability to write texts (letters, articles, reports, compositions and reviews) of 120-180 words covering various topics. There are two parts in this section.

All written texts are marked by experienced examiners who attend a training and standardisation session before marking. Examiners award marks according to a general marking scheme, which has detailed performance bands from 0-5, where band 3 describes a satisfactory level. The scores are converted to provide a mark out of 20 for each piece of writing. Table 6 describes the tasks in Paper 2.

Table 6

*FCE Paper 2: Description of Writing Tasks*

Part 1	Part 2
Students write a letter (120-180 words) replying to another person and including some specific details.	Students have four choices and choose one to write about (120-180 words). <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Write a composition expressing opinion about a topic.</li><li>2. Write an article expressing opinion about a topic.</li><li>3. Write a composition for or against a specific topic.</li><li>4. Write an article for a magazine answering some questions given.</li></ol>

**Paper 3: Use of English** (1 hour 15 minutes): This component requires the candidate to demonstrate his/her knowledge and control of the language system by completing various tasks, such as filling gaps, word and phrase transformation, and error identification. It focuses on grammar and vocabulary. There are five parts in this section. Table 7 describes the tasks in Paper 3.

Table 7

*FCE Paper 3: Description of Use of English Tasks*

Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4	Part 5
Students fill in the blanks with one of the four options given. All the words that are given as options belong to the same grammatical group: nouns, verbs, prepositions, etc. (multiple choice)	Students fill in the blanks of a text with one word per space. No options are provided.	Students complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first, using the word given.	Students read a text and decide whether each line is correct or incorrect. If the line is incorrect, they correct it.	Students complete a text using a word that derives from the ones they are given (eg: inform/information).

**Paper 4: Listening** (40 minutes, approx.): This component measures the ability to understand spoken English. The listening texts included in this paper are varied: interviews, discussions, lectures and conversations. There are four parts in this section.

Table 8 describes the tasks in Paper 4.

Table 8

*FCE Paper 4: Description of Listening Comprehension Tasks*

Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4
Students hear people talking in different situations and choose the best answer for each question (multiple choice).	Students hear a radio interview (for example) and complete the text with the missing information.	Students hear different people talk and match the speaker to what each person says.	Students hear a conversation between three people and indicate which person each question refers to.

**Paper 5: Speaking** (14 minutes, approx.): This component measures the ability to interact orally in a range of contexts. There are four parts in this section. Aside from the first part, this paper is completed in pairs. The first part is an interview, where candidates give the interviewer information about themselves and talk about past and future experiences. The second part involves long individual turns of about one minute, where each candidate gives information to the other, expresses his/her opinion and compares and contrasts. The third part is a collaborative task (role-play) where candidates agree, disagree, discuss, suggest, and justify. The last part is a discussion furthering the topic that was given for the role-play task. Candidates are provided with material such as photographs and drawings. Two examiners are present in the room at the time of the exam, an assessor and an interlocutor. The assessor awards marks to each candidate for performance throughout the test according to four criteria (the same criteria used for PET: grammar and vocabulary; discourse management; pronunciation; interactive communication). The interlocutor awards marks according to a global achievement scale, which assesses the candidates' overall effectiveness in tackling the tasks.

As with PET, only the total scores for the speaking section of FCE were made available to the researcher. There are no scores for the individual parts.

In the present study, in which practice exams were used, the scores from PET and FCE were expressed in percentages (from 0% to 100%), for each of the separate papers, as well as for the final score. This allowed for an analysis and comparison of different sections, parts, as well as of the overall score. The overall scores were sent to the researcher electronically and were presented on Excel sheets, and photocopies of most of the exams were made available to the researcher as the originals are normally kept by the school until the end of the academic year and then discarded.

### *3.4 Procedure*

The design of this study is cross-sectional. Data were collected during one August practice test session, and PET and FCE scores did not belong to the same group of students. That is, the early starters in Program A taking the PET (Level 1 exam) were not the same students as the early starters in Program A taking the FCE (Level 2 exam). Similarly, the late starters in Program B taking the PET (Level 1 exam) were not the same students as the late starters in Program B taking the FCE (Level 2 exam).

As the instruments are already-existing ones, there are conventions to be followed for their analysis. The teachers who scored the tests in Córdoba, Argentina, were all trained and experienced in the Cambridge scoring procedures. Photocopies of the entire practice exams were made available to the researcher so that further analyses of the different tasks within each paper could be carried out. The names of the students were replaced by codes to maintain their anonymity. Since two versions of the practice exams were used with each group to control for cheating, an item analysis was not possible. However, all the tasks in each version followed the format described in 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 above.

Four tasks from each exam were used to answer Research Questions 4-9. These tasks were selected according to the demands they make on analysis and control (see Bialystok, 2001). While analysis and control are theoretically separate dimensions in Bialystok's framework, in practice, task demands cannot be considered separately (see Chapter 2). Since these two dimensions are so closely linked, only analysis, which is most often the predictor of the level of control, was taken into account when classifying these tasks. It was hypothesized that only the level of analysis required to complete a task

would differentiate between participants in Program A (early starters) and Program B (late starters).

Two HIGH analysis tasks and two LOW analysis tasks were selected. These tasks are exactly the same format in PET and FCE, facilitating comparison and ensuring reliability. Task H1 (High 1) is part 1 of the Writing Paper of the Level 1 exam (PET) (see Appendix 2, page 91) and part 3 of the Use of English Paper of the Level 2 exam (FCE) (see Appendix 3, page 113). This task requires students to complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence. In PET, students have to complete the second sentence with no more than three words, and in FCE, students have to use the word given to complete the second sentence. The word given cannot be changed, and students must use between two and five words, including the one given.

Task H2 (High 2) is part 5 of the Reading Paper of the Level 1 exam (PET) (see Appendix 2, page 90) and part 1 of the Use of English Paper of the Level 2 exam (FCE) (see Appendix 3, page 110). This task requires students to read the text shown and choose the answer (A, B, C or D) that best completes each space provided.

Task L1 (Low 1) is part 1 of the Listening Paper of the Level 1 exam (PET) (see Appendix 2, page 94) as well as of the Level 2 exam (FCE) (see Appendix 3, page 117). It requires students to listen to the recording and choose the best answer (A, B or C) for each question. In PET, the answers are in picture form whereas in FCE they are in sentence form.

Task L2 (Low 2) is part 3 of the Listening Paper of the Level 1 exam (PET) (see Appendix 2, page 98) and part 2 of the Listening Paper of the Level 2 exam (FCE) (see Appendix 3, page 119). This task requires students to listen to the recording and complete the sentences with the missing information.

Given that not all the participants' copies of the practice exams were made available to the researcher, Ns are smaller for the four tasks chosen (H1, H2, L1 and L2) than Ns for the overall scores. Table 9 shows the tasks that were compared and how they match on both exams. Note that no tasks from the FCE Reading Comprehension and Writing papers were compared.

Table 9

*High and Low Analysis Tasks in PET and FCE*

**PET**

Paper: Listening Comprehension

	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4
Analysis and control	<b>LOW</b>		<b>LOW</b>	

Paper: Reading

	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4	Part 5
Analysis and control					<b>HIGH</b>

Paper: Writing

	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3
Analysis and control	<b>HIGH</b>		

**FCE**

Paper: Use of English

	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4	Part 5
Analysis and control	<b>HIGH</b>		<b>HIGH</b>		

Paper: Listening Comprehension

	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4
Analysis and control	<b>LOW</b>	<b>LOW</b>		

Paper: Reading Comprehension

	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4
Analysis and control				

Paper: Writing

	Part 1	Part 2
Analysis and control		

### *3.5 Summary*

This chapter described the methodology used in the study to investigate the research questions presented in Chapter 2. Chapter 4 presents the analysis procedures, findings and discussion of the findings obtained.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *4.1 Introduction*

This chapter presents the results for each research question and discusses the findings and possible explanations of those results. For the purpose of the study, *t*-tests (independent samples) were used to compare the performance of participants in Program A and participants in Program B. Equality of variances was checked using the Levene's test. Whenever the assumption of equality of variances was violated, *t*-tests for unequal variances were conducted. The alpha level used for the entire study was .05. Due to multiple comparisons, the Bonferroni adjustment was made, resulting in an alpha level of .008. The findings are presented in tables under the corresponding research question.

### *4.2 Research question #1*

Will there be a significant difference in the overall scores of participants in Programs A and B on the Level 1 exam (PET)?

#### *4.2.1 Results for research question #1*

The *t*-test results for the overall scores on the Level 1 Exam (PET) indicated that participants in Program A scored significantly higher than those in Program B. Table 10 summarizes the findings.

Table 10

*T-test (Unequal Variances) Results for PET Overall Scores, Programs A and B*

Program	N	Mean	SD	df	t
A	26	85.89	5.97	43	4.74*
B	29	74.32	11.53		

\*  $p < .008$

As can be seen in Table 10, the *SD* for Program B is almost double that for Program A. This is due to the wider range of overall scores in Program B, from 48 to 93, in contrast to the range from 63 to 95 in Program A. Indeed, some individuals in Program B scored above the mean of Program A, while others scored much below it. The overall scores for individuals in Program A and Program B can be found in Appendix 4.

*4.2.2 Discussion of results for research question # 1*

One explanation for the finding that participants in Program A obtained higher overall scores than those in Program B on the Level 1 exam (PET) is the age at which they had begun learning English (age of onset of instruction). The reader will recall that learners in Program A were younger (age 7-8) when they started their English program, whereas participants in Program B were 12-13 years old.

However, age of onset of instruction is not the only factor to consider when analysing the results. Total amount of instructional seems to have played a more important role than cognitive development in the performance of both groups of participants. Participants in Program A had received between 1680 and 1960 hours of English instruction at the time they took the Level 1 exam. In contrast, participants in

Program B had received 840 hours of instruction, or about half as many, before taking the same exam. This supports the claim that when the amount of instruction differs, learners who have received more hours of instruction show advantages (Barik and Swain, 1975; Carroll, 1967, 1975; Collins et al., 1999; Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Swain and Barik, 1976), and, consequently, early starters outperform later starters in all four skills (Lapkin et al., 1991).

Late starters might have been predicted to perform as well as early starters due to their cognitive advantage (Ausubel, 1964; Cummins, 1980; Swain, 1981), but that was not the case. It is likely, therefore, that the performance of participants in both programs was influenced by a combination of two factors: overall amount of instruction and age of onset of this instruction.

#### *4.3 Research question #2*

Will there be a significant difference in the overall scores of participants in Programs A and B on the Level 2 exam (FCE)?

##### *4.3.1 Results for research question #2*

The t-test results for the overall scores on the Level 2 Exam (FCE) were not the same as those obtained on the Level 1 exam. Participants in Program A did not outperform those in Program B. Although the mean overall score for participants in Program A is higher than that for participants in Program B, this difference is not significant. Table 11 summarizes the findings.

Table 11

*T-test Results for FCE Overall Scores, Programs A and B*

Program	N	Mean	SD	df	t
A	43	70.46	11.21	53	1.47
B	12	64.58	15.80		

The *SD* is high for both Program A and B. Overall scores in Program A range from 46 to 92, and in Program B from 40 to 95. The overall scores for individuals in Programs A and B can be found in Appendix 5. In contrast to the PET test, performance on the FCE was more variable for both participants in both groups.

