In the speech of a group of francophone ESL learners, we examined introducer forms used to initiate picture descriptions. We then compared the learners' use of these forms to the corresponding forms in the classroom language the learners were exposed to—textbook language, the students' own classroom language, and their teachers' language. We also compared the learners' use of introducers to that of native speakers performing the same task. Some of the non-target-like characteristics of the learners' language were found to correspond to characteristics of the input they received.
The fourth hypothesis, the input hypothesis, may be the single most important concept in second language acquisition theory today. It is important because it attempts to answer the crucial theoretical question of how we acquire language. It is also important because it may hold the answer to many of our everyday problems in second language instruction at all levels. Second-language acquisition classroom research is an area of research in second-language acquisition concerned with how people learn languages in educational settings. There is a significant overlap between classroom research and language education. Classroom research is empirical, basing its findings on data and statistics wherever possible. It is also more concerned with what the learners do in the classroom than with what the teacher does. Where language teaching methods may only concentrate on the