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**DIFFERENCES IN STRATEGY USE AMONG LEARNERS OF
ITALIAN WITH VARIOUS AMOUNTS OF PREVIOUS LANGUAGE
EXPERIENCE**

Committee:

Elaine K. Horwitz, Supervisor

Diane Schallert

Carl Blyth

Daniela Bini

Thomas Garza

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Colclough Allison Sanders, B.A., M.A.

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Dedication

To my parents – thank you.

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DIFFERENCES IN STRATEGY USE AMONG LEARNERS OF ITALIAN WITH VARIOUS AMOUNTS OF PREVIOUS LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE

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The purpose of this study is to observe the differences in types of language learning strategies used by students of Italian with varying levels and types of previous language experience. Previous research shows that students of a third language seem to have some sort of an advantage over second language learners. Part of this advantage may be due to a greater use of language learning strategies and therefore this study seeks to identify the types of strategies used by more experienced language learners, and then looks for a relationship between those strategies and amount of previous language experience. The ultimate goal of this research is to provide beginning language learners with a greater variety of strategies in order to facilitate their overall language learning.

Learning strategies are specific steps taken by the learner to enhance their learning experience. Foreign language students may not be explicitly aware of their particular strategy use, however, all of them - regardless of their level of success in language learning - employ at least some of these learning strategies. In order to

determine the strategy use among 68 students of beginning Italian at the University of Texas at Austin, Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning was administered in March of 2002. Participants also filled out background questionnaires to determine the amount and type of their previous language experience. Additional participants completed the same measures but were also interviewed to follow up on their self-reported strategy use.

It was expected that language learners with more experience - whether explicit classroom instruction, or exposure at home – would exhibit a higher level of strategy use than would the less experienced learners. The results indicated that students with more than four or five years of language study reported using considerably more strategies than the less experienced learners did. Furthermore, those students exposed to another language at home also reported using significantly more strategies than those students who were not exposed to another language at home. Thus, it would appear that previous language experience is related to increased strategy use. Further research in the area is therefore suggested.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Purposes of the Study

Of all the questions posed in the field of second language acquisition, one of the most difficult to answer continues to be why certain people are better language learners than others. Previous research has demonstrated that experienced language learners are more successful at acquiring subsequent languages. (Fouser, 1995; Mägiste, 1984; McLaughlin & Nayak, 1989; Nation & McLaughlin, 1986; Nayak et al., 1990; Rivers, 1996; Thomas, 1988 & 1992) Among the factors that contribute to this success are increased strategy use, as well as a heightened sense of metalinguistic awareness (conscious knowledge of the rules of language) stemming from their previous exposure to a foreign language. In an effort to facilitate learning for their novice students, it would therefore seem useful for language teachers to examine these factors. As such, the areas of previous language experience, metalinguistic awareness and strategy use will be the main focus of the present study within the context of the college level foreign language classroom in the United States.

Many students enrolling in college level foreign language courses have already studied a foreign language in high school. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2003), 82.6% of all American high school graduates in the year 2000 had taken foreign language classes in high school. Among these, 52% had taken one to two years of foreign language and 29.8% had taken three or more years. Therefore, more than 80% of students enrolling in college level foreign language courses will have some previous experience studying a foreign language. While some of these students are learning an additional language because they were successful the first time

around, others are admittedly enrolling in college courses because they were unsuccessful in high school and need to be able to demonstrate some proficiency in language to fulfill their degree requirements.

Drawing on prior knowledge is just one of many strategies we can provide our college level language students, whether they are experienced language learners or novices. Those who are in fact learning a second language - and have no prior language learning experience - can still be trained to use the same strategies that experienced language learners use, especially if their instructor has an idea of what types of strategies are best suited to their situation.

By examining the types of strategies used by experienced and successful language learners, this study aims to provide beginning and less successful learners with the extra strategies that may be helpful in order to facilitate their learning process. Such strategy training could also lead to a heightened sense of metalinguistic awareness by giving our students more effective strategies to use. I also hope to encourage them to become more critically reflective of their own learning process, therefore becoming more autonomous and successful learners.

Rubin notes that not all students succeed at learning language through a “natural” process, and need to have their attention drawn to specific strategies before they can devote conscious attention to their own language learning. She suggests that such strategy training may be especially helpful to those students who are struggling to learn a second language. Rubin also points out that “once the strategies of good language learners are identified, they can be made available and, where useful, used by less successful learners to enable them to learn a foreign/second language more effectively”

(1987, p. 16). However, as we will see below, the concept of strategy training may not be so straight-forward.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although much research has been done on the topic of second language acquisition (SLA), few studies have addressed the related topic of third and subsequent language acquisition. There are a number of issues to consider when discussing third language acquisition (TLA) that distinguish it from the acquisition of a second language.

First of all, the process of acquiring a language seems to change once a second language has been acquired (Cenoz & Valencia, 1994; Jessner, 1999; Klein, 1995; Mägiste, 1984; Rivers, 1996; Thomas, 1988 & 1992). Many researchers agree that previous knowledge of a language can lead to a heightened sense of “metalinguistic awareness” and that learners with such awareness are more open-minded in their ideas about language learning (Bialystok, 1988 & 2001; Cenoz et al., 2001; Jessner, 1999; Thomas, 1988 & 1992; Yelland et al., 1993). Thomas defines metalinguistic awareness as “an individual’s ability to focus attention on language as an object in and of itself, to reflect upon language, and to evaluate it” (1992, p. 531). A related phenomenon is metacognitive knowledge, which refers to the learners’ knowledge about their own learning process. Paris and Winograd define metacognitive knowledge as “knowledge about cognitive states and abilities that can be shared among individuals while at the same time expanding the construct to include affective and motivational characteristics of thinking” (1990, p. 239). Although it is not as specific to language learning as metalinguistic awareness is, there is some research to suggest that metacognitive

knowledge could facilitate learning (Dickinson, 1995; Victori & Lockart, 1995; Zimmerman, 1989; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994).

There also seem to be differences depending on the age of a student's acquisition of a third language, for instance someone who acquired two languages simultaneously as a child versus someone who formally studied a second language as an adult (Thomas, 1988 & 1992). In the first of Thomas's studies, bilingual English-Spanish speakers who had received some formal training in Spanish performed significantly better on a French grammar test than bilinguals who had never had instruction in Spanish. Bilinguals with training in Spanish produced the lowest percentage of errors and attempted more structures than bilinguals with no formal study in Spanish and monolinguals, while bilinguals with only a passive knowledge of Spanish attempted the lowest amount of structures and produced high percentages of errors. Thomas attributes the differences in performance to a higher level of metalinguistic awareness in bilinguals with formal training due to their previous formal study of the second language. Bilingual students who have not had a classroom language experience might not be at much of an advantage over monolinguals.

While there is indeed a general consensus that once a person has acquired a second language - either as a child or in a classroom - subsequent language learning is facilitated (Cenoz & Valencia, 1994; Mägiste, 1984 & 1986; Sanz, 2000; Thomas, 1988 & 1992;), there are differing opinions as to what causes this phenomenon. Strategy use may be one of the contributing factors to this facilitation. Wenden defines learner strategies as "language learning behaviors learners actually engage in to learn and regulate the learning of a second language", but also as "what learners know about the

strategies they use, i.e. their strategic knowledge” (1987, p. 6). Previous research in the field of strategy use (Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Derry & Murphy, 1986; O’Malley, 1987; Oxford, 1990; Russo & Stewner-Manzanares, 1985; Thompson & Rubin, 1993; Weinstein & Mayer, 1985; Wenden, 1987; Yang, 1995) suggests that learners can be trained in the use of strategies, and thereby become more successful learners. As we will see later in the discussion, this may only be the first step in helping students become more strategic learners.

Furthermore, several studies support the idea that strategy use is increased in people who have learned a second language (Nation & McLaughlin, 1986; Nayak et al., 1990). The authors suggest that expert language learners use information processing strategies and techniques that are different from those used by inexperienced language learners. Although there is much anecdotal evidence that multilinguals acquire additional languages with more ease than someone learning a second language does, there has not been much experimental data reported to support this claim. In an attempt to answer the question of what makes experienced language learners different from novices, McLaughlin and Nayak (1989) consider the studies that have been done on what they call a “positive transfer hypothesis”. They suggest that positive transfer occurs from learning languages, and that this knowledge gives the multilingual an advantage over novice language learners. Even though the multilinguals in their study did not exhibit greater success overall, they were more likely to adjust their strategy use according to the task at hand. And while they did not necessarily use more strategies than monolinguals, the multilinguals demonstrated a greater use of metacognitive strategies.

SIGNIFICANCE AND PURPOSES OF THIS STUDY

The purpose of this study is to observe the differences in types of language learning strategies used by students of Italian with varying levels of previous language learning experience. Italian was particularly chosen as the target language in this study because it tends to draw students with a wide variety of language learning backgrounds. Thus both experienced learners and less-experienced learners will be observed. In addition, the differences in types of strategies used by students exposed to another language at home (for example, students who grew up in a bilingual environment), and those without such exposure will be examined. The following research questions will be posed:

1. What are the differences in strategy use among L2 learners with different types of previous formal language experience?
2. How do L2 learners exposed to another language in the home compare to those exposed only to English in terms of strategy use?

Both questions consider the different types of strategies as described by Oxford (1990). Participants used Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) to self-report their use of strategies when learning a language. The reported strategies were coded as "memory", "cognitive", "compensation", "metacognitive", "affective" or "social." This was the first step in identifying the spectrum of strategies used by all the participants and allowed the researcher to identify the strategies used by a variety of language learners. In keeping with the idea that experienced learners may have a heightened sense of metalinguistic awareness, it was expected that these learners of

Italian – whether their experience was formal study or exposure in the home - would use more metacognitive and cognitive strategies than the less experienced learners.

The first question specifically addresses the issue of differences in strategy use between participants with varying degrees of previous formal language experience. This information is of interest because most students of college-level Italian today have already formally studied a second language in high school. Some have had several years of study in one language while others have studied multiple languages. Therefore all participants completed a language background questionnaire to determine the amount and type of previous language experience. By comparing the results of the SILL to those of the background questionnaire, the researcher was able to identify those strategies used by learners with different degrees of previous language experience. A higher use of metacognitive strategies was expected in the learners who have had more explicit training in their second language.

The second research question compares the strategy use of learners who were exposed to another language in their home as a child with those who heard only English. Many students come from a mixed language background and while some of these speak the home language, others are merely aware of it. It was expected that these learners would have a higher than average use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, but not as high as those with formal training in the second language.

The discovery of an increased use of strategies in different types of experienced language learners would allow the researcher to provide novice learners with more sophisticated strategy use in an attempt to facilitate their language learning.

OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter One has explained the purposes and significance of the current study with respect to existing issues in strategy use among experienced language learners. It has also posed the research questions. As a context for this research project, Chapter Two will provide a review of the relevant literature in types of language learners, metalinguistic awareness in experienced language learners and strategy use in L3 learners as well as strategy use in second language (L2) learners, and finally strategy training. Chapter Three will present the research methods of this study, including the design, a description of the participants and the instrumentation used, as well as methods of data analysis. The results of the study will be presented in Chapter Four and will be discussed in Chapter Five, along with pedagogical implications and areas for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

As a context for the current study, this chapter will focus on three main areas of literature: language learners with different types of previous language experience, metalinguistic awareness, and language learning strategies.

2.1.1 DEFINING AND DESCRIBING LANGUAGE LEARNERS

As discussed below, students come to the foreign language classroom with a wide variety of previous language backgrounds. In many areas of the United States we are likely to find bilingual students who learned two languages either simultaneously or in close succession as a child. Although these students didn't formally study a foreign language, they could bring with them the heightened sense of metalinguistic awareness that often accompanies knowledge of two languages. They will likely be more aware of the structure of language and the differences between distinct linguistic systems. Other language learners may have successfully learned a second language as an adult. The experience of formally studying a language should have provided these learners with more tools and strategies to apply to learning a third language.

Many students attempting to learn a language may have tried unsuccessfully to do so before, and therefore may bring with them a certain amount of preconceived notions regarding language learning. These learners may be starting over with a language they previously studied (false beginners) or they may be starting fresh with a new language (serial language learners). In either case, they may have some negative feelings about language learning or some questionable beliefs about what language learning entails.

Suggestions for dealing with all these types of students will be offered in the Pedagogical Implications in Chapter Five.

2.1.2 THE THIRD LANGUAGE LEARNER

While much research continues to be done in the field of second language acquisition, the related field of third and subsequent language acquisition remains wide open for investigation. As Fouser (1995) points out, this field deserves more attention precisely because it allows researchers to test second language acquisition theories in light of the additional variable of prior language learning. He goes on to say that researchers “could benefit greatly from investigating how a new language is processed and produced by a learner who has acquired, or who is familiar with, at least two linguistic systems” (1995, p. 389). In a similar vein, foreign language teachers could also benefit from such information and make use of it in their classrooms.

The research that has been done in third language acquisition demonstrates that the process of acquiring a language is changed once a second language has been acquired (Cenoz & Valencia, 1994; Jessner, 1999; Klein, 1995; Mägiste, 1984; Rivers, 1996; Thomas, 1988, 1992) and it is generally agreed by these authors that third language acquisition is facilitated by prior acquisition of a second language. The advantages that third language learners might have over second language learners can be attributed to “highly developed learning strategies, metalinguistic awareness and communicative sensitivity” (Cenoz et al., 2001, p. 6). Learning strategies and metalinguistic awareness will be discussed later in this chapter but first we must examine the definitions of third language acquisition.

Third language acquisition (TLA) is defined by Fouser (1995, p. 387) as “the acquisition of a language beyond the second language or the first foreign language.” This is a fairly broad definition and leaves the door open for a wide variety of prior language experience. The second language could be acquired simultaneously with the first or could be learned much later. Indeed, there seems to be a lack of a consensus about how to define third language learners.

Jessner points out that TLA is not the same as SLA because of the “crosslinguistic influence in multilinguals and the advantages gained from contact with several languages” (1999, p. 203). Given this prior linguistic experience, Jessner explains, the third language learner will display qualitative differences in language learning, such as being able to consciously reflect on the strategies used while learning a second language and apply them to third language learning. This will obviously be more of a factor when the second language was explicitly learned, rather than acquired at home and that is why it is especially important to consider the context in which the first two languages were learned.

2.1.3 BILINGUAL THIRD LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Most studies in the field of third language acquisition consider childhood bilinguals who are then learning a third language as an adolescent or adult (Cenoz, Hufeisen & Jessner, 2001; Cenoz & Valencia, 1994; Jessner, 1999; Klein, 1995; Sanz, 2000; Swain et al., 1990). Such a childhood bilingual environment is defined by Galambos and Goldin-Meadow (1990, p. 2) as “the juxtaposition of two language systems learned simultaneously.” In these cases, both of the first two languages are

learned at the age of natural language acquisition and can therefore both be considered ‘native’ languages.

Within this bilingual context, Mägiste (1984, p. 416) differentiates between “passive bilingualism”, in which the child has a passive knowledge of their first language, and “active bilingualism”, in which the first language is used actively at home on a daily basis. This is an important distinction, especially given that her results reveal that passive knowledge of the first language seems to facilitate third language acquisition while active bilingualism could delay such acquisition because it is more likely to result in interference. In a later study, Mägiste (1986) asserts that passive bilingualism’s facilitating effect derives from the fact that it causes less interference and allows the learner to concentrate more on the new language being learned.

In a similar vein, Thomas (1988, 1992) acknowledges potential differences between English-Spanish bilingual students who have formally studied Spanish and those who only have an informal knowledge. She links these differences to Bialystok’s (1978) distinction between explicit and implicit knowledge. In Bialystok’s model of second language learning, explicit knowledge can be described or articulated whereas implicit knowledge is simply produced spontaneously. Thomas notes that Bialystok (1981) later changed her terminology to analyzed and nonanalyzed knowledge rather than explicit and implicit so as to avoid confusion of explicit knowledge with the conscious knowledge of language rules (1992, p. 532).¹

Another important distinction in terminology is that between bilingualism and

¹ For a more in-depth discussion of Bialystok’s model of second language learning, see section 2.2.1 below.

biliteracy. Sanz (2000, p.23) maintains that biliteracy actually “results in more efficient language learning”. She points out that this key distinction is made in three studies (Wagner et al., 1989; Cenoz and Valencia, 1994; Swain et al., 1990) that compare biliterates with monolinguals. Referring to Cenoz and Valencia (1994), Sanz (2000, p. 24) notes that “any advantage found in favor of the bilingual group could be assumed to be the result of their ‘fully developed bilingualism’: that is, control over, and frequent use of the four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and understanding) in both languages”.

2.1.4 SUCCESSFUL SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Very few studies consider whether learning a second language as an adolescent or adult might facilitate learning a subsequent third language. In their study of language learning strategies in monolingual and multilingual adults, Nayak et al. (1990) note which of their multilingual participants learned their second languages after the age of 12 but they do not separate this group out for their analysis or look for any differences between the two types of multilinguals. The authors only mention this matter briefly in the conclusion: “We do not wish to ignore the possibility that multilingual subjects differ as a function of their experience with language. The person who learns several languages as an adult has a different language-learning experience than does the person who has learned a number of languages as a child” (p. 242). This is indeed an interesting and important area for further investigation.

One author who considers third language acquisition after the second language has been acquired as an adult is Rivers (1996, 2001) and he terms these learners ‘experienced language learners’ or ‘expert learners’ as well as third language learners. Rivers defines expert language learners as “learners with sufficient experience at

language learning and sufficient awareness of that experience to make conscious use of it in their third-language courses” (1996, p. 2). In response to the research question “how does experience in second-language learning affect the learner’s further acquisition of foreign languages?” (1996, p. 1), Rivers found expert learners tended to exhibit learner autonomy and self-assessment. He defines autonomy as attempts by the learner to take control of the learning process. Self-assessment was demonstrated by student comments on their own “perceptions of their progress in the course, their strengths and weaknesses with regard to the language learning process, and the suitability of the course to their learner styles and learning strategy preferences” (pp. 3-4). Further results of the study indicate that expert learners use a spectrum of social learning strategies and self-directed learning behaviors as well as exhibit a high degree of metalinguistic awareness.