*4.3.2 Discussion of results for research question #2*

The overall score advantage of participants in Program A over those in Program B was not maintained at the Level 2 exam. One explanation is that the participants in Program B were older when they started learning English and had a cognitive advantage over the younger starters in Program A that allowed them to be more efficient learners. The teachers matched the instruction to the learners' cognitive ability and made efficient use of time from the beginning of the instruction, given that they were aware of the late start to language learning and of the time constraint for exam preparation. In contrast, although teachers in Program A also matched the learners' cognitive ability from the beginning, early starters were young and their cognitive maturity between ages 7 and 10 only allowed them to engage in communicative activities (songs, games, crossword puzzles, grammar exercises that focused on repetition, etc.), tasks which did not necessarily match those of the exams. It was only later, two years before the Level 1

exam, that early starters received instruction that would prepare them for the test. It could also be speculated that because their approach to language learning was memory based, they could have continued learning the language in this way, even at an older age and regardless of their cognitive ability.

Munoz (2003, 2008) reminds us that adolescents or older learners have access to explicit learning mechanisms and can use their analytic and metalinguistic skills to learn faster. In contrast, young children in early elementary school grades learn implicitly, and this type of learning requires a greater amount of input and time. A similar claim was made by Burstall et al. (1974) and Harley and Hart (1997). Therefore, even though participants in Program B had started receiving English instruction at a later age and had accumulated fewer hours of instruction than participants in Program A, by the time they took the Level 2 exam, their analytic and metalinguistic abilities, together with two additional years of instruction, enabled them to catch up to the early starter, who by then had spent a thousand hours more in their English program.

Following Collins et al (1999), this finding could also be explained by the fact that “the kind of learning that takes place in the communicative classroom context reaches a plateau at some point and that the simple addition of more classroom hours of the same type of exposure will not lead to a proportional increase in learning” (p.673).

#### *4.4 Research question #3*

Can the tasks on the Level 1 and Level 2 exams be classified with respect to their demands on analysis and control?

#### *4.4.1 Results for research question #3*

Four researchers attempted on two occasions to classify all the tasks in the Level 1 and Level 2 exams according to the demands they made on analysis and control. The first step was to compare and try to match the tasks from the exams to those given by Bialystok (2001) as examples of high and low analysis and control tasks. Next, tasks were sorted, and the highest and lowest examples of the two processes were identified. This was done by all four researchers working individually at first, and then pairs of researchers attempted the classification together. Consensus was reached on the analysis continuum, but not on control. Indeed, analysis and control could not be separated, and tasks that were judged to demand high levels of analysis were also judged to demand high levels of the control, while tasks that were judged as low analysis were also judged as low control.

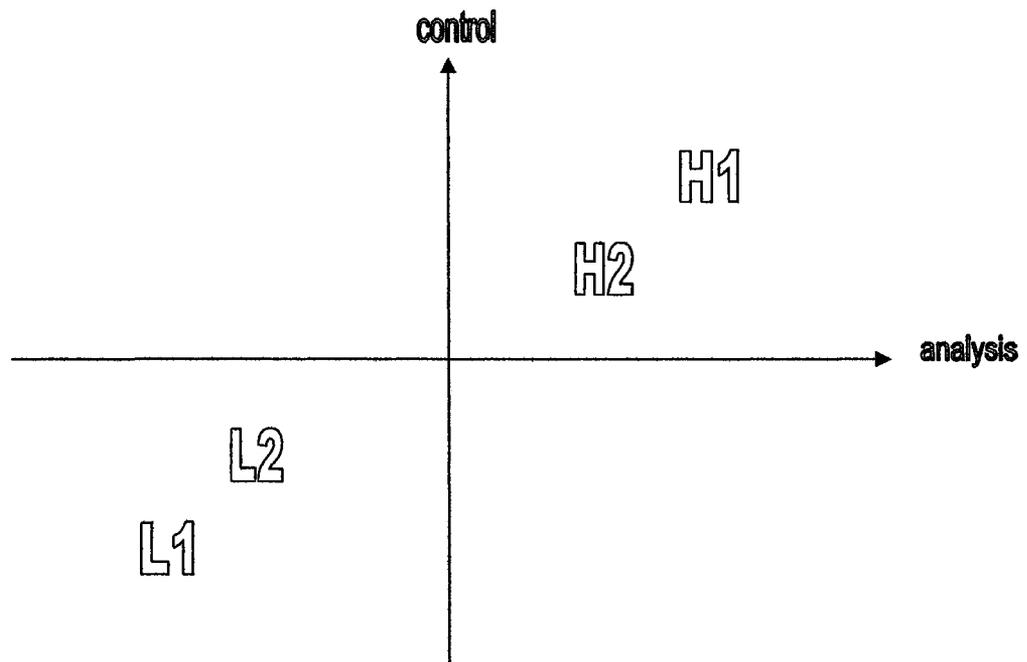
Four tasks per exam were clearly classified as representing the low and high extremes of the analysis continuum. As mentioned in Chapter 3, these tasks are similar in both exams. The instructions given to the students as well as the requirements for task completion are almost exactly the same. Consequently, tasks demands are also similar. For that reason, they were selected as representative tasks of each exam that could be used in comparing performance across programs. The two high analysis tasks are referred to as H1 and H2, and the two low analysis tasks as L1 and L2.

Table 12 shows these tasks. Figure 2 shows where the four tasks are placed on the analysis and control framework.

Table 12

*Low and High Analysis Tasks from PET and FCE Used for Comparison*

	PET	FCE
Low analysis tasks	L1: Listening Comprehension 1 L2: Listening Comprehension 3	L1: Listening Comprehension 1 L2: Listening Comprehension 2
High analysis tasks	H1: Writing 1 H2: Reading Comprehension 5	H1: Use of English 1 H2: Use of English 3



*Figure 2. High and Low Analysis Tasks*

As can be seen in Figure 2, task H1 is considered higher in analysis (and control) than task H2, and task L1 is considered lower in analysis (and control) than task L2. As described in Chapter 3, Task H1 requires the students to complete the second sentence so

that it means the same as the first. This task, then, demands not only understanding of the first sentence, but also production on the part of the students. They have to come up with the words that complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first. In task H2, they are required to choose the word (A, B, C or D) that best completes the blank spaces in a text. They have to understand the text and the words given, but they can also guess or trust their memory and choose an answer that sounds right.

Task L1 requires students to listen to a recorded text and choose the correct answer (A, B or C). In the Level 1 exam (PET), the answers given are in picture form while in the Level 2 exam (FCE) they are in sentence form. Students do not have to come up with an answer, but rather choose it from a set of options. In task L2, students have to listen to the recording and complete the sentences with the information missing. Students then write the answer, which is often more than one word.

#### *4.4.2 Discussion of results for research question # 3*

The purpose of classifying all the tasks according to the demands they make on analysis and control was to find out whether the older learners' (late starters) cognitive advantage would be more evident on high analysis tasks than on low analysis tasks. It could be speculated that it was not possible to classify all tasks according to their demands on control because analysis and control cannot be considered separately. As Bialystok herself noted (2001), these processes are logically connected to one another, and most of the tasks that demand high levels of analysis also demand high levels of control. Thus, while consensus could be reached on the demands the four tasks make on

analysis such that they could be placed along a continuum from lower to higher analysis in relation to each other, it was not possible to tease analysis and control apart.

#### 4.5 Research question # 4

Will there be a significant difference in the combined score of tasks H1, H2, L1 and L2 of participants in Programs A and B on the Level 1 exam (PET)?

##### 4.5.1 Results for research question #4

The t-test results for the combined scores of tasks H1, H2, L1 and L2 on the Level 1 exam (PET) indicated that participants in Program A scored significantly higher than those in Program B. Table 13 summarizes the findings.

Table 13

*Independent Samples t-test (Unequal Variances) Results for PET Combined Score of Tasks H1, H2, L1, L2, Programs A and B*

Program	N	M	SD	df	t
Program A	20	84.91	9.34	12.86	3.23*
Program B	11	65.64	18.54		

\*  $p < .008$

##### 4.5.2 Discussion of results for research question #4

As in the case of research question #1, the finding could be attributed to the greater amount of instructional time for participants in Program A. Even if the older starters in Program B can be assumed to have had a cognitive advantage over younger starters that could have given them an advantage on the high analysis tasks, the younger

starters had received twice as much instruction (1680-1960 hours versus 840 hours) as the older starters at the time of Test 1. Thus, amount of instructional time seems to have had a greater impact on test performance than age.

The results obtained on the combined score of tasks H1, H2, L1 and L2 at the Level 1 exam are the same as those of the overall scores: participants in Program A scored significantly higher than those in Program B. This confirms that the four components chosen are representative of the exam.

#### *4.6 Research question #5*

Will there be a significant difference in the combined score of tasks H1, H2, L2 and L1 of participants in Programs A and B on the Level 2 exam (FCE)?

##### *4.6.1 Results for research question #5*

This research question asks whether Program A participants will significantly outperform Program B participants on the subcomponents of the Level 2 exam. The t-test results for the combined scores on the Level 2 Exam (FCE) showed that the same pattern was not observed. That is, although the mean scores are higher for participants in Program A than Program B, there was no significant difference between the two groups on the combined scores. Table 14 summarizes the findings.

Table 14

*Independent Samples t-test Results for FCE Combined Score of Tasks H1, H2, L1, L2, Programs A and B*

Program	N	M	SD	df	t
Program A	25	69.75	11.92	30	2.57
Program B	7	55.82	15.39		

#### *4.6.2 Discussion of results for research question #5*

The finding for the combined score is similar to the result obtained for research question 2. That is, older learners did as well as younger learners. As discussed above, this is possibly due to their analytical language ability and to the fact that they are making use of the cognitive advantages associated with adolescence. Harley and Hart (1997) speculated that learners who begin learning a second language at an early age may continue to use this memory-based learning strategy when they reach adolescence, rather than switching to analytic strategies. If this is the case, early starters would be at a disadvantage with respect to older starters on tasks that require analysis, despite their continuing advantage with respect to the total number of instructional hours they have accumulated.

Another factor that could have influenced the results is motivation. It is possible that younger learners had reached a point where they no longer felt motivated to continue learning the second language. The initial enthusiasm might have diminished after a long period of instruction. By the time both groups took the Level 2 exam, early starters had been studying English as a second language after their regular school day for approximately eight years, whereas late starters had been learning the language for six years and for about half the total number of hours.

Before we move to the next research question, it is important to point out that similar results were obtained, regardless of whether performance on the Level 1 and Level 2 exams was compared using the total scores for the overall exam or the combined scores of four tasks representative of high and low analysis (H1, H2, L1 and L2). Specifically, the answers to research questions 1 and 4 were that participants in Program A significantly outperformed participants in Program B on the Level 1 exam. The answers to research questions 2 and 5 were that Program A participants did not significantly outperform Program B participants on the Level 2 exam. The similar findings suggest that tasks H1, H2, L1 and L2 reflect the demands made by the overall Level 1 and Level 2 exams on analysis. The next research questions address performance on tasks that make different demands on analysis.

#### *4.7 Research question #6*

Will participants in Program A and B perform differently on Level 1 exam (PET) tasks that make high demands on analysis (H1 and H2)?

##### *4.7.1 Results for research question #6*

The t-test results for the high analysis tasks (H1 and H2) on the Level 1 Exam (PET) indicated that for task H1 (Writing 1), participants in Program A and Program B performed similarly. However, the results of task H2 (Reading Comprehension 5) showed that participants in Program A scored significantly higher than those in Program B. Tables 15 and 16 summarize the findings.

