SUCCESSFUL FEMALE ADULT LANGUAGE LEARNERS:

THEIR STRATEGY USE IN SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

By

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was twofold: first to identify the language learning strategies (LLS) of seven successful adult female learners enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) at the University of Victoria; and, secondly, to describe in what naturalistic life circumstances or situations these strategies are revealed.

The learners were self-selected for the study. All were enrolled in a 410, intermediate level ESL course and ranged from twenty-one to twenty-seven years of age. There were six Asian participants and one Mexican. Experience in ESL study ranged from approximately one year to eleven years.

The choice of female participants was based on convenience; suggestions in existing research about women's differentiated use of LLS; and, the researcher's own career role in association with young women studying ESL. Although gender was not a specific focus in the study, the female researcher and participants share a common phenomenological reality. This prompted questions about assumptions, methods, and findings of the study, as well as its conceptual framework.

Three data collection processes were used to measure learners' reported use of LLS. The first was the Strategies Inventory in Language Learning (SILL) (Oxford, 1989), a fifty item, Likert scaled summative tool measuring LLS preference in six macrostrategy areas. The second and third data collection methods were qualitative. Employing the second method, participants were interviewed twice by the researcher. Using the third methodology, participants kept reflective notes/mini-diary studies for a

period of two weeks.

The strategy category system from the SILL was used to organize the qualitative data from the interviews and reflective notes.

The most significant findings from the study were:

1. The participants used all categories of LLS as measured by SILL, but tended to prefer cognitive, metacognitive, and affective strategies;

2. ESL appears to be learned in a variety of ways depending on individual psychological and social situational factors; and,

3. Learners optimized multiple life situations—formal and informal; psychological; and, social—to realize their learning goals and aspirations.

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CHAPTER ONE

Successful Female Adult Language Learners:

Their Strategy Use in Second Language Learning

Introduction

The closing decades of the twentieth century have witnessed tremendous growth and change in the knowledge base and requirements for language use throughout the world (Esling, 1989). English has emerged as an international language of science, medicine, and education (Johnstone, 1992).

Coupled with these communication requirements, this century has witnessed globally disruptive, political, and ecological activity which has resulted in a rising number of migrants, refugees, and immigrants requiring language reeducation (Bassler, 1990; Butler, 1991).

Within the field of adult language learning (including second or foreign language learning), the preferred educational approach has reflected a major theoretical shift (McLaughlin, Rossman, & McLeod, 1983; Swaffar, 1989; etc.). Whereas early efforts focused mainly on the role of learning theory and methodology, current efforts have demonstrated an increased interest in the role of the learner, his/her attributes, characteristics, and behaviours. Among these are included human information processing capacity, language learning experience, and the use of language learning strategies (LLS) (Bialystok, 1978; Schmidt, 1990).

Theoretical efforts to explain adult language learning have constituted a complex and confusing area of research due to the inter/intra-disciplinary complexity

of language learning process (Long, 1990). In order to focus and priorize research efforts, it became necessary to delineate the most salient areas of the language learning process (Bialystok, 1978; McLaughlin, et al., 1983), identify pivotal constructs and relationships (Ellis, 1989), and define ambiguous terminology (Stern, 1991; Stevick, 1990).

Historically, theory in adult language learning, most commonly called Second Language Acquisition (SLA), the process of acquiring another language after one's native language (Gass & Selinker, 1994), has been characterized by two different traditions: one linguistic in nature and the other psychological. The linguistic tradition focused primarily on learning methodology and content, including such theoretical constructs as contrastive analysis, comprehensible input, and variability in learning rate (Ellis, 1989; Johnstone, 1992; etc.).

Alternatively, the psychological tradition addressed the learner, his/her characteristics including needs, attitudes, and affective behaviour (Bialystok, 1975; Ellis, 1989; Gardiner & MacIntyre, 1993).

Much of the early emphasis in both research and practice has focused on the traditional, linguistic *rules* aspect of language learning (Jacobs & Schumann, 1992). Thus, resultant theory has largely addressed outcome evidence, the *what* of language learning; that is, learning associated manifestations or products (Cohen, 1990). In the area of strategies related to language learning, it was often teaching strategies or learning materials which received primary research attention (Swaffar, 1989). The processural, learner focused aspects of language learning were largely ignored (Cohen,

1990; Raymond, 1982).

Recent efforts have moved away from the focus on the *what* and toward the *how* of language learning (Cohen, 1990). Increasingly, research and practice has sought to utilize current psychological tradition and theory in understanding the process of language learning and the inherent role of the learner. This perspective assumes an understanding of language as a living, "...creative process with strong genetic roots, something best approached from the stance of cognitive psychology" (McArthur, 1983, p. 35).

Thus as the paradigm for understanding the process of SLA has shifted and become more inclusive, the centrality of the learner's role has increasingly been recognized. Subsequently, the behaviours and attributes, cognitive and otherwise, which characterize and differentiate SLA participants, have attracted the attention of both researchers and practitioners (Reid, 1987; Swaffar, 1987).

One of these areas of learning behaviour that has attracted increasing attention has been learners' use of strategic behaviour in SLA (Canale & Swain, 1980; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1985).

Conceptual Approaches

The field of cognitive psychology has suggested a variety of approaches and processes that the human mind uses in interpreting and manipulating incoming sensory information. Eisner (1994) suggested that six basic components be included in a taxonomy of cognitive processes. These were possession of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Through these mental

operations or processes of learning, informational input is modified by the learner into knowledge or knowledge structures. Thus input becomes intake and schemata encoding the intake are formed as knowledge. This knowledge can then be stored in long term memory to be retrieved and used when needed as output (Gass, 1988).

The assignment of the language learning process to the domain of cognitive psychology, made some basic philosophical assumptions about the nature of language learning and the role of the learner. It assumed that language learning involves both controlled and automatic processes, depending on task requirements, learner attentiveness, and the ability and experience of the learner (McLaughlin, et al., 1983). It also assumed that the language learning process is multifaceted and interactional (Gass, 1988), involves modification and transformation of incoming language stimuli, and that the language learner is a proactive creator of knowledge.

Anderson (1985) noted that in cognitive learning endeavours there was a difference between novice and expert learners; experts perceived reoccurring patterns in problems or tasks and were able to tailor or strategically link their solutions to fit these patterns. This same ability, to differentiate between the successful and the less successful learner, had been evident in empirical research efforts related to better understanding learners' SLA efforts (Naiman, Fröhlich, Stern, & Todesco, 1978; Rubin, 1975).

Subsequently, strategic insight and behaviour were suggested as a way for language learners to better interact cognitively with incoming knowledge in order to optimize their SLA learning efforts (McLaughlin, et al., 1983). That is, it was posited

that the use of language learning strategies by learners greatly enhanced their chances for success in achieving a successful SLA experience (Naiman, et al., 1978; Stern, 1975).

This was a significant finding because success in SLA had not always been consistent with learners' or teachers' efforts. Practical solutions were needed for "...the perennial complaints about the unsatisfactory state of language teaching, about its ineffectiveness, about the waste of money and energy on something that does not produce commensurate results." (Stern, 1983, p. 24). The possibility that learners' use of LLS, in the process of SLA, could provide some forms of solution to this problem was tempting indeed.

Although the concept of strategy use in language learning has only been described in the past three decades or so, the use of strategy to optimize human endeavours is not a novel idea. Etymologically, our use of the word strategy is said to refer to a "a clever or careful plan" (Barnhart, 1988, p. 1074). Borrowed from the French *strategie*, and referring to the art and planning of military operations, the word may have originated from the Greek word *stetegia* which literally meant the command of a general (Barnhart, 1988).

Historically, the concept of strategy use has been described for many centuries. The monumental sixth century army general Sun Tzu wrote in his classic, *The Art of War*, of the necessity for study, analysis, and rational thought as the basis for the planning and conduct of successful military endeavours (Griffith, 1971). Much later, with regard to the organization and success of Japanese business management, Michael

Deutsch (1983) cited *The Book of Five Rings: A Guide to Winning Strategy* when speaking to American businessmen regarding their understanding of Japanese business processes. He said (of American businessmen), "They need to recognize that in order to meet the special opportunities and challenges of Japan, different strategies are required from those used in other countries." (Deutsch, 1983, p. 12).

In these instances, strategy is suggested as a way in which adversaries, in war or commerce, could better understand and control their thinking and behaviours in order to realize satisfactory outcomes to their endeavours. Inherent was the assumption that the person(s) mobilizing the strategy needed to assess the requirements of the task at hand and decide how to best allocate resources, in order to realize the most success.

It is evident that in all endeavours involving the use of strategic behaviour, the strategist is involved in a complex interactive process with the challenge or task at hand. Initially the strategist must intentionally be oriented toward the problem, proceed by continuously choosing from a number of possible solutions, and finally combine or orchestrate these choices to produce a final solution.

The potential efficacy of this ability had been posited theoretically in the field of learning generally (Dansereau, 1985, Entwistle & Ramsden, 1983), and reported empirically by SLA researchers.

Perhaps because the basic understanding of the SLA process was so nebulous, and the theoretical base somewhat fractured between a linguistic orientation and a cognitive psychological orientation, resultant research efforts related to LLS use

diverged in a variety of directions.

The outcome was that there are "...almost two dozen L2 strategy classification systems." (Oxford, 1993a, p. 182). Nevertheless, it has been suggested that research related to the use of language learning strategies in the SLA process can be grouped in five general areas. These include:

1. Linguistically based strategy systems dealing with language monitoring, inferencing, formal and functional practising (Bialystok, 1978), various types of communication strategies like paraphrasing or borrowing (Tarone, 1977), and the concept of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980);

2. Systems based on psychological functions such as cognitive and socio-affective strategies (Marton, 1983; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990);

3. Systems based on typologies describing characteristic behaviours of successful language learners (Naiman, et al., 1978; Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975);

4. Systems based primarily on particular learning skills such as vocabulary learning, reading comprehension, or writing (Cohen, 1990); and,

5. Systems based on different types of learners related to their learning styles (Sutter, 1995) or strategy-style linkages (Ehrman & Oxford, 1989; Ely, 1989).

(Oxford, 1993)

Further to the above, other researchers such as Krashen (as cited in Stern, 1984), took the stance that strategies occurred in a *natural progression* in the role of language acquisition, while Ellis (1985) suggested that strategy combinations are hierarchically related, in a psycholinguistic sense, such that they emerge as linguistic

structures, becoming increasingly more complex. He also posited that attempting to identify learner strategies was somewhat like "...stumbling blindfolded around a room to find a hidden object." (Ellis, as cited in Towell & Hawkins, 1994, p. 226).

It is evident from the foregoing that the research field related to strategy use in SLA is fraught with ambiguities and conflicting perspectives. Thus the use of the term *strategy* in SLA by Cohen or Ely would be similar to Oxford's use of the term, but less like the use of the term by Krashen or Canale and Swain.