Such use of strategies and self-directed learning behaviors are only a part of the additional skills that may be available to the third language learner. In a dynamic model of third language acquisition, Herdina and Jessner (2000, p. 92) suggest that the “acquisition of a further language leads to the development of new skills which begin to form part of the multilingual repertoire”. These skills are divided into three categories: Language learning skills, language management skills and language maintenance skills. Language learning skills incorporate the cognitive aspect of language learning, such as *how* to learn a language. The authors state that this “is one of the factors which due to prior experience with the second language learning process must be considered as developed at a higher level in third language learners than in second language learners” (pp. 92-93). Language management skills include the ability to both integrate and differentiate a variety of language resources and “can therefore be defined as the

multilingual art of balancing communicative requirements with language resources” (p. 93). Finally, language maintenance skills are considered the most important part of the language acquisition process because of the difficult nature of “having to not only maintain a certain level of competence in three languages but actually increase the level of all three competences in order to progress” (p. 93).

The authors maintain that all three of these skills contribute to ‘language awareness’ or ‘metalinguistic awareness’. They conclude by asserting that the process of language acquisition is qualitatively different in the multilingual speaker, “in so far as the acquisition of more than one language encourages the development of a metasystem which is then used in subsequent processes of language learning. It is indeed no longer a question of learning a language, rather one of learning to learn a language” (pp. 93-94). This concept of metalinguistic awareness will be discussed below.

2.1.5 FALSE BEGINNERS

False beginners are defined as students who “are entering college foreign language courses at a lower level than those they had completed in high school, often actually entering college foreign language study at the introductory level after two, three, or even four years of high school experience in the language” (Lange et al., 1992, p. 284). As Fukai (2000, p. 3) points out, many first year university foreign language courses include such students who opt to start from the beginning with a language they had previously studied in high school. Several studies (Lange et al., 1992; Watt, 1997) suggest a positive correlation between such previous study and academic success at the beginning of college level courses.

Reporting on the results of Halff (1977), Lange et al. (1992, p. 286) state that while false beginners do perform better than true beginners at the beginning of the first semester, “differences in test scores between the two groups were erased by the end of the semester”. Their own results indicate “a weak but consistent positive relationship between years of prior instruction and pass rates on the [University of Michigan] entrance proficiency test” (Lange et al., 1992, p. 291) The researchers state that the nature of this relationship appears to be complicated and varied (p. 292).

The complex state of this relationship is apparent in another study (Nakamura, 1997) in which the total number of overall errors made by false beginners was equivalent to those made by true beginners. However, while written performance and reading comprehension is the same for the two groups, the false beginners’ reading performance is better than that of true beginners. The problem for false beginners seems to “lie in recoding and decoding of English words” (p. 8). False beginners in this study also read aloud more quickly but make more errors than true beginners and did not attempt to repair them. Nakamura points out that “false beginners do not seem to use the learning strategy of self-correction” (p. 7).

One reason for initial success in college level courses may be a lowered level of anxiety due to familiarity with the subject matter. In a small-scale qualitative study of two Japanese FL students, Fukai (2000) found that the false beginner, with four years of high school Japanese experience, reported feeling lucky to have the prior experience. She was much less nervous or anxious in class than the true beginner: “Instead of worrying about learning new things, Mary just needed to activate and strengthen her existing knowledge in first semester college Japanese. The foundation of Japanese Mary

built in high school seems to have helped her feel less anxious in college” (Fukai, 2000, p. 10). Therefore, it seems that prior experience in high school provides background information that makes false beginners feel more secure at the college level.

While the prior language experience of the false beginners included in these studies has been the same language as that studied in college, we should allow for the possibility that prior experience in any language could have the same benefits and that therefore even students who choose to learn a new language in college could be considered a type of false beginner. This will be discussed below.

2.1.6 TOWARDS A NEW DEFINITION: THE SERIAL LANGUAGE LEARNER

As stated above, false beginners are defined as students who choose to start over in college with the same language that they already studied in high school. The limited studies available show that these students perform better – at least initially – than do students with no previous experience in the language. And as we have seen in studies of third language learners, students who have previously learned a second language seem to have an advantage over students with no previous experience. But what about the student who enrolls in a beginning language course, having already studied one or more previous languages to no avail? Many students arrive at college and take an introductory course in a language other than one they may have studied – even extensively- in high school. Due to a lack of success in that previous language, they switch to a new language, either in order to fulfill the foreign language requirement in college, or simply because they are determined finally to learn a language. We certainly cannot say that these students have successfully learned a second language, but they do have experience in learning a language. They are not technically false beginners, because they are not starting over

with the same language previously studied. This researcher would like to suggest a new definition for this type of learner: the serial language learner.²

Serial language learners will have most likely developed some ideas about language learning from their previous classroom experience. We could probably assume a certain level of metalinguistic awareness stemming from this experience and therefore teachers should help serial language learners to draw on this awareness and use it to their advantage. Even though they are now learning a new language, they can refer back to what they know about grammar from their prior exposure to it. Because the previous language learning experience may have been an unpleasant one, this would be a good opportunity to provide the serial language learner with some affective strategies for lowering anxiety.

While serial language learners may employ some language learning strategies, given their lack of success in learning a language, they probably do not choose their strategies wisely or employ them effectively. Strategy training could draw their attention to the strategies they know and help them to use them more effectively, as well as teach them new strategies.

To the best of this researcher's knowledge, no studies have been done on the type of language learner described here and given the number of learners who fall into this category, it would seem that such research is merited. In the meantime however, language teachers should take the time to assess the types of previous language learning experiences of their students and acknowledge these different backgrounds when implementing strategy training in the classroom.

² This definition was suggested to me by Elaine Horwitz in a personal communication on Aug. 13, 2003.

2.2.1 DEFINING METALINGUISTIC AWARENESS

Metalinguistic awareness is defined by Thomas (1988, p. 236) as “students’ conscious knowledge of the rules and forms of language”. In a later study, she gives a more precise definition of it as an “ability to focus attention on language as an object in and of itself, to reflect upon language, and to evaluate it” (1992, p. 531). Yopp (1988) broke down metalinguistic ability into four types of awareness: phonological awareness, word awareness, syntactic awareness and pragmatic awareness. As mentioned above, metalinguistic awareness is a cognitive aspect of language learning that can be simply expressed as knowing how to learn a language.

Yelland et al. refer to children with metalinguistic awareness as possessing “greater *explicit* knowledge of the structural components of their language: that is, they have increased access to the usually tacit knowledge that underlies speaking and listening” (1993, p.423). This aspect of metalinguistic awareness can be linked to Bialystok’s (1978; 1981; 1986; 1988; 2001) metacognitive model of language learning. Within this model, Bialystok divides linguistic processing into two components: analysis of linguistic knowledge and control of linguistic processing. She explains analysis of linguistic knowledge as “the skill component responsible for the structuring and explication of linguistic knowledge” (1988, p. 561). Within this type of processing, implicit knowledge is organized and structured, thereby becoming explicit knowledge. Control of linguistic processing, on the other hand, is “the executive component responsible for directing attention to the selection and integration of information” and is linked to “executive processes or metacomponents (fluid ability)” (Bialystok, 1988, p. 561).

According to Bialystok (1986), metalinguistic tasks such as judging grammaticality or meaningfulness cannot be accomplished without accessing explicit or analyzed knowledge. Such analyzed knowledge is not necessarily the same as being able to articulate conscious facts or grammatical rules. As Sharwood Smith (1981) points out, just because a learner cannot explain grammatical rules does not mean they aren't aware of the structure of the language. Bialystok maintains that there are different demands on control, knowledge and the coordination of these two when performing various metalinguistic tasks. For example, making a grammatical judgement requires moderate analyzed knowledge, while correcting an error requires high analyzed knowledge (Bialystok and Ryan, 1985). Therefore, different types of metalinguistic tasks will vary in difficulty, depending on the amount of demand they place on control functions. Bialystok and Ryan point out that as learners become more fluent, the demands on cognitive control are reduced and performance improves even further. Furthermore, Bialystok (1986) suggests that the development of the cognitive skills of analysis and control contribute to metalinguistic ability.

Jessner (1999, p. 201) also makes the link between metalinguistic ability and cognitive processes by pointing out that “higher levels of metalinguistic awareness [...] facilitate the acquisition of language by exploiting the cognitive mechanisms underlying these processes of transfer and enhancement”. As we will see below, prior experience in acquiring or learning a second language can help develop cognitive processes and therefore experienced or third language learners tend to demonstrate higher levels of metalinguistic awareness.

2.2.2 METALINGUISTIC AWARENESS IN EXPERIENCED LANGUAGE LEARNERS

A number of studies (Bialystok, 1988, 2001; Jessner, 1999; Thomas, 1988, 1992; Yelland et al., 1993) suggest a link between heightened metalinguistic awareness and previous language experience. Cook cites previous research with children that demonstrates “that the child with an L2 outscores the monolingual child on tests of sheer grammaticality and on tests where form has to be separated from meaning” (1995, p. 95). Indeed, Bialystok found that in tests of metalinguistic performance, “the fully bilingual group always scored the highest and the monolingual group, the lowest” (1988, p. 563).

Within bilinguals, it has been suggested that explicit training in the second language may result in higher levels of metalinguistic awareness, which contributes to performance in learning a third language. In a study by Thomas (1988), English-Spanish speakers who had received formal training in Spanish (biliterate bilinguals) performed significantly better on a grammar test than did English-Spanish speakers with no formal instruction. Thomas reports that the biliterate bilinguals produced the lowest number of errors and also attempted more structures than bilinguals or monolinguals. She argues that “the difference in performance between bilinguals and monolinguals and among different kinds of bilinguals may be attributed to the students’ different levels of metalinguistic awareness” (Thomas, 1988, p. 239). She also notes that “bilinguals learning a third language seem to have developed a sensitivity to language as a system which helps them perform better on those activities usually associated with formal language learning than monolinguals learning a foreign language for the first time” (p. 240). Because the bilingual biliterates out-performed the bilinguals who had no formal instruction, Thomas suggests that exposure to explicit classroom instruction “may

transfer positively to a successful third language-learning experience in a similar environment” (p. 240).

In another study comparing the metalinguistic skills of bilingual children to those of monolingual children, Galambos and Goldin-Meadow tested their hypothesis that “the bilingual experience should serve to enhance the development of metalinguistic abilities in young children, compared to the monolingual experience” (1990, p. 4). In order to explore a continuum from implicit to explicit knowledge, children in the study were asked to “*note* errors in ungrammatical sentences, to *correct* those errors, and to *explain* why those errors were wrong” (p. 5). Among these tasks, the latter would represent the highest level of metalinguistic skill because it requires explicit knowledge of the rules of language.

In each of the three age groups tested in Spanish, the Spanish-English bilingual children noted significantly more errors than the Spanish monolingual children did. However, when the same tasks were given in English, the bilingual group did not perform significantly better than the monolingual group. The authors explain these contrasting results by the fact that the Spanish-English bilinguals had the same level of Spanish proficiency as the Spanish-speaking monolinguals but had a lower level of English proficiency than the English-speaking monolinguals. However, once the mean number of errors noted were adjusted for proficiency, the bilingual children once again outperformed the monolingual children at every age group.

In terms of correcting errors, the youngest group of bilinguals gave more corrections that were grammatically based, as opposed to the monolingual children who gave corrections based on content alone. This advantage did not continue in the third

metalinguistic task of explanations however and therefore, the authors conclude that “the bilingual experience appeared to influence performance on the noting and correcting tasks but not on the explanation task” (p. 44). They suggest that “there is a sequence of development in the children’s’ awareness of language from an orientation to language based on content, to an orientation based on linguistic markers, to an orientation based on linguistic systems” (p. 46). Furthermore, the authors posit that the experience of bilingualism may facilitate the progression through this sequence.

While the majority of studies on metalinguistic awareness consider bilingualism, it would also appear that metalinguistic benefits of exposure to a second language may occur even when the amount of exposure is limited. Yelland et al. (1993) found that children who received only an hour of Italian instruction per week for 6 months performed significantly better on a measure of word awareness than did children with no such second language training. These results carried over into a test of written word recognition, where the group of marginally bilingual children again performed significantly better than the monolingual children. The authors conclude that “the benefits to the development of metalinguistic awareness that accrue from bilingualism are not dependent on the acquisition of some critical degree of competence in the second language” (p. 441).

All of these studies suggest that the experience of learning a second language - whether in the home within a bilingual environment, or in the classroom for even a limited amount of time – heightens the learners’ awareness of the process of learning a language and thereby facilitates further language learning experiences. As we will see

below, this heightened sense of metalinguistic awareness is often coupled with an increased use of language learning strategies.

2.3.1 DEFINITIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES

Learner strategies have been defined as “language learning behaviors learners actually engage in to learn and regulate the learning of a second language”, but also refer to “what learners know about the strategies they use, i.e. their strategic knowledge” (Wenden, 1987, p. 6). These behaviors can also be more specifically defined as “operations employed by the learner to aid the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information” (Oxford, 1990, p. 8). Oxford suggests however, that this definition be expanded to “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations” (p. 8). As such, she offers the following features of language learning strategies:

Table 2.1 Features of Language Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies:	
1.	Contribute to the main goal, communicative competence.
2.	Allow learners to become more self-directed.
3.	Expand the role of teachers.
4.	Are problem-oriented.
5.	Are specific actions taken by the learner.
6.	Involve many aspects of the learner, not just the cognitive.
7.	Support learning both directly and indirectly.
8.	Are not always observable.
9.	Are often conscious.
10.	Can be taught.
11.	Are flexible.
12.	Are influenced by a variety of factors.

Source: Oxford 1990, p. 9

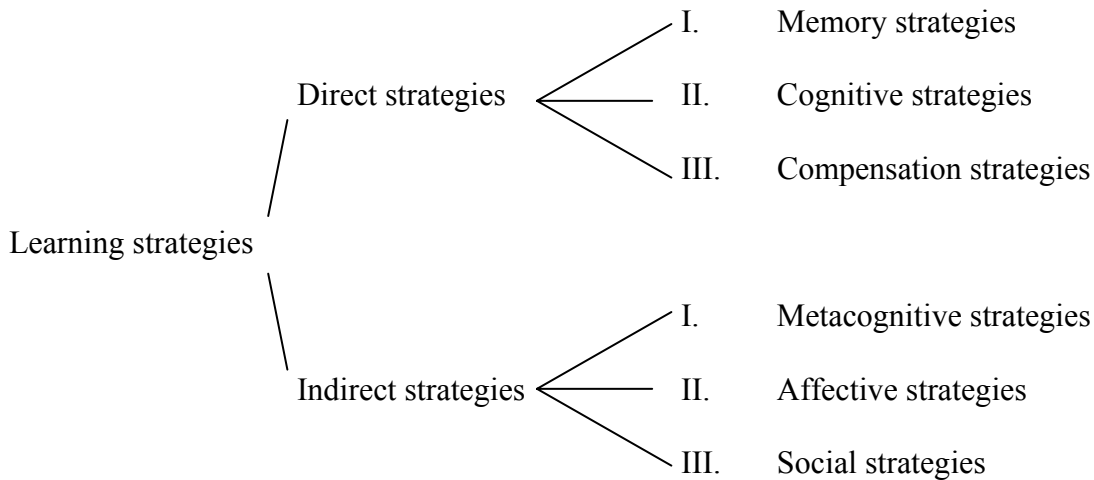
Language learning strategies have been classified in a number of ways. Rubin (1987) suggests that there are two main types of learning strategies: metacognitive strategies - which refer to knowledge of the cognitive process as well as regulation and control of those processes - and cognitive strategies - which are the actual problem-solving operations. Rubin (1987, pp. 23-35) identifies the following six cognitive learning strategies: clarification / verification; guessing / inductive inferencing; deductive reasoning; practice; memorization; and monitoring. Metacognitive learning strategies, on the other hand, involve the learner's planning, monitoring and evaluating of their own learning. These include choosing and prioritizing what they want to learn and then planning what strategies they should use to reach their goals (Rubin, 1987, p. 25).

Other researchers have suggested a third category of social and affective learning strategies (Chamot & O'Malley, 1987; Chamot & Kupper, 1989). This category takes into account the important element of interaction between students and teacher as well as among students themselves. It also includes the learner's control over their own emotions.

The most comprehensive classification system of language learning strategies is offered by Oxford (1990), who builds on the base of the three aforementioned categories. Oxford divides language learning strategies into direct and indirect strategies. Direct strategies are comprised of memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies. The indirect strategies are metacognitive, affective and social strategies³

³ This classification system will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

Table 2.2: Diagram of the Strategy System: An Overview



Source: Oxford 1990, p. 16

2.3.2 LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES AND THE SUCCESSFUL L2 LEARNER

A number of studies have shown that good language learners effectively employ language learning strategies (Bialystok, 1979, 1981; Naiman et al., 1978; Rubin, 1975, 1981, 1987; Stern, 1975). Rubin (1975) describes the good language learner as one who is willing to make guesses and makes them accurately, is driven to communicate, is not afraid of making mistakes, looks for patterns, practices regularly, monitors their own language use and pays attention to language meaning. Naiman et al. (1978) suggest six strategies used by good language learners. These are reported by Oxford (1989, pp. 235-236) as: “selecting language situations that allow one’s preferences to be used; actively being involved in language learning; seeing language as both a rule system and a communication tool; extending and revising one’s understanding of the language;

learning to think in the language; and addressing the affective demands of language learning.”

According to Oxford (1989, 1990), good language learners will use *metacognitive* strategies - such as paying attention, organizing and self-monitoring - to manage their own learning process. They will use *memory* strategies - such as associating, using imagery and reviewing – to learn and recall new information as needed. They will make use of such *cognitive* strategies as repeating, translating and taking notes. When they are faced with limitations, they will use *compensation* strategies - such as using linguistic clues, miming or gesturing, or using a circumlocution to express their ideas. Good learners will also adopt the *social* strategies of asking for clarification, cooperating with others and developing cultural understanding. Finally, they will monitor and control their own emotions by utilizing such *affective* strategies as rewarding themselves, discussing their feelings, making positive statements and using laughter.