Table 15

*Independent Samples t-test Results for PET High Analysis Task H1, Programs A and B*

H1 (Writing1)	Program	N	M	SD	df	t
	Program A	22	70.91	23.48	31	.39
	Program B	11	67.27	28.67		

Table 16

*Independent Samples t-test (Unequal Variances) Results for PET High Analysis Task H2, Programs A and B*

H2 (Reading Comp. 5)	Program	N	M	SD	df	t
	Program A	22	82.73	12.79	10.52	3.53*
	Program B	11	53.64	25.80		

\*  $p < .008$

#### 4.7.2 Discussion of results for research question #6

The studies presented in the literature review in Chapter 2 suggest that older learners have a cognitive advantage over younger learners, given that they have a richer vocabulary, a better knowledge of grammar and their literacy skills are already strong in the L1 (Ausubel, 1964; Swain, 1981). This could compensate for the much greater amount of instructional time that younger learners (participants in Program A) received, and one could expect that participants in Program B would perform similarly to those in Program A on high analysis tasks. Indeed, this was confirmed for task H1, but not for task H2. That is, there was no significant difference in the performance of participants in Program A and Program B on task H1 although participants in Program A performed significantly higher than those in Program B on task H2. To explain the difference in

performance between the two tasks, it is necessary to consider what participants have to do in each of these two high analysis tasks.

Task H1 requires participants to paraphrase sentences that they are given, by completing the sentence that follows using no more than three words.

Example: The flat is near my college.

**The flat is not.....my college.**

Task H2 is a multiple-choice exercise where participants have to complete a text by choosing the correct word for each blank space.

Example: Although (1) ..... groups of people have always lived outdoors in tents, camping as we know it today only began to be (2)..... about 50 years ago.

1. A some    B every    C both    D each

2. A famous    B popular    C favourite    D current

While these two tasks were both considered to be high in analysis, they differ in some aspects. In Task H1, the participant must provide the words to fill in each sentence, even though the options are grammatically and semantically constrained, whereas in Task H2, the options are provided.

The explanation that could be given to the results obtained here is that task H2 is a slightly “easier” task, as it requires only understanding the sentence and choosing the right word. H1 is harder, given that it relies both on understanding (comprehension) and production. Older learners (having a cognitive advantage, including literacy advantage) are better able to cope with this more complex task.

#### 4.8 Research question #7

Will the same pattern be observed on the Level 2 exam?

##### 4.8.1 Results for research question #7

The t-test results for the high analysis tasks (H1 and H2) on the Level 2 Exam (FCE) indicated that there was no significant difference in the performance of participants in Programs A and B. Tables 17 and 18 summarize the findings.

Table 17

*Independent Samples t-test Results for FCE High Analysis Task H1, Programs A and B*

H1 (U. of English 1)	Program	N	M	SD	df	t
	Program A	30	60.43	14.14	44	.46
	Program B	16	58.25	17.85		

Table 18

*Independent Samples t-test (Unequal Variances) Results for FCE High Analysis Task H2, Programs A and B*

H2 (U. of English 3)	Program	N	M	SD	df	t
	Program A	30	71.17	12.30	19.75	1.62
	Program B	16	61.25	22.84		

##### 4.8.2 Discussion of results for research question #7

Late starters, those in Program B, may be assumed to have a cognitive advantage over early starters, as well as a more analytical approach to language learning (Harley and

Hart, 1997). This may have contributed to their good performance on high analysis tasks, even if the amount of instruction they had received at the time they took the Level 2 exam was much lower than the early starters in Program A. The cognitive advantage likely made up for the smaller amount of instruction. Furthermore, the early starters in this study might have reached a plateau by the time they took the Level 2 exam (Collins et al., 1999).

#### 4.9 Research question #8

Will participants in Programs A and B perform differently on Level 1 exam tasks that make low demands on analysis (L1 and L2)?

##### 4.9.1 Results for research question #8

The t-test results for the low analysis tasks (L1 and L2) on the Level 1 exam (PET) showed that participants in Program A performed significantly higher than participants in Program B on both low analysis tasks. Tables 19 and 20 summarize the findings.

Table 19

*Independent Samples t-test(Unequal Variances) Results for PET Low Analysis Task L1, Programs A and B*

L1 (List. Comp. 1)	Program	N	M	SD	df	t
	Program A	22	93.50	10.64	10.42	3.55*
	Program B	11	68.73	21.89		

\*  $p. < .008$

Table 20

*Independent Samples t-test Results for PET Low Analysis Task L2, Programs A and B*

L2 (List. Comp. 3)	Program	N	M	SD	df	t
	Program A	22	93.73	12.33	31	4.41*
	Program B	11	72.91	13.69		

\*  $p < .008$

*4.9.2 Discussion of results for research question #8*

As was the case for the overall test results at Time 1 discussed under research question 1 above, participants in Program A scored higher than those in Program B on both low analysis tasks.

Task L1 requires students to listen to a recording and choose the best answer (A, B or C) for each question. The answers are in picture form (see Appendix 2, page 94).

Task L2 requires students to listen to a recording and complete the sentences with the missing information (see Appendix 2, page 98).

Muñoz (2001) found no difference in the performance of early and late starters in listening comprehension, but in her study, the amount of instruction was the same for both groups at the time of testing. In the present study, early starters had received twice the amount of instruction as late starters, which could explain their higher performance on these tasks, as well as on the overall exam

The overall advantage of higher amount of instruction, which in this case is closely linked to an early start, can be seen on many types of tasks (Barik and Swain, 1975; Carroll, 1967, 1975; Collins et al., 1999; Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Swain and Barik, 1976).

#### 4.10 Research question #9

Will the same pattern be observed on the Level 2 exam?

##### 4.10.1 Results for research question #9

The t-test results for the low analysis tasks (L1 and L2) on the Level 2 Exam (FCE) indicated that there was no significant difference on the performance of participants in Program A and those in Program B. Tables 21 and 22 summarize the findings.

Table 21

*Independent Samples t-test Results for FCE Low Analysis Task L1, Programs A and B*

L1 (List. Compr. 1)	Program	N	M	SD	df	t
	Program A	35	70.90	21.78	40	1.65
	Program B	7	55.43	26.89		

Table 22

*Independent Samples t-test Results for FCE Low Analysis Task L2, Programs A and B*

L2 (List. Compr. 2)	Program	N	M	SD	df	t
	Program A	35	74.86	18.01	40	2.11
	Program B	7	58.57	21.93		

##### 4.10.2 Discussion of results for research question # 9

The low analysis tasks chosen (L1 and L2) were two listening comprehension tasks. Listening comprehension seems to be a skill where there may be no clear advantage of one group over another (Muñoz, 2003).

It is important to note that, even though there was no significant difference between the groups, the means for participants in Program B were lower on both tasks. Furthermore, there were only seven participants in Group B, and the scores varied widely. The heterogeneity of the group is reflected in the high standard deviations. This variation may have accounted for the finding of no significant difference between the two groups.

Another explanation that could be given is that, although these tasks were considered low in analysis (or lower than the tasks that were classified as high), they were still high, compared to Bialystok's (2001) examples of low analysis oral tasks (L2 conversation, adult conversation, children's conversations) (p. 16). She states that children's conversations "make the lowest demands on cognitive processes, but conversations in a second language require both more formal knowledge and highly skilled attention to perform at a reasonable level of proficiency" (p. 15). Even if these tasks were not "conversations", participants had to understand spoken language in a context-reduced situation (Cummins, 1983). Cummins states that cognitive maturity helps in the performance of context-reduced tasks.

#### *4.11 Conclusion*

Answers to research questions 1, 4, and 8 showed a statistically significant difference between the programs, and in each case, participants in Program A scored higher than those in Program B on the Level 1 exam. An exception to this pattern was found in addressing research question 6, and participants in Program B did as well, statistically, as participants in Program B on one of the two high analysis tasks (H2) on the Level 1 exam.

Answers to research questions 2, 5, 7 and 9 indicated that there were no statistical differences between the results obtained by participants in Programs A and B on the Level 2 exam. Research question 3 was partially answered, as only four tasks per exam were clearly classified as high or low in analysis.

The findings obtained in this study would seem to support the “younger = better” theory in the short term, given that participants in Program A, early starters, obtained higher overall scores than participants in Program B, late starters, at the Level 1 exam (PET). However, the effects of an early start are conflated with the effects of amount of instruction. Not only did participants in Program A begin instruction at an earlier age, but by the time they took the Level 1 exam (PET), they had received many more hours of instruction than participants in Program B. These two factors cannot be separated as they both influence the result of overall scores.

With respect to the overall scores of both groups of participants at the Level 2 exam (FCE), the results reveal that participants in Program B scored similarly to those in Program A. This suggests that the late starters had a cognitive advantage over early starters, which made up for their smaller total amount of instructional time. However, although there was no statistically significant difference between the programs at the Level 2 exam (FCE), the overall scores of participants in Program A, early starters, were higher than those in Program B. Amount of instruction, which in this study is very “significant” (Muñoz, 2008), was the strongest factor that influenced the results of both groups of participants.

The task classification was not completely successful. Firstly, not all tasks could be classified according to their demands on analysis and control. Secondly, although four tasks, which matched on both exams, could be classified and placed on the analysis and

control framework, the results obtained on high analysis tasks (H1 and H2) at the Level 1 exam (PET) partially supported the predictions, which were that late starters would outperform, or perform similarly, to early starters on these tasks due to their cognitive advantage. They did perform similarly on task H1, but not on task H2. As for low analysis tasks, it was not predicted that late starters would perform as well as early starters at the Level 2 exam (FCE), but that is what the results indicate. As stated above, given that all the tasks are part of an exam, which is by nature, a context-reduced situation, they all make some kind of cognitive demand on the learner, favouring late starters.

The next chapter presents the contributions that this study makes to the field, its limitations, and offers suggestion for future research.

## CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

### *5.1 Introduction*

This chapter presents the contributions of the present study to the field of applied linguistics and second language education. It also discusses its limitations and gives suggestions for further research in the field.

### *5.2 Contributions*

An important aspect of this study was the large amount of instruction received by both groups of participants. Even if participants in Program B, late starters, received almost half the number of hours of instruction as those in Program A, early starters, both amounts surpass any that has been studied until now in a foreign language context.

The results obtained in this study support previous research carried out in elementary school second or foreign language programs. As we saw in Chapter 3, amount of instruction is an important factor in determining learning outcomes in second and foreign language settings (Barik and Swain, 1975; Carroll, 1967, 1974; Collins et al., 1999; Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Lapkin et al., 1991; Swain and Barik, 1976; White and Turner, 2005). In this study, although early starters obtained significantly higher overall scores on the Level 1 exam, we cannot attribute their superior performance to an earlier age of onset (7-8 versus 12-13) since they had accumulated twice as many hours of instruction as the late starters. Indeed, the findings of this study are in line with claims that older learners' cognitive skills may enable them perform as well as younger learners

on language tasks that make use of their analytic and literacy skills (Ausubel, 1964; Cummins, 1980; Swain, 1981). In this study, despite having half as much instructional time as the early starters, the late starters did as well on one of the high analysis tasks (H1, Writing 1). Two years later, the performance of the late starters was statistically no different from that of the early starters on the overall scores and all of the selected tests of the Level 2 exam.