Nevertheless, it can assuredly be said that SLA is a complex, multifaceted, interactive endeavour and learning/acquisition occurs in many different ways, some of them episodic and unplanned. LLS use has emerged consistently as one factor among others (for example, personality and motivational factors) important in understanding the language learning process (Naiman, et al., 1978; Reid, 1987). It has transpired over time that LLS use in SLA merits research focus, if for no other reason than that second language learners seemed better prepared for the process and were predictably more successful, if equipped with the resourcefulness that strategic behaviour seemed to avail.

Problem Statement

The field of strategic learning behaviour in the field of SLA abounds with inconsistencies. There have been theoretical shifts, such as the shift from emphasis on linguistic form and content, to an emphasis on the role of the learner in the generative construction of language.

Researchers have also noted a persistent lack of clarification regarding concepts

and strategy typologies (Oxford & Cohen, 1992), inconsistencies related to terminology use (Stevick, 1990), and ambiguous, ambivalent research goals (Gass, 1988). These inconsistencies pose obvious dilemmas for focused empirical work in the development of a congruent SLA theory base.

Thus, although many definitions, criteria, and typologies have been used to conceptualize the way in which LLS are operative in language learning, satisfactory explanation and understanding of strategy use remain elusive at a theoretical level. At the classroom level, teachers need a more informed understanding of both teaching and learning conditions that result in optimal successful SLA.

Existing research seems to suggest that learning strategies are significant in the role of successful second language learning (Bialystok, 1978; Cohen, 1990; Wenden, 1987a). What remains uncertain is an informed understanding of *what* learning strategies are used by successful language learners, and perhaps even more significantly *when* and *how* they are used (Gass & Selinker, 1994; Rubin & Thompson, 1994; Wenden, 1986).

Purpose of the Study

Long (1990) suggested that an explanatory theory of SLA should first be interactionist (recognizing both learner variables and environmental variables). Secondly, he suggested that a satisfactory SLA theory would need to specify which learner and environmental factors are of constant significance, and which are less constant and/or interactive with other variables, including when and how this occurs.

The purpose of this study is to contribute to a more informed understanding of

LLS use by successful adult female language learners. For example, what strategies do learners use in their language learning? Do strategies include informal behaviours linked to formal learning experiences? Is it possible for learners to conceptualize and articulate these concisely? Are learning situations important in prompting and using successful strategies? By examining these kinds of questions it may be possible to better understand the use of learning strategies by the successful adult female language learners who are the subjects of this study.

Although gender was not specifically a focus in this study, it should be noted that gender is a significant factor in the women's use of language (Tannen, 1990). For example, it has been reported that women use more LLS, both qualitatively and quantitatively, than men (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989). It has been posited that LLS use may be related to various particular female attributes including physiology of the brain (Caine & Caine, 1991), purpose of language use (Tannen, 1990), context of language use (Green & Oxford, 1995), etc. Nevertheless, since gender was one variable which remained constant in this study, it was not specifically investigated relative to learners' use of LLS.

One of the barriers to the utilization of innovative and creative teaching and learning processes in the field of SLA, is the problem of linking theory to practice. Studies like the present one might be an asset in providing such a linkage.

It has been suggested elsewhere that research studies using multi-method, multi-factorial approaches involving a variety of data collection techniques, both qualitative and quantitative, may prove useful in language learning research (Oxford & Cohen,

1992). Extensive longitudinal, cross-sectional (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990), and cross-cultural (Oxford, 1995) studies are needed to produce consistency in our expanded understanding of strategic processes used by language learners. The current study is a small research effort oriented toward a generally enhanced understanding of language learning strategy use through the examination and reporting of patterns of strategy usage particular to a group of adult females involved in SLA.

The Professional Experiential Context

Sometimes in professional teaching practice, an observation of, or reflection on, an apparently ineffectual methodological approach can serve as a cue to reflective thought. As such, the very focus on something that does not seem to support learning, prompts one to ask substantive questions regarding the possible nature or process of a more effective method. The thoughts leading to the following two research questions evolved in much that way.

Some years ago, while guiding language learners attempting to master a listening comprehension task, I became aware that in fact the task offered a limited range of solution possibilities. It was a static, traditional exercise attempting to teach adult language learners listening and comprehension skills in a language laboratory setting. It confined them to a rigid protocol, predetermined by the teacher and the lab instructor.

However, as the task progressed, it became evident that not all learners were following the *authorized* approach. Despite cautionary requests from me, their teacher, and the language laboratory instructor, some learners persisted in doing what seemed

to enable them to capture the sounds and meaning inherent in the learning material. Further, it seemed that the learners trying their own, alternative methods were achieving a higher level of task success (comprehension) than some others in the class who were being compliant.

When reflecting on this observation, I was prompted to analyze the components of that learning situation: the non-compliant learner behaviour, the lesson plan, the material, the learning context, etc. This reflection resulted in a number of thoughts. For example, what were these learners trying to do by following their own approaches to the listening material rather than the one authorized by the teachers? Did these more self-directed learners have their own particular, more effective ways of organizing and understanding the material? What if these behaviours really were associated with success in developing listening comprehension skill? Could they be observed in other areas of language learning and would it be possible to identify them and the situations in which they occurred?

The following research questions address limited aspects of both the *what* and *how* of strategic behaviour in language learning. In particular they examine the use of strategies by seven successful adult female language learners.

The Research Questions

1. What are language learning strategies used by this respondent group of successful adult female second language learners? and;

2. In what naturalistic life situations are these revealed?

Definition of Terms

Second Language Acquisition (SLA): the process of acquiring another language after one's native language has been learned (Gass & Selinker, 1994).

Language Learning Strategies (LLS): activities, often conscious, one engages to facilitate and support the growth of proficiency in the SLA process. For the purpose of this study, such strategies include those suggested in Oxford's (1985) taxonomy. They are:

Direct Strategy Class (interact directly with linguistic material to be used as when the learner reorganizes or reinterprets linguistic structures). The macrostrategy categories in this class are: a) memory strategies—used to encode, recognize, and retrieve language information into memory (i.e., imagery, grouping, etc.) (Thompson, 1987); b) cognitive strategies—involve manipulation or reorganization of linguistic/task oriented material to facilitate its assimilation into existing knowledge structures (O'Malley, 1990); and, c) compensation strategies—strategies used to overcome gaps in learners' developing knowledge proficiency by the use of clues (contextual and linguistic) to infer meaning, stalling to maintain ongoing negotiation, and circumlocution to facilitate discourse with native speakers (Oxford, 1985).

Indirect Strategy Class (strategies that contribute indirectly to facilitate SLA by facilitating learning through planning and organization, empathetic and positive affective behaviours, etc.): a) metacognitive strategies—used to organize, monitor, and self-direct learning activities (Flavell, 1979; Wenden, 1987a); b) affective strategies—used to recognize and control attitudes and emotions, manage anxiety; and,

c) social strategies—strategies used to create and maintain social interaction with proficient speakers of the target language (Oxford, 1985; Wong-Fillmore, 1976).

Significance of the Study

The current field-based study is significant because it addresses an area of second language learning which offers potential for an expanded and refined conceptualization of the strategic learning behaviours (i.e., LLS) of successful language learners. It also offers the possibility of identifying and examining life situations in the learning process, potentially amenable to strategy use and supportive of other developing/less successful language learners.

As extended learning and self-directedness are now realized as critical factors in the process of second language learning (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992), both the nature and location of individual learners' LLS have become increasingly relevant to research in the field. As Anita Wenden (n.d.a) said,

> Learning takes time, and it is not always possible for learners to achieve the level of communicative competence that will enable them to function without difficulty outside the classroom within the time period set aside for the course. Secondly, in setting objectives and outlining tasks, it is impossible to anticipate the many different contexts in which the learners' professional and personal responsibilities will place them once they leave. Their needs change and vary (pp. 4-5).

Therefore, in order to fully benefit from structured learning experiences learners need to acquire learning skills and knowledge about the learning process. One area of skill suggested by Wenden and other researchers (Oxford & Cohen, 1992; Sharkey, 1995) focuses on learners' informed use of LLS as a way of achieving autonomy and success in second language learning. Thus, the current study is significant because such efforts, however limited in scope, *cumulatively* contribute to an experienced knowledge base from which meaningful SLA theory can be realized.

CHAPTER TWO

Professional Literature Perspectives on Adult Language Learners: Their Strategy Use in Second Language Acquisition

Introduction

Many adult learners involved in SLA are studying English as a Second Language at universities and colleges in Britain, Australia, the United States, and Canada. These learners come at considerable cost in terms of time, money, and psychological energy to study English, hoping to achieve improved opportunities in terms of educational, employment, and social opportunities. Some are deemed successful in their endeavours, and are able to pursue their dreams. Others are not as successful in their English language studies, and suffer disappointment and distress as well as the loss of material resources (Lightbrown & Spada, 1995; Stern, 1983).

Thus, the process of Second Language Acquisition has become an integral part of the transformational learning process of many adults relocating to alien linguistic milieus. Adult SLA, unlike the usual course of a child's first language acquisition process, has not always proven to be a successful, predictable process (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992; Stern, 1983).

There is a plethora of literature relating to the language learning process, language learning variables, individual learner attributes, the role of *innatist* (genetic) factors versus the role of social interaction (Gass, 1988), neurocognitive factors (Schumann, 1994), and the role of individual learning attributes or characteristics including learners' use of language learning strategies.

It is therefore necessary to initially priorize those research aspects that seem most pertinent to the present study, in particular in research relevant to the process involved in adult second language acquisition. (Second language acquisition in this context refers to the learning of any language after the learning of one's native language, and may include the learning of a third or fourth language) (Gass & Selinker, 1994).

Research Challenges in Second Language Acquisition

The ultimate goal in research related to second language learning is to better understand how language is acquired and the operative mechanisms and processes which contribute to that acquisition (Gass, 1988). Realization of this goal has been frustrated by major controversies in the field of second language learning regarding the role of the biological and experiential substrates operative in the process. Much of the discussion "...was carried out in such a polarized way that it was hard not to get the impression that everything was either due to innate abilities *or* to experience." (Wode, 1994, p. 326).

A variety of research efforts addressing both experiential and biological factors flourished separately, and it was difficult to achieve theoretical proposals sufficiently expansive to address a comprehensive understanding of the processes involved in second language acquisition (Gass, 1988; Long, 1990).