The link between proficiency and language learning strategy use has been shown in various studies suggesting that appropriate use of strategies can contribute to overall proficiency or to performance in specific skill areas (Bialystok, 1981; Bremner, 1999; Green & Oxford, 1995; Oxford et al., 1993; Thompson & Rubin, 1993). Green and Oxford (1995, p. 265) report that “students who were better in their language performance generally reported higher levels of overall strategy use and frequent use of a greater number of strategy categories”. The authors do acknowledge however that this relationship might not be causal, but cyclical in nature, stating that “this relationship is best visualized not as a one-way arrow leading from cause to effect, but rather as an ascending spiral in which active use strategies help students attain higher proficiency,

which in turn makes it more likely that students will select these active use strategies” (1995, p. 288).

How does the use of language learning strategies contribute to learning? Oxford and Nyikos (1989, p. 291) suggest that “use of appropriate learning strategies enables students to take responsibility for their own learning by enhancing learner autonomy, independence, and self directions.” They also point out that within the context of cognitive psychology, “learning strategies help learners to assimilate new information into their own existing mental structures or schemata, thus creating increasingly rich and complex schemata” (1989, p. 291).

While less successful learners might also use strategies, they do not choose them appropriately or use them correctly. Chamot and Kupper (1989, p. 13) point out that “effective language learners know how to use appropriate strategies to reach their learning goals, whereas ineffective learners are less expert in their strategy choice and use”. Successful language learners are able to match the appropriate strategy to the task at hand. In their study of strategies in two language learners, Abraham and Vann (1987) found that the more effective language learner was more flexible in his use of strategies and employed a wide variety of them, whereas the less effective learner approached all tasks in the same manner without regard to the appropriateness of the strategy being used. Therefore, simply possessing a large repertoire of strategies is not sufficient for effective language learning. Knowing how to choose the correct strategies and put them to good use seems to be a key characteristic of the good language learner. As Oxford et al. (1990, p. 199) point out, the more effective language learners use strategies “more consciously,

more purposefully, more appropriately, and more frequently” than their less successful counterparts.

Many strategy studies have examined the types of strategies used by students in an attempt to determine which strategies are the most effective in promoting language learning (Bialystok, 1981; Bremner, 1999; Chamot & Kupper, 1989). In her study of high school students learning French, Bialystok (1981) examined the use of four types of language learning strategies: inferencing (guessing), monitoring (noting errors), formal practicing (of language rules), and functional practicing (using the language). She found that among these, monitoring and inferencing were used the most but that functional practicing was most directly related to achievement. After administering Oxford’s (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning⁴ to a group of university students in Hong Kong, Bremner (1999) found that compensation and cognitive strategies were used most frequently, while memory strategies were used the least. There was a strong relationship found between use of eleven specific strategies – nine of which were cognitive strategies – and proficiency. Bremner points out that these results are similar to those of Green and Oxford (1995), mentioned above, in that many of the strategies that contributed to proficiency involve active practice.

These are among the types of strategies used effectively by successful language learners. Now we will examine the use of strategies among learners with previous language experience.

⁴ See Chapter 3 for a discussion of the Strategy Inventory.

2.3.3 STRATEGY USE IN EXPERIENCED LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Just as the research in the area of third language learning is relatively limited, the more specific topic of strategy use in L3 learners is even more limited, although a few studies have examined this topic (McLaughlin & Nayak, 1989; Nation & McLaughlin, 1986; Nayak et al., 1990; Thomas, 1992). Thomas compared second language learners of French with a group of English-Spanish bilinguals who were also learning French. The study was designed to discover differences in the amount of importance the two groups assigned to explicit grammar instruction in the classroom. Another purpose of the study was to draw on the previous formal training in Spanish received by some of the English-Spanish bilinguals in order to develop language learning strategies. Thomas hypothesized that the bilinguals who had learned Spanish only in the home would place less importance on explicit instruction whereas those bilinguals who had also received formal training in Spanish in the classroom would be more aware of language as a system and would therefore place more importance on the role of grammar.

In the study, beginning and intermediate students of French were asked to assign importance to four components of communicative competence, based on the models of Canale (1983) and Canale and Swain (1987): grammar, vocabulary, social use, and strategies. Among the beginning students, both bilingual groups assigned slightly less importance to grammar (3.3% less) and vocabulary (6.4% less) than did the monolingual students. The bilingual students also assigned much more importance (13.3% more) to the use of strategies than did the monolinguals (1992, p. 538). Thomas suggests that these results indicate that prior experience in speaking Spanish makes the bilingual students more aware of the benefits of such strategies as code-switching to overcome

limitations and she hypothesizes that “they have developed an awareness that knowledge of such strategies is a component of communicative competence” (p. 538).

Among the intermediate students, the bilinguals assigned less importance to strategies (13% less) than their monolingual counterparts did, whereas they assigned more importance to grammar (9.2% more) and vocabulary (4.7% more)(p. 539). Here Thomas points out that the monolinguals seem more aware of the importance of strategies than their bilingual counterparts and that their exposure to formal instruction during the first year of French “appears to have taught them that knowing French grammar and vocabulary just is not enough to facilitate communication” (p. 539)

The next two studies are related and compare the use of strategies between ‘expert’ and ‘novice’ language learners in an information-processing context. The researchers hypothesize that one reason that multilingual or ‘expert’ language learners succeed in language learning may be a more advanced use of strategies, including the ability to adjust their strategy use in accordance with the task at hand (McLaughlin & Nayak, 1989; Nation & McLaughlin, 1986; Nayak et al., 1990).

The first of these studies compared strategies used by multilinguals, bilinguals and monolinguals learning a miniature linguistic system. The authors suggest that expert language learners use different information processing strategies than novice learners do because the former group has access to automatic processes that aren’t available to the latter group. The instructions in the experiment were intended to elicit two types of language learning strategies: implicit and explicit strategies. Implicit learning is defined as “a non-deliberate process whereby the structural nature of the stimulus material is mapped onto the mind of the attentive subject” (Nation & McLaughlin, 1986, p. 43).

Explicit learning “is a deliberate process whereby the subject induces the rules underlying the structure of the stimulus environment through intentional examination and analysis of the stimuli” (p. 43). The results showed that the multilingual group performed significantly better than either the monolingual or bilingual groups when the task required implicit learning but not when explicit learning was required. The authors suggest that the advantage of the expert language learner therefore lies in “an ability to abstract structural information from linguistic stimuli under conditions where subjects are simply exposed to exemplars with no instructions to learn the material or derive underlying rules” (p. 51). When the task involves learning explicit rules, there was no difference in performance between the groups. To explain the superior performance of the multilingual group on the implicit-learning task, Nation and McLaughlin suggest that “they possess more successful higher-order plans for organizing linguistic stimuli. Multilinguals are likely to have at their disposal more automatized basic linguistic skills that permit them to allocate more processing resources to higher-level tasks” (p. 53).

In a follow-up study within the same context of information-processing, Nayak et al. (1990) examined differences in performance between monolinguals and multilinguals under two different learning conditions. In the ‘memory’ condition participants were instructed to actively memorize the materials, while in the ‘rule-discovery’ condition they were asked to try to discover the underlying rules that governed the materials. Monolinguals and multilinguals performed similarly on the memory task but the multilinguals performed significantly better in learning the rules in the second task. The authors suggest that the fact that the multilinguals performed better on this task “is most likely a reflection of their experience with language and their willingness and ability to

search for rules” (Nayak et al., 1990, p. 241). They also suggest that the multilinguals were more flexible in their use of strategies in both tasks: “That multilinguals subjects used a wider variety of different strategies in the rule-discovery than in the memory condition, and that no such difference existed for the monolingual subjects leads us to conclude that one reason for the superior performance of the multilingual subjects is a greater flexibility in switching strategies” (p. 242).

Reporting on the results of both of these studies, as well as those of Ramsey (1980), who also showed that multilinguals demonstrated more “flexibility in ‘restructuring mental frameworks’ than did monolingual subjects”, McLaughlin and Nayak (1989, p. 11) conclude that expert language learners are more flexible in their interpretations of linguistic rules. They offer this explanation:

This ability to exert flexible control over linguistic representations and to shift strategies may result from “learning to learn”, in the sense that experience with a number of languages may make the individual more aware of structural similarities and differences between languages and less constrained by specific learning strategies. More experienced learners may more quickly step up to the metaprocedural level and weigh the strategies and tactics they are using (p. 11).

Thus it would appear that a heightened sense of the structure of the language (metalinguistic awareness) combined with a more sophisticated use of strategies contribute to better performance in experienced language learners. Let us now examine some ways to provide language learners with the necessary strategies to enhance their language learning experience.

2.3.4 STRATEGY TRAINING

As Horwitz points out (1987, p. 126), “the ultimate purpose of studying learner strategies is, of course, an applied one; researchers and teachers hope to determine which strategies are most effective and help students adopt more productive learning procedures.” The importance of identifying the strategies used by successful learners is also noted by Rubin (1987, p. 16) who writes: “once the strategies of good language learners are identified, they can be made available and, where useful, used by less successful learners to enable them to learn a foreign/second language more effectively”. As we have seen above, one of the factors that contributes to the success of effective language learners is their appropriate use of language learning strategies.

Research has suggested that strategy training can be an effective way to increase strategy use in language learners (Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Chipman et al., 1985; Derry & Murphy, 1986; O'Malley, 1987; Russo & Stewner-Manzanares, 1985; Thompson & Rubin, 1993; Weinstein & Mayer, 1985; Yang, 1995). Within the context of foreign language learning, early research in strategy training addressed specific types of language tasks such as vocabulary learning. Several studies (Atkinson & Raugh, 1975; Politzer et al., 1982a, 1982b, 1982c, 1983; Willerman, 1977) focused on the keyword method – linking mental pictures of words to their sound - for memorizing vocabulary. More recent strategy training studies (Nyikos, 1990; Oxford et al., 1990; Thompson & Rubin, 1993) focus on broader training in a more informed context, where students are made aware of the benefits of implementing strategies.

Strategy training has also been defined as “learner training,” “learning-to-learn training,” “learner methodology training,” and “methodological initiation for learners”

(Oxford, 1990, p. 200). As Oxford maintains, strategy training is necessary because learners need to learn how to learn, and “*conscious* skill in self-directed learning and in strategy use must be sharpened through training” (1990, p. 201). The most effective strategy training will not only teach strategies but will also help learners change their beliefs about the importance of taking responsibility for their own learning by utilizing strategies. This is especially true in the area of foreign language instruction, Oxford points out, because “language learning requires active self-direction on the part of learners; they cannot be spoon-fed if they desire and expect to reach an acceptable level of communicative competence” (1990, p. 201). Oxford also cites the importance of explicit strategy training, in which learners are not only taught how to use new strategies, but also how to evaluate their effectiveness and to transfer their use to new situations (1989, p. 244). Explicit strategy training is also called direct training by some researchers (Brown et al, 1986; Derry & Murphy, 1986; Palinscar & Brown, 1984) and it seems that this type of training is most effective because students will be more likely to continue using strategies and to transfer them to new tasks when they have been explicitly made aware of the benefits of strategy use. Therefore, explicit – or direct – strategy training should produce more self-directed and self-reliant learners.

Indeed, explicit training is among the elements considered important by Wenden (1987, p. 159) when it comes to incorporating strategy training in the classroom. The four elements that she believes should be considered are explicitness of purpose, content, integration of learner training with language training, and evaluation. Like the researchers cited above, Wenden also maintains that strategy training is more effective

when students are explicitly told about the purposes of such training. Informed training, says Wenden, is more likely to result in repeated, long-term strategy use.

In terms of content of language training, a combination of training in both specific (cognitive) strategies and general (metacognitive) strategies has also been shown to be more effective than training in just one type of strategy alone (Brown & Palinscar, 1982). Cognitive strategies help students deal with specific language tasks, while metacognitive strategies help them to manage their overall learning. These two types of strategies complement each other, resulting in what Wenden calls a superior package of skills (1987, p. 161).

How to go about integrating strategy training in the language course seems to depend on the type of course and the amount of time available. In a traditional language classroom, specific time can be set aside for explicit strategy training within the context of an activity. Alternatively, students could simply be provided with a list of strategies to implement on their own. The first of these, as Wenden points out, is more integrated than the second and therefore more effective because it “enables the learner to perceive the relevance of the task, enhances comprehension, and facilitates retention” (1987, p. 161).

The final element of strategy training that Wenden considers is evaluation, or how to measure the outcomes of learner training. She cites three kinds of changes in learner behavior that have been examined in previous research: task improvement, maintenance and transfer (Wenden, 1987, p. 162). The first of these may be observed in terms of better understanding, fewer mistakes made and increased memory for vocabulary, among other possibilities. Maintenance of strategy use can be observed over time. Do students continue to spontaneously use strategies a week or a month after strategy training or do

they need to be prompted to use them? And finally, do they transfer their use of strategies to different language tasks or contexts? These are all elements that must be considered when evaluating the effectiveness of strategy training.

Based on research of strategy training, Oxford (1994) offers the following guidelines for implementing strategy training in the classroom. First of all, students' needs should be assessed and they should be provided with strategy training that is appropriate to those needs. Strategy training should be a part of the regular curriculum over a long period of time and students should therefore be given ample opportunity for practice. Explicit strategy training will involve explanations and activities such as brainstorming. Students should also be provided with handouts and materials to study at home. Because affective issues such as motivation and anxiety must be considered when offering strategy training, the process should be somewhat individualized to the needs of each student. Finally, students must be given the opportunity to evaluate their progress and thereby be aware of the success of the training.

Oxford (1990) offers three types of strategy training: awareness training, one-time strategy training, and long-term strategy training. The first of these is also defined as consciousness-raising or familiarization training and consists of making learners aware of the existence of strategies and how they can facilitate certain tasks. This is an especially important aspect of strategy training because more often than not, it is the first time that learners are introduced to the idea of learning strategies. While it is not necessarily related to long-term strategy use, one-time strategy training provides learners with several strategies to help them with a specific task. As such, they can become more aware of how and when to use a strategy and also evaluate the usefulness of the strategy on that

particular task. Oxford suggests that the most effective type of strategy training is long-term strategy training, which continues the practice learned in one-time training over a longer period of time with more strategies and a greater variety of language tasks.

The idea that strategy training needs to be long-term in order to be most effective is also suggested by the results of O'Malley's (1987) study on the effects of language learning strategy training. In this experimental study, ESL students were assigned to one of three groups: metacognitive, cognitive or control groups. The first of these were provided with explicit training in the use of one metacognitive strategy, one or two cognitive strategies and a social-affective strategy. The cognitive group received the same cognitive and social-affective strategies but did not receive any metacognitive training. The control group was told to complete the task as they normally would. Strategy use instruction was provided for fifty minutes daily for eight days within a two-week period. The strategies taught remained the same for the treatment groups but the tasks (either vocabulary, listening or speaking) were different each time so the students could practice the same strategies on a variety of language activities. Results of the vocabulary test showed that the treatment groups were actually less efficient than those who received no training. O'Malley notes that the Asian students in the treatment groups persisted in using their existing strategies of rote repetition rather than adopting the new strategies they had been taught. He suggests that this difficulty stems from the fact that they knew they would be tested within a few minutes and were hesitant to employ new strategies under those circumstances. So while they were indeed using some strategies, they were not being flexible in their choice of strategy. As we saw earlier in this chapter, effective language learners are more flexible in their use of strategies.

Results of the second and third listening tests showed that the treatment groups did perform significantly better than the control group. However, results on the first listening test only approached but did not reach significance. O'Malley offers the suggestion that the treatment groups did not have enough time to become sufficiently familiar with the strategies. This could certainly be true, given that the type of strategy training provided in this study was of a very limited nature and not the long-term training that Oxford has recommended as being more effective. So while the overall results of O'Malley's study did not show a significant positive effect of training on the use of language learning strategies, they do support the ideas that strategy use must be flexible and that strategy training should be long-term.

Additional factors that may contribute to the success of strategy training are the amount of interest expressed by the teacher and the ability to motivate the students to implement strategies, as well as the use of appropriate teaching methods. These are among the findings of a study conducted by Chamot and Kupper (1989) who observed high school students undergoing training in the use of language learning strategies. This study differed from previous strategy training studies where the researchers themselves provided the strategy training. In this case, four different instructors provided their own students with strategy training and therefore the researchers were able to observe that the success of such an endeavor depends on the ability of the instructor to develop techniques for teaching effective strategy use, as well as to "provide a motivational framework that can convince students of the value of learning strategies" (Chamot & Kupper, 1989, p. 18).

Several findings can therefore be drawn from this discussion. Strategy training should be explicit and long-term. Teachers should integrate specific strategy training tasks into their regular language learning curriculum. Such training should also help students understand that they have the chance to take control of their own learning experience and therefore make them more self-reliant learners. Students should learn to evaluate their use of strategies and how to transfer their strategy use to new tasks. A wide variety of strategies should be taught, including both cognitive strategies to deal with specific tasks, and metacognitive strategies to help students manage their overall learning experience. The teacher has the important role of providing the students with explicit instruction, appropriate tasks and materials, as well as the enthusiasm to motivate students to use their new strategies. With effective strategy training implemented in the classroom, all students should be able to improve their language learning, regardless of their previous experience.

It is important to note however, that the majority of the aforementioned literature on strategy training is based on notions of language teaching methodology that are now somewhat outdated. More current language teaching methodology promotes task-based learning, in which students must learn to identify the goal of a task and decide how to go about reaching that goal. In such a task-based learning situation, students are likely to benefit from strategy training that not only provides them with the necessary tactics, but also teaches them to identify the goal of their task, to decide which strategies will be most effective in helping them reach their goal and to monitor the effectiveness of the strategies they are using as they move toward that goal. As mentioned above, some previous research on successful use of strategies has suggested the importance of

choosing the correct strategy for the task at hand and knowing how to implement strategies effectively to reach a goal (Abraham & Vann, 1987; Chamot & Kupper, 1989). In a similar vein, one should consider the notion of teaching students to be strategic, that is to identify a goal and to purposefully select the appropriate strategy to reach that goal (Paris, Lipson & Wixson, 1983). Such training can help students to become more self-directed learners who control their own learning by planning, evaluating and regulating their skills. This notion will be revisited in the Pedagogical Implications section of Chapter Five.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

The purpose of this study is to observe the differences in types of language learning strategies used by students of Italian with varying levels and types of previous language experience. As the literature review in Chapter Two has shown, students of a third language seem to have some sort of an advantage over second language learners. Part of this advantage may be due to a greater use of language learning strategies and therefore this study will seek to identify the types of strategies used by more experienced language learners, and will then look for a relationship between those strategies and amount of previous language experience. The ultimate goal of this research is to provide beginning - and less successful - language learners with a greater variety of strategies in the hope that this strengthened strategy use will facilitate their overall language learning.