### *5.3 Pedagogical and program implications*

This finding has implications for program implementation. Amount of instruction in a pedagogical setting plays a different role and it impacts learners differently at different stages of learners' cognitive development. Specifically, younger and older learners might benefit from instruction that differs in the way in which the hours of instruction are distributed. In this thesis study, not only did early starters receive more years of instruction, but they also had more hours of instruction per week. A more intensive program for early starters is in line with the finding that younger learners' memory-based approach to learning requires a great amount of input (Dekeyser 2000; Muñoz 2008). Older learners in this thesis study were part of a less intensive program, and still performed as well as early starters in the long run. Six hours of instruction per week are likely sufficient for older learners in an intensive program. Moreover, the findings from this study suggest that late starters may be able to catch up with early starters, at least on some performance measures.

Regarding the type of instruction offered in the school, the results indicate that it matched the requirements of the exams. Most importantly, this means that both the

instruction and the exam tasks were appropriate to the age of the learners (Muñoz, 2007). With young learners, it is advisable to use listening comprehension material that requires the learners to draw or circle after they listen, to use repetition in the classroom, visual stimuli for oral interactions, and to incorporate brief texts, such as crosswords, which motivate the learners who consider these tasks as games. Writing production should also be supported by visual stimuli and by the context. Adequate instruction for older learners, according to Muñoz, involves more engaging listening tasks which require logical reasoning, speaking tasks that revolve around more imaginary situations, such as role-plays, longer readings texts from which the learners can infer meaning, and writing tasks that involve free production.

The results of this study can be applied to other EFL contexts that offer similar language programs. Parents, students and teachers can take advantage of these results in a very practical way, which is to decide which language program best suits their learning objectives. Genesee (1978) suggested that “the selection of an early or late starting date may depend, to some extent, on the language goals set by the community” (p. 152).

The findings of this study give evidence of the older learner’s cognitive advantage. A late start, then, can have positive outcomes. This validates intensive ESL programs in Quebec for 11-12 year olds (grade 6), as learners are cognitively more mature at this age and can make fast progress in the early stages of instruction (Celaya, Torras, Pérez-Vidal, 2001; Muñoz, 2003). They are also more efficient at learning the language (Burstall et al, 1974).

For schools such as the one in which the data for this study were collected, the findings of this study can be used in their favour in two ways. First, students in Program A perform better on the Level 1 exam than late starters, showing a significant difference

in the short term. If the school is able to attract a younger clientele, this is financially beneficial to the school as they will attend over a longer period of time. Second, students in Program B performed similarly to those in Program A on the Level 2 exam. This strongly suggests that their cognitive advantage plays an important role, and although they were not able to catch up with the early starters on all of the components of the Level 1 exam, after receiving more instruction, they did. A late start to language learning, which would cost parents less money, can still lead to high levels of achievement.

#### *5.4 Limitations*

The most important limitation in this study is that the age and time factors are confounded. That is, participants in Program A and Program B took the Level 1 and Level 2 tests at different ages and after different amounts of instruction. In order to control for these two factors in this study, participants in Program A would have had to take the Level 1 exam (PET) after 840 hours of instruction, around the age of 10. However, this would not have been possible as participants in Program A would not have had the cognitive maturity to successfully complete the tasks that are part of the exam.

A second limitation is that the speaking section of the practice exams was not made available to the researcher. Only the overall scores were given in table format, and the researcher was not able to find out anything about the speaking component of the exams. Therefore, tasks in this section could not be classified according to the demands they make on analysis and control. For this reason, pronunciation, which is often an area in which early starters show an advantage, could not be investigated.

Another limitation of this study is that it was not longitudinal, for PET scores and FCE scores came from different groups of students. Therefore, results did not indicate how one cohort each from Program A and Program B performed at Level 1 and Level 2, but rather how Program A and Program B students from different cohorts performed on the two exams.

The next limitation is related to the set of measures used in the thesis study. On the one hand, the Cambridge exams are well known and highly respected around the world for their reliability and validity, and the use of a single set of measures could be taken as a strength in that comparison could be made across tasks and exams. On the other hand, they were the only measure used. Furthermore, these are standardized tests, which limit instruction in a way, because teachers have to prepare students for these exams, and the syllabus is adapted to this end.

Another limitation is that two versions of the practice exam were used. Even if they contained the same type and number of exercises requiring equivalent degrees of analysis and control and are claimed to have the same level of difficulty, a detailed analysis of specific items was not possible.

Regarding the administration of the exams, another limitation is that the researcher was not present when this took place, nor was she able to visit the school during the year to observe classroom instruction. Furthermore, no background information on these learners was available, so any differences in outside exposure and motivation are unknown. However, we can assume that since students are learning in an EFL context, they have limited access to English outside the classroom.

Finally, because there are more early starters than late starters in the school, there are more participants in Program A than in Program B. A larger number of participants, balanced between the two programs would have made the findings more robust.

### *5.5 Future research*

Not all tasks could be clearly classified according to the demands they make on analysis and control, so it was not possible to compare all tasks from all the sections of the exam. Another approach could be taken to attempt to classify tasks with respect to the language skills and knowledge needed to complete them (e.g. reading, writing, listening, oral interaction, grammar), or task variables, such as whether they are open or closed tasks or whether the tasks predispose the participants to focus on fluency, accuracy or complexity.

Future research should compare the performance of participants in Program A and Program B on the different sections of both exams (reading comprehension, listening comprehension, speaking, writing). This would contribute to the studies that have compared early and late starters' performance on the different skills.

Also, the oral production of participants in Programs A and B should be investigated. These learners receive a massive amount of instruction, so their pronunciation, as well as their fluency and accuracy, would be very interesting to study and analyse. Many studies have found that it is in this area that there is a gap between early and late starters. Early starters reach a higher level of achievement in spoken language (Burstall et al, 1974).

Future research can look at the long-term effects of an early and late start. In the case of learners who continue receiving language instruction, will there still be an advantage for early starters? If learners do not continue receiving instruction and have a limited use of the language, how will the patterns of language loss differ?

### *5.6 Conclusion*

This cross-sectional thesis study found that an early start, in combination with a large amount of instructional time, was beneficial in the short term. That is, early starters outperformed late starters on a standardized proficiency test. However, the advantage of this early start was not maintained after two more years of instruction. It would appear that late starters' cognitive advantage enabled them to benefit from instruction that matched their abilities, thereby overcoming the disadvantage of fewer hours of instruction. The findings are therefore in line with Genesee (1978), who stated that "late instruction confers an advantage on the learner by virtue of his learning efficiency, while early instruction confers an advantage by virtue of the extended opportunities it provides for language learning" (p. 153).

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## APPENDIX 1: CONSENT FORM

# CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

1455 boul. de Maisonneuve West  
Montreal, Qc. H3G 1M8

### Consent form to participate in research

I agree to participate in research being conducted by Veronica Frediani, M.A. student in Applied Linguistics at Concordia University, supervised by Joanna White, Ph. D., Associate Professor at Concordia University.

#### A. PURPOSE

I have been informed that the purpose of the research is to investigate the effect of cognitive requirements on the students' performance on different second language proficiency tasks (reading comprehension, writing, grammar, listening comprehension, oral interviews), which are part of practice exams taken by the students each year at the British School.

#### B. PROCEDURES

As director of the British School, I will give the researcher, Veronica Frediani, a set of approximately 100 completed practice exams which the students wrote during the period of Aug-Oct. 2004. These exams were administered by teachers in this school and were scored by them as well. They belong to the school and are not returned to the students. The aim of these exams is to provide practice before the students write the official exams during the month of December.

The researcher will have the exams for a maximum of one week, during which she will photocopy the exams and return the originals to me. The students' names will be known during the photocopying period, only for matching purposes. Once the exams are matched, the names will be removed and replaced by codes.

The original exams will be kept at the school for a period of time and eventually discarded. The photocopies will be kept in a secure place at Concordia University until the research is completed.

I understand that the researcher may ask me some questions about the school and the teaching methodology used. She will know my identity, but my name, and the name of the school will not be revealed to anyone else.

#### C. CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

- I understand that there are no negative consequences for deciding not to participate in this study and that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation, or that of the school, at any time.
- I understand that my participation in this study is confidential. The data from the study may be published, but the researcher will not disclose my identity, that of the school or the students.

- I understand the purpose of this study and know that there is no hidden motive of which I have not been informed.

I have carefully read the above, and I agree to participate in this study.

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

For more information, please contact:

Veronica Frediani

Phone:

e-mail address:

or

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APPENDIX 2 : PRELIMINARY ENGLISH TEST

PAPER 1 READING AND WRITING TEST (1 hour 30 minutes)

READING

PART 1

Questions 1–5

- Look at the text in each question.
- What does it say?
- Mark the letter next to the correct explanation – A, B or C – on your answer sheet.

Example:

0

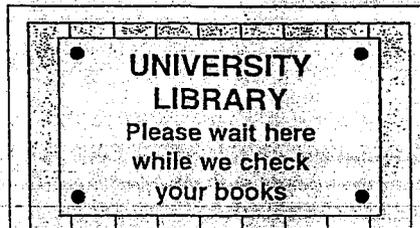


- A Do not leave your bicycle touching the window.
- B Broken glass may damage your bicycle tyres.
- C Your bicycle may not be safe here.

Example answer:

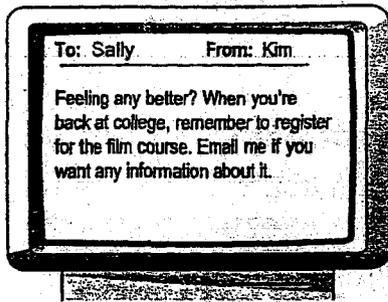
Part 1			
0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C

1



- A Do not go away until we have checked your books.
- B Check you have all your books before you leave the library.
- C Do not leave books here for checking without telling us.

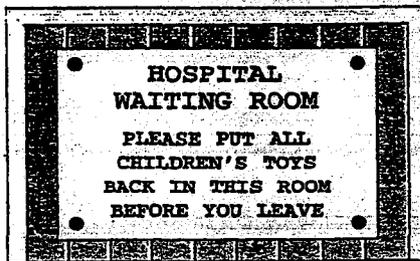
2



Why has Kim emailed Sally?

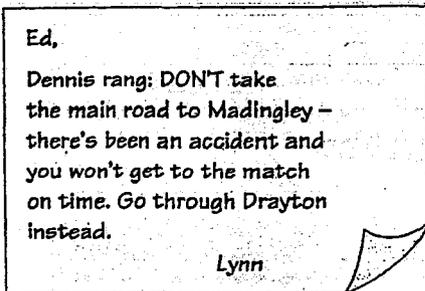
- A to give her some details
- B to let her know that he's ill
- C to remind her to do something

3



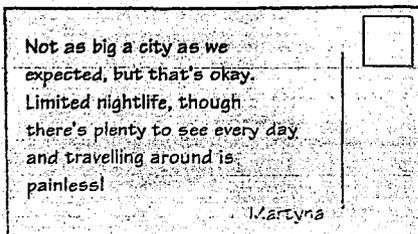
- A We leave some toys at the back of this room for children.
- B Please don't leave any toys outside this room when you go.
- C Remember to take your children's toys with you when you leave.

4



- A To arrive punctually, Ed should use a different route.
- B Dennis suggests that it's quicker to go on the main road.
- C If there's enough time, Lynn would like to see the match.

5



According to Martyna, the city's disadvantage is

- A its actual size.
- B its transport system.
- C its evening entertainment.