Perspectives on the Nature of Language

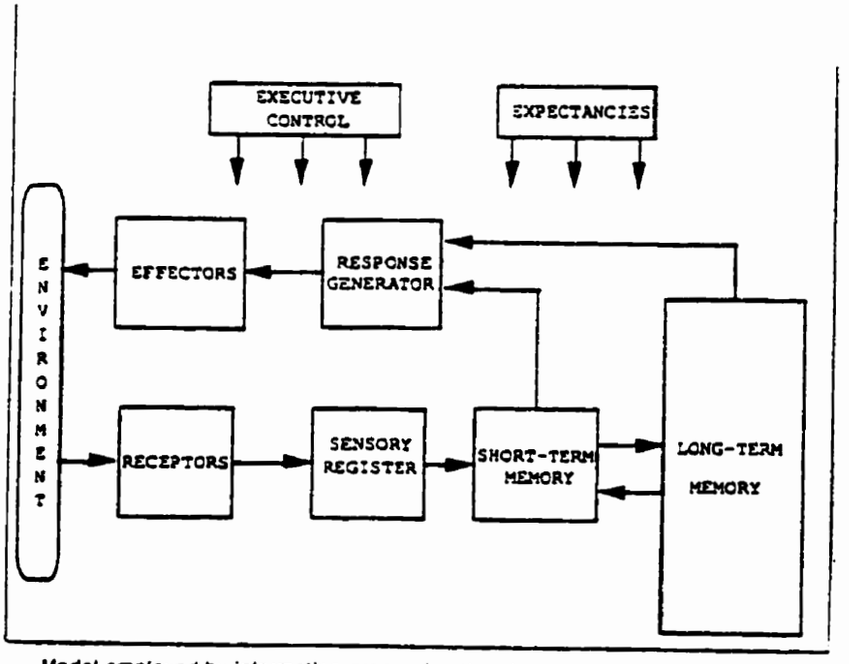
Research claims purporting genetic, innate characteristics and processes (The Innateness Theory) to explain SLA were primarily investigated within the academic

realm of linguistics (Stern, 1991).

Early efforts to understand the nature of language learning were based on B. F. Skinner's (1938) behaviourist paradigm. Skinner assumed that all human behaviour, including language learning, resulted from a conditioning process whereby organisms, including man, responded to particular stimuli.

Support for the *innatist* perspective evolved in an acceptance of what is called the Stagewise Theory (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 80). This theory assumed that second language acquisition was a largely predictable process, at least somewhat constricted by universal, developmentally-determined processes (Pinker, 1994). Thus, behaviourist psychology using a deductive/analytical approach sought to address SLA as an aspect of habit formation (Raimes, 1983; Stern, 1983). Meanwhile the experiential perspective, which assumed that SLA occurred as a result of a human learning process, was being investigated within the realms of cognitive psychology (Gagne, 1974; McLaughlin, 1987). In Gagne's world of learning, humans were active processors of information. He suggested that there existed two interactive processes, executive control and expectancy, which significantly affected a human learner's ability to facilitate language learning.

Figure 1. Information Processing Model



Model employed by information-processing theories of learning and memory. (from R. M. Gagne, 1974, Essentials of learning for instruction)

A significant aspect of Gagne's (1974) paradigm was his suggestion that through the two processes of executive control and expectancy, learners could affect the outcome of their own learning behaviours. That is, the learner's behaviour would be a function of choices or strategies which could be mobilized to meet specific learning goals. Inherent in this model of learning was the assumption that the human learner, through these control processes, could continuously refine his/her learning process, thereby learning how to learn (Gagne, 1974).

Expanded Perspective of Language Learning

In 1978, a descriptive, explanatory model of second language learning which included a multiplicity of interactive variables including *implicit knowledge, explicit knowledge,* and *other knowledge* was proposed (Bialystok, 1978). She was seeking to address the issue that not all communication could be explained by innateness models (i.e., Krashen's Learning Acquisition Model) (Brown, 1987). Also, Bialystok (1978) suggested a role for language learning strategies (practising, inferencing, and monitoring) which demonstrated a salient role for active learner involvement (i.e., cognitive and metacognitive activities) related to SLA. Thus, Bialystok's (1978) model represented an important transitional device, as it addressed the limitations of purely innatist theories in explaining language learning. By demonstrating an "...implicit/explicit continuum with connecting inferencing processes...." (Brown, 1987, p. 190), Bialystok was able to suggest possible explanations for the complexity of second language acquisition.

Further, Bialystok suggested a reorientation in understanding the learner and

learner's role in the learning process. She suggested that some aspects of the language learning process were *obligatory*, while others were *optional*. She proposed that the learner's use of these *optional* categories served "...as means for exploiting available information to improve competence in second language." (Bialystok, 1978, p. 76). In text, she described the learner's use of inferencing as a mode of hypothesis formation "...in which some information is used to generate an explicitly linguistic hypothesis about a previously unknown meaning or form in a second language." (Bialystok, 1978, p. 78). This was an early explanatory effort aimed at understanding how learning strategies might be operationalized, in order to realize second language as a constructivist process, in an increasingly socio-interactive, psychological sense (Agnew & Brown, 1989; Neimeyer, 1993).

Alternative Approaches to Strategy Use in SLA

At the same time as these linguistic researchers were expanding ideas about second language acquisition, some linguists began to examine SLA from a slightly different perspective (Canale & Swain, 1980; Hatch, 1983). They observed it was unlikely that a direct transference of morphemes from the first language occurred (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992) in the process of SLA. Rather, it might be more useful to consider both the role of morpheme acquisition, etc., *and* learner variables such as native language, status, goals, ages, language proficiency levels, etc. (Gass, 1988).

The construction of communication systems of language was hence described as having both grammatical and communicative approaches (Canale & Swain, 1980). The grammatical approach of SLA was organized on the basis of linguistic or

grammatical forms (phonological forms, syntactical patterns, lexical items). The communicative approach was organized on the basis of communicative functions (apologizing, describing, inviting).

Thus, within a framework called the Communicative Competence Theory (Canale & Swain, 1980), it was suggested that language learners needed to develop competence in four areas in order to achieve success in speaking. These four areas were grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. This theory was important because it addressed the interactive nature of language (grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic). However, the term 'strategic competence', with its focus on interactive communication strategies, used the term strategy quite differently from the way in which Bialystok (1978) had suggested. That is, Bialystok's use of strategy focused more on the nature of learners' use of LLS to facilitate language learning, and less on their role in realizing communication goals.

Aspects of this phenomenon were later described as the "...social interactionist theory...." (Gass, 1988, p. 17), which assumes that language and social interaction cannot be separated, and that the multifaceted, interactive nature of the process is important in understanding skill development in second language acquisition (Gass, 1988). Social interactionist theory also assumed that cognition and language were crucially context bound and could best be understood from that perspective.

Early research in cognitive psychology relating to second language skill acquisition, spoke of the learner from an information processing perspective

(Anderson, 1982; McLaughlin, Rossman, & McLeod, 1983). The information processing perspective assumed that learners actively impose cognitive schemata on incoming data in an effort to organize the information (McLaughlin, et al., 1983). It was also assumed that the learner had a limited capacity system, that the process of selecting critical information for further processing was important and occurred in the act of noticing/attending, and that attention could be controlled (Tomlin & Villa, 1994).

Consciousness and noticing (Tomlin & Villa, 1994) are two important cognitive strategies which are particularly relevant to SLA. It is critically important that the learner gain skill in precisely differentiating among the various linguistic structures (feature analysis, lexical items, etc.) in order to develop both fluency and precision in the target language. Further, the ability to create structure through grouping, classification, and organization of linguistic structure, aids the learner in creating meaningful personalized learning structures that are more effectively encoded and retrieved (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

This inclusion of multiple external contextual factors, *and* the hermeneutical role of the adult second language learner, suggested the possible role of a *constructivist* mode of knowledge structuring in second language acquisition (Dulay, Burt, & Krashen, 1982; Wittrock, 1974).

Thus, the language learner interacted constructively with the learning environment, both internal (Murphy, 1989) and external (Stern, 1983). The external environment could be considered to be the learning locale. The internal environment

included the learner's knowledge about language, including cognitive experiential level, beliefs and values, affective states, cultural background, etc., which contributed to language learning as a "hermeneutical" experience (Murphy, 1989).

However, while acknowledging this multiplicity of interactive factors that seemed critical to language learners' possible modes of organization and SLA success, the actual learning acquisition *process* remained ambiguous.

Good Language Learners

By 1987, it had become evident to researchers and teachers that "...no *single* discipline or theory or model or factor will ever provide a magic formula for solving the mystery of second language acquisition." (Brown, 1987, p. xii). It was necessary to work toward developing a broadly-based theory of second language acquisition which would guide practice and further research efforts.

In this vein, research efforts in a variety of areas emerged. One of the promising areas that emanated from this research highlighted important, inter-individual variations among language learners. Utilizing the empirical data reflecting distinguishing aspects of successful language learners, some observations and analyses were posited.

There appeared to be attributes and strategies related to the second language learning process/SLA, which successful learners possessed and less successful learners did not. Researchers and educators began to describe the characteristics which seemed to identify "good language learners" (Flavell, 1979; Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975; Wenden, 1986). The evidence from these studies lent credence to the emergent role of

the learner as a problem-solver and creator of knowledge in the field of SLA.

Naiman, Fröhlich, Stern, and Todesco (1978) began their descriptive research by acknowledging acceptance of the major problems facing second language learners. Stern (1983) had suggested that these were important in delineating possible solutions. The significant problems seemed to include:

1. The disparity between the inevitable presence of the native language and other languages as a reference system, and the inadequacy of the new language system as a frame of reference;

2. The dilemma related to attending to the linguistic forms *and* the message to be conveyed; and,

3. The choice between rational and intuitive learning (Stern, 1983).

Empirical Findings: Strategy Use in Second Language Learning

Naiman, et al., (1978) suggested that in addressing these dilemmas, some learners were more successful than others. This led to their research question: "Do good learners tackle the learning task differently from poor learners, and do learners have certain characteristics which predispose them to good or poor learning?." (p. 2). Findings from their interviews with "good language learners" led them to believe, that in a general sense, there were five distinguishing traits which characterized the good language learner. For example, it seemed that:

1. They assumed an active approach to the learning task, purposefully seeking out learning opportunities;

2. They made the assumption that language was a system and used a variety of

comparison and inferencing techniques to optimize this approach;

3. They were conscious of the dual roles of language as both a mode of communication and a mode of socio-cultural interaction;

4. They realized that there were affective demands within the language learning task and were able to successfully manage this area of challenge; and,

5. They were able to monitor their developing language learning system, used inferencing in attempts to validate the adequacy of their linguistic performance, and asked for corrective feedback from native speakers (Naiman, et al., 1978, p. 14-15). Later research efforts confirmed that Naiman, et al., (1978) had captured in a global way the essence of learners' "...strategies later to be classified by researchers as: cognitive, metacognitive and affective." (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 4).

Role of Empirical Research

Gradually, empirical and descriptive studies suggesting a difference existed between successful language learners and less successful language learners emerged. It seemed that the more proficient, for example, good language learners, might be doing something different or special in their learning endeavours (Stern, 1985; Rubin, 1985). Those findings "...anticipated what cognitive psychology was realizing independently, that competent individuals are effective because of special ways of processing information." (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 2).