Oxford (1990, p.8) describes language learning strategies as “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations”. In addition, the use of language learning strategies should promote the goal of communicative competence across the following four skills groups: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Furthermore, enhanced use of language learning strategies can help develop and hone even yet more specific areas of communicative competence, such as grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence (Oxford, 1990, p. 9).

Although other researchers (Bialystok, 1981; Rubin, 1981; Politzer, 1983; Politzer & McGroarty, 1985; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990) have offered differing classification taxonomies for learning strategies, this research will focus on the classification developed

by Oxford (1990). Within this classification, language learning strategies are divided into two categories: direct and indirect.

Direct strategies, as the name suggests, directly involve the target language. These include memory strategies (such as making mental links), applying images and sounds, and reviewing. The second group of direct strategies are cognitive strategies, which include practicing, analyzing, receiving input and producing output. The final group of direct strategies are compensation strategies, such as making intelligent guesses and overcoming limitations.

Indirect strategies, on the other hand, “support and manage language learning without (in many instances) directly involving the target language” (Oxford, 1990, p. 135). The first of these are the metacognitive group, in which learners “coordinate their own learning process” (p. 136). These strategies entail centering, arranging, planning and evaluating the student’s own learning. Affective strategies relate to emotions, and therefore lower anxiety, provide self-encouragement, and maintain a steady control of the student’s emotions. Finally, the last of these indirect strategies is social, which involve interaction such as asking questions, cooperating, and empathizing with others.

Foreign language students may not be explicitly aware of their particular strategy use at any given time, however, all of them - regardless of their level of success in language learning - employ at least some of these learning strategies. Indeed, the more effective language students are more likely to use learning strategies “more consciously, more purposefully, more appropriately, and more frequently” than less effective students do (Oxford et al, 1990, p. 199). Because of this fact, a study such as the present one can contribute to the learning experience of language students by administering a strategy

inventory such as the SILL (described below), which can make students more aware of their own strategy use and can also offer suggestions of additional strategies they can add to their repertoire of learning skills.

STUDY ONE

Participants

Participants in the first part of the study were 68 undergraduate students of 1st year, 2nd semester Italian at the University of Texas at Austin. Of these, 8.8% identified themselves as Hispanic. Their ages ranged from 18 to 24, and the group was 65% female and 35% male.

The participants were chosen because they had already completed one full semester of Italian and therefore had some experience in studying a foreign language. The UT Austin student body population in the Fall of 2001 was comprised of 81.5% native Texans and - given the secondary school curriculum in the state of Texas - many of these students had studied Spanish for several years. Indeed, 66% of the participants in this study had taken Spanish before enrolling in Italian. Furthermore, the same student body in the 2001-2002 academic year (when this data was collected) was comprised of Hispanic students at the rate of 12% (slightly higher than the 8.8% of participants who reported Hispanic ethnicity). These students were particularly interesting to the researcher because of their potential for having been exposed to Spanish in the home growing up.

Instruments and Procedures

Information about strategy use was gathered using surveys. A two-part survey was administered during the middle of the semester to five sections of Italian 507. These sections were taught by 4 instructors; two sections had the same teacher and all classes followed the same curriculum. The surveys were completed during class time for the most part, although some participants completed them at home and returned them to their instructor by the following week.

Background Questionnaire

The first part of the survey was a background questionnaire to determine the extent of each participant's prior language experience. The questionnaire includes basic demographic questions, as well as specific questions about the number of previous years of language study, languages spoken in the participants' homes and a self-evaluation of the participants' proficiency in Spanish. (Appendix A) These questions were chosen to identify the independent variables for the quantitative analysis.

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning

The second part of the survey consisted of Oxford's (1990, p. 283-291) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), which is an 80 item questionnaire covering the six categories of learning strategies as discussed above: memory (15 items), cognitive (25 items), compensation (8 items), metacognitive (16 items), affective (7 items) and social (9 items). (Appendix B) The largest number of items are devoted to cognitive strategies because these cover the greatest variety and relate to "both practice and 'deep

processing', which involves personalizing the information and conducting analysis, synthesis, and continuous adjustment of schemata" (Oxford and Ehrman, 1995, p. 372).

By using the aforementioned six categories, the SILL takes a broad approach to conceptualizing language learning strategies in order to include social and affective factors as well as general cognitive aspects. This gives a much wider picture of the language learner as a whole. Indeed, Oxford states that the SILL was needed because previous instruments "do not always systematically represent the wide variety of strategies viewed as important to language learning: often they stop with cognitive and metacognitive strategies" (1996, p. 30). This broad approach is further illustrated in the types of strategies investigated in the SILL, which cover the spectrum of the four basic language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Each item of the SILL consists of a statement about language learning, such as "I plan what I am going to accomplish in language learning each day or each week" (Oxford, 1990, p. 287). The statements are followed by a Likert scale ranging from 1 ("Never or almost never true of me") to 5 ("Always or almost always true of me"). Oxford (1996, p. 30) reports that these "response options are based on the widely used and well accepted response options of the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory described by Weinstein, Palmer and Schulte (1987)."

First used by students at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center in Monterey, California, the SILL has since been widely administered to language students in schools, universities and government agencies. As of late 1995 the SILL had already been used in approximately 50 major studies involving 10,000 language learners (Oxford, 1996, p. 30).

However, despite the existence of other instruments for measuring strategy use (mentioned above), there is a lack of published reliability or validity for these instruments. Oxford (1996, p. 30) cites this dearth as one of the main reasons she developed the SILL. She claims that the SILL is the only “strategy questionnaire that has been extensively checked for reliability and validated in multiple ways” (1996, p. 30). For instance, Oxford and Nyikos (1989) report reliability - using Cronbach’s alpha for internal consistency - at .96 based on a 1,200-person sample of university students. Green and Oxford (1995) quote reliability of .93-.98 for various forms of the SILL (again using Cronbach’s alpha), while Oxford and Ehrman (1995) found a reliability ranging from .89 to .98 for the 268 participants who took the SILL in their study. For the population of his study, Bremner (1999) reports reliability of .92.

In addition to having high reliability, the SILL appears to not suffer from social desirability response bias (i.e. the tendency for participants to respond in such a way that they believe the researcher wants them to do). Yang (1992) found no correlation between responses on the SILL and those on the Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale. Furthermore, based on the results of informal strategy interviews, Oxford (1986) found that respondents had answered the SILL honestly.

The SILL has been used extensively in research examining the relationship between the use of language learning strategies and a wide variety of factors. Oxford and Ehrman (1995) found significant correlations between the use of language learning strategies and factors such as: proficiency, teacher perceptions, learning style, personality type, motivation, anxiety, gender, aptitude and ego boundaries. In another study involving multiple variables, Ho (1998) investigated factors that contribute to strategy

use, such as motivation/ attitude, effort, English proficiency and socio-cultural educational factors. These particular studies were unusual because of their examination of so many variables. Indeed, most other recent studies using the SILL concentrate on fewer variables.

For instance, Law (2002) investigated the relationship between the SILL and oral proficiency, while Nisbet (2002) investigated the relationship between language learning strategy preference and overall proficiency as measured by a version of the TOEFL.

In another example, Lee (2001) examined the use of strategies across gender and performance level. Results show significantly higher use of strategies by females over males and also demonstrate a significant relationship between strategy use and success in language learning. In a similar study of gender differences in strategy use, but one with different conclusions, Osanai (2000) did not find significant differences overall but did find that females tend to use more social and affective strategies.

Saleh (1999) used the SILL to examine only the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in learners of Arabic as a Foreign Language. In this study, the relationship between strategy use and proficiency was again examined, as was the use of such strategies across genders. While no significant difference was found between genders in the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, these types of strategies did tend to be used more often by men than by women. Also, Saleh found no significant differences between varying levels of proficiency and strategy use.

These are just a few examples of the many uses of the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning in investigative studies of language learning.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis

In order to calculate the quantitative analysis of data for this report, the statistical software program Statview (Version 5.01) was used. Descriptive statistics summarized the background information, including prior language experience, as well as the mean scores of overall strategy use and for each type of strategy. A number of correlations were run to look for relationships between number of years of previous language experience and overall strategy use, as well as with each category of strategy type. A one-way ANOVA with three levels of the independent variable (amount of previous language experience) was run to look for significant differences in terms of overall score on the SILL. The same test was run again for score on each individual category of strategy. An additional ANOVA was run to look for the effect of exposure to a second language in the home on strategy use.

STUDY TWO

Interviews

Although the strategy questionnaires can provide a general assessment of the wide variety of strategies used by language students, it does not allow the participants to describe in detail their strategy use or to explain their choice of strategies in a given situation. In order to explore such information and to look for confirmation of reported strategy use, five additional participants completed the SILL and were also interviewed at the end of their semester.

Participants

These five participants were chosen based on a variety of prior language experience and varying levels of success in their present studies of Italian. They were students in the researcher's class. Their profiles are summarized below:

Table 3.1: Interview Participant Profiles (Italian pseudonyms are used)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>Prior Language Study</i>	<i>Languages Spoken in Home</i>	<i>Reports Hispanic Ethnicity?</i>	<i>Overall Score on SILL</i>	<i>Score on Final Exam</i>
Annamaria	21	F	Spanish: 2 years in HS (Advanced)	Spanish (only)	yes	3.8	90%
Adria	19	F	Spanish: 4 years in HS	Spanish and English	yes	2.76	89%
Grazia	19	F	French: 2 years in HS Latin: 8 years in HS and college	English	no	2.86	97%
Amelia	20	F	Spanish: 3 years in HS*	English	no	3.3	65%
Giustino	21	M	Spanish: 2 years in HS*	English	no	2.95	83%

* These participants claim they didn't study and therefore didn't learn much Spanish at all in high school.

Instrumentation

The interview questions were designed to determine the nature of each participant's prior language experience. For instance, whether or not they formally learned a language before studying Italian, or if they knowingly applied their knowledge of another language to learning Italian. They were specifically asked what kinds of strategies (or tricks) they used when learning Italian. In order to determine whether or not they consider themselves bilingual, during the semi-structured interview the students were asked more specific questions about their language use at home. These interviews, which were also recorded, provide more in-depth information about previous language experience, as well as additional examples of strategy use. While the interviews were based on core questions, the participants were given the freedom to elaborate on their answers. (For a description of the interview questions, see Appendix C) They were given the chance to ask questions, and several of them took the opportunity to do so, finding out what they could do to become better language learners.

Qualitative Analysis

The interview data was transcribed by the researcher as soon as the interviews were complete. Any mentions of strategy use were noted and coded based on Oxford's six categories: memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective and social. Responses were reviewed to see if the participants verbally report using the same strategies as they reported using on the SILL. Recurring themes in responses were recorded and compared to the results of the strategy inventory.

Chapter 4: Results

In this chapter, the results of the background questionnaire will be presented, followed by the analyses of the quantitative data and the results of the interviews. The descriptive statistics and quantitative analyses were obtained using the statistical program Statview (Version 5.01).

STUDY ONE

Results of the Background Questionnaire

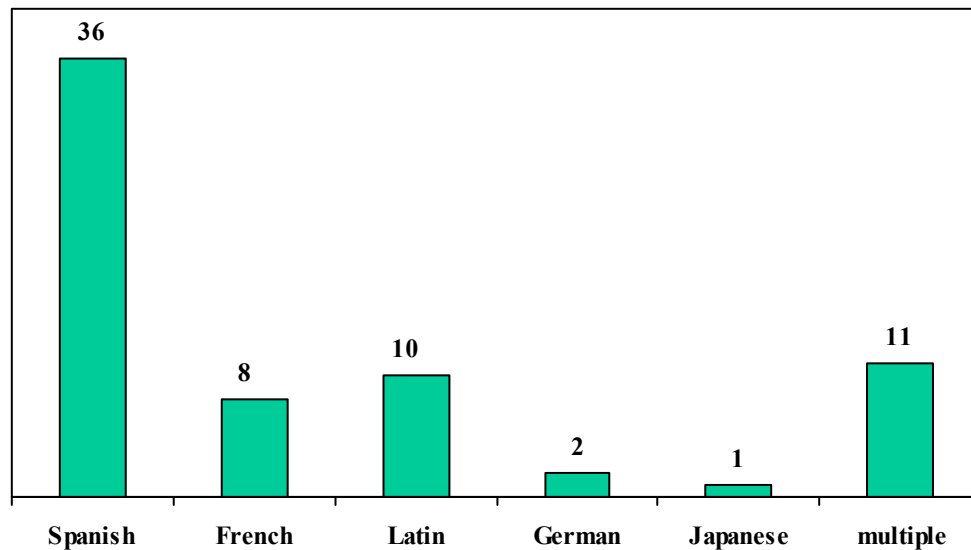
A background questionnaire was administered to determine to what extent each participant had been exposed to any foreign language prior to studying Italian. Questions included whether another language had been spoken in their home growing up, as well as how many other languages they had studied, and for how long. Analyses of the results of the questionnaire indicated that the mean number of previous languages studied was 1.25 – the maximum number of languages studied was five and the minimum was one. The mean number of years of previous study was 3.83, with a maximum of 24 years and a minimum of one. Given these results on the background questionnaire, the main factors that will be considered in terms of strategy use are number of years of previous language study, number of languages studied, and exposure to another language in the home.

A total of fifteen participants reported being exposed to another language in the home as a child. Spanish was spoken in the home of five participants and German in the home of two. The following languages were also spoken in one home each, for a total of eight participants (one of whom had two languages spoken in the home): Croatian,

Czech, Hebrew, Igbo, Mandarin, Russian, Tamil, Thai and Yiddish. Of these fifteen participants, only four reported actually speaking the language that was spoken in their home, while another four reported that they spoke only very little of the home language and the remaining seven participants reported that they did not speak it at all. However, as we will see below, there did seem to be a relationship between exposure to another language in the home and language learning strategy use.

All of the participants had at least one year of previous formal language study. Forty-five participants studied Spanish before taking Italian and eleven participants had studied more than one language. The results of this item on the questionnaire are summarized in the table below:

Figure 4.1: Previous Formal Language Study



The eleven participants who had studied more than one language previously were classified as “multiple language learners”. Only four of these had a language other than English spoken in the home. These multiple language learners will be discussed in more depth below, in the context of their performance on the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning.

As reported above, the number of years of previous language study ranged from one to 24. A majority of the students (47 of them) had taken three to four years of language in high school, which corresponds to a typical high school language requirement. Thirteen students had taken only two years or fewer, while eight students had studied five or more years of another language. These three categories of years of previous language study will be considered below in terms of the differences in strategy use between the three groups. (See Appendix D for a summary of the results of the background questionnaire.)

Results of the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning

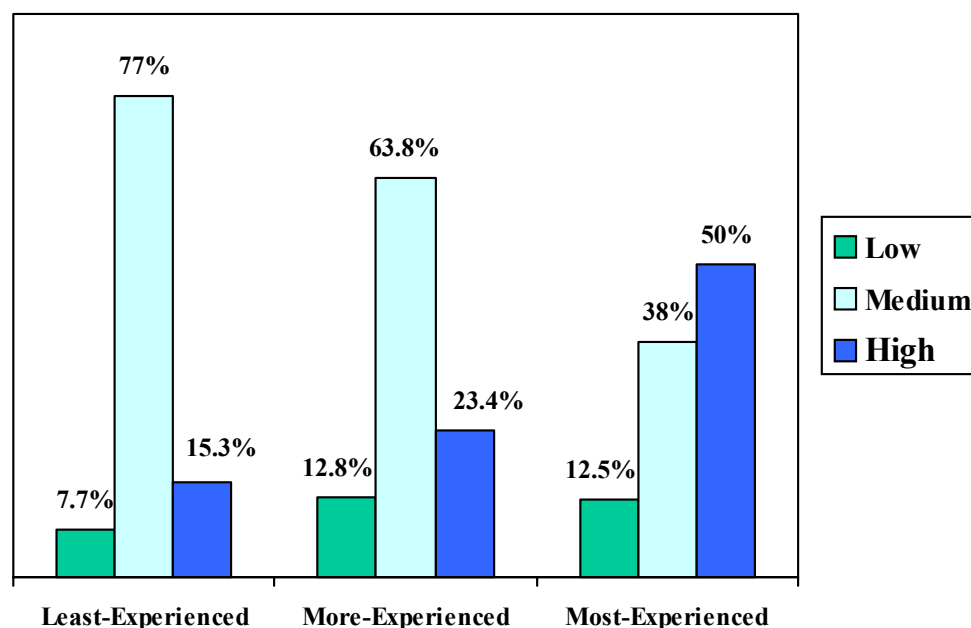
Research Question One: What are the differences in strategy use among L2 learners with different types of previous language experience?

The mean score for overall strategy use as measured by the SILL was 3.07 (out of a possible total of five) for the entire group. The multiple language learners had a mean score of 3.34 overall, while the mean for the single previous language group was 3.02 and the mean for those who had another language spoken in their home was 3.29. When categorized according to number of years of previous language study, the least-experienced group (with two years or less of language study) received a mean score of

2.98 overall, the more-experienced group (with three to four years of study) had a 3.06 and the most-experienced group (five years or more) received a 3.28. Thus, the single language learners and those who had only two years or less of previous language study scored the lowest on the SILL.

Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995) categorized levels of strategy use as follows: a mean of 1.0 to 2.4 is low strategy use, a mean of 2.5 to 3.4 is medium strategy use, and a mean of 3.5 to 5 is high strategy use. Using these same categories of level of strategy use, all groups in this study fall into the medium strategy use category. However, while the mean strategy use for each group falls into the medium use range, it is interesting to note that among the least-experienced learners, only 15.3% of the participants had a high level of strategy use while 23.4% of the more-experienced learners and 50% of the most-experienced learners demonstrated a high level of strategy use. (See Figure 4.2) These differences in amount of strategy use will be examined in more depth below.