## PART 2

### Questions 6–10

- The people below all want to move to a new home.
- On the opposite page there are descriptions of eight different homes.
- Decide which home (letters A–H) would be the most suitable for each of the following people (numbers 6–10).
- For each of these numbers mark the correct letter on your answer sheet.

D

6



Chris and Sarah want to rent a flat as soon as possible. They would prefer a quiet part of town with views over gardens and water.

B

7



George would like to rent a small home near the centre of town with somewhere safe to keep his car. He has only a little time to do the gardening.

A

8



Graham and Suzie have four children. They want to buy a house in the countryside which is big enough for each child to have their own room. The children enjoy playing outdoors.

9



Mary is a lawyer who works mainly in London. She is hoping to buy a home in the country where she can work sometimes. She needs to be able to catch a train to London easily.

10



James and Miranda have always lived in town, but as their two teenage daughters love riding they now want to buy a house in the country. They need enough space to have two horses.

## Looking for a new home?

### A Tidmarsh

This six-bedroom, nineteenth-century house, just outside the village of Tidmarsh, is a very pleasant family home with two sitting rooms and a dining room. There is a garage and a garden with a swimming pool. Quick sale wanted.

### B Brettisham

This elegant one-bedroom house near the river consists of an unusually large living room, bright kitchen and bathroom. It has gas central heating, a small garden which is easy to look after, and a garage. Reasonable monthly rent for a town centre property.

### C Lower Farleigh

For sale: this newly-built one-bedroom town house has a large lounge, kitchen, bathroom, garage and a private garden at the back that needs some work. It is very close to the shopping centre and within five minutes' walk of the bus station with connections to London and Birmingham.

### D Corbridge

A lovely, furnished apartment away from the noise of the city centre, with a balcony looking down on beautiful lawns, flowers and, beyond them, the River Thames. The accommodation includes two bedrooms, a living room and a kitchen/dining room. Cars may be parked in the road. Available to rent immediately.

### E Dinton

A beautiful small cottage for sale in a pretty village with lovely views over farms and hills. The accommodation includes two bedrooms, kitchen, living room and study/office. Enjoy the quiet of the countryside and still benefit from good connections with all major cities as the railway station is very close.

### F Winchcombe

For sale: an interesting old country farmhouse with two reception rooms, comfortable kitchen and three bedrooms. Next to the house there are some old buildings which could be used to store equipment or keep animals, and a field which could be turned into a garden with tennis court or swimming pool.

### G Saxford

A spacious new two-bedroom apartment will become available for rent when the owner moves abroad in three months' time. It has views of the park and canal although it is only one street away from the main shopping area. No private parking facilities are included but there is usually space to park in the street outside.

### H Beckington

For immediate rent: an attractive, large nineteenth-century town house with ten bedrooms. At the end of the garden, there is an old building, originally used for horses, which could be used as a garage or turned into office accommodation.

**PART 3**

**Questions 11–20**

- Look at the sentences below about a theatre.
- Read the text on the opposite page to decide if each sentence is correct or incorrect.
- If it is correct, mark **A** on your answer sheet.
- If it is not correct, mark **B** on your answer sheet.

- 11 If a performance begins at 8 p.m., the Goddington Theatre Ticket Office re-opens at 7.30 that evening. **A**
- 12 Bookings by credit card cost more. **B**
- 13 You must pay for tickets when you reserve them. **B**
- 14 Wheelchairs are allowed in front of row A. **A**
- 15 The public can use the university car park at certain times only. **A**
- 16 The university is on the same side of the road as the library. **A**
- 17 The car park is in front of the university building. **A**
- 18 You need to drive away quickly after putting your money in the car park machine. **B**
- 19 The railway station is nearer the university than the bus station. **B**
- 20 Taxi drivers refuse to pick up customers inside the car park. **A**

# GODDINGTON THEATRE

The Goddington Theatre Ticket Office is open from 12 noon until 4 p.m. Monday to Friday, and for half an hour in the evening before the advertised start time of each performance.

## Telephone bookings

- Your tickets are held at the Ticket Office for you to collect or, if you prefer, a charge of 35p is made to post them to you. No extra charge is made for bookings by credit card.
- Reservations are held for up to four days, allowing time to call in to pay for the tickets or to send payments in the post.

## Postal bookings

- You can write to the Ticket Office requesting tickets, or to confirm a reservation.

## Information for the disabled

- The theatre has space for up to five wheelchairs at a performance, as the seats in positions 12-16 of row A can be removed.
- If you have difficulty with stairs, please let us know when booking.

## Where to find Goddington Theatre

Goddington Theatre can be found within the Goddington University site, next to the car park, which is available for public use after 5 p.m. on weekdays and all day at weekends.

## If travelling by car

Coming from the south end of Princes Street, you will see the library on your right. The next building on your right is Goddington University - there is a pedestrian crossing outside the front entrance. Take the next turning on the right after the crossing (into Broad Street) which takes you along the side of Goddington University - then first right into the car park. Drive up to the car park gate straight ahead of you, stopping as close as possible to the orange machine. Put a £1 coin in the machine and the gate will rise. (Note: Do not try to put a coin in the machine by getting out of your car - it is likely that by the time you get back in your car the gate will already be closed again!)

Other car parks are shown on the map. There is an hourly charge. You may find a free parking place on one of the side streets.

## If travelling by train

You will need to allow 30 minutes to walk from the station. Taxis are available from the front of the station.

## If travelling by bus/coach

The University is a 5 to 10-minute walk from the main bus station.

## Taxis

When ordering a taxi from the theatre, ask to be picked up at the bottom of North Street. Taxis will not come into the car park because of the entrance charge.

## PART 4

### Questions 21–25

- Read the text and questions below.
- For each question, mark the letter next to the correct answer – A, B, C or D – on your answer sheet.

John Fisher, a builder, and his wife Elizabeth wanted more living space, so they left their small flat for an old 40-metre-high castle tower. They have spent five years turning it into a beautiful home with six floors, winning three architectural prizes.

‘I love the space, and being private,’ Elizabeth says. ‘You feel separated from the world. If I’m in the kitchen, which is 25 metres above the ground floor, and the doorbell rings, I don’t have to answer it because visitors can’t see I’m in!’

‘There are 142 steps to the top, so if I go up and down five or six times a day, it’s very good exercise! But having to carry heavy things to the top is terrible, so I never buy more than two bags of shopping from the supermarket at a time. Apart from that, it’s a brilliant place to live.’

‘When we first saw the place, I asked my father’s advice about buying it, because we couldn’t decide. After paying for it, we were a bit worried because it looked awful. But we really loved it, and knew how we wanted it to look.’

‘Living here can be difficult – yesterday I climbed a four-metre ladder to clean the windows. But when you stand on the roof you can see all the way out to sea on a clear day, and that’s a wonderful experience. I’m really glad we moved.’

- 21 What is the writer trying to do in the text?
- A describe how to turn an old tower into a house
  - B recommend a particular builder
  - C describe what it is like to live in a tower
  - D explain how to win prizes for building work
- 22 From this text, a reader can find out
- A why visitors are not welcome at John and Elizabeth’s house.
  - B why Elizabeth exercises every day.
  - C why Elizabeth asked her father to buy the tower.
  - D why John and Elizabeth left their flat.

23 Which of the following best describes Elizabeth's feelings about the tower?

- A She wanted it as soon as she saw it.
- B She likes most things about it.
- C She has been worried since they paid for it.
- D She finds it unsuitable to live in.

24 What problem does Elizabeth have with living in such a tall building?

- A Her visitors find it difficult to see if she is at home.
- B She feels separated from other people.
- C She cannot bring home lots of shopping at once.
- D It is impossible to clean any of the windows.

25 How will John and Elizabeth advertise their tower if they sell it?

A

**FOR SALE**  
Tall building, formerly a  
castle. High windows  
give a good view.  
Needs some  
improvement.

B

**FOR SALE**  
A house with a difference – a  
castle tower, turned into a  
lovely home.  
Wonderful view.

C

**FOR SALE**  
Prize-winning home, five years  
old. Six rooms, all with sea  
views.

D

**FOR SALE**  
Castle tower, turned into six  
small flats, close to  
supermarket.

**PART 5**

**Questions 26–35**

- Read the text below and choose the correct word for each space.
- For each question, mark the letter next to the correct word – A, B, C or D – on your answer sheet.

Example answer:

Part 5				
0	A	B	C	D
—	—	—	—	—

**CAMPING**

Although (0) ..... groups of people have always lived outdoors in tents, camping as we know it today only began to be (26) ..... about 50 years ago. The increase in the use of cars and improvements in camping (27) ..... have allowed more people to travel longer (28) ..... into the countryside and to stay there in greater comfort.

Many campers like to be (29) ..... themselves in quiet areas, so they (30) ..... their tent and food and walk or cycle into the forests or the mountains. Others, preferring to be near people, drive to a public or privately-owned campsite (31) ..... has up-to-date facilities, (32) ..... hot showers and swimming pools.

Whether campers are (33) ..... in the mountains or on a busy site, they should remember to (34) ..... the area clean and tidy. In the forests, they must put out any fires and keep food hidden to avoid attracting (35) ..... animals.

- |    |          |              |             |             |
|----|----------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| 0  | A some   | B every      | C both      | D each      |
| 26 | A famous | B popular    | C favourite | D current   |
| 27 | A tools  | B baggage    | C equipment | D property  |
| 28 | A ways   | B directions | C voyages   | D distances |
| 29 | A on     | B by         | C at        | D of        |
| 30 | A take   | B make       | C pick      | D do        |
| 31 | A where  | B who        | C which     | D when      |
| 32 | A such   | B like       | C as        | D just      |
| 33 | A lonely | B single     | C separate  | D alone     |
| 34 | A remain | B stay       | C leave     | D let       |
| 35 | A wild   | B natural    | C loose     | D free      |

## WRITING

### PART 1

#### Questions 1-5

- Here are some sentences about a student who is living in a flat.
- For each question, complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first, using no more than three words.
- Write only the missing words on your answer sheet.

**Example:** The flat is near my college.

The flat is not far from my college.

- 1 My friend told me that I could stay in his flat.

My friend said: 'You can use my flat.'

- 2 I started living here two months ago.

I have lived here for two months ago.

- 3 This is the first time I've lived in a city.

I've never lived in a city before.

- 4 The flat has two bedrooms.

There are two bedrooms in the flat.

- 5 My bedroom is too small for all my books.

My bedroom is not bigger for all my books.

## PART 2

### Question 6

You are going to a concert this evening with a group of friends and want to ask your English friend Pat to come too.

Write a note to leave for Pat. In your note, you should

- ask Pat to join you at the concert this evening
- explain where the concert will take place
- tell Pat what sort of music will be performed.

Write 35–45 words on your answer sheet.

3-

Hi Pat

I invite you for a concert this evening at 10 school because if you dont come I will go alone

The concert is going to be in 'Orfeo' in Casade las Rosas that is why I going to take you.

I'm sure that are you going to like the music because its Rock and Roll and I know that you liked it

### PART 3

Answer one of the following questions (7 or 8).

#### Question 7

- You have to write a story for your English teacher.
- Your story must begin with this sentence:

*I was standing beside someone famous!*

- Write your story in about 100 words on your answer sheet.

#### Question 8

- This is part of a letter you receive from an Australian friend.

It's so hot here! What's the weather like in your country at the moment? What outdoor activities are you able to do at this time of year? Tell me about it.

- Now write a letter, answering your friend's questions.
- Write your letter in about 100 words on your answer sheet.