Social Interactionist Theory in SLA

The cognitive theory component of social interactionism proposes language learning as *one* aspect of human learning. Social interactionist theory also includes the

role of individual learner characteristics in the process of SLA. As such, it is possible to perceive a multifaceted, interactive process of SLA, within which exists a significant role for *both* the innate attributes of the learner *and* his/her experiential/cognitive level of language learning. This has shaped a more comprehensive understanding of the language acquisition process, with the potential to refocus, refine, and expand research efforts.

Language learning strategies occur as a component of cognition in social interactionist theory. Social interactionist theory assumes that the areas of language, cognition, and social interaction cannot logically be separated without distorting the way in which linguistic and interactive skills develop (Gass & Selinker, 1994). This perspective is reflected in Stern's (1983) model for second language acquisition and in a revised socio-educational model (Gardiner & MacIntyre, 1993) in which various constructs important to SLA are located with reference to various other interactive factors. Among the constructs included interactively in these models is that of second language learning strategies.

Potential for Strategy Use in Second Language Learning

The construct of cognitive psychology has been used to conceptualize a variety of aptitudes and processes that the human mind uses in interpreting and manipulating incoming sensory information. Eisner (1994) suggests six basic components be included in a taxonomy of cognitive processes. These are possession of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Through these mental operations or processes of learning, sensory input is

thought to be modified by the learner into knowledge or knowledge structures. Thus, input becomes intake, and schemata encoding the intake forms knowledge (Gass, 1988). This knowledge can then be stored in long-term memory to be retrieved and used when needed as output (Bialystok, 1978; Gass, 1988). The particular mechanisms used to manipulate the incoming information, and later to retrieve and apply it, have been generally referred to as cognitive learning strategies (Dansereau, 1985; O'Malley, 1990).

It has been suggested by Naiman, et al. (1978) and other researchers that adult language learners' use of strategies facilitate the language learning process in a variety of ways. These include: promoting an ambience of active learner control and self-directedness when approaching learning material (Reid, 1987); increasing the time on task (Wenden, 1987b); increasing the depth of focus in relationship with learning material (Schmidt, 1990); self-assessment (Holec, 1987); and, the facilitation of introspective thought (Faerch & Kasper, 1987); etc. All of these appear conducive to reception, refinement, retention, and retrieval—the processes thought to be salient in the second language learning experience.

However, despite positive research support for language learning strategy use (Cohen, 1987; Oxford, 1985), a paradigmatic shift (Raimes, 1983; Swaffar, 1989) in conceptualizing the language learning process was necessary to more fully validate strategy use. As the field of second language acquisition sought to address language learning interactively, it was particularly critical to address not only the role of cognition in the learning process, but to also note an expanded role for the learner in

the sense of humanistic psychology. This role of the learner emphasized the uniquely human attributes of the learner, the need to respect the freedom of the learner, and the need to regard the dignity of the learner as a human being (Moskowitz, 1980).

As the role of the learner was acknowledged as a creator of knowledge, and as second language acquisition was recognized as a constructivist process, it became increasingly important to validate ways in which the learning process could be facilitated and supported. The use of language learning strategies, in developing learner autonomy in the language learning process, seemed to be appropriate to this goal (Wenden, 1987b).

Coupled with a heightened level of respect for this learner's basic humanity, an appreciation of the adult language learner's associated responsibility for furthering his/her own learning process has evolved (Oxford, 1990a). The more successful or expert language learner seems to have a better understanding of this role and the level of responsibility he/she has for their own learning activities (Swaffar, 1987; Wenden, 1987a).

Thus behaviorally, the more successful language learner is often characterized by an ability to utilize learning strategies particularly appropriate to their personal attributes, needs, and goals in the language learning process (Reid, 1987; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992). It seems that language learners at all levels use some learning strategies (Vann & Abraham, 1990), individual learners may use strategies on a continuum of increasing precision and focus (O'Malley, 1990), or may use the same strategy in adaptively different ways depending on the task requirements (Mohan,

1986).

It was noted, however, that some learners are not consciously aware of the strategies they use, or selectively use those which are considered to be less helpful, noncommunicative, and mundane (Nyikos, 1987). Others are aware of a wide range of strategy use, but they employ these strategies in a "...random, unfocused, almost desperate manner," such that they are of little value in successfully completing the task at hand (Vann & Abraham, 1989, as cited in Oxford & Cohen, 1992, p. 2).

It has been posited that associated phenomena, such as learning style (Reid, 1987), sex and maturation (Oxford & Crookall, 1989), and level of literate proficiency (Schumacher & Nash, 1991) may influence adult language learners' choice of strategy. However, the relationship between strategy use and proficiency is complex (Ehrman & Oxford, 1989), and some learners do not profess conscious strategy use at all. Viewed differently, strategies may reflect a level of reflective thought that is found primarily in adult learners (Brookfield, 1990; Mezirow & Associates, 1990). There are many complex explanations for all of the related factors which influence the use of LLS. However, it is beyond the scope of this study to examine these factors (i.e., learning styles) individually or interactively.

Strategy Classification Schemes

A number of sophisticated taxonomies and inventories have been developed by researchers to describe language learning strategies, and facilitate their identification (i.e., Bialystok, 1978; Mohan, 1986; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Rubin, 1981). Some were based on differentiation between *cognitive*, *metacognitive*, and *affective* strategies

(O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Others referred to *direct* and *indirect* categories (Rubin, 1981). Still others focused on the understanding of *communication strategies* (Bialystok, 1978). Many of these categories overlapped, and were difficult to operationalize in a meaningful manner.

Subsequently, Rebecca Oxford (1985) attempted to build on some of these earlier classification schemes by suggesting two broad categories (see Appendix D). She chose to focus her taxonomy and scheme on *Direct* and *Indirect* Strategies (Oxford, 1985), which she modelled on Dansereau's primary and support strategies for learning (Dansereau, 1985).

Direct Strategies referred to those which directly involved language and required mental processing of the language (Oxford, 1985). For example, strategies in which the learner, despite gaps in knowledge, used synonyms, guessing manoeuvres, etc., to successfully communicate meaning would constitute a direct compensation strategy (see Appendix D).

Conversely, Indirect Strategies were said to be those that support and manage language learning (Cohen, 1990; Oxford, 1985). A strategy in this category might include consciously paying attention to explicit aspects of a review, or planning to overview material, with the aim of linking novel material with the conceptually familiar.

Those two major, general classes were further divided into a total of six groups capable of connecting with, supporting, and assisting one another in the understanding of learning strategy classification (see Appendix D). A significant aspect of Oxford's

(1985) work related to her ability to integrate the theoretical underpinnings of the learner strategy literature, with practical suggestions for aiding language learners in strategy use (Cohen, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). From this taxonomy, Oxford developed an assessment tool called Strategies in Language Learning (SILL), which has been used extensively and cross-culturally to evaluate learners' perceptions of their language learning strategy use (Cohen, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995). To date, SILL appears to be the only language learning strategy instrument that has been tested extensively in multiple ways. That is, it has also been tested extensively for utility, validity, and reliability and has been used in forty to fifty major studies involving approximately nine thousand language learners worldwide (Oxford & Stock, 1995). The instrument has been adapted for LLS testing in various language learning contexts.

The Strategies Inventory in Language Learning (version 7.0) is a fifty question, Likert scale instrument that is used to assess the preferences of language learners for particular types of learning strategies. The strategy categories which are included have been derived from existing theoretical and empirical research (Oxford, 1990).

The SILL (version 7.0) offers the learner a choice of five options of Likert scale responses (ranging from "almost never true of me" to "always or almost always true of me"). The instrument is divided into six subscales or factors relevant to the strategy categories. It thus assesses the frequency of use of language learning strategies in the six macrostrategy categories that were described by Oxford (1985). These macrostrategy categories include memory, cognitive, and compensation

strategies (Direct Strategy Class) and metacognitive, affective, and social strategies (Indirect Strategy Class).

Concluding Comments

A review of the literature has led this researcher to believe that empirical testing and refinement has borne out the authenticity and utility of Oxford's approach. Academic support for this position may be found. For example, research using the SILL tool has identified new data related to gender, age, and level of knowledge characteristic of strategy use in language learning (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990); and, "...validity of the SILL rests on predictive and correlative links with language performance." (Oxford & Stock, 1995, p. 32). A unique aspect of Oxford's taxonomy is her focus on affective strategies, and a further strength is her admonition that teachers become facilitators or guides encouraging learners to take more responsibility for their learning (Applebaum, 1993).

This latter perspective reflects an understanding of adult second language acquisition as a mode of adult learning. The learners' attributes, perspectives, and behaviour resonate a capacity for self-directedness (Knowles, 1975) and critical reflection (Brookfield, 1990). These are two learner characteristics evidenced in the successful use of language learning strategies (Faerch & Kasper, 1987; Rubin & Thompson, 1994) and presage an enhanced understanding of the ways in which successful, adult, second language acquisition may be realized.

In conclusion, any research efforts aimed at enhancing a theory of second language acquisition should meet at least two basic criteria, that of being relevant to

learners' target communicative needs, and justifiably useful in terms of psycholinguistic requisites (i.e. input processing abilities) (Long, 1990). Language learning strategies, though not fully understood, and subject to hypertaxonomizing (Gass & Selinker, 1994; Oxford & Cohen, 1992), seem to hold promise in both of the above areas.

Theoretical Framework

Despite many levels of approach to second language acquisition, certain lines of evidence are useful in understanding this complex phenomena, operationally. One such line of evidence has been presented, in the research, describing the use of language learning strategies by learners in the process of SLA.

Language learning strategy research has been fruitful, partially because learner behaviours, as exhibited in empirical findings (Naiman, et al., 1978; Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975), supported the theoretical underpinnings that have evolved in later research efforts (Bialystok, 1978; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1985).

However, as the paradigm conceptualizing SLA shifted from a product (language) centred position, to a process (learning) position, the relationship of the learner to the learning process had to be redefined (Gass, 1988; Raymond, 1982; Reid, 1987; Swaffar, 1989). The role of the learner, including learner attributes, was emerging as a pivotal research consideration in better understanding how success in SLA could be achieved. It became evident that SLA research efforts should focus on some of the issues that had surfaced in empirical studies (Bialystok, 1978; Naiman, et al., 1978; Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975), as well as theoretical linguistic questions. That

is, what were the main challenges facing adult learners involved in the process of SLA, and what were some learning behaviours that seemed successful in addressing these challenges? Cumulatively, what relevance did the challenges and behaviours have for the learners as persons (Stevick, 1990), and what significance were these actions in the SLA research efforts?

Theoretical efforts had moved the SLA process into the realm of cognitive science, and described second language learning as a complex cognitive process. Initially, this cognitive learning conceptualization perceived the learners primarily from a basic, limited capacity, processing perspective (Anderson, 1987). However, it became increasingly evident that this was a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for understanding the process whereby successful SLA occurred.