Figure 4.2: Levels of Strategy Use



In terms of types of strategies, compensation and social strategies were used the most by both the multiple and single language groups and the same was true across the groups for years of language experience. Indeed, the mean scores for compensation strategies were within the high use category for all groups. Furthermore, cognitive strategies and social strategies were highly used by the multiple language learners and the most-experienced language learners (see highlighting in Table 4.1 below). However, while the L2 learners with exposure to another language in the home also used compensation strategies the most, their metacognitive strategy use tied with cognitive strategy use for second place. Memory and affective strategies were used the least by all groups. The overall results are summarized in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Mean Scores on Strategy Inventory for Language Learning

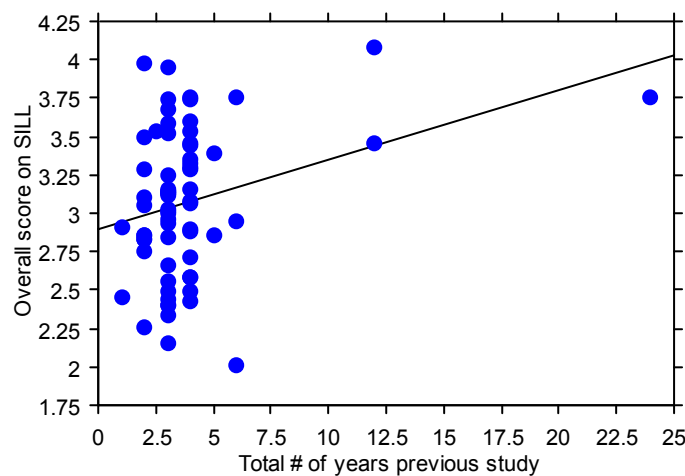
<i>Strategy Category</i>	<i>Whole Group</i>	<i>Multiple Language Learners</i>	<i>Single Language Learners</i>	<i>Learners Exposed to Another Language at Home</i>	<i>Two years or less of Previous Study</i>	<i>Three to four Years Previous Study</i>	<i>Five or more years Previous Study</i>
Overall Score	3.07	3.34	3.02	3.29	2.98	3.06	3.28
Memory Strategies	2.79	2.89	2.77	2.95	2.63	2.82	2.90
Cognitive Strategies	3.12	3.55	3.03	3.44	2.96	3.07	3.55
Compensation Strategies	3.57	3.66	3.55	3.67	3.53	3.57	3.63
Metacognitive Strategies	3.17	3.43	3.12	3.44	3.05	3.19	3.24
Affective Strategies	2.40	2.71	2.34	2.62	2.67	2.34	2.34
Social Strategies	3.32	3.63	3.26	3.42	3.22	3.29	3.68

* Note: These categories are not mutually exclusive.

A number of correlations were computed to look for a relationship between years of previous language study and overall strategy use, as well as use of each type of language learning strategy. Several of the results just reached significance, although this may be due to a relatively small sample size that was easily influenced by outliers. However, despite the lack of a strong correlation between number of years of language study and performance on the SILL, some interesting trends were apparent when examining the scatterplots as we will see below.

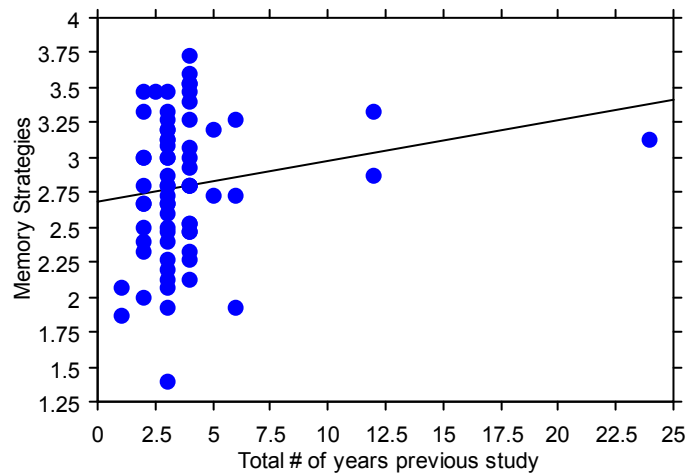
A correlation between years of previous language study and overall score on the SILL resulted in a score of $r = .292$, $p = .0156$, which is significant at the $p < .05$ level. In order to examine the mean strategy use by students with various years of previous language study, a scatterplot for the data was generated (See Figure 4.3). It appears that students with more than four years of previous language learning experience tended to score higher than average overall on the SILL.

Figure 4.3: Scatterplot of Years of Previous Language Study vs. Overall Score on SILL



A second correlation looked for a relationship between number of years of previous language study and use of memory strategies in particular. In this case, the score of $r = .179$, $p = .1448$ indicated a non-significant relationship. While the learners with more experience still tend to use more memory strategies than the least experienced learners, these differences do not appear as great, as can be seen in the scatterplot in Figure 4.4.

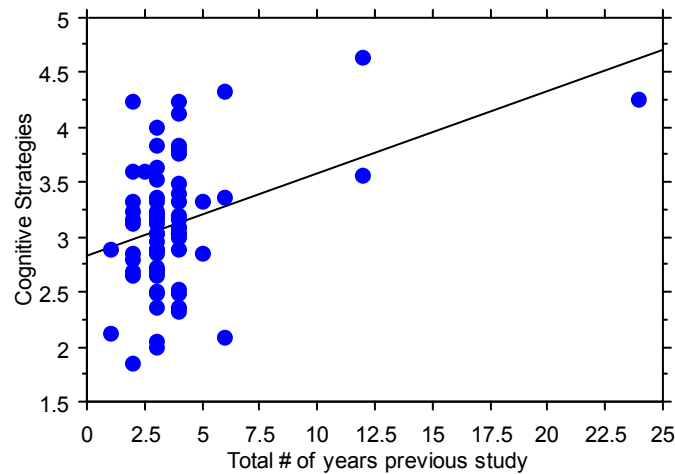
Figure 4.4: Scatterplot of Years of Previous Language Study vs. Use of Memory Strategies



The correlation for years of previous language study and use of cognitive strategies resulted in a score of $r = .384$, $p = .0012$, which is again significant at the $p < .05$ level and is the strongest of all the correlations. The stronger relationship seems to stem from the handful of the participants with less than 4 years of language study who chose a particularly low number of cognitive strategies while several of the most experienced language learners reported a much larger number. Indeed, as we will see below, the greatest differences in strategy use across the groups of language learners occur within

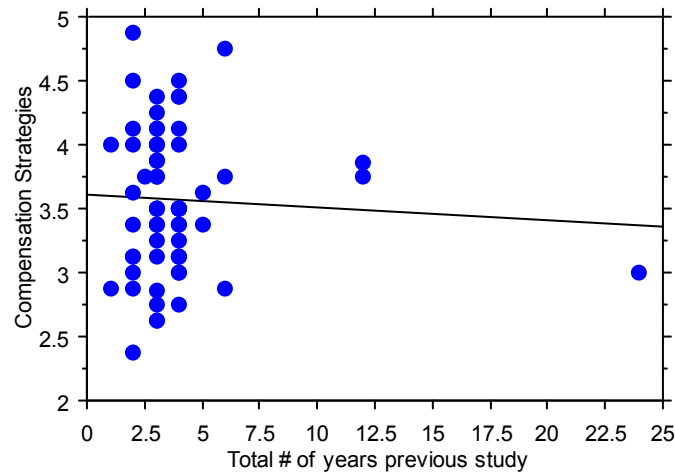
the category of cognitive strategies. The scatterplot of this correlation can be found in Figure 4.5. Again we see a higher incidence of strategy use by the most experienced language learners.

Figure 4.5: Scatterplot of Years of Previous Language Study vs. Use of Cognitive Strategies



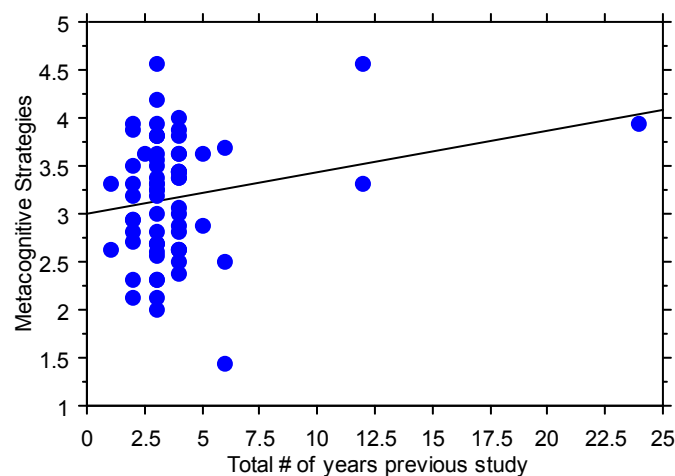
The next correlation for years of language study and use of compensation strategies resulted in a non-significant score of $r = .054$, $p = .6591$ and the scatterplot (Figure 4.6) indicates an especially wide range of scores across all years of previous language study. The more experienced language learners do not demonstrate any greater use of compensation strategies and in this case in particular, the highest score was received by someone with only two years experience, while the more experienced learners only scored in the middle to low range.

Figure 4.6: Scatterplot of Years of Previous Language Study vs. Use of Compensation Strategies



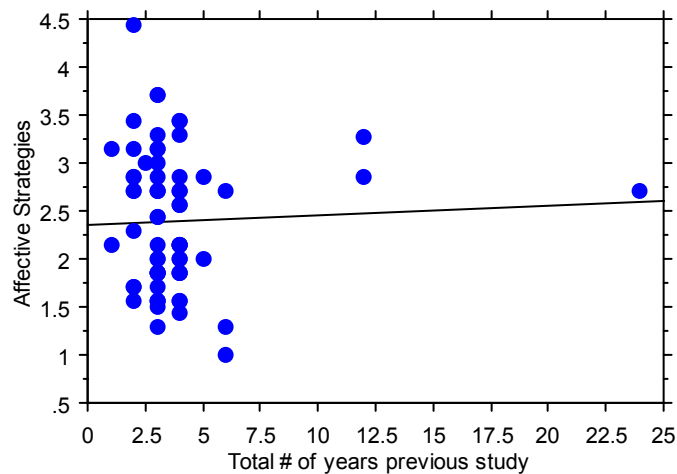
The correlation for years of language study and use of metacognitive strategies was also not significant with a score of $r = .212$, $p = .0831$. Once again there is a wide variety of scores among learners with less than five years of previous language study, and those with more experience tended to score slightly above the mean score for the less-experienced learners. Again, we see a particularly high use of strategies by the three most experienced language learners (Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7: Scatterplot of Years of Previous Language Study vs. Use of Metacognitive Strategies



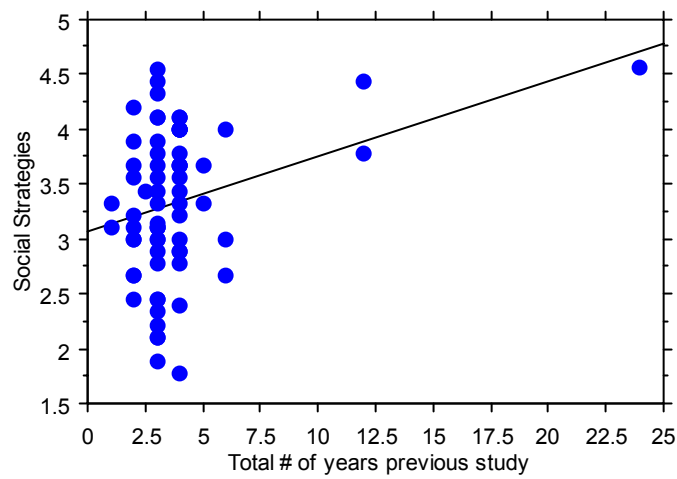
The correlation for years of previous language study and use of affective strategies was $r = .042$, $p = .7344$, which is the lowest of all the correlations. As seen in Figure 4.8, there appears to be virtually no difference in use of affective strategies as experience increases, with the exception of the three most experienced language learners.

Figure 4.8: Scatterplot of Years of Previous Language Study and Use of Affective Strategies



The correlation for years of language study and use of social strategies was $r = .313$, $p = .0093$, which is again significant at the $p < .05$ level. As seen in the scatterplot, (Figure 4.9) several students with less than four years of language study scored particularly low in this category, while the most experienced learners once again scored relatively high.

Figure 4.9: Scatterplot for Years of Previous Language Study vs. Use of Social Strategies



While even the significant relationships in the above correlations are not particularly strong, examination of the scatterplots did reveal that a number of the language learners with more than four or five years of language learning experience typically scored above the means for overall strategy use, as well as most categories of specific strategy use. In addition, the three most experienced learners consistently reported high strategy use. This apparent difference between levels of previous language study led the researcher to perform several analyses of variance (ANOVAs) to look for differences on SILL scores between learners with varying amounts of previous language study. For the first set of ANOVAs the participants were divided into groups of least-experienced (two years or less of previous language study), more-experienced (three to four years) and most-experienced (five or more years).

ANOVAs were performed across these three groups for overall strategy use, as well as for each strategy category. While none of the ANOVA tests were significant, the ANOVA for use of cognitive strategies approached significance at the $p < .05$ level ($p = .0765$) and therefore post hoc analyses were run and revealed significant differences in

the use of cognitive strategies between the least-experienced group and the most-experienced group, as well as between the more-experienced group and the most-experienced group. See Tables 4.2 and 4.3 for results of the ANOVA and post hoc analyses for cognitive strategy use. (The reader should interpret this result with caution since the original F -value only approached significance.)

Table 4.2: Analysis of Variance of Use of Cognitive Strategies by Language Experience Group

Source of Variance	SS	df	MS	F -value	p -value
Between Groups	1.839	2	.919	2.675	.0765
Within Groups	22.339	65	.344		

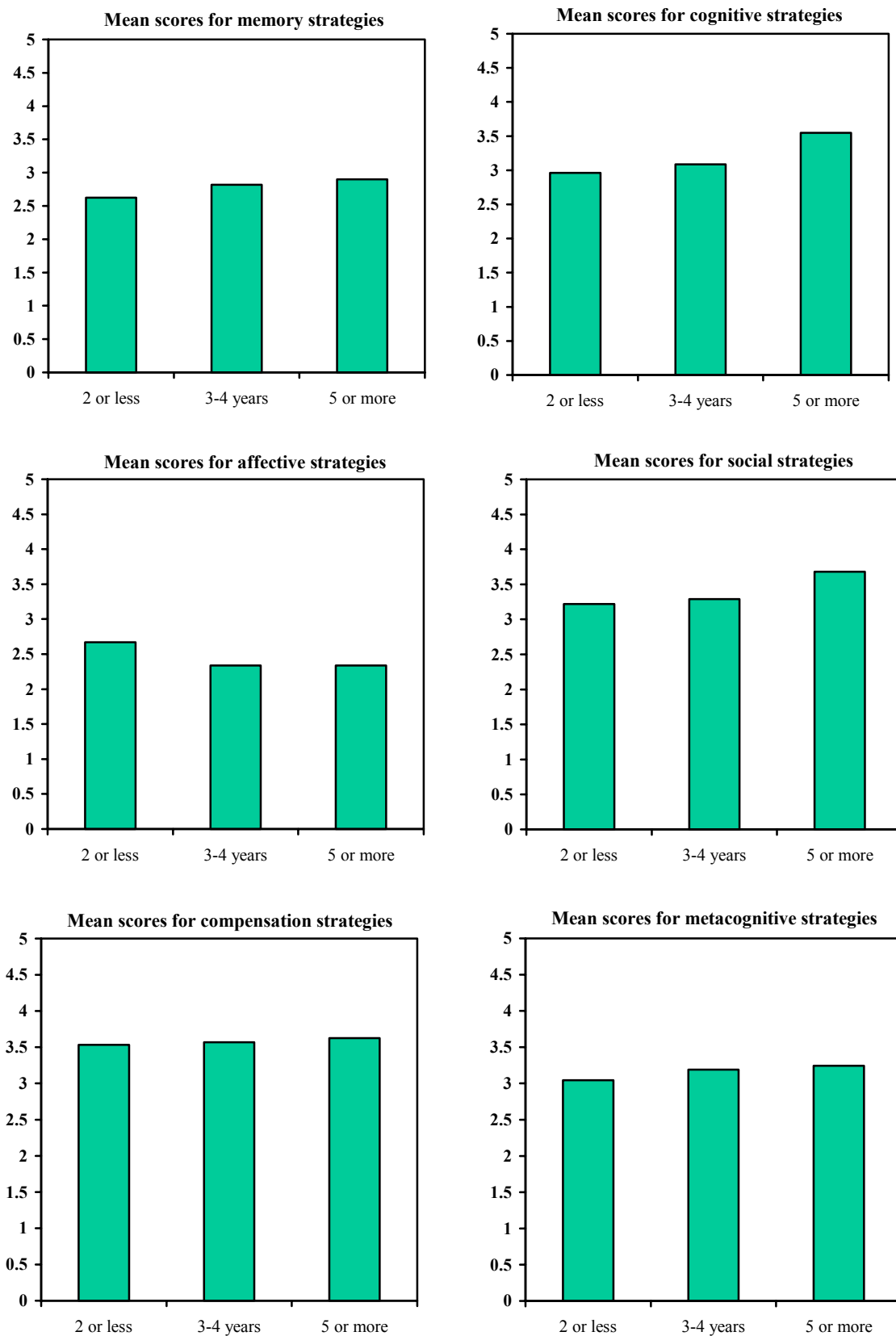
Table 4.3: Fisher's PLSD Post hoc Analyses for Use of Cognitive Strategies

Group Comparisons	Mean Difference	Critical Difference	p -value
Least-Experienced, More-Experienced	-.126	.367	.4939
Least-Experienced, Most-Experienced	-.586	.526	.0295*
More-Experienced, Most-Experienced	-.460	.448	.0443*

* Results considered significant at the $p < .05$ level

While no other significant differences were found between strategy use across the three groups, the same trend of increased strategy use in the more and most experienced learners is evident. The differences in strategy use among the three groups of language experience can be seen in Figure 4.10 below.