Dear Juan

I receive your letter. Thank you for <sup>writing</sup> write.

Here it's the same season. It is very hot and heavy but I post well because I stay with my new girlfriend and I, in her house there are a big swimming pool where I am post the most time of the day.

She has a little brother and we play hockey, football in the water and she was happy. If I not in her house I went with friends to the lake to do skiing or the boat thought a little wheels and I skip up the wheels.

Please sent me other letter ~~ps~~

I see you in the holidays  
with love

**PAPER 2 LISTENING TEST**

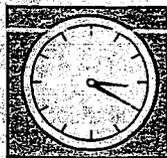
about 35 minutes  
(including 6 minutes transfer time)

**PART 1**

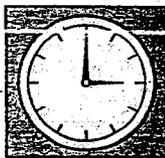
**Questions 1–7**

- There are seven questions in this part.
- For each question there are three pictures and a short recording.
- Choose the correct picture and put a tick (✓) in the box below it.

Example: What's the time?



A



B



C

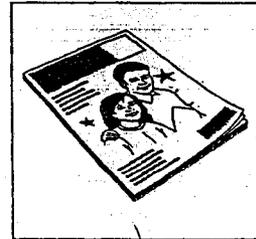
1 What is the man going to buy?



A



B



C

2 Which dress is Kate talking about?



A

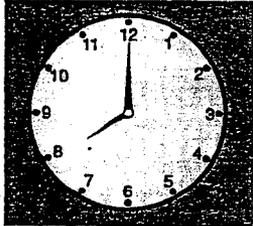


B

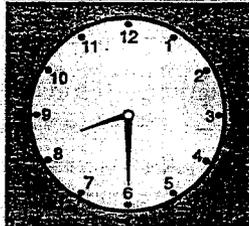


C

3 When will Jane meet them?



A

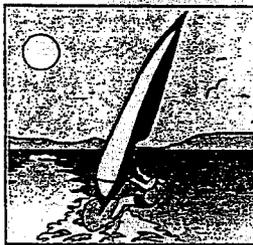


B



C

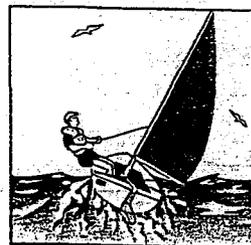
4 Which morning activity is for beginners?



A



B



C

5 Which painting does the woman decide to buy?



A

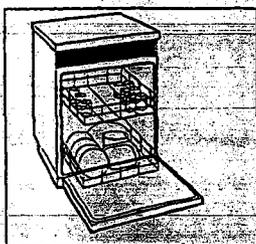


B

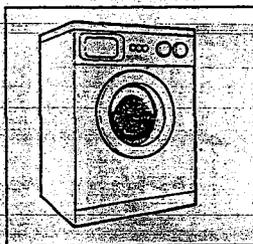


C

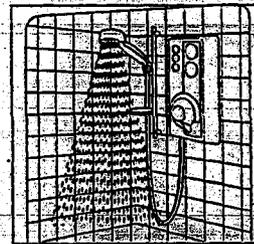
6 What is the man selling?



A

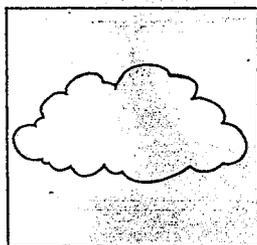


B

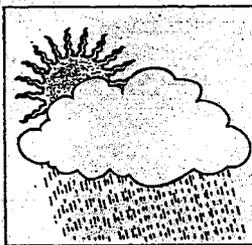


C

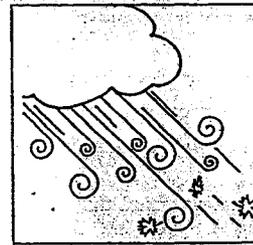
7 What is the weather forecast for tomorrow?



A



B



C

## PART 2

### Questions 8-13

- You will hear a radio presenter talking about new books.
- For each question put a tick (✓) in the correct box.

- 8 To really understand *My life* you need to
- A  read it very slowly.
- B  know about the writer's life.
- C  read the writer's other books.
- 9 In *Goodbye to the fields*, John goes to London because
- A  his parents do not like the country.
- B  his father has to be close to his work.
- C  his parents both come from the city.
- 10 The *A-Z of photography* will not interest experienced photographers because
- A  the information is unsuitable.
- B  the pictures are simple.
- C  it says nothing about equipment.
- 11 The presenter likes *Cooking for one* because
- A  it taught her to cook Italian food.
- B  it contains only easy meals.
- C  she now likes cooking.
- 12 What is wrong with *Holidays in Europe*?
- A  It leaves out well-known places.
- B  The maps are not very good.
- C  It is too expensive.
- 13 Next week's programme will be useful if you
- A  enjoy reading reports.
- B  are trying to save money.
- C  are planning to buy presents.

**PART 3**

**Questions 14–19**

- You will hear a teacher talking about a camping trip.
- For each question, fill in the missing information in the numbered space.

Camping Trip

Coach leaves school at (14) ..... on Monday morning.

Bring. \* one bag or case

\* a (15) tent

\* warm clothes

\* (16) swimming things

\* pocket money to spend on souvenirs and (17) drinks

Catch a bus outside (18) the police office to Southport.

Friday p.m.: Check notice board in (19) .....

## PART 4

### Questions 20–25

- Look at the six sentences for this part.
- You will hear a conversation between a girl, Lisa, and a boy, Ben, about holidays.
- Decide if each sentence is correct or incorrect.
- If it is correct, put a tick (✓) in the box under **A** for **YES**. If it is not correct, put a tick (✓) in the box under **B** for **NO**.

	A	B
	YES	NO
20 Lisa thinks you can enjoy a holiday without spending a lot.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
21 Ben has arranged to go on a seaside holiday.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22 Lisa thinks a walking holiday is healthy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
23 Ben thinks the weather in Scotland will be fine.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24 Lisa enjoys walking in hot weather.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
25 Lisa prefers staying in hotels.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**FCE MOCK EXAM – AUGUST 2004**  
**READING COMPREHENSION**

You are going to read a magazine article about a violinist. Choose the most suitable heading from the list A-H for each part (1-6) of the article. There is one extra heading which you do not need to use. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

- A A hard struggle
- B Agreeing with criticism
- C The need for a style
- D Criticising the system
- E Escaping disapproval
- F Being famous
- G Wider ambitions
- H Good reviews

## The making of a musician

*Maria Bachmann talks to David Henley about her career as a violinist.*

0 H

This is going to be Maria Bachmann's year. She'll see to that. She is determined to make her mark on the British classical music scene. In America she has already had the most stunning reception and critics have called her 'the most exciting young violinist around'.

1 A

Although she is now on the verge of international fame, the path there has not been simple. 'It's very competitive, that's for sure,' she says. 'As a young soloist, you aren't only trying to compete with other young soloists, you're trying to break into a field that has many established artists as well.' However, a lot of work, a little bit of luck and a great deal of persistence at trying to be 'as good a musician as possible' seem to have worked for her.

2 E

As a child, the piano was her first instrument. But when she was seven, she found a violin that had belonged to her grandfather. Just a year later, she abandoned the piano to concentrate on the violin. There were two reasons for the change. 'Even at that young age, I felt that the violin had a more expressive quality. But that wasn't the only reason. Being a pianist, my father would always criticise me when I practised. But he didn't have the same expertise with the violin, so I was able to play as I wanted to.'

3 C

After graduating from music college in New York, Maria had a careful think about how she wanted to proceed. 'I didn't want to keep on studying forever,' she explains. 'I felt it was important to have my own unique kind of playing. You can only do that if you follow your own instincts and aren't being influenced by someone else's ideas.'

4 D

Every year international music competitions are held which can bring a young musician both fame and fortune. Not surprisingly, young musicians prepare for these competitions with the dedication of professional athletes readying themselves for the Olympic Games. Maria was no exception and she won first prizes in both New York and Vienna. These were important steps on the road to success, and yet she dislikes the whole idea of competitions. 'They're really not fun at all,' she says, 'and there are many, many artists who deserve to be heard on the concert stage, not just first prize winners.'

5 B

She has a passion for modern composers and her first two albums have clearly marked her as a champion of modern music. However, she sympathises with the charge that twentieth-century music can be rather difficult to understand. 'When I do a concert, I try to put in one or two modern pieces along with the standard works, but I'm very careful about the kind of new music that I choose. For me to put it in a concert, it has to be really beautiful and have an emotional message as well.'

6 F

Maria lives mainly in New York. It's here that she spends time away from concerts, going to jazz clubs with her husband. However, she is so keen to find fame in Europe that they have bought an old castle in Scotland, which they hope to move into when it has been made habitable. Eventually, Maria wants to start a festival in the castle grounds, not just for music, but also for the visual arts and theatre.

## Part 2

You are going to read a magazine article about a family-run garage. For questions 7-14, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

### There's no stopping her!

Noreen Hannington, a sixty-three-year-old grandmother of five, arrives at the Tyre and Wheel Company in North London at 8 a.m. every morning. She puts on a greasy apron, rolls up her sleeves and gets ready for the day's work.

The first customer pulls up in an old van. It has a flat tyre and the driver was lucky to make it to the garage. Noreen puts on her rubber gloves and gets down to work. She casually pulls off the wheel, swings it onto the work bench with one hand and takes it apart. 'There's your problem, sir,' she announces, pointing at a tiny hole in the tyre. Right now, he couldn't care less about that, since what he feels is more serious: a fast-decreasing sense of his own worth. At least his mates haven't come to witness him being rescued by a sweet-faced granny!

Why is Noreen in this line of work, anyway? It's a family business and when Noreen's husband died, she decided to keep it going for her two sons, Bill and Fred, then aged only seventeen and fifteen. Before that, her husband had let her watch what went on in the garage, but she had never been allowed to lift a finger. Initially, she doubted her ability to make a go of it, but somehow she managed, and although the boys are now grown up, has never got round to handing over.

Now the business has expanded to include not only the sons but daughters-in-law, too. With Noreen in charge, it all runs smoothly. 'Bill handles anything mechanical. Fred does electrical repairs, while I fix flat tyres and anything else to do with wheels.' She waves at the new computer. 'I also do the accounts. They keep on at me to think modern, but we don't need this.' Bill jokes: 'We don't need you, but you're still here!'

Noreen is indeed still around, lifting well over twelve kilogrammes in weight up to twenty times a day, which is rather surprising, to say the least. As Bill says, 'Tyre changing's hard and she shouldn't be doing it.' Noreen pulls a face and replies, 'I'll stop when I'm eighty-five. Anyway, it was far worse in the old days, when there was less equipment.' 'And before that, you were repairing the horses and carts,' jokes Bill. We all laugh at that one.

Suddenly it all becomes obvious to me – these friendly jokes create an environment that Noreen loves and, despite her advanced age, she wants to stick it out, even if the work is hard at times. So much so, that on the rare occasions when she does go away, she can't wait to return. 'I have just had a wonderful holiday on board a cruise ship. Going to sea made sure I couldn't come running back to the garage after a few hours! But walking back into the garage meant coming home to me,' she says fondly. She stops talking for a moment to check the drinks machine. 'It's out of tea,' she shouts. Everybody sighs; on her first day back at work, the boss is making her presence felt.

Surely all this heavy work must affect her health though? Noreen claims that it doesn't, though her daughter-in-law mentions recent back trouble. 'That had nothing to do with the tyres! It was when I was doing those stupid roof tiles,' says Noreen. 'We rebuilt the garage and added a first floor. It was quite a nice change to be a labourer for a while, actually.'