By 1988 many researchers had accepted the position that second language acquisition was a multi-faceted endeavour (Gass & Selinker, 1994) in which *innate*, *cognitive*, and *socio-interactive* factors were important in various ways, at various times. Precisely how this is realized operationally, in terms of mental activities and learning processes, remains unclear.

Inherent in this understanding of learner attributes, as foci of consideration, there emerged the perception that, in SLA, the learner processed incoming language information and behaviours in terms of a variety of significant, individual, learner variables. Some learners seemed to be more successful in managing the processing and utilization of language input in SLA than others.

Options abound in understanding why some adult language learners are more

successful than others in the SLA process. The use of LLS seems to be one way of understanding a problem-solving approach available to aid learners in managing their language learning challenges. There seem to be variant forms in which the use of this strategic approach supports the language learners' reception, refinement, retention, and retrieval (processes thought to be salient) in the language learning process.

However, not all researchers who have investigated the use of language learning strategies have found consistency, credibility, or usefulness in the construct as a way of expanding their understanding of the ways in which learners successfully manage the process of SLA (Nyikos, 1987; Reiss, 1983). An important consideration seems to be the ability of the language learner to tailor the use of strategic behaviour to match personal learning style, level of language competency, task requirements, etc. (Oxford, 1993; Reid, 1987). However, there are other factors such as affect which are not well understood or investigated (Phillips, 1990) that may prove pivotal to the process of SLA.

The role of language learning strategies in SLA has been investigated by a number of researchers who have created complex and sometimes confusing categories and taxonomies in an effort to conceptualize and describe the construct (Bialystok & Sharwood-Smith, 1985; Oxford & Cohen, 1992).

A review of the literature germane to these efforts, has led this researcher to believe that the taxonomy and research approach, advocated by Rebecca Oxford, presages possibilities for better understanding learners' use of language learning strategies. That is, though still evolving (Green & Oxford, 1995), Oxford's approach

has potential for identifying, describing, and reflecting on language learners' strategy use and the contexts in which it is evidenced (Oxford & Cohen, 1992).

Oxford suggests the role of LLS use both in *direct* interaction with the language to be learned, and in *indirect* behaviours which support and manage language learning. The value of Oxford's work has been recognized by other learning strategy researchers (Cohen, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). The purpose of the current study is to examine the use of language learning strategies by successful adult female language learners.

The evidence, that has evolved for this researcher, has resulted in the belief that learner use of strategic behaviour may be a fruitful area of SLA investigation. Therefore, the focus of this study will be to examine, reflect upon, evaluate, and describe the presence of language learner strategies and the situational locale of their occurrences in the particular SLA environments evidenced in the research data.

Through a review of pertinent literature and personal contact with professional language strategy researchers (Cohen, Sutter, Oxford, and Wenden), an evolving theoretical framework, as previously described, will form a philosophical and theoretical framework for the interpretation and explanations of the findings of the current study. The following chapter "Methodology: Methods Toward Meanings" will describe and discuss this methodological framework.

CHAPTER THREE

Methods Toward Meaning

Introduction

A primarily qualitative research design was chosen for this study, relative to the purpose of the study, and the researcher's personal interest in the role of the adult learner in the SLA process. However, historical information available on possible design approaches (Chamot, 1987; Rubin & Thompson, 1994), and the somewhat amorphous developmental level of theory related to learning strategy use in SLA, were also factors in design selection.

Research in education has at times attempted to understand the complex qualities of human learning through the line of cybernetic models and scientific paradigms. However, it may be argued that it is equally relevant to shape and interpret educational research, based on the concept of connoisseurship embedded in an artistic paradigm (Eisner, 1977). Connoisseurship assumes a refined level of tacit knowledge and experience embodied in the researcher/connoisseur enabling him/her to discern subtle qualities, and perceive complex nuances, related to the research data. It is this ability to recognize and interpret the qualities and relationships that thus emerge in the connoisseur's inductive process, that serve to bridge the findings with their relevance in addressing research questions (Eisner, 1994).

Qualitative research allows for an in-depth, detailed description of the subject matter. This approach is particularly relevant for the study of relatively uncharted human behavioral phenomena. Rich or deep descriptions (Bogden & Biklen, 1992;

Patton, 1987) are useful in generating theory through the inductive process of reasoning from facts or cases (Merriam, 1988).

Qualitative methodology facilitates descriptions of reality from the informants' subjective perspective. It is assumed that those involved (both researcher and informants) have particular knowledge, experience, and perspectives significant to an enhanced understanding of the research focus (Grotjahn, 1987; Patton, 1987). Thus, the phenomenon being researched may be revealed, and understood, more authentically and insightfully.

In an attempt to better understand perspectives of existing researchers who focus on language learning strategy use, the writer initially made personal contact with several such researchers. Oxford (1990) had suggested this would be possible and had included contact addresses.

Personal responses were received from Andrew Cohen, Anita Wenden, Will Sutter, and Rebecca Oxford. These included a compact disc describing Sutter's work and some associated findings; a letter with literature references from Cohen; literature references and relevant textual reports from Wenden; and, telephone contacts, textual reports, and a note from Rebecca Oxford.

These contributed to a personally encouraging research perspective, as well as a broader knowledge base from which to plan the methodological approach to this study.

Design

Strategies inventory in language learning (SILL).

The Strategies Inventory in Language Learning (version 7.0, ESL/EFL 9c,

Oxford, 1989) is a fifty question, Likert scale assessment tool that assesses learners' use of language learning strategies (LLS).

Initially, I was interested in finding a useful, valid mode of evaluating learners' language learning strategy use in the classroom. I was also looking for a means of raising learners' consciousness related to their strategic language learning behaviour. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) stated that the SILL had been widely tested and seemed to have utility in the area of understanding learners' use of language learning strategies. Pursuing this lead, I contacted Rebecca Oxford who faxed me a copy of an article, at the time in press, which evaluated the worldwide use of the SILL (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995).

The short version of the SILL (version 7.0; ESL/EFL 9c, Oxford, 1989) used in the present study was reviewed extensively in the aforementioned article. At the time of publication, the SILL had been used in forty to fifty studies, including a dozen dissertations and theses, and had been tested in a variety of countries and languages around the world. It was estimated that approximately 8,000 to 9,000 language learners had been involved in these studies and that SILL appears to be the only language learning strategy instrument that has been extensively tested for reliability and validity in multiple ways (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995). In addition to the original English version, the EFL/ESL SILL has been translated into a variety of languages including Arabic, Japanese, Russian, and Thai.

In designing the SILL in 1989, a factor analysis process was used to organize subscales of strategy groups reflecting categories of behaviour related to language

learning behaviour as proposed in Oxford's (1985) typology of language learning strategies (i.e., Direct and Indirect classes containing six macrostrategy categories). On the basis of this structure, the SILL questionnaire items are divided into six different categories. These include: memory strategies (9 items), cognitive strategies (14 items), compensation strategies (6 items), metacognitive strategies (9 items), social strategies (6 items), and affective strategies (6 items). A short set of directions to the student including a sample item and a scoring worksheet are included in the SILL package (Appendix A).

Aside from the extensive testing that had been done to ensure its reliability, etc. (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990; Green & Oxford, 1995; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989) the SILL addresses at least three other important issues. These include: helping the learner assess use of affective and social strategies which, though important in the learning process, are often not addressed; helping the learner focus attention on personalized use of LLS through the use of a tool on which to record answers and calculate scores relative to each strategy subscale and their overall average; and, making it possible to extensively assess the use of cognitive language learning strategies, deemed important in analyzing, synthesizing, and information in the language learning process. In the framework of this study, the scoring was done by myself, the participant-observer, both in the interest of time constraints, and in terms of non-obtrusiveness into the classroom process.

The SILL inventory has been pretested with a group of four female Hispanic speakers to ascertain its utility in terms of linguistic and conceptual understanding for

learners at a 410 intermediate level of ESL proficiency. Generally speaking, utility had already been established, although the ease with which the task was accomplished and the time required to complete the questionnaire varied somewhat in much the same way that it did with the participants in this study.

Semi-structured interviews.

Some researchers have favoured the use of group interviews (i.e., Chamot, 1987). However, it has been found that individual interviews yield more precise, specific findings, and allow each learner an opportunity to participate at the same level (Haastrup, 1987). For this reason, it was decided that each informant would be interviewed twice, individually. The interviews, each of which consisted of two parts (see Appendix B).

The first section of the initial interview focused on questions of a general nature, thought to be significant, related to participants' learning activities, beliefs, and informal learning activities (Wenden, 1987a). The second part centred on specific task focused contexts, in which learners were asked to describe precisely what strategic behaviour they would utilize in approaching and managing specific language learning requirements (Chamot, 1987). When the interview schedule was pre-tested with one Asian intermediate female ESL learner, it consisted of questions related to language learning activities, but did not have a life situational component. While the initial format worked well in identifying successful language learning behaviours generally, some researchers believe that task focused activities yield more insights, precision, and detail to the learners' focus on their strategy use (Chamot, 1987; Wenden, 1987).

Therefore, in designing the interview schedules used in this study, a specific, task-related, life situational component was included in the latter part of both interviews. The questions were based on formatting used by two researchers who had utilized interviews in examining language learning strategies (Chamot, 1987; Rubin & Thompson, 1994).

Due to the participants' developing English language proficiency, the text form of the semi-structured interview was presented as a guide during each interview session. It was hoped that this would improve the informants' level of cognitive and linguistic control over the content, lessen possible anxiety, and improve the chances for accurate and complete information that would better inform the research questions.

With the permission of the informants, the interviews were audio recorded. In order to capture both the intent and meaning of the participants' statements, a direct transcription of each interview was planned. The use of verbal self-report in SLA research has been fraught with criticism. It is felt that respondents in self-reporting may be influenced by factors that have little to do with the reality of their actual behaviour, etc. (Cohen, 1994); in terms of historical material there is always the possibility of memory lapses, blurring, or inaccuracy. Self-report, which involves the transcription and analysis of interview data, etc., is a somewhat time-consuming process and in large studies may become prohibitively expensive. However, when learners' perceptions and interpretations of their current and personalized behaviours are the focus of self-reports, the resultant data may be quite focused, individualized, and reveal measures of reality not available through other methodological approaches

(Cohen, 1994). Because of the conceptually personalized nature of the research questions which formed the foci of this study relative to the predetermined small size of the research group, it was decided to pursue the use of self-report data through the process of individual interviewing.

Reflective notes.