Figure 4.10: Bar Graphs of Strategy Use by the Three Levels of Language Experience



Another ANOVA examined differences in strategy use between single previous language learners (once again, defined as having only studied one language prior to Italian) and multiple language learners (with two or more languages studied previously). The ANOVA (Table 4.4) demonstrated a significant effect for number of languages learned, indicating that the multiple language learners indeed used significantly more strategies overall than did the single language learners ($F = 4.512$, $p = .0374$). Specifically, the multiple learners used significantly more cognitive strategies ($F = 7.295$, $p = .0088$) (Table 4.5). Furthermore, these learners also used more metacognitive strategies than did single language learners, although the results only approached significance at $F = 2.258$, $p = .1377$. These were the two categories of strategies that were expected to be higher for learners with more previous language experience, whether that experience was formal language study or exposure in the home as a child.

Table 4.4: Analysis of Variance of Overall Strategy Use and Number of Languages Previously Studied

Source of Variance	<i>df</i>	SS	MS	<i>F</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Between Groups	1	.963	.963	4.512	.0374*
Within Groups	66	14.094	.214		

* Results considered significant at the $p < .05$ level

Table 4.5: Analysis of Variance of Use of Cognitive Strategies and Number of Languages Previously Studied

Source of Variance	<i>df</i>	SS	MS	<i>F</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Between Groups	1	2.406	2.406	7.295	.0088*
Within Groups	66	21.771	.330		

* Results considered significant at the $p < .05$ level

Research Question Two: How do learners exposed to another language in the home compare to learners exposed only to English in terms of strategy use?

To follow up on the notion that even exposure to another language in the home might influence strategy use, an additional ANOVA was computed to look for such an effect (Tables 4.6 and 4.7). Those learners who were exposed to another language in the home were compared to those who only had English in the home. The results indicated that there is indeed a significant effect at the $p < .05$ level for exposure to a language other than English in the home and overall strategy use ($F = 4.447, p = .0338$) as well as use of cognitive strategies ($F = 5.818, p = .0187$). The results for other strategy types were not significant, although the use of metacognitive strategies once again approached significance at $F = 3.652, p = .0603$.

Table 4.6: Analysis of Variance of Overall Strategy Use and Another Language Spoken in the Home

Source of Variance	<i>df</i>	SS	MS	<i>F</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Between Groups	1	.950	.950	4.447	.0388*
Within Groups	66	14.106	.214		

* Results considered significant at the $p < .05$ level

Table 4.7: Analysis of Variance of Use of Cognitive Strategies and Another Language Spoken in the Home

Source of Variance	<i>df</i>	SS	MS	<i>F</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Between Groups	1	1.959	1.959	5.818	.0187*
Within Groups	66	22.219	.337		

* Results considered significant at the $p < .05$ level

STUDY TWO

Summary of Results of Strategy Inventory for Language Learning

Before being interviewed, the five additional participants also completed the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning.⁵ The mean scores for these participants were very comparable to those of the group in the first study. These learners had a wide variety of previous language experience and just like the overall group above, this group used compensation and social strategies the most frequently and affective and memory strategies the least. All of these participants rated affective strategies as low use, with an overall mean score of 2.17 for that category. Their mean score for overall strategy use was 3.14 as compared to 3.07 for the above group. This score still falls in the medium use range. A summary of their scores is presented in Table 4.12.

Table 4.8: Summary of Interview Participants' SILL Scores

<i>Italian pseudonyms</i>	<i>Adria</i>	<i>Amelia</i>	<i>Annamaria</i>	<i>Giustino</i>	<i>Grazia</i>	<i>Mean Scores</i>
Overall Score	2.76	3.30	3.80	2.95	2.86	3.14
Memory Strategies	2.67	3.80	3.60	2.67	2.27	3.00
Cognitive Strategies	2.88	3.16	3.96	3.32	3.04	3.27
Compensation Strategies	3.13	4.25	4.25	3.38	3.25	3.65
Metacognitive Strategies	2.63	2.88	4.13	2.69	2.81	3.03
Affective Strategies	1.71	2.00	2.27	2.14	2.14	2.17
Social Strategies	3.33	3.78	3.89	3.11	3.67	3.56

⁵ For profiles of interview participants, please see Chapter 3.

Results of the Interviews

In order to examine in more detail the use of strategies by language students similar to the ones examined in Study One above and to look for confirmation of reported strategy use, in-depth interviews were conducted with these additional five participants. Given the open-ended questions of the interviews, participants were able to discuss a wide variety of topics within the context of their own language learning experience. The main focus was on the type and extent of previous language experience they had, whether it was exposure to a language in the home or language study during high school. (For a description of the interview questions, see Appendix B.) In terms of strategy use, most participants did not provide many concrete examples of specific strategy use, but rather discussed the types of activities they preferred to engage in while studying for an Italian test or preparing for class. For the most part, these general comments were supported by their results on the SILL. Therefore, the results of each student's interview will be discussed along with their individual results on the SILL.

Annamaria

Annamaria is a 21 year old female from south Texas who identifies herself as Hispanic. Both her parents were born and raised in Mexico. Her grandmother, who spoke no English, also lived with them and therefore only Spanish was spoken in her home. When she started school, Annamaria was first put in a bilingual class and then eventually moved to an all English class. Once she started school, her brother spoke to her in English. Even at that young age, Annamaria was aware of the discrimination towards Spanish speakers and tried to speak English as much as possible outside the home.

In high school, Annamaria took two years of Advanced Placement Spanish in a bilingual class. Although she says she still doesn't know technical grammatical terms like "preterito", she knows how to conjugate verbs nonetheless. She speaks a "Tex-Mex" variety of Spanish and she admits that it does not always correspond with "standard" Spanish as it was taught to her in school.

When asked what she learned in her Spanish classes that helped her in learning Italian, Annamaria says "I think they're very similar. I mean, they all derive from Latin, right?" She notes that the word order is the same in both languages and that she therefore thinks in Spanish to figure out how to say something in Italian. She also pointed out that many words have the same meanings and that many grammatical elements (such as prepositions) are the same. In order to remember Italian pronunciation, she makes sound associations with Spanish words. Also, she says that she doesn't want to sound stupid when speaking Italian so she makes a point to look up words or grammar that she doesn't know.

Although Annamaria admits that she didn't study very much for her Italian tests, she does say that she reviews the verb conjugations and notices the differences between Spanish and Italian. As her teacher, I noticed that she very conscientiously wrote out many verb conjugations in the margins of her tests. Aside from explicitly studying, Annamaria provided herself with extra opportunities to practice Italian by watching Italian movies with subtitles. As a final note, she says that she tries to relax and prays before tests.

Annamaria's overall score of 3.8 for strategy use is much higher than the mean scores of either group. It is even higher than the mean score of 3.34 for the more-

experienced language learners in the first study and indeed she is the only interview participant whose strategy use falls into the high range. Her most frequently used strategies are compensation and metacognitive strategies (4.25 and 4.13, respectively), although her use of cognitive strategies is also very high at 3.96. She uses affective strategies the least, at 2.29. We will see how these results correspond to her reported strategy use below.

Despite the fact that she says she doesn't know the grammatical terms in Spanish, Annamaria seems to be very aware of the structure of language and of what she needs to do in order to learn. This is reflected in her high usage of cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Among the former, Annamaria focuses on sound-based strategies such as "I say or write new expressions repeatedly to practice them"; "I imitate the way native speakers talk"; "I practice the sounds or alphabet of the new language"; and "I watch TV shows or movies or listen to the radio in the new language", all of which she rated a 5. In terms of metacognitive strategies, Annamaria's responses on the SILL indicated that she takes active steps to facilitate her own learning by using strategies such as trying to concentrate on what is being said to her, deciding in advance to pay special attention to specific language aspects, trying to find out how to be a better language learner, noticing her language errors, finding out the reasons for them and learning from her mistakes. Again, Annamaria gave each of these strategies the highest rating.

Many of the memory strategies that Annamaria mentioned in her interview used sound to make connections between Italian and Spanish. Her preference for these types of strategies is reflected in her high rating of items such as "I create associations between the new material and what I already know"; "I associate the sound of the new word with

the sound of a familiar word”; and “I use a combination of sounds and images to remember the new word”.

Annamaria mentions several affective strategies in her interview, such as trying to relax and praying before tests. However, on the SILL she only gave a rating of two (“Generally not true of me”) to the item “I try to relax whenever I feel anxious about the new language.” She gave relatively low ratings to most other affective strategies and once again it is possible that she doesn’t employ such strategies because she simply doesn’t feel nervous. Other than the mention of praying before a test, Annamaria did not give any indication in her interview that she ever feels particularly anxious about learning Italian. This could explain her low score of 2.89 for use of affective strategies.

Annamaria’s previous experience of two years of advanced Spanish study in high school, as well as growing up in an exclusively Spanish speaking home, make her an experienced language learner. This experience could possibly account for her very high use of strategies, especially those in the cognitive and metacognitive categories. She seems to be an excellent example of an experienced language learner with a heightened sense of metalinguistic awareness.

Adria

Adria is a 19 year old woman from El Paso, Texas who also identifies herself as Hispanic. Both Spanish and English were spoken in her home. Her parents were both born and raised in El Paso but their parents were from Juarez, Mexico. Adria’s mother spoke Spanish as her first language while her father learned English first and then Spanish. She says that her father speaks Spanish perfectly, but with an American accent. Adria also learned Spanish as her first language and spoke no English until she went to

school. At that point, her mother stopped speaking Spanish to her because she didn't want Adria to stand out in school or be the target of discrimination. They must have resumed speaking Spanish at some point because on her background questionnaire, Adria referred to her Spanish as "kind of like Tex-Mex that I only speak with my mother."

Adria studied Spanish in 7th through 10th grades but says that the instruction was "so horrible that I didn't learn anything". She also says that she didn't care about learning Spanish in high school – she didn't like it or the teachers and just wasn't interested in learning it. As a result, she reports that she doesn't speak much Spanish now but can get by. She is uncomfortable speaking the language because her grammar isn't good. She believes that if she were to study Spanish at this point, it would be very easy for her to pick it up again. Despite her claim that she really doesn't speak Spanish very well at all, Adria took a placement test at UT and placed out of 10 hours of Spanish instruction. She credits her success to simply growing up in El Paso and being exposed to the language as a child, and not to any high school instruction she received.

When asked about whether her experience with Spanish was helpful to learning Italian, Adria cites the many similarities between words in the two languages and states that she therefore didn't really need to study vocabulary in Italian but would simply relate it to her knowledge of Spanish vocabulary. She also admits that she often mispronounced words in Italian based on how they should be pronounced in Spanish. However, since she didn't really study for Spanish in high school, she felt like she was starting fresh with Italian and therefore had to develop the appropriate study habits. In terms of studying for Italian, Adria said that she liked to review the materials and do

examples in the book on her own before coming to class. She kept note cards with different colors for vocabulary and verbs and would review them before tests.

As a final note, Adria said that she felt much more relaxed in her Italian class because everyone was at the same level and she didn't feel like she was at a disadvantage compared to other students. In her high school Spanish class, which was intended to be a beginning course, all the other students actually had much higher ability than she did and she felt that the teacher therefore targeted her lessons to the more advanced students. This was not the case in her Italian class and Adria stated that she found the atmosphere "very refreshing".

The study habits that Adria reported in her interview are reflected in her responses on the SILL. Overall, Adria's strategy use (2.76) is just slightly below average, both among this small group of interviewees and the larger group in the first study. Like both groups in general, Adria used compensation strategies (3.13) and social strategies (3.33) the most. However, unlike both groups, her use of cognitive strategies (2.88) was lower than all other categories except for affective strategies (1.71). Her strategy use in all categories is in the medium range, except for the affective strategies which are low (like those of all the other interviewees). While her score for memory strategies (2.67) was almost exactly average, she uses them relatively more frequently than she does the cognitive strategies.

The memory strategies that she assigned the highest scores (in her case a score of 4 or "Generally true of me") included: "I create associations between new material and what I already know"; "I place the new word in a group with other words that are similar in some way"; and "I associate the sound of the new word with the sound of a familiar

word”. The use of these strategies is indicative of what she reported in the interview about relating Italian vocabulary to the words she knows in Spanish. However, Adria also reported that she liked to review the material before coming to class but on the SILL she only assigned a 3 (“Somewhat true of me”) to the item “I review often.” She did however assign a 4 to the item “I go back to refresh my memory of things I learned much earlier.”

In terms of cognitive strategies, Adria seems to concentrate on those that deal specifically with sound and this is certainly logical given her observation that Italian and Spanish sound so similar. The cognitive strategies that Adria rated the highest included: “I say or write new expressions repeatedly to practice them”; “I imitate the way native speakers talk”; and “I practice the sounds or alphabet of the new language.” And although she reported in the interview that she relies on her knowledge of Spanish to help her learn Italian, she assigned a 4 to the item “I try to understand what I have heard or read without translating it word-for-word into my own language.” This item may be ambiguous in this case, since we do not know whether Adria related it to English or Spanish. Indeed, on the items “I look for similarities and contrasts between the new language and my own” and “I am cautious about transferring words or concepts directly from my language to the new language” Adria assigned a 4 and a 3 (“Somewhat true of me”), respectively. It could be assumed that she is aware of the similarities between Spanish and Italian and makes use of them but is also aware that she can’t always rely on such similarities. However, Adria did not give high scores to any of the other cognitive strategies and therefore she has limited herself to the use of sounds and making

associations with her own language. Indeed, the only strategies that Adria reports using less than cognitive strategies are the affective strategies.

Although she didn't mention any specific affective strategies in her interview, Adria did point out that she felt very stressed in her high school Spanish class because of the higher ability of her peers. By contrast, she found the atmosphere in her college Italian class to be much more relaxing. As such, she gave a score of 4 to the item "I try to relax whenever I feel anxious about using the new language" and a 3 to "I make encouraging statements to myself so that I will continue to try hard and do my best in language learning." Despite the high ratings on these two items, Adria scored 1.71 overall on affective strategies, the lowest of all the categories for her and well below the average for the interview participants (2.17). It is difficult to know if this is because she still feels very anxious learning Italian or whether she does not feel that affective strategies are necessary since she doesn't feel anxious. She assigned a score of 1 ("Never or almost never true of me") to the remaining items in the category of affective strategies. These include strategies such as encouraging herself to take wise risks, rewarding herself, paying attention to stress and writing or talking about her feelings. Based on her comments that she found her experience with Italian to be "refreshing" and that she no longer felt that she was behind the rest of the class, it is assumed that she no longer feels as anxious as she did in high school and therefore doesn't find the need for affective strategies.

Adria's experience of studying four years of Spanish in high school and growing up in a Spanish – English bilingual home would make her another experienced learner. Unlike Annamaria however, she doesn't display a heightened awareness of language

rules. This could be explained by the fact that she says she didn't make an effort to study during her Spanish classes and therefore was basically learning grammar from scratch. Her slightly higher use of compensation strategies and social strategies perhaps help her to overcome her difficulties with grammar. Finally, the fact that she uses many memory strategies that are based on sound would suggest that her bilingual experience provided her at least with an "ear" for language if not the heightened metalinguistic awareness that would have been helped by more formal language training.

Giustino

Giustino is a 21 year old male who heard no languages other than English while growing up in east Texas. He studied Spanish in high school for two years and then learned more Spanish working in a restaurant with native Spanish speakers. Giustino reports that when taking Spanish in high school, he did not pay attention and did not want to learn the language. Although he claims he never studied for Spanish, he got mostly B's in his classes. He adds that he would have learned much more if he had cared more about school in general. He is glad, however, that he knows the Spanish that he did learn because he believes it helps him with his Italian. However, he doesn't want to continue studying Spanish because he wants to do something different. He was inspired to learn Italian by an Italian friend who had a positive influence on him.

When learning Spanish in high school, one of the only study tricks Giustino reported using is playing around with words and making up catchy phrases. He continues to play with sound in learning Italian, repeating words and phrases out loud or in his head. This was his favorite strategy, until he realized that he couldn't keep up with all the information and then made note sheets on his computer instead. He continued to

prefer to hear things in order to learn and would often call his Italian friend to have simple conversations for practice.

When asked how he would prepare for a test in Italian, Giustino noted that at first he would approach it like any other course, by looking at all the information and trying to memorize it. He soon realized that he couldn't treat Italian like other subjects but interestingly, he said that he found the learning process for Italian to be similar to that of math. As he says, you have to learn the facts first and then apply what you have learned to a practical situation.

After studying the material on his own to become familiar with the rules, Giustino then likes to collaborate with others to reinforce what he has learned. If a certain concept is unclear to him, he likes to hear someone else explain it in their own words. He worked with a group of students to study for the final exam and found it very useful, as long as everyone else was focused on the same task. As he says, "With math or Italian there are so many things I have questions about and when I study by myself I never know if I'm on the right track. But with other people I feel like what I'm studying is right."

Giustino's overall score on the SILL of 2.95 is barely below the mean and falls within the medium use range. He uses compensation strategies the most (3.38), followed by cognitive strategies (3.32) and then social strategies (3.11). Memory and metacognitive strategies are right in the middle with scores of 2.67 and 2.69, respectively, and he uses affective strategies the least (2.14). Like Adria above, all of his strategy use is in the medium use range, except for affective strategies which are low use.

Despite the fact that Giustino reports using sounds to help him memorize vocabulary, he only assigned a rating of 2 ("Generally not true of me") to the following

memory strategies: “I associate the sound of the new word with the sound of a familiar word” and “I use rhyming to remember it.” In contrast, he assigned a 4 and a 5 respectively to these more visual memory strategies: “I remember the word by making a clear mental image of it or drawing a picture” and “I visualize the spelling of the word in my mind”. He does also state that he likes to look over the book very carefully and memorize the information, so perhaps he is using visual imagery to memorize the words on the page. Indeed, the other two memory strategies that he rated highly (4) were that he reviews often and goes back to refresh his memory of things he learned previously.

Giustino’s use of oral strategies appears in the section for cognitive strategies, where he indicated that he generally imitates native speakers and that he practices the sounds of Italian. However, he reported that he only sometimes says or writes new expressions repeatedly to learn them. Instead, the cognitive strategies that he reports using the most are related to his statement in the interview that he feels it is important to learn the rules of language and then apply them. This analytical approach is evident in his high rating (4) of the following cognitive strategies: “I apply general rules to new situations when using the language”; “I look for patterns in the new language”; and “I develop my own understanding of how the new language works, even if sometimes I have to revise my understanding based on the new information”. This last strategy is also related to his statement that he likes to hear other students’ interpretations of the rules so he can reinforce or change his own understanding as necessary.