Noreen is a delightful woman, who clearly intends to be part of the business for a long time yet.

7 How does the van driver feel after getting help from Noreen?

- A impressed by the way she works
- B embarrassed that he needed it
- C relieved at finding it in time
- D unconvinced by her advice

8 Why did Noreen take over the running of the business?

- A to fulfil a promise to her husband
- B to stop her sons fighting over it
- C to make sure it stayed in the family
- D to prove that she could manage it

9 'Keep on at' in line 34 describes a way of

- A trying to make someone laugh.
- B trying to accept something.
- C trying to convince someone.
- D trying to make something easier.

10 The writer finds it strange that

- A Bill allows his mother to work at her age.
- B Noreen knows exactly when she will retire.
- C Bill doesn't find a way to help his mother.
- D Noreen does a job that is unsuitable for her.

11 Why, in the writer's opinion, does Noreen want to carry on working at the garage?

- A She feels that working keeps her young.
- B She enjoys the working atmosphere.
- C She is genuinely interested in the work.
- D She looks forward to more expensive holidays.

12 Why do Noreen's family sigh when she mentions the problem with the drinks machine?

- A They don't feel responsible for it.
- B They wish they had noticed it first.
- C They realise that she's in control again.
- D They feel that she is being unreasonable.

13 When Noreen hurt her back, she

- A wasn't able to go on with the building work.
- B missed her usual job of repairing the tyres.
- C annoyed her daughter-in-law.
- D blamed her injury on having to fix the tiles.

14 Which phrase best describes the writer's view of Noreen?

- A a determined woman
- B a demanding boss
- C a loving grandmother
- D a co-operative worker

Part 3

You are going to read an article about a new novelist. Eight paragraphs have been removed from the article. Choose from paragraphs A-I the one which fits each gap (16-22). There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

## Judy Astley

### A first-time novelist writes about her experience.

My first novel is about to be published, but it was short stories which gave me my first taste of success. The first story I wrote was for a *Writers' News* short story competition in 1992.

0 | I

My real ambitions, however, were in the field of novel writing. My first try at a full-length novel had been in my desk drawer for some time, and my success in *Writers' News* caused me to think seriously again about the future direction of my writing.

15 | D

I continued to enter *Writers' News* competitions because they also provided an organised structure for my writing. You had to produce a given number of words on a given theme by a certain date.

16 | A

In many ways, I find the writing techniques are similar whether you are writing a short story or a novel. My starting point is a theme for a story, and if it looks like being a strong theme it seems a shame to waste it on a short story.

17 | G

I am not a natural storyteller. The fact is I sometimes find it difficult to turn a theme into the 85,000 words necessary for a novel.

18 | F

The theme of the book was people who think that the way they behave is OK and that everyone else wants to be like them. To develop the theme, I took a set of London families and transported them to summer holiday cottages in a tiny fishing village.

19 | H

My next novel centres on a similar group of people, but the theme is crime. These people think that crime is something that comes in from outside, something that comes from poorer neighbourhoods.

20 | E

I suppose my characters come from observation, but I certainly do not take someone and transfer them unaltered to the page. It's a complicated process and takes time.

21 | C

It is terrific if you have something published while you are also having problems with chapter seven of your novel. It tells you that you are at least doing something right!

A Having chosen my theme, I look around for characters to act it out. I know that many writers start with their characters in mind and allow the characters' actions to control the plot, but for me the main idea is the first thing.

B The point is they are all involved themselves. They exaggerate insurance claims, and business expenses – all sorts of things. It is against the law, but they don't quite see it that way.

C OK, it might be negative, but it is exciting to have some of your work out there in the post. It is also good to keep in contact with editors and such-like.

D I used the £100 winnings for the fees at a creative writing class. The disciplines that the class imposed got me back into the habit of writing. I had to do classwork on a set subject in a certain time. That gave me targets to aim at and got me going again.

E The setting provides the opportunity to explore the relationship between the local residents and the short-term visitors. I also look at the relationships between and within each of the visiting families.

F The need for such disciplined habits is the most important thing about writing. You really must sit down in front of your typewriter or word-processor and get on with it.

G But while all this is going on, I still like to write short stories. The great thing about writing stories alongside your big novel project is that you are always getting some reaction to your work.

H That was certainly true of my first one, which was called *Just for the Summer*. I had to rewrite it because my central character needed more development.

It was a murder story, told from the viewpoint of the victim, and my entry won the £100 first prize. It was just the encouragement I needed, and I went on to write stories for various popular magazines.

Part 4

You are going to read a newspaper article about four women who turned a hobby into a way of making a living. For questions 22-35, choose from the women (A-D). The women may be chosen more than once. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

Which woman

responded to encouragement from her teacher?	0	A
found one line of work was not profitable enough?	22	A
responded to an advertisement for a course?	23	C
found a lot of work through personal recommendations?	24	B
has plans to set up her own company?	25	B
enjoys the comments she receives while working?	26	A
got ideas by looking in various publications?	27	B
developed a skill out of financial necessity?	28	B
regularly takes control of large-scale projects?	29	C
likes to produce things for a specific age group?	30	B
says she feels it's important to continue learning?	31	D
has found an export market for her work?	32	C
was required to get a qualification?	33	A
took a relaxed approach to finding out about her subject?	34	D
has recently developed a new skill?	35	D

## Join the Class

*For most of us, an evening class or part-time course is a way of enjoying a hobby, but it could be the start of a successful career. Meet four women who signed up for fun and discovered they had more marketable talents than they imagined.*

### A ALISON BARDFIELD

It was Alison Bardfield's artistic leanings which first led her to flower-arranging classes. Then, with the support of her course tutor, she went on to set up her own flower-arranging business, converting her garage into a workshop. Despite its success, it was too time-consuming for the money it made, so when she saw that a top London department store was advertising for interior designers able to give advice to customers, she decided to apply. They were looking for people from creative backgrounds with a feel for design, which I saw as an extension of what I was already doing,' she explains. 'Flower-arranging gave me an eye for colour which I could easily apply to fabrics and paints.' As a condition of her appointment, Alison studied for a diploma in interior design, which gave her both knowledge and confidence. 'Interior design is an on-going thing,' she insists. 'I still go to exhibitions to keep up to date, even though I've been working for years now.' She doesn't earn a huge salary but still gets a thrill when shoppers, seeing her mixing paint colours, compliment her on her skill.

### B BRENDA ASHDON

'I've always been arty and good at putting things together, but never aimed to make it my career,' says Brenda Ashdon. Her brother, Andrew, who makes high-quality furniture in an antique style, was the one to encourage her. Brenda became interested in painting furniture after seeing examples in books and magazines, and then Andrew told her there was a real market for that sort of work. She attended a course with her brother, who offered to sell her work for her. Orders soon started to come in, and for Brenda the most exciting moment was when her first pieces were sold in the USA. Brenda particularly loves painting furniture for the under-fives, though she'll happily accept any commission. As she's about to start trading under her own name rather than working for her brother, it's clearly a terrific way to turn a hobby into a means of making money.

### C CECILIA HOWLETT

Cecilia Howlett is the daughter of a house builder and seems blessed with a natural feel for home-making through colour and design. She learnt this about herself when she bought her first house. 'I could afford the house, but not the cost of doing it up,' she explains. 'It was in an awful state, so I had to do it myself.' Cecilia found that she could transform an empty room into a living space and so she attended a decorating course she'd seen publicised in a newspaper. She had studied textile design at home in South Africa before coming to London and so added to the skills she had already acquired. The course also inspired her to put things on a more professional footing: now wealthy clients pay for her ideas and she quite often oversees work in houses from start to finish.

### D DEBBIE EASTON

Back in 1995, when Debbie Easton bought an old country house with lots of land attached, she realised she knew nothing about gardening. She set about educating herself in a leisurely way, losing herself in a good gardening book, which taught her a great deal. 'I was a bit over-enthusiastic in those days,' she recalls. But she went on to help friends with their gardens and never made the same error twice. Her interest fired, she decided to attend a well-known garden-design course, where she discovered she had the ability to go professional. 'That course gave me a flying start,' she says. 'Until then, I didn't know how to do a proper garden plan, which is an essential skill.' As word of her talents was spread by satisfied clients, so her business grew, until earlier this year she was asked to run a garden-design course. She took to teaching immediately and now plans to run a series of courses from her new London home.

**FIRST CERTIFICATE IN ENGLISH - MOCK EXAM 2004**  
**COMPOSITION**

**Part 1**

You **must** answer this question.

- 1 You organise events at your college English club for people who want to improve their English. Your teacher has written to you about a possible speaker for the club.

Read the message from your teacher, on which you have made some notes. Then write a letter to Belinda Marriott, including all the information in your notes.

Belinda Marriott, a British novelist who writes crime stories, has come to live in our area. She might be willing to give a talk to the English club - please write to her, giving her some information about the club.

*invite her*

Could you suggest at least one topic she could talk about, and give her a choice of dates -

*age of members, ...*

*her latest book, or...*

15 or 22 February, from 7 to 8 p.m.

*ask which*

*offer her dinner afterwards at ...*

Write a **letter** of between 120 and 180 words in an appropriate style on the opposite page. Do not write any postal addresses.

## Part 2

Write an answer to one of the questions 2 - 5 in this part. Write your answer in 120 - 180 words and in an appropriate style.

2. Your teacher has asked you to write a composition in answer to the following question: *What could be done to prevent the problem of hooliganism during football matches?*

Write your composition.

3. You have seen this notice in an international student magazine:

*Could you live without television for a week?*

Write an article telling what difference this  
would make to your life.

The best article will be published!

Write your article.

4. The following comment was printed in an international magazine.

*Winning a fortune doesn't always make people happy.*

Now your teacher has asked you to write a composition on this subject, saying if you agree or disagree.

Write your composition.

5. You have seen this in an international magazine.

### **COLOUR**

- What is your favourite colour and why?
- Why is colour so important in our lives?

Write us an article answering these questions.  
The best article will be published in the magazine.

Now write your article for the magazine.

**FIRST CERTIFICATE IN ENGLISH – MOCK EXAM 2004**  
**USE OF ENGLISH**

**Part 1**

For questions 1-15, read the text below and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) best fits each space. There is an example at the beginning (0). Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

Example:

0 A call B say C tell D mention

0	A	B	C	D
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**THE SAN JOSE MUSEUM IN CALIFORNIA, USA**

In California, there is an area which people (0) ..... Silicon Valley because of the large number of computer companies there. The inhabitants of Silicon Valley are concerned because <sup>San Jose</sup> there are only rows of office (1) ..... in their town, (2) ..... New York, for example, has the Statue of Liberty as a tourist attraction. There is a (3) ..... of any monuments which will (4) ..... into the future. The San Jose Museum is the first (5) ..... towards changing that.

The museum has been paid for mainly by people who have (6) ..... their money from the computer industry. It has not been difficult to (7) ..... the museum with computer exhibits but the problem has been how to (8) ..... this technology in a visually exciting way. After all, computers are (9) ..... dull objects to look at and it is difficult for the San Jose Museum to (10) ..... with other museums. For example, at the London Science Museum, visitors can see an enormous steam engine (11) ....., whilst at the San Francisco Science Museum, visitors can (12) ..... a part in experiments and learn about the laws of physics.