In planning the initial design of this study it was hoped that classroom learning logs could be used as an integral part of the study. In reality, at least three dilemmas arose in connection with this plan. First, learners in the 410 classes had only initiated learning log use at the beginning of the term in their class and the whole process was still somewhat innovative. Secondly, the researcher was concerned about the obtrusiveness of the research process and the ramifications of this for all concerned. That is, there would be both practical and conceptual differences of journal/log documentation between those involved in the study and others (male learners/non-participant females, etc.). Finally, the logistics of actually entering the research site were somewhat ambiguous as the researcher was not a teacher in the English Language Centre program. In the light of these dilemmas, it was decided to try to find another way to access this level of insight into participants' personalized perspectives on their SLA learning behaviours.

The researcher decided that a way of creating a mini-diary data collection process was to ask each participant to make notes of their learning behaviours over a two week period of term time. It was realized that in creating the structure of what the researcher has called reflective notes (see Appendix C), an inherent bias might be

created toward certain types of responses. However, the researcher felt it was necessary to try to focus participants' attention on language learning processes rather than a simple annotation of daily activities.

The process of writing in a learning diary or log has proven valuable in helping learners pay conscious attention to their learning strategies (Rubin & Thompson, 1994). It also seems to facilitate learners' evaluative focus and enables the manipulation/refining of language learning strategies, particularly when noting them with reference to a particular learning task or learning situation (Naiman, et al., 1978; Rubin, 1987; Scarcella & Oxford, 1994).

At the suggestion of a committee member, the researcher also kept a reflective journal of her own experiences during the research process. This has served to capture immediate dilemmas, questions, and insights related to the research process. The journal enabled the researcher to record insights and to reflect on experiences and phenomena generated by the research process. Increasingly, one is reminded of the tentativeness and uncertainties of assumptions sometimes made, and the necessity to remain open to alternative realities and expanded options.

In the search for underlying meaning and rationale in qualitative, reflective research, the evolving data becomes not simply an aspect of a research project, but a relevant, integral aspect of one's professional and personal stance. In somewhat the same way that language is seen as a generative process (O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Kupper, & Russo, 1985), the evolution of the reflective researcher/practitioner in the qualitative research process may also reflect a generative

process.

Selection of Subjects

It has been suggested that a number of variables, including gender, cognitive style, and personality, influence the way in which learners utilize language learning strategies in the SLA process (Ehrman & Oxford, 1989). In an effort to hold one of these constant, it was decided to study only female language learners.

Informants/participants for this study were learners from the intermediate level 410, English as a Second Language class at the English Language Centre, University of Victoria. They involved themselves in this study by responding to a request for volunteers, presented by the Teacher-Administrator at the English Language Centre. The request presented learners, registered in the program, with an opportunity to participate in a study examining the learning strategies of successful adult female language learners.

Participants were selected from a population of intermediate language learners. It is felt that an intermediate proficiency level in a second language is necessary to enable learners to reflect upon and discuss their learning behaviour (Chamot, 1987). That is, while some language learners at advanced levels of language learning use strategies, their automization of the LLS prevents conscious identification, verbalization, and discussion of their introspective learning activities (Haastrup, 1987).

It was stipulated that the research population should represent *successful* female language learners. Success was measured by achievement of a score of between 41 and 49 (scaled) points on the Secondary Level of English Proficiency (SLEP)

(Alderson, Krahnke, & Stansfield, 1987). Designed to measure ability in spoken and written English, the SLEP test is a multiple-choice placement tool commonly used for assessing ESL students. Validity and reliability of the test have been demonstrated in data gathered from test centres around the world since 1980 (Alderson, et al., 1987).

In a more general sense, all of these women could be considered successful learners in that they had all completed tertiary education, the minimum being junior college graduation. Two of the women were professionally trained and had been employed for between one and seven years. Two of the women had studied one Asian language in addition to English, two had studied one European language and one was studying an Asian language at the time of the research study. As such they might be considered somewhat experienced language learners. One woman had experience in editing books on regional economic theory written by her father. As such, her level of literacy and experience in literacy endeavours exceeded that reported by other participants. All the women were between twenty-three and twenty-nine years of age.

Success was also deemed to be evident by the learners' involvement in specific language learning experiences. Although this included attendance of a formalized, educational ESL program (University of Victoria English Language Program), it was anticipated that learning would also include other forms of less systematic, structured learning (i.e., homestay language experience in formal cross-cultural language activities, etc.). Successful language learners have been shown to seek out both formal and informal learning experiences as a means of self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability (Pearson, 1988; Reid, 1987).

Data Collection

Introduction.

The data for this research study were collected using three data collection processes (SILL inventory, semi-structured interviews, and reflective notes) throughout November, 1994.

The required documentation pertaining to the research project had been approved by the Human Subjects Committee, University of Victoria, and the research approach was discussed with the graduate supervisor and the committee prior to commencement of the data collection process.

Initially each informant was contacted by telephone, followed by a letter to clarify the purpose of the study and the anticipated research protocol. The first meeting with the research participants took place in the English Language Centre, a site known and available to us, through arrangement by the Teacher-Administrator at the English Language Centre.

SILL: Data collection.

The SILL assessment tool consisted of fifty questions. It took participants approximately thirty to thirty-five minutes to complete. At the onset of the administration of the tool it was reiterated that the results of the test were confidential and would in no way influence learners' marks, nor would classroom teachers have any contact with the information. Having already clarified these guidelines in my telephone conversation and introductory letter, I had not anticipated this need for reassurance. However, there seemed to exist a sense of apprehension as we were

about to embark on the completion of the SILL. This SILL data collection process provided an individualized score for each learner related to her use of LLS in each of memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategy categories, as well as a score which reflected her average reported use of LLS related to all six of the categories.

Although the SILL inventory is designed so that learners can score themselves, I decided that in terms of the purpose for which the inventories were collected, and time constraints, I would score the inventories myself. Scoring is done by noting the level of Likert value for each question (1 to 5, where 1 represents almost never used, and 5 represents always or almost always used), and adding the total score for each section. Each strategy category (memory, cognitive, etc.) was then factored in terms of the weighting of its section. This provided a score reflecting the learner's preference for use of that category of strategy. Finally, all the factored values are cumulatively scored to devise a final value which represented the learner's overall average use of all six LLS categories represented in the SILL tool.

Semi-structured interviews (SSI): Data collection.

At our first meeting, in addition to completing the strategy assessment tool (SILL), each participant spoke briefly about herself, her interest in learning English, and asked questions about the research process. When the timing for the interviews was discussed at the first meeting, it became evident that a convenient time for participants to meet with the researcher was during their lunch break from 12:30 and 2:30 pm. The majority of the interviews took place during this time slot, with the

schedule arranged to accommodate other commitments of the participants. There were a total of fourteen interviews as each participant was interviewed twice. Each interview lasted about twenty minutes. One student was interviewed at the MacPherson Library because the facility at the English Language Centre was in use during our allotted time, and another student was interviewed at the home of her host family. The semi-structured interviews were audio taped with the permission of each participant.

The textual forms of both Interview I and Interview II were used to support the interview process. These were semi-structured interviews and as such not all participants' responses adhered completely to the written format.

Reflective notes (RN): Data collection.

In the third method of data collection, respondents were requested to keep 'reflective notes' in which they wrote about self-selected learning activities. It was hoped that this reporting process would encourage respondents to annotate language learning efforts in a reflective, focused manner so that their particular language learning strategies would be more evident to the researcher. Finally, it was anticipated that the note-taking process would serve to give voice to the respondents' personalized language learning strategies "...freely and intentionally chosen." (MacIntyre, 1994, p. 185).

The learners were asked to make an entry each day for a two week period on the format provided. One respondent declined participation in this activity.

Of the learners who completed this data collection process, entries varied from

three short entries to fourteen entries, some reflecting use of a single strategy and others comprised of chains of language learning strategies linked with respondents' personal feelings, beliefs, and learning experiences, etc.

Theoretical Considerations of Data Analysis

In reducing and analyzing qualitative data it is possible to use primarily inductive methods to generate themes useful for the organization of data. It is also possible to use preexisting category systems, although this may present some dilemmas. In choosing a category system, one must ensure that there is conceptual compatibility between the research questions and the theoretical perspective inherent in the preexisting category system. That is, the researcher was asking a question about the conceptual nature of participants' language learning strategy use; was Oxford's (1989) SILL category system congruent with the goals of the research questions?

Secondly, was the category system sufficiently inclusive to capture most learning strategies that might emerge? The latter issue addresses an important dilemma in using a borrowed system such as Oxford's. That is, one may tend toward data selection to fit the preexisting categories and miss conceptualizing and organizing other categories to capture idiosyncratic and unique data.

However, in terms of the design of the whole study, the research questions asked, and the nature of Oxford's categorization system, the researcher decided that it would be possible to use this preexisting typology of language learning strategies to understand and thematically locate learners' use of language learning strategies present in the qualitative data. Oxford's system has the potential to address the first research

question, at least partially, and to accommodate analysis of the second research question. In this sense, it seemed possible to use Oxford's system for both inductive and generative purposes in the data analysis.

The researcher also felt that in terms of triangulating the data, the general use of the same categorization system would facilitate comparison of findings in both qualitative and quantitative data areas.

Based on the admonition that there is a need for efforts to establish a more definite research-theory perspective in strategic language learning behaviour and "...the beginnings of systematicity in the categorization schemes for strategies, so that new investigators need not gather information blindly...." (Skehan, 1989, p. 82), the researcher decided to use Oxford's categorization system in understanding the research data in this study. The data was analyzed in three stages.

Data Analysis Process

Data analysis: SILL.

Initially, the researcher scored the seven SILL inventories and organized the findings into lists reflecting each participants' reported use of language learning strategies and rank order of the strategy categories. Each one of these lists was placed on individualized legal sized folders, colour coded to remind the researcher of the individual learner whose data was represented therein. These folders are subsequently referred to as 'Summary Sheets'.

Each one of these folders has on it:

1. The participant's SILL mean value for each of Oxford's strategy categories;

and,

2. A value representing the participant's frequency of strategy use for each of the six categories.

Data analysis: Semi-structured interviews.

Each of the audio tapes were listened to twice and then transcribed. I then took the learners' transcriptions and, in the framework of the question asked or the conceptual nature of a learner's statement, cut up one copy and allocated the data to that each Summary Sheet.

The more generally situated quotes related to the learner's musings/reflections and some of the researcher's own field notes relative to that participant were allocated to the area of the learner's Summary Sheet which was initially titled General Reflections.

Data analysis: Reflective notes.

The reflective notes existed from their inception in the situational frame created by the individual participants/writers. It may be argued that some of the learners' reports in this area resemble incidents rather than specific language learning strategies. Nevertheless, they are aspects of language learning behaviour which involved each participant in the selection of language learning experiences to reflectively record and annotate in her own voice. As such, the notations offer insights on language learning areas which individual language learners chose to isolate or comment on. Thus, the *notes* enhanced an understanding of the ways each participant perceived, organized, and interpreted the meaning of LLS using their experiential SLA background.