Given Giustino’s statements in his interview about liking to collaborate with other students, one might expect his score on social strategies to be higher than 3.11. The only strategy in this section that he rated a 5 was that when speaking to a native speaker, he

asks for help. This is not surprising, considering he likes to call his Italian friend just for the chance to practice his language skills. However, he only assigned a 3 to the strategy “I work with other language learners to practice, review, or share information”. In the interview he indicated that he had worked with other students to study for the final exam but he may have worked mostly independently for the rest of the semester and therefore didn’t rate that strategy higher.

Giustino’s claim that he really didn’t learn much Spanish during his two years of high school study and the fact that he grew up in a strictly monolingual environment would make him a less-experienced language learner. He could also be classified as a serial language learner (as defined in Chapter Two) because he chose to start over with Italian after a brief, unsuccessful attempt to learn Spanish. It is interesting to note that Giustino equates learning Italian with learning math. He doesn’t have much prior language learning experience to fall back on and therefore uses other prior experience to help him learn Italian. This lack of prior language learning experience could also explain his relatively higher use of compensation strategies.

Amelia

Amelia is a 20 year old woman whose native language is English. She was not exposed to any other language in her home and studied Spanish from 8th to 10th grade. She did not learn it well at all because, as she says, she didn’t pay attention and didn’t want to learn. This is the first year that she ever applied herself to language learning and therefore does not have any study habits from high school.

When asked what sorts of study tricks she employed over the course of the semester, Amelia reported that she wrote vocabulary words and important phrases all

over her mirrors at home. She also has a small notebook with vocabulary that she carries with her and studies on the bus. She likes to use references sources often and has bought a dictionary and several phrase books. To study at home, Amelia puts on classical or jazz music (“real chill out music”) so she can relax. She also turns on a fan that blows on a wind chime and puts on Christmas lights.

In class, if she doesn’t understand something she asks for clarification or looks it up. She doesn’t like to speak in a group because she feels insecure and says that she is much more comfortable at home by herself. Her class was often put in groups to do work collaboratively but she didn’t like that because she wanted to prove to herself that she was capable of doing the work on her own.

Amelia admits that she choked on the final exam because she got very nervous. She has to bring lots of water with her to tests and tries to go outside and breathe when possible. Because she hasn’t done well with foreign languages in the past, she gets especially nervous with Italian.

Amelia’s overall strategy use (3.3) is slightly higher than average. Similarly to both groups, her most frequently used strategies are compensation strategies (4.25). However, in contrast to both her small group and the larger group in the first study, she uses memory strategies the second most frequently. Her score of 3.8 in this category is well above the average of 3.0 for her group and 2.79 for the first group. Like both groups, Amelia uses affective strategies (2.0) least frequently but in her case, metacognitive strategies (2.88) are used almost as infrequently. It is interesting to note that Amelia’s use of memory, compensation and social strategies all fall into the range of high use and she is the only interviewee other than Annamaria to have so many high use

categories. (Grazia, below, is the only other participant to fall into the range of high use for any category with her use of social strategies.)

The strategies that Amelia mentions in her interview cover all six categories. Although writing vocabulary on her mirrors is not a specific item on the SILL, it is related to the visual nature of the items “I remember the word by making a clear mental image of it or by drawing a picture” (which she assigned a 5 or “Always or almost always true of me”) and “I visualize the spelling of the new word in my mind” (which she gave a 4). Her use of a small notebook with definitions in it is related to the item “I use flashcards with the new word on one side and the definition or other information on the other”, which she also gave a 5. These are all examples of memory strategies.

In terms of cognitive strategies, Amelia mentions her use of dictionaries and phrasebooks, which corresponds with the score of 5 she gave to the item “I use reference materials such as glossaries or dictionaries to help me use the new language.”

Amelia stated that she will ask someone else for clarification when she does not know something. This can be a compensation strategy (“I ask the other person to tell me the right word if I can’t think of it in a conversation”) or a social strategy (“If I do not understand, I ask the speaker to slow down, repeat, or clarify what was said”), both of which she rated a 5. Amelia also gave high ratings to several other similar social strategies, indicating that while she is not necessarily comfortable speaking in groups, she is willing to take advantage of the knowledge of another person when it is helpful.

In her interview, Amelia painted a very vivid picture of the calming atmosphere she creates at home when she is studying and this is supported by a metacognitive strategy on the SILL: “I arrange my physical environment to promote learning; for

instance I find a quiet, comfortable place to review.” Amelia of course gave this item a rating of 5. Despite her attempts to create a relaxing environment however, Amelia only assigned a 1 to the following affective strategy: “I try to relax whenever I feel anxious about using the new language.” The interview did reveal that she employs other affective strategies, such as drinking water and going outside to breathe, but these are not included on the SILL. She did assign a rating of 4 to the two items that mention writing or talking about her feelings about language learning, so she is using some of the affective strategies on the SILL. Amelia seems to be very aware of her need to stay relaxed while studying and she could most likely benefit from adding some additional affective strategies to her repertoire.

Amelia, like Giustino above, is both a less-experienced language learner (with three years of high school study of Spanish in which she claims to have learned very little) and a serial language learners because she chose to start fresh with Italian. It is interesting to note that despite this lack of previous experience, Amelia reported the second highest number of strategies used among the interviewees.

Grazia

Grazia is a 19 year old who first became aware of other languages in kindergarten in Baton Rouge. She studied French in 4th and 5th grades but says it was just vocabulary memorization and she doesn’t remember any of it. In 7th grade she started studying Latin, which she chose because she didn’t want to continue French and hated the sound of Spanish. She studied Latin for 6 years through middle and high school and then took 2 more years in college. Latin is her major and she wants to eventually teach both Latin and Italian.

When asked to contrast her experience learning Italian with that of Latin, Grazia said that because the focus in Latin is on grammar, she tends to approach Italian in the same way. At the beginning of her Italian class, she immediately noticed the communicative teaching approach and the importance of pronunciation that were lacking in her Latin classes. She also quickly acknowledged the similarities of the verb conjugations in Latin and Italian. I had indeed noticed that Grazia was very aware of the grammar and that she asked very specific grammar-based questions in class. Grazia credits her success in Latin to her English grammar classes and she points out that many students don't even understand English grammar. She says that language teachers should take a week and a half to teach English grammar before starting any foreign language instruction. She thinks it is very important to have a strong background in your own grammar before trying to learn a new language.

When asked what tricks she used while learning Italian, Grazia says that she likes to review well, especially the things she doesn't understand at first. She writes out exercises over and over, even those in the text that aren't required. She has difficulty understanding the audio-tapes and therefore listens to them several times. She tries to be more aware of her speaking and is very hesitant and cautious about saying anything until she knows she has it right. She is afraid of making mistakes while speaking. In order to improve her speaking ability, Grazia seeks out extra opportunities for practice. Her mother is also studying Italian and Grazia joins her conversation group at a coffee shop.

Grazia's overall score for strategy use is below the average of her group at 2.86. She reported using social strategies the most (3.67), followed by compensation strategies

(3.25) and cognitive strategies (3.04). Metacognitive (2.81) and memory strategies (2.27) were in the middle and affective strategies were the least used (2.14).

Grazia seems to take a very analytical approach to language learning. She does not mention using many visual or oral strategies and this is reflected in her responses on the SILL. She rated six memory strategies as a 1 (“Never or almost never true of me”), including putting new words into a sentence to remember them, using rhyming, making a mental image of the word and physically acting out the word. In contrast, she gives a rating of 5 to the strategy of visualizing the *spelling* of a word and a 4 to remembering where on a page she first saw a word.

The cognitive strategies that Grazia favors reflect her analytical nature. She divides words into parts to figure out the meaning, looks for similarities with her own language, and looks for patterns in the new language (all rated 4). She also uses reference materials to help learn the language (5). Once again, she shies away from oral strategies in this category, giving mostly twos and threes to the items related to saying words aloud, practicing sounds, watching TV or movies, or imitating the way native speakers talk.

In her interview, Grazia indicated that she meets with her mother’s conversation group for practice but on the SILL she only rated the following metacognitive items as a 3: “I take responsibility for finding opportunities to practice the new language” and “I actively look for people with whom I can speak the new language”. This may be due to the fact that if her mother hadn’t explicitly asked her to attend the conversation group, she would not have sought out other opportunities to practice her speaking. However, under the social strategy category, Grazia said that she does work with others to practice

(4) and that she has a regular language learning partner (5). She may be referring to other students in her class or once again to her mother. At any rate, it seems that these collaborative learning experiences may have just been the result of chance and not an active decision on her part.

With her two years of French study in high school and eight years of Latin study in both high school and college, Grazia is certainly an experienced language learner and her reported use of strategies do not seem to reflect her high level of experience. Given the very analytical approach to learning that I had observed in Grazia, I was surprised that her overall SILL score, and especially her metacognitive and cognitive strategies, were only in the medium use range. Grazia (and by contrast, Amelia as well) demonstrates that previous language learning experience does not necessarily result in higher strategy use. This issue will be discussed in Chapter Five.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to look for differences in strategy use among language learners with varying amounts and types of previous language experience. A review of the related literature has shown that strategy use is often increased in people who have learned a second language (McLaughlin & Nayak, 1989; Nation & McLaughlin, 1986; Nayak, 1990; Ramsey, 1980). Other studies have demonstrated that bilinguals and experienced language learners tend to be more successful at learning subsequent languages (Fouser, 1995; Mägiste, 1984; Rivers, 1996), and while these studies didn't specifically concentrate on strategy use, additional research (Bialystok, 1981; Bremner, 1999; Green & Oxford, 1995; Oxford et al., 1993; Thompson & Rubin, 1993) suggests that increased strategy use is a contributing factor to successful language learning. Therefore it is not unreasonable, based on such research, to expect to find that more-experienced language learners, whether they gained their experience in the classroom or at home, might demonstrate a higher level of strategy use than less-experienced learners. The results of the current study suggest that this is indeed the case.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

It was expected that language learners with more experience - whether explicit classroom instruction, or exposure at home – would exhibit a higher level of strategy use, particularly within the categories of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, than would the less experienced learners. The results bore out this notion, although there are some interesting variations in strategy use to be discussed.

Before examining strategy use, this study considered the previous language experience of the participants. Although the students were all enrolled in the second semester of a beginning Italian class, none of them were actual beginning language learners. The range of previous language experience spanned from one year of high school instruction to growing up in a bilingual home to twenty-four years of formal language instruction (including twenty years of English instruction). Fifteen students reported being exposed to another language in the home growing up. And while only eight participants reported studying a foreign language for five or more years, the majority of them (69%) had studied three to four years of a foreign language before enrolling in their Italian course. Many of these indicated on their background questionnaires that despite several years of language study, they did not learn very much in their high school language classes. (Interestingly, some of these reported receiving A's and B's nonetheless.) None of these students had previously studied Italian and therefore cannot technically be considered false beginners. They all chose to begin again with a new language – Italian - and therefore can be defined as serial language learners. These learners will have a certain amount of prior knowledge about language learning, whether they claim to have learned their previous language or not. Some of them may put this prior knowledge to good use in the form of employing strategies while others may have not used many strategies the first time around and will therefore need to be instructed in their use in order to be more successful with their current endeavor.

Teachers should therefore be aware that a student in a beginning language class at the college level is most likely not actually a beginning language learner at all. At the same time, they should not assume that previous language learning experience will mean

that these students are more likely to succeed. In fact, it is probable that they have switched to a new language because of a lack of success in the first one. These students in particular will benefit from strategy training, which will be discussed below.

Study One

Research Question One: What are the differences in strategy use among L2 learners with different types of previous language experience?

It was thought that perhaps correlations would show a relationship between years of previous language study and score on the SILL. This did not prove to be true because of a wide variation in SILL scores among learners with between one and four years of language study. Some beginning learners scored very high on the SILL, while others scored very low. However, after approximately four or five years of language study, the participants in this study reported using considerably more strategies than the less experienced learners did. Once the participants were divided into groups of language experience, the mean SILL scores increased progressively from least-experienced to most-experienced learners. Specifically, the most-experienced learners used significantly more cognitive strategies than either the more- or least-experienced learners did. While the use of metacognitive strategies also increased with experience, the results were not significant.

The category of strategies that remained relatively equally used across experience groups was that of compensation strategies, which was the only category to be highly used by all three groups. The mean score for these overall was 3.57, with the least-, more- and most-experienced groups having means of 3.53, 3.57 and 3.63, respectively.

These high scores indicate that all of the learners in this study use a high number of strategies to help them overcome their limitations with regard to language learning and to make intelligent guesses when they are not certain.

Interestingly, the use of affective strategies actually decreased as experience increased. These strategies were consistently the least used by all three groups and the mean scores decreased from 2.67 for the least-experienced group to 2.34 for both the more- and most-experienced groups. This decrease is most likely explained by the fact that learners become more comfortable with language learning as their experience increases and therefore feel less need for strategies to decrease their anxiety. This also seemed to be true for the interview participants, who will be discussed below.

Research Question Two: How do learners exposed to another language in the home compare to learners exposed only to English in terms of strategy use?

It was also expected that learners who heard another language in the home as a child – regardless of whether they actually report being able to speak that second language – would demonstrate a higher use of strategies (cognitive and metacognitive in particular) than would those who were only exposed to English in the home. An ANOVA comparing these two groups indicated that those exposed to another language did use significantly more strategies overall, as well as significantly more cognitive strategies. While this group also used more metacognitive strategies, once again these results only approached significance.

It was not possible to compare the learners exposed to another language with the most-experienced language learners because these two groups were not mutually exclusive, however it would be interesting to know whether formal language instruction

or mere informal exposure to a language would be more likely to affect strategy use. This would be a possible area for future research. (Additional areas for future research will be discussed below.) In the meantime it seems that any previous language experience, whether formal or informal, contributes to a higher level of strategy use.

Study Two

The results of the SILL for the interview participants reflected those of the overall group, with compensation and social strategies being the most highly used and affective strategies being the least used. Indeed the affective strategies were rated low-use by all five interview participants, with the highest score in this category being Annamaria's score of 2.29, which falls below the mean score of 2.40 for the whole group in Study One. Such low use of affective strategies would once again suggest that these students did not feel particularly anxious in their Italian class and therefore didn't feel the need to take steps to manage their emotions regarding their language learning.

It is very interesting to compare the results of Annamaria, who studied only two years of advanced Spanish in high school but grew up in a Spanish-speaking home, with those of Grazia, who grew up in an exclusively English-speaking environment but began studying French in middle school and began studying Latin in high school. She studied Latin for a total of eight years between high school and college. Annamaria had only two years of previous formal language study, compared to ten years of formal training for Grazia. According to my categories of language experience, Annamaria would be a least-experienced language learner, but her exposure to Spanish in the home gives her a different kind of informal experience that seems to have contributed to her very high use of language learning strategies. She rated all categories of strategies as high use, with the

exception of affective strategies, which were low. Grazia, who would certainly be considered a most-experienced language learner, demonstrated a much wider variety of strategy use, ranging from low (memory and affective) to medium (cognitive, compensation and metacognitive) to high (social). So while Annamaria seems a perfect example of a bilingual learner exhibiting high strategy use, Grazia's reported average use of strategies does not support the idea that higher levels of language experience will lead to higher strategy use. It is possible however, that the results of the SILL do not give an accurate picture of her strategy use. In her interview, Grazia mentioned using a modest number of strategies very frequently and therefore it is possible that she relies heavily on a few strategies. She would have therefore rated those few strategies very high on the SILL and the rest as very low. As her teacher, I certainly noticed that she was very perceptive about rules of grammar and she seemed to have a very high level of metalinguistic awareness. Furthermore, Grazia's performance in Italian class was very high – she received a 97% on the final exam for the course. In retrospect, I believe that she had identified a few favorite strategies and used them repeatedly.

The wide variety of SILL scores for the five interview participants is similar to the variety within the least-experienced language learners in the first study. Again, it seems that learners with fewer than three or four years of language learning have a wide variability in SILL scores while those with more than four or five years of previous learning will exhibit less variability and tend to score higher on the SILL. This would suggest that the skills learned in a language class might not be apparent until later in the students' language learning career. Therefore, a student with fewer than three or four years of language study might exhibit high strategy use but more likely will not do so

until later. One reason why there may be such a difference in strategy use among the least-experienced language learners might be that some of these learners already have a repertory of general learning strategies that they have transferred from their other courses into their language learning classes while other learners haven't realized that many general learning strategies can be transferred to language learning. Whatever the reason may be, it appears that students can learn to use more strategies and therefore become better language learners over time.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

As mentioned above, various studies have suggested that appropriate strategy use can contribute to success in language learning (Bialystok, 1981; Bremner, 1999; Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Green & Oxford, 1995; Oxford et al., 1993; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Thompson & Rubin, 1993). Given the wide variety of strategy use reported by the least-experienced language learners in this study, it would seem useful for language teachers to incorporate strategy training as part of their beginning language curriculum. This training would be especially useful to those learners considered false beginners (if they are starting over with a language they have previously studied) or serial learners (defined in Chapter Two as a learner who enrolls in a beginning language course having already studied one or more languages to no avail). The lack of success that these learners previously experienced may have been due in part to low strategy use. Furthermore, they are likely to be nervous or apprehensive about trying to learn yet another language and could especially benefit from training in the use of affective strategies.

As discussed in Chapter Two, strategy training should be explicit in order to be most effective. By training students to be strategic, teachers can provide their less-

successful students with the same tools that are used effectively by the more-successful students. Teachers of false beginners and serial language learners – who were not successful in earlier attempts to learn a language – will need to persuade these students that they can indeed be successful in learning a language if they are willing to change their preconceived notions about how to go about language learning. They should be told that there is not necessarily one right way to learn a language and that if the tools they attempted earlier weren't appropriate for them, they should work to identify more effective strategies. Teachers should not simply list strategies for students to use, but should help students to learn how to identify the goal of any given task, to purposefully choose the appropriate strategy to reach that goal and then to monitor the effectiveness of that strategy as they proceed through the task at hand. Traditional strategy training seems should perhaps be combined with the newer task-based approaches to learning. In order for students to be strategic in their approach to a task, they need to have a repertoire of strategies from which to choose.