Most children are already (13) ..... with the wonderful things computers can do, but the San Jose Museum has some excellent displays. (14) ..... other things, visitors can use a computer to (15) ..... a radio-controlled spaceship. And who knows, some of the children visiting today may be the inventors of

- 1 A blocks B communities C towers  D estates
- 2 A however B since  C whereas D whether
- 3 A need B gap C requirement  D lack
- 4 A keep  B preserve  C last D save
- 5  A progress  B step C course D way
- 6 A found  B made C won D achieved
- 7 A fill B include C extend  D complete
- 8 A discover B control C understand  D present
- 9 A too B considerably  C rather D absolutely
- 10  A compete B oppose C challenge  D imitate
- 11 A making  B working C using D employing
- 12  A get B stand C play D hold
- 13 A trained B familiar C accustomed D known
- 14 A Between  B Through C Around D Amongst
- 15 A direct B conduct  C lead D rule



Part 3

For questions 31-40, complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between two and five words, including the word given. Here is an example (0).

Example:

0 A very friendly taxi driver drove us into town.

driven

We ..... a very friendly taxi driver.

The gap can be filled by the words 'were driven into town by' so you write:

0 were driven into town by

Write only the missing words on the separate answer sheet.

31 'If you drink this water, it will make you ill,' the guide warned us.

safe

This water is not safe for drinking the guide warned us.

32 The boy said that he hadn't been involved in the crime.

denied

The boy <sup>had</sup> ~~denied~~ denied been ..... involved in the crime.

33 None of the girls except Jane wore jeans to the party.

who

Jane was the only one who wore ..... jeans to the party.

34 The maths teacher has still not marked the students' exercises.

yet

The students' exercises haven't been yet ..... marked by the maths teacher.

~~Nursing has never been well paid, the woman insisted.~~

badly

Nursing has ever been badly paid, the woman insisted.

36 John really can't afford that computer game for his nephew.

expensive

That computer game is far expensive for John to buy for his nephew.

37 You'll have to go to the beach without me because I don't want to swim today.

feel

You'll have to go to the beach without me because I don't feel like going today.

38 It was so cold at the weekend that the river froze.

if

The river would not freeze if the weather hadn't been so cold at the weekend.

39 I desperately wanted to tell Susan the news.

wait

I really wait anxiously to tell Susan the news.

40 I advise you to take out travel insurance before you go away.

better

You would better take out travel insurance before you go away.

Part 4

For questions 41-55, read the text below and look carefully at each line. Some of the lines are correct, and some have a word which should not be there.

If a line is correct, put a tick (✓) by the number on the separate answer sheet.

If a line has a word which should not be there, write the word on the separate answer sheet. There are two examples at the beginning (0 and 00).

Examples:

0	✓
---	---

00	of
----	----

MY SUMMER PLANS

- 0 How are you? I'm writing to tell you about my summer plans.
- 00 Next of month, my brother Mike is coming to see me from Canada.
- ever* 41 I'm really excited as I haven't ever seen him for a long time. He
- last* 42 has been studying in Canada for last two years at the University of
- ✓ 43 Toronto and I expect that he'll have lots of stories to tell me about
- ✓ 44 his life there as a student. We have already discussed about some
- ✓ 45 ideas for our holiday together. Mike will be staying with me for
- almost* 46 almost a month so I'm make sure we'll have time to visit many places.
- round* 47 First of all, we're hoping to go by train to London and visit round
- in* 48 some of the sights in there. Mike is a science student and
- ✓ 49 it is my intention to go to university and study medicine, so
- for* 50 it would be very interesting to spend a day for seeing the
- having* 51 Science Museum and also, perhaps, the Planetarium. After having
- doing* 52 that, we thought about doing camping for a few days in the Lake
- both* 53 District. We're both keen on the hill walking and I know that Mike
- also* 54 would rather like to do some climbing too. I also hope that I will
- ✓ 55 get the chance to come together and stay with you for a few days.

Part 5

For questions 56-65, read the text below. Use the word given in capitals at the end of each line to form a word that fits in the space in the same line. There is an example at the beginning (0). Write your answers on the separate answer sheet.

Example: 0 information

COMMUNICATION

'Communication' means the exchange of ideas and (0) information  
between living things. In the animal (56) <sup>kingdom</sup> this is clearly shown  
when a cat raises its fur and spits to (57) <sup>frighten</sup> an enemy, while a gorilla  
may beat its chest angrily to show how (58) <sup>powerful</sup> it is. We humans  
(59) <sup>originally</sup> developed language as a form of expression for our thoughts,  
and then recorded them as the (60) <sup>written</sup> word.

INFORM  
KING  
FRIGHT  
POWER  
ORIGINAL  
WRITE

These two (61) <sup>developments</sup> allowed us to communicate difficult ideas to each  
other. Finally, (62) <sup>various</sup> scientific advances over the last 150 years  
have produced (63) television and telephone links over long  
(64) <sup>distances</sup>, allowing messages to be sent across the world and into  
space in a way that would have seemed completely (65) <sup>impossible</sup> just a few  
decades ago.

DEVELOP  
VARY  
RELY  
DISTANT  
POSSIBLE

**PART 1**

You will hear people talking in eight different situations. For Questions 1-8, choose the best answer, A, B or C.

1 You hear a woman talking to a supermarket manager.

What is she complaining about?

- A soft pears and lemons
- B rotten oranges and apples
- C brown lemons and grapes

C 1

2 You hear a man cancelling a hotel booking.

What is the reason for the cancellation?

- A His wife has to go into hospital.
- B His wife has to go away suddenly.
- C His wife has been in an accident.

B 2

3 You are visiting an art exhibition.

What does your friend say about it?

- A It's expensive.
- B It's too modern.
- C It's meaningless.

C 3

4 Listen to these two people talking.

What are they discussing?

- A a car
- B a bike
- C a fridge

A 4

Practice Test 1, Paper 4

5 Listen to a teacher talking to some students.

What is he telling them to do?

- A write down some information
- B look at a new film
- C copy out some information

C 5

6 Listen to this radio advertisement.

What is being advertised?

- A package tours
- B home exchanges
- C luxury holidays

B 6

7 You hear a man talking about why he decided to lose weight.

What is the reason he gives?

- A He felt overweight.
- B His clothes were very tight.
- C He couldn't stop eating.

A 7

8 You overhear two people talking about a woman on their staff.

What is the problem?

- A She complains all the time.
- B She gets upset very easily.
- C She's always late for work. \*

C 8

## PART 2

You will hear a radio interview with a girl called Silvia, who has won a competition. For Questions 9-18, complete the sentences.

9 Silvia won her first competition when  **9**.

10 Her short story was published in  **10** with others.

### Background

11+ Her parents work as  **11** and

12

**12**.

13 Her parents used to  **13** at bedtime.

14 As a child she would  **14** to other people.

15 Writing  **15** is what she likes best.

### Young Writer's Award

16 Her £1,000 prize will be used to buy  **16**.

17 Her first novel will be read by  **17**.

18 The best thing about the award is  **18** she will receive.

**PART 3**

You will hear five different people apologising about something. For Questions 19-23, choose from the list A-F the reason for each speaker's apology. Use the letters only once. There is one extra letter which you do not need to use.

A disturbing someone

Speaker 1

E 19

B cancelling a theatre booking

Speaker 2

C 20

C leaving something behind

Speaker 3

D 21

D forgetting to write something down

Speaker 4

F 22

E arriving very late

Speaker 5

A 23

F dropping something

**PART 4**

You will hear a conversation which takes place in a café between three friends – Anna, Peter and Miriam – who used to be at school together.

Answer questions 24-30 by writing **A** (for Anna)  
**P** (for Peter) or  
**M** (for Miriam) in the boxes provided.

24 Who has a reputation for not being on time? *late-arrival*

M	24
---	----

 ✓

25 Who complains about work? 

A	25
---	----

 ✓

26 Who made a disappointing choice? 

P	26
---	----

 ✓

27 Who is sympathetic? 

A	27
---	----

 M

28 Who feels the most positive? 

M	28
---	----

 ✓

29 Who regrets rushing into a decision? 

P	29
---	----

 ✓

30 Who is uncertain about the future? 

A	30
---	----

 ✓

**APPENDIX 4: PET OVERALL SCORES,  
PROGRAMS A AND B**

**Program A**

	Student code	Overall score
1	ALVPE	86,29
2	BATLO	82,54
3	BECFR	88,35
4	BENRO	81,54
5	CIPMA	90,87
6	ESTEM	82,36
7	FORFE	84,13
8	GONMI	87,93
9	LASSA	95,31
10	LOPDE	80,63
11	MOLSA	84,20
12	NASFR	92,00
13	PASMA	87,00
14	SALAG	84,64
15	BOTVA	86,25
16	BRIIG	85,25
17	DIACA	82,35
18	DIAIG	86,75
19	ESCEU	92,21
20	FIELU	88,03
21	GONEU	87,59
22	GONCL	85,63
23	GORSO	89,85
24	ORICA	93,87
25	PARAG	83,96
26	SANGU	63,36

### Program B

	Student code	Overall score
1	ACHJO	88
2	AHU	60
3	ARABE	71
4	CANJO	93
5	CEL	75
6	HASGO	48
7	JARCA	60
8	RACGO	73
9	ROSCO	71
10	TOLNI	62
11	ANAAG	63,17
12	AZZNA	74,95
13	BASCO	80
14	BENAN	81,02
15	CABAG	59,5
16	CABLO	69,35
17	CHAMA	57,75
18	DEGOS	75,85
19	GIMME	86,62
20	MARNO	80
21	MARFL	73
22	MOHRA	94,27
23	MUSVI	74,45
24	ROLIR	89
25	SANTI	76,67
26	TAMAL	83,42
27	TIEFL	77,35
28	TOZTA	67,78
29	PAILU	90,05

**APPENDIX 5: FCE OVERALL SCORES,  
PROGRAMS A AND B**

**Program A**

	Student code	Overall score
1	AIRFL	69,25
2	BLACA	78,58
3	GONTO	71,97
4	MARSA	61,13
5	MARSO	54,43
6	MARCH	70,25
7	MILIG	88,82
8	MOLCR	61,9
9	NAHJO	75,03
10	STAMA	75,65
11	WALFR	46,5
12	BERTO	62,75
13	BONGR	73,39
14	ESCCA	63,21
15	ESCRO	58,9
16	MOYCA	50,62
17	PORGU	87,49
18	RUIVI	76,77
19	URRSO	84,42
20	NICIR	92,96
21	AGUAL	78,25
22	AIRAG	74,3
23	BARJE	65,7
24	BERCO	81,6
25	CAFLU	73,7
26	FRITO	83,9
27	GUEEU	51,5
28	RIOAG	79,5
29	SWOGU	77,2
30	VAZES	70,14
31	ABASA	61,28
32	ABAMA	55,49
33	ALVJO	73,55
34	ALVGU	64,13
35	AMUAG	66,76
36	ARIFE	82,68
37	DELCO	80,07
38	GONGR	71,6
39	HERVE	71,65
40	LOPBE	81,27
41	NASED	64,17
42	NORMA	68,68
43	PARMA	48,7

### Program B

	Student code	Overall scores
1	BERGA	67,39
2	FERIG	72,8
3	PASCA	95,05
4	PRIRA	72,6
5	ROSNA	63,62
6	YANPA	83,8
7	CORIN	50,11
8	FERVA	40,69
9	LEPCE	54,74
10	MORBE	52,95
11	VIDVA	49,09
12	VISGA	72,09