It is known that what people believe to be true or significant is more important than the objective reality (Fetterman, 1988). Extrapolated to the framework of this study, it may be said that a language learner could be expected to attend to and report aspects/incidents of reality which she believed to capture meaningful aspects of her language learning behaviour. The active process of paying selective attention has been designated an important metacognitive strategy which orients the learner toward meaningful reflective interaction with the task at hand (Chamot, 1990; Schumann, 1995). Further, it has been suggested that some incidents in adult learners' lives are pivotal and may even constitute *critical incidents* (Roth, 1990). As such, they serve to focus the learner's attention on conceptual understandings critical to the advancement of their learning process (Roth, 1990).

In conclusion, this data collection process served at least three important purposes. Initially it challenged learners to examine their personalized language learning processes. Secondly, it enabled learners to express specific and personalized learning needs. Finally, in writing reflectively learners were given an opportunity to generate personalized strategic solutions to their SLA endeavours and in doing so to reveal their use of LLS.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data/SILL.

Each participant had completed a SILL (version 7.0) summative inventory. The researcher scored each one of these and rank ordered the findings to provide quantitative evidence of the reported use of the learners' use of language learning

strategies. The ranked scores are displayed in a figure at the conclusion of each learner's vignette in order to provide one aspect of understanding relative to the first research question. This display of the rank ordering of strategy use in both qualitative and quantitative findings made the findings more transparent.

Qualitative data.

Initially the researcher took one copy of each learner/participant's text containing her qualitative data (interview data and reflective note data) and allocated it to her summary sheet. This located the language learning strategies in the situations in which they had been elicited (interview data) or generatively conceived (interview data and reflective note data).

In deciding how each emergent strategy might be categorized, the strategy was examined in order to allocate it to the Direct or Indirect Strategy Class. Having decided which class the language learning strategy occupied, the conceptual nature of the macrostrategy category (i.e., cognitive) and the allied microstrategy set (i.e., naturalistic practice) were identified.

In order to more clearly elucidate the learner's use of language strategies, the researcher prepared a vignette or summary statement on the strategic language learning behaviours of each of the seven research participants.

Hence the researcher examined, analyzed, and labelled each strategy that was perceived in the participant's qualitative data. These frequencies of each macrostrategy category were then tabulated, rank ordered, and displayed in each participant's vignette.

Initially each vignette included a brief demographic overview of the learner as a person, including cultural background, language learning experience, personalized beliefs, values, and goals related to SLA, etc. Also included in the vignette was a section on the analysis and findings reflective of each learner's three data collection processes. During the data analysis process, themes and topics gradually evolved to capture life situations in which learners reported their particularized language learning strategies. These themes served to answer research question number two which asked in what life situations learners' language learning strategies would be present. Thematic areas not clearly provided for the Oxford (1989) taxonomy are discussed in the following chapter. In order to better display and understand the emergent themes found in the qualitative data, a table was included showing the macrostrategy categories and related themes. Quotes illustrating examples of language learning strategies used were placed in the relevant box on the appropriate tables. The thematic relationships were examined in which the language learning strategies were juxtaposed with the user's language learning strategies, as they emerged in the qualitative findings. The penultimate table in each learner's section was used to display the quantitative findings from the SILL inventory.

Synthesis.

Each learner in this study may be considered holistically a particularized example of language learning strategy use in the SLA process. Therefore, it was necessary to examine each learner's strategies documented in the data in order to gain insights to inform the two research questions.

Triangulation of Qualitative and Quantitative Data

In terms of qualitative and quantitative findings for each participant, the researcher wrote a synthesis reflecting perceptions of the learner's use of language learning strategies. This included analysis of findings from all three data collection processes.

The final table of each learner's vignette displayed a synthesis of rank ordered preference of each LLS category (Oxford, 1989) as it occurred in the qualitative (SSI and RN) findings and as it occurred in the quantitative SILL findings.

A concluding statement reflected on triangulation of the findings and a reflective synthesis of all the research findings as they related to the research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

Language Learning Strategies: Orchestrated Occurrences

Introduction

This chapter is intended to provide the reader with some insights into ways in which the seven women who participated in this study used language learning strategies (LLS) to accomplish their goals in learning English as a second language.

Initially, broad demographic characteristics of the participant group are presented. Then an individualized profile, of each participant's strategy use in their language learning experience, is discussed. Each learner has been assigned a pseudonym. The findings presented in the participants' individual profiles were derived from three data collection processes. These were semi-structured interviews (SSI), reflective notes (RN; mini-diary studies), and the Strategies Inventory in Language Learning (SILL). The individual participant profiles are presented in a vignette describing each learner's perspective on her language learning behaviours.

Initially, the frequencies of language learning strategies derived from qualitative findings from the semi-structured interviews and the reflective notes are reported separately in text. Examples of these qualitative findings are presented in three tables per participant, where the woman's language learning strategies are juxta positioned against the learning situations in which they occurred. The seventeen themes which emerged from the qualitative data (semi-structured interviews and reflective notes) were: Understanding English Speakers and their Culture; English as a System of Language; Difficulties and Confusion; Extra Practice; Understanding Grammar;

Studying Grammar; Learning Pronunciation; Most Important Activity in Learning English; Being Understood; Understanding/Learning New Words; Getting Main Idea and Details; My Most Difficult Learning Task; Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience; Getting Help; Am I Making Progress?; Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities; and, Preparing for a Challenging Task. Each example of LLS is encoded with SSI or RN to indicate the data source.

By referring to the three tables it is possible to see the seventeen themes which emerged from the qualitative data. It is also possible to see the life situation locale for each language learning strategy use reported by the learner. The frequency of each participant's reported SILL use of language learning strategies, and its rank order is recorded on the penultimate table in each learner's vignette. In the final table, the findings from the two qualitative data collection methods, reported separately in text, have been fused and are found under the heading "Qualitative Evidence."

Finally, a section titled Reflective Synthesis collates and discusses the findings in terms of each learner/participant.

All of the participants in this study were volunteers; the sole remuneration given to each was a copy of the book *How to Be a More Successful Language Learner* (Rubin & Thompson, 1994). Both by self-selecting to become a part of this study and by their expressed interest in discussing and explaining their language learning process, each woman demonstrated her interest in better understanding her SLA process.

Learning Experience of Participant 'Yuriko'

Description of Yuriko

Yuriko is a twenty-three year old woman from Japan who has been studying English for nine years. She graduated from Junior Women's College in Japan, but began her English studies in a private language school shortly prior to entering junior high school.

Yuriko is the first member of her family to formally pursue English studies abroad. She speaks about English language study saying her family was "not interested ...but I am interested because my brother's wife ...taught me ...some alphabet, the basic English, ...so I was very interested in English."

She speaks of her plans to go to California from Victoria saying, "Too many Japanese ...I have many opportunities to speak Japanese here ...my English getting worse." She talked about her plans of living with her friend in California as a means of developing cultural and linguistic understanding of English speakers.

Yuriko spoke about beliefs regarding her SLA experience saying, "I don't ...think me don't have to ...um ...ashamed ...because I'm learning English ...that the most important thing, I think." (taking emotional temperature/affective; self-evaluation/metacognitive).

She continued saying, "Studying English ...also I can learn that country's customs or culture ...some phrases from old history. I can read the phrases ...but I don't know [what] that mean ...I want to know about them. I like that one ...so I want to know the history." (planning learning/metacognitive; taking emotional

temperature/affective; empathy for culture/social).

With reference to better understanding English speakers Yuriko said, "Talking to Japanese, we don't say my feeling, but in Canada you don't do that [the implication being that Canadians overtly expressed their feelings] ...so if I can speak more ...and I can say what I am thinking ...I want to do that." (arranging and planning learning/metacognitive). (Yuriko seems to say here that you have to permeate the thought mode of native speakers, both by understanding and expression of thought, in order to better access meaning and being, in their experiential and linguistic world.)

Qualitative Findings

Interview findings.

In the interview data describing Yuriko's strategic behaviour in language learning activities, she used primarily metacognitive and cognitive LLS. Twenty instances of cognitive strategy use were noted. Cognitive language learning strategies were most often evident when related to specific linguistic/language learning material (i.e., understanding syntax, creating structure of words by finding their spellings, etc.). These were most evident in the themes: "English as a System of Language," "Understanding Grammar," "Learning Pronunciation," etc.

Metacognitive strategic learning behaviour, on the other hand, was more pervasive and was evident throughout various aspects of Yuriko's learning experience, both naturalistic and formal. Twenty-six instances of metacognitive strategy use were noted. These were chiefly noted in the life situations of "English as a System of Language," "Difficulties and Confusion," "Extra Practice," "Remembering a

Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience," "Planning for a Challenging Task," "Am I Making Progress," and "Most Important Activity in Learning English."

Social learning strategies were Yuriko's third most preferred strategy category. Twelve instances of social learning strategies were evident in the data. Social strategies enable Yuriko to interact with native speakers, to negotiate meaning in various formal and informal situations, and ultimately better understand the target language culture. Social learning strategies were primarily noted in the themes: "Understanding English Speakers and their Culture," and "Extra Practice."

The use of affective learning strategies was evidenced in the qualitative data in twelve instances. Affective strategies seemed very important in aiding Yuriko to understand, accept, and cope with feelings and responses related to her SLA experience. Affective strategy use was noted in the themes: "Difficulties and Confusion," "Understanding/Learning New Words," and "Extra Practice."

The use of memory strategies was vividly described by Yuriko when she talked about the ways in which she created pictures and images in her mind in order to create structures and support recall of linguistic material. The use of memory strategies was noted nine times in the interview data. Memory strategies were most evident in the themes: "Getting the Main Idea and Details," "Understanding/Learning New Words," "Learning Pronunciation," etc.

Compensation strategies were the least often strategy category reported in the qualitative data by Yuriko in strategic behaviour in SLA endeavours. Compensation strategies were used by Yuriko in learning situations where she used linguistic and

situational clues, to help her guess the meaning when she lacked the actual linguistic control/proficiency sufficient to understand or express the conceptual tasks. There were eight instances in which use of compensation strategies was noted. Compensation strategies were most often evidenced in the themes: "Difficulties and Confusion," "Getting Extra Practice," Understanding/Learning New Words," etc.

Reflective note findings.

Yuriko's reflective note findings evidenced two instances of metacognitive strategy use. One occurred in the theme: "Difficulties and Confusion." The other occurred in the theme: "Extra Practice." Cognitive strategy use was evident in two instances and there was one instance of social strategy use in the theme: "Extra Practice."

Tables 1, 2, and 3 which follow display instances of Yuriko's language strategies as they were reported in the qualitative data. Table 4 displays Yuriko's rank ordered SILL scores. Table 5 displays a synthesis of the rank ordered LLS scores, both quantitative (SILL) and qualitative (RN and SSI).