Perhaps the most important pedagogical implication of this study is that teachers need to be aware of the wide variety of students in their classes. Steps should be taken to identify especially those false beginners and serial language learners who will need extra help to overcome the difficulties they have experienced in the past. By helping them to become more strategic learners, teachers could perhaps put a stop to the serial language learning and help them become successful language learners instead.

The wide variety in SILL scores among the least-experienced language learners in this study suggests that many beginning language learners (including those false beginners and serial language learners) do use a high number of strategies but probably

don't use them successfully. The lack of success in learning a previous language may be due in part to the fact that less-successful learners employ some strategies, but are not strategic in their use. They may have learned that they are supposed to make flashcards to study vocabulary or take notes in class to learn grammar, for example, but if they are not purposefully choosing a strategy based on the goal of their task and monitoring their progress as they move through the task, their choice of strategy may not be especially beneficial to learning.

There are several metacognitive strategies mentioned by Oxford (1990) that could specifically help false beginners and serial language learners to become more strategic. Being strategic, as discussed above, involves identifying the goal of a task and purposefully choosing a strategy to reach that goal. Metacognitive strategies such as previewing the lesson to find out what it is about, clearly identifying the purpose of an activity, considering the nature of the task and evaluating general progress made could all be especially valuable to previously unsuccessful language learners.

On the other hand, learners who have been previously successful in learning a foreign language or who grew up in a bilingual home might benefit from cognitive strategies such as looking for similarities between their previous language (in addition to English) and the new language, as well as applying the rules of their previous language to the new language, where applicable, and looking for patterns in language. This may be especially true of Spanish speakers who are learning Italian for example, or any other pairing of Romance languages. In this case it is also necessary to point out the important strategy of being cautious about transferring words directly from another language.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Some interesting comparisons can be made between the present results and those of the literature in the fields of metalinguistic awareness and of strategy use, particularly among experienced language learners. Most of the learners in this study cannot really be compared to those in the literature on third language learning, because they did not truly acquire a second language before learning Italian. However, the more- and most-experienced learners here are likely to take advantage of their prior linguistic experience and to consciously reflect on their strategy use - in a similar manner to multilinguals with heightened metalinguistic awareness - as suggested by Jessner (1999).

Thomas (1988, 1992) reported that bilinguals who had formally studied their second language performed significantly better on a grammar test than bilinguals with no formal study. She suggested that explicit instruction was more likely to lead to the heightened metalinguistic awareness that would in turn result in better performance. Although the current study could not directly compare the bilinguals with formal instruction to those with no such instruction, the results suggest that even those students with mere exposure to another language in the home have a heightened sensitivity to language that manifests itself in the form of increased use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in particular. As Yelland et al. (1993) suggested, even a limited amount of exposure to a second language can result in metalinguistic benefits and this seems to be the case here.

Interestingly, Mägiste (1984, 1986) also differentiated between 'passive' and 'active' bilingualism but she reported that passive knowledge of a language was more likely to facilitate third language learning, whereas active bilingualism could delay such acquisition. She suggested that passive bilingualism was less likely to cause interference and this could explain why even those learners who were exposed to a language in the home exhibited higher strategy use than those who were not.

Additional comparisons can be made to the literature in the field of strategy use. Many researchers (Bialystok, 1979, 1981; Naiman et al., 1978; Oxford, 1989, 1990; Rubin, 1975, 1981, 1987; Stern, 1975) have pointed out that good language learners will make effective use of language learning strategies. Although the current study did not investigate the performance of the participants, it can probably be assumed that the most-experienced language learners have been successful up to this point and can be considered good language learners. The results of this study have demonstrated that these learners do indeed employ more language learning strategies than those with less experience. And while some of the less-experienced language learners also exhibited a fairly high level of strategy use, it is possible, as suggested by Chamot and Kupper (1989) that they do not choose their strategies wisely or use them properly. Therefore it is important to keep in mind that even though some of the less-experienced learners report high strategy use, they may not be flexible in their use of strategies or use them appropriately, as Abraham and Vann (1987) point out.

This concept of flexibility in strategy use is also found in the studies by Nation and McLaughlin (1986) and Nayak et al. (1990) who showed that multilinguals outperformed both monolinguals and bilinguals on tasks requiring implicit learning. The authors suggest that the multilinguals possess more automatized linguistic skills, but also that they use a wider variety of strategies and are more flexible in their use. So while the current study cannot account for flexibility of strategy use, the results do indicate once again that more experienced language learners (or expert language learners, according to McLaughlin, Nayak and Nation) will use more strategies than less experienced learners.

LIMITATIONS

There are several limitations to consider when interpreting the results of this study. First of all, the language of study – Italian - is very similar to Spanish, which was previously studied by 66% of the participants in the first study and by 4 out of the 5

interviewees. Therefore, many of these students might simply rely on their knowledge of Spanish to help them with their Italian study, rather than utilizing a greater number of language learning strategies.

Secondly, the SILL is a self-report measure and as such should be interpreted with caution. Although it has been shown to be highly reliable (Bremner, 1999; Oxford, 1996; Oxford & Ehrman, 1995; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Green & Oxford, 1995), students may still be influenced by social desirability factors. The fact that the questionnaire was completed anonymously should have diminished these types of responses. Furthermore, none of students in the first study were taught by the researcher and therefore probably felt no need to produce socially desirable responses.

Another problem with the SILL became apparent during the interviews. Several students indicated using strategies that weren't included on the SILL, such as Amelia writing vocabulary with a dry-erase marker over all the mirrors in her house. She also indicated in her interview that she was very nervous about language learning and to combat this anxiety during tests would be sure to bring lots of water and to step outside to breathe. So while she didn't report using all of the affective strategies on the SILL, she does use several others.

Such discrepancies between SILL results and actual strategy use reported in the interviews are indicative of a major problem with the SILL. The inventory is very static and limited to a teaching methodology that is no longer widely used. Newer task-based methods of teaching require students to adjust their use of strategies as each task requires. Because the items on the SILL are very specific, they don't allow for much flexibility of interpretation. Furthermore, as an inventory, the SILL merely lists possible strategies that could be used by students, but doesn't take into consideration the context in which the strategies are used. The static nature of the SILL could be in part to blame for a lack of more significant results in the current study. Perhaps more differences would have been apparent between the groups of students with different amounts of experience if the

measure used had taken into account not just the strategies used by learners but also their goals and motivation.

Another limitation to consider is the fact that the interviews were conducted by the students' instructor, however these were done after the end of the semester when grades had already been turned in and therefore the students shouldn't have felt compelled to please me with their answers. This seemed to be true, as several students actually admitted that they did not study much for their Italian class.

Finally, the wide variation in number of participants in the three groups (least-, more-, and most-experienced language learners) probably contributed to a lack of statistical significance. This disparity in numbers is very hard to avoid in a typical university language classroom because the majority of learners will have only studied a previous language for one to two years. In this sample, there were a few outliers with a high number of years of previous language study who skewed the results of the correlations. Without these few students, there would not have been any correlation between years of previous language study and strategy use. It is very difficult to find many people who continue studying a language after four years and that will most likely be true for just about any population in the United States.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study to use the SILL to specifically consider strategy use among groups with varying levels of previous language experience. As mentioned above, it would be very interesting to further this research by comparing different types of language learners. Within the more experienced language learners, comparisons could be made between those with explicit classroom instruction and those raised bilingually. Given the wide variety of types of previous experience in a typical college foreign language classroom, it would also be important to examine the strategy use of false beginners and serial language learners. In order to get a more accurate

picture of strategy use, it is important to find a better method for observing not just the types of strategies used, but also the students' goals and motivations. This would be best done with a more qualitative approach, including interviews conducted at regular intervals over time as well as observations in class and perhaps think-aloud protocols recorded outside of class.

It would also be interesting to compare the effects of traditional strategy training, as discussed in previous research (Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Chipman et al., 1985; Derry & Murphy, 1986; O'Malley, 1987; Oxford, 1990 & 1994; Russo & Stewner-Manzanares, 1985; Thompson & Rubin, 1993; Weinstein & Mayer, 1985; Yang, 1995), with more goal-oriented training in being strategic, as discussed above. It is likely that the latter would be more effective in promoting successful language learning.

CONCLUSIONS

This study has examined the differences in strategy use among language learners with a variety in amount and type of previous language experience. Results indicated that learners with more previous language experience – whether explicit classroom training or exposure to a language spoken at home – tend to use more strategies than less-experienced learners do. In her 1988 study, Thomas suggests that bilingual students without classroom experience might not have an advantage over monolinguals but the results of the current study indicate that this is not the case. It seems that even 'passive' knowledge of a language (or simply exposure to a second language) can contribute to increased strategy use when learning a second or third language. As strategy use has been linked to successful language learning, it makes sense for foreign language teachers to supply their beginning students with not only these useful tools, but also the ability to employ them strategically so that all language learners have a chance for a successful language learning experience.

This study has also demonstrated that college level language learners have a wide variety of previous language backgrounds that should be taken into consideration by the teacher. Some learners may come from a bilingual background while others may have simply been exposed to another language in the home as a child. Other learners have already studied another language successfully, while still others have failed to do so. All of these backgrounds are important and will change the classroom experience for each student. Perhaps the most crucial role of the language teacher is to impress upon all learners that they can succeed in learning a language, regardless of the quality of their previous experience.

Appendix A: Background Questionnaire

Background Questionnaire

Please complete the following information:

Age _____ Sex _____ Major _____ Overall GPA _____

Year (check one):

_____ Freshman _____ Sophomore
_____ Junior _____ Senior _____ other (specify _____)

Ethnic identity (check all that apply):

_____ African-American _____ American Indian _____ Hispanic
_____ Caucasian _____ Asian American _____ other (specify)

Have you ever studied another foreign language before taking Italian? What language(s)?

For how many years? What kind of grades did you get?

What language or languages were spoken in your home while you were growing up? By whom?

What language or languages are spoken in your home today? By whom?

What languages do you speak other than English?

What do you consider to be your first language?

If you speak Spanish, please check the statement that best describes your ability to do so:

- ☐ I can understand some of it but don't speak it or write it
- ☐ I can understand most of it but don't speak it or write it.
- ☐ I can understand a little and speak a little but don't write it.
- ☐ I can understand most of it but only speak a little and write a little.
- ☐ I can understand most of it and can speak pretty well but don't write it.
- ☐ I can understand it well, speak it well and write it pretty well.
- ☐ I have no problem understanding, speaking or writing it.

Do you have any other experience with a foreign language that you would like to mention?

Appendix B: Description of Interview Questions

- 1) Describe your language experiences growing up.
- 2) What languages were spoken in your home?
- 3) Did you have a preference for one over the other? Why?
- 4) What languages have you formally studied in school? How would describe that learning experience? Did you learn any special tricks that you apply to learning Italian?
- 5) Do you apply your knowledge of another language to learning Italian? How? What kinds of study tricks do you use?
- 6) Did you do anything in particular to study for the final exam? Did you study with other people or by yourself? How did you work through difficult items on the test?
- 7) What else can you tell me about your experience in Italian class this semester?

Appendix C: Summary of Results of Background Questionnaire

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Hispanic Ethnicity Reported?</i>	<i>Languages Studied</i>	<i>Total Years of Lang. Study</i>	<i>Language other than English Spoken in Home</i>
1	20	Female	No	Spanish: 4 years	4	None
2	19	Female	No	ASL: 1 year Spanish: 2 years	3	None
3	19	Female	No	Spanish: 2 years	2	None
4	21	Male	No	Spanish: 3 years	3	None
5	19	Male	No	Spanish: 2 years	2	None
6	22	Male	No	Spanish: 2 years	2	None
7	19	Male	No	Spanish: 3 years	3	None
8	18	Female	No	Spanish: 3 years	3	None
9	18	Female	No	Spanish: 4 years	4	None
10	21	Female	No	Spanish: 4 years	4	None
11	20	Female	No	Spanish: 4 years	4	Spanish
12	18	Female	No	Spanish: 3 years ASL: 1 year	4	None
13	19	Female	No	Spanish: 3 years	3	None
14	21	Male	No	Spanish: 2 years	2	None
15	20	Male	No	Spanish: 2 years	2	None
16	20	Female	Yes	Spanish: 4 years	4	None
17	20	Female	No	Spanish: 6 years	6	Tamil
18	19	Female	No	Spanish: 3 years	3	None
19	19	Female	No	Spanish: 4 years	4	None

20	21	Female	No	French: 2.5 years German: 2 years Spanish: 1 semester	5	German
21	21	Female	No	Spanish: 4 years	4	Igbo
22	19	Female	No	Spanish: 4 years	4	None
23	21	Female	No	Spanish: 4 years	4	None
24	19	Female	No	Spanish: 4 years	4	None
25	18	Male	No	Spanish: 3 years	3	None
26	18	Male	No	French: 7 years Spanish: 5 years	12	None
27	18	Male	No	Spanish: 3 years	3	None
28	19	Male	No	Spanish: 3 years	3	None
29	18	Male	Yes	Spanish: 3 years	3	Spanish
30	20	Male	No	Cantonese: 1 year French: 2 years German: 1 year Russian: 1 year Spanish: 7 years	12	Hebrew
31	19	Female	No	Spanish: 3 years	3	None
32	18	Female	No	Spanish: 3 years	3	Russian
33	19	Male	No	French: 2 years Spanish: 4 years	6	None
34	24	Male	Yes	English: 20 years German: 2 years Spanish: 2 years	24	Spanish
35	18	Female	Yes	Latin: 2 years Spanish: 1 year	3	None
36	20	Female	No	Spanish: 2 years	2	None
37	20	Female	No	Spanish: 4 years	4	None

38	19	Male	No	Latin: 2 years Spanish: < 1 year	2.5	None
39	19	Female	No	Spanish: 4 years	4	None
40	19	Female	No	Spanish: 2 years	2	None
41	18	Female	No	Latin: 3 years Spanish: 1 year	4	None
42	19	Female	No	Spanish: 3 years	3	None
43	19	Female	No	Spanish: 3 years	3	None
44	18	Male	Yes	Spanish: 3 years	3	None
45	20	Male	No	Spanish: 3 years	3	None
46	18	Male	No	Latin: 2 years	2	German
47	19	Male	No	Latin: 4 years	4	None
48	21	Female	No	Latin: 6 years	6	None
49	20	Female	No	French: 3 years	3	None
50	20	Female	No	Latin: 4 years	4	Thai
51	20	Female	No	French: 1 year	1	None
52	18	Female	No	Latin: 2 years	2	Croatian and Czech
53	20	Female	No	Latin: 5 years	5	None
54	22	Female	No	French: 2 years	2	None
55	20	Female	No	French: 3 years	3	None
56	19	Female	No	German: 3 years	3	None
57	18	Female	No	French: 3 years	3	None
58	18	Female	No	French: 4 years	4	Spanish
59	18	Female	No	Latin: 3 years	3	Spanish
60	19	Female	No	French: 1 year Latin: 3 years	4	Mandarin

61	21	Female	No	French: 2 years	2	None
62	18	Female	No	French: 4 years	4	None
63	19	Female	No	Latin: 3 years	3	None
64	18	Male	No	Latin: 2 years	2	None
65	20	Male	No	French: 1 year German: 2 years	3	None
66	20	Male	No	Latin: 4 years	4	None
67	20	Male	No	Japanese: 1 year	1	None
68	20	Male	No	German: 3 years	3	Yiddish

Appendix D: Consent form

COVER SHEET

TITLE OF THE STUDY:
STRATEGY USE OF 2ND AND 3RD LANGUAGE LEARNERS OF ITALIAN

You are invited to participate in a study of students' strategy use in the Italian language classroom. My name is Colclough Sanders and I am a graduate student at The University of Texas at Austin. This study is being done as dissertation research. You are being asked to participate in the study because you are enrolled in a lower division Italian class here at the University of Texas. If you participate, you will be one of approximately 75 people in the study.

If you decide to participate, I will ask you to fill out a questionnaire about your prior language experience. I will then ask you to fill out a questionnaire about the types of language learning strategies you use while learning Italian. Your name will not be written on either of the questionnaires and therefore your responses will be completely confidential.

Your decision to participate or to decide not to participate will not affect your present or future relationship with The University of Texas at Austin. Your decision will not affect your course grade in any way.

If you have any questions about the study, please ask me. If you have any questions later, you may call me at (201) 344-2153 or you may call my supervisor, Professor Elaine Horwitz at 471-4078. If you have any questions or concerns about your treatment as a research participant in this study, call Professor Clarke Burnham in the Office of Research Compliance at 477-8871.

You are making a decision whether or not to participate. By returning the questionnaire to me you are indicating that you have read the information provided above and have decided to participate in the study. If you do not want to participate in the study, simply do not return the questionnaire. If there are any questions that you do not want to answer, please feel free to skip them but complete the rest of the questionnaire. If you do return the questionnaire, I will be very grateful for your participation. Thank you very much!

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Vita

Colclough Allison Sanders was born on Lakenheath Airforce Base in the United Kingdom on January 28, 1970, the daughter of Polly Ann and Donald Benjamin Sanders, and later of Lynda Sanders. After completing her work at Durham Academy, Durham, North Carolina in 1988 she entered Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York. She graduated with departmental honors in Italian in May of 1992.

Upon graduating, she lived in Milan, Italy for a year as an au pair and English teacher before entering graduate school at the University of California at Berkeley in September of 1993. While completing her Master of Arts in Italian Literature, she taught undergraduate courses in Italian language. She received her Master's degree in May of 1995, whereupon she moved to Milan, Italy once again to act as Academic Advisor for the Institute of European Studies student exchange program. She also taught English in a private school during that time.

In September of 1996 she began teaching as a Lecturer in Italian at the University of Texas at Austin. In September of 1997 she enrolled at the University of Texas in the doctoral program for Foreign Language Education with a specialty in Italian. She continued to teach Italian in the French and Italian department while completing her doctoral coursework. In September of 2001 she was hired as Assistant Professor of Italian in the Department of Foreign Languages, Literatures and Cultures at Kean University in Union, New Jersey.

Permanent address: 105 W. 77th St, #1C
New York, NY 10024

This dissertation was typed by the author.