Table 1

Yuriko's LLS Use and Associated Learning Themes

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Memory						
Cognitive		"In Japan ...say subject and at the end is a verb ...I learned German ...very different grammar style ...so very hard ...also English." (SSI)		"At a basketball game at UVic ...Canadian students sat behind me ...talking ...I tried to understand ...I couldn't understand ...because they used many slangs." (RN)	"Basic grammar is important because ...I learned that form but I make many mistakes ...so ...'she must be rich ...and she might be rich' ...very different meaning ...if I make a mistake that's trouble." (SSI)	
Compensation				(Studying with my conversation partner) "If I don't understand a word ...I will ask 'please repeat ...spell that word.'" (SSI)		
Metacognitive					"I have learned that grammar point already ...but I have forgot (laugh) ...that's meeting ...kind of review for me ...if I feel bored ...I just do exercise ...and read information ...explanation." (SSI)	

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Affective			"Sometimes [on the phone] have to listen very carefully ...but get mixed up ...get key points ...maybe ...confuse or panic ...I just say to me 'calm down' (laughed)." (SSI)	"My first time [host family correct me] I was very nervous ...but I wanted to learn correct English." (SSI)		
Social	"I feel difference between Canada and Japan ...people's feelings ...people's thinking ...everything are different." (SSI)			"So I say to my family 'well, okay, of course please correct my mistake. Okay, try to practice with everybody." (SSI)		

Table 2

Themes:	Learning Pronunciation	Most Important Activity in Learning English	Being Understood	Understanding/Learning New Words	Getting Main Idea and Details	My Most Difficult Learning Task
Strategies:						
Memory	"Maybe that's a mistake ...but I guess anyway ...in my mind ...I have a kind of word ...and divide it from stress ...I ask you to repeat again ...sometimes I record ...record and listen my pronunciation." (SSI)			"I imagine ...some situations in my mind ...make pictures ...and I try to remember the thought." (SSI)		
Cognitive	"I want to learn the spelling ....I want to write down." (SSI)					
Compensation	"I ask you again to please repeat that again." (SSI)			"I just read through ...I don't know if that right but I guess ...I know the situation ...sometimes ...can't understand yet ...I look up." (SSI)		
Metacognitive		"The most important thing ...prepare attention ...participate ...in class." (SSI)				
Affective				"Of course I am studying English ...so I have to use English ...so use English dictionary ...but if trouble to understand ...so I check Japanese dictionary ...so that is much helpful for me." (SSI)		

Themes:	Learning Pronunciation	Most Important Activity in Learning English	Being Understood	Understanding/Learning New Words	Getting Main Idea and Details	My Most Difficult Learning Task
Strategies:						
Social						

Table 3

Themes:	Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience	Getting Help	Am I Making Progress?	Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities	Preparing for a Challenging Task
Strategies:					
Memory					
Cognitive					
Compensation				"My favourite activity is to watch movies ...because they speak ...uh ...daily conversation ...so that's very useful for me ..movies have screens so if I don't understand ...what she or he is saying ..but I can imagine ...I can guess." (SSI)	

Themes:	Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience	Getting Help	Am I Making Progress?	Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities	Preparing for a Challenging Task
Strategies:					
Metacognitive	"That is a difficult question ...may I will ...when I go back home ...go home ...I will rewrite ..and read again ...remember the vocabulary ...maybe I will check my mistake." (SSI)		"I have many opportunities to speak Japanese here ...too many Japanese here ...English getting worse." (SSI)		"Today is busy day because I have presentation .. all English day me ..this morning I try to speak English ...because I have to think something in English ...because ...sometimes speak Japanese ...my brain does not work very well .. in my brain there are many, many Japanese words ..so that's not good ...I'm afraid I can't explain very well." (SSI)
Affective					
Social					

Quantitative Findings

SILL findings.

On the SILL inventory, using Oxford's mode of scoring, Yuriko's highest score was in the category of social strategies, although cognitive and compensation strategies were also in the high range of use. Metacognitive, affective, and memory were in the medium range of use. Yuriko's use of all language learning strategies at a moderate to high level of use suggests she is a strategic language learner and that she is both aware of her strategies and able to priorize them.

Table 4

SILL Inventory Scores for Yuriko

SILL Evidence Rank Order Strategy Use	Score
1. Social	4.2
2. Compensation	3.7
3. Cognitive	3.7
4. Metacognitive	3.4
5. Memory	3.2
6. Affective	3.3

SILL Profile of Results (Version 7.0)

Key to Understanding Averages:

High	Almost or always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
Low	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

This figure is based on Oxford's (1990, p. 300) SILL Profile of Results. Copyright exemption was obtained from Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Reflective Synthesis

In understanding the findings it should be remembered that my level of subjectivity in understanding Yuriko's use of her language learning strategies may be different from hers. I had a small slice in her life as a language learner to examine and to analyze. Although I attempted to capture the realities of her use of strategic learning behaviour in SLA, there may be aspects of my perspective that prevented me from achieving this in the most precise manner (I am reminded by her quote, "Everything is different ...people's thinking etc.").

Yuriko reflected on the dilemma of facing linguistically and socially confusing situations and how she intentionally mobilized LLS to help her gain control linguistically (using compensation strategies, i.e., asking for repetition, when she lacked the precise language to accomplish her tasks; seeking practice to better understand English as a language and a culture; planning, monitoring, and evaluating her learning efforts; using her visual and cognitive orientation to maximize her language learning experience while listening to messages that her somatic being shares with her affective being). This may be one of the most interesting aspects of Yuriko's LLS behaviour in the light of John Schumann's (1994) recent assertion that, "...the brain, affect and cognition are distinguishable, but inseparable." (p. 231). The findings from Yuriko's case suggest this.

One of the areas referred to by Yuriko in her reflective notes when she says "in my dream," etc., suggests how significant the unconscious mind may be in both processing language and influencing learners' insights/feelings about their language

learning experience. Such insights might be understood within Oxford's affective strategy category of "listening to your body" in which the learner must pay attention to the feelings that their somatic being provides, in better understanding themselves as language learners, as well as their efforts in language learning. However, there may be no category of language learning strategy in Oxford's system which adequately and accurately captures the essence of this aspect of learning.

From both a research and a practice perspective Yuriko reminds us that it is not the brain or the body in isolation that partake in the SLA process, rather it is the whole being of the SLA participant in relationship (Norton-Pierce, 1995) with the target language speakers and their cultural reality that create and recreate the learning process (Brown, 1994).

As I reflect on Yuriko's strategic learning efforts, the findings remind me that this woman seemed, on both a conscious and subconscious level, to mobilize modes of being as modes of learning. That is, she seemed able to plan and use her life experience to optimize her SLA experience. This is one of the attributes of being a self-directed learner for whom all life is learning. Yuriko understood that the world of Japanese and English speakers was completely different, but did not feel disempowered.

This is an important consideration, especially for adult learners who come to the process of SLA with a mature personal construct (Cranton, 1992). Many experience a loss of self in a linguistic code far removed from their native language (Murphy, 1989). Yuriko used her language learning strategies to ensure this did not

happen to her.

Table 5

Synthesis of Findings: Yuriko

Qualitative Evidence -Sum of Two Methods- Rank Order of Strategy	Score	SILL Evidence Quantitative Findings Rank Order of Strategy	Score
1. Metacognitive	28	1. Social	4.2
2. Cognitive	22	2. Compensation	3.7
3. Social	13	3. Cognitive	3.7
4. Affective	12	4. Metacognitive	3.4
5. Memory	9	5. Memory	3.2
6. Compensation	8	6. Affective	3.3

SILL Profile of Results (Version 7.0)

Key to Understanding Averages:

High	Almost or always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
Low	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

This figure is based on Oxford's (1990, p. 300) SILL Profile of Results. Copyright exemption was obtained from Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Learning Experience of Participant 'Alexandria'

Description of Alexandria

Alexandria (Alex) is a twenty-seven year old woman from Mexico. She graduated from business college and worked as a professional financial consultant in Mexico City. Alex spoke of reading and editing book drafts for her father, an economist, who has authored several books related to the emerging economies of Latin America. Two of Alex's sisters, who live in the United States, are fluent in English. When interviewed, Alex had been studying English for nearly a year in Victoria and said, "I study a little bit before in Mexico." Alex reported that when she came to the English Language Centre program, her sister from California came to stay with her host family for the first two weeks "to give me a little hand."

Alex expressed a pragmatically high valuation of English when she said: "Now is very demanding in my country and everybody has to speak another language ...to find better jobs or better opportunities."

Despite her enthusiasm for participation in the study, she decided that she did not have time to keep the reflective notes. In the interview Alex expressed definite ideas about the ways in which she perceived herself as an adult ESL learner in a formalized program, saying: "In my opinion the program at UVic is ...is easy ...I think that they don't understand the students ...I don't know if they don't realize that you are ...you are a person ...and you ...have been alive for years and years ...and you know many things." (self-evaluation/metacognitive; discussing feelings/affective).

Alex's high literacy level in Spanish and her inquisitive reflective nature were

evident in the interview discussions. Her language learning strategies included a variety of cognitive, analytic processes in which she used her attentive, analytical ability to focus on, and derive meaning from, a variety of English expressions. For example, she analyzed idioms ("ring the bell"); reflected cross-linguistically on words ("one day in the soap opera she used 'in my second thought';" "in fact ...amputation ...we say ...amputatage"); and focused her attention on precision in naturalistic English language use (i.e., "because he was using good proper English").

With reference to how long it would take to learn a language Alex said, "I think if you are learning a language ...it's forever. ...And I think it's ...we are Mexican people and we want to learn ...and we are ...not very shy and sometimes ...we are ...we know we are ...making mistake ...but I think everybody that ...want to learn another language ...is going to make ...mistake." (taking risks wisely/affective; monitoring/metacognitive). "...because if you are learning another language ...there are many things new for you ...in that language ...but that doesn't mean they don't know nothing." (encouraging statements/affective).

Alex revealed herself as a proactive, energetic language learner. She mobilized extensive and diverse LLS to avail herself of opportunities for English language learning. Rubin (1975) and Naiman, et al. (1978) had suggested a number of attributes which characterize good language learners, many of which were evident in Alex's language learning.

Qualitative Findings

Interview findings.

The data from Alex's interviews revealed thirty-six instances of cognitive language learning strategies. These were primarily evidenced in the themes: "English Language as a System," "Understanding/Learning New Words," "Extra Practice," "Learning Grammar," "Getting Main Idea and Details," etc. Several times in the interview she analyzed expressions and did contrastive analysis between words in Spanish and English.

Metacognitive language learning strategies were evidenced twenty-six times in the interview data. Alex used metacognitive strategies in the themes: "Understanding English Speakers and their Culture," "Understanding/Learning New Words," "Understanding Grammar," "Extra Practice," "Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities," etc. These were learning activities that required globalized planning, organization, and evaluation than Alex evidenced so clearly in her many and varied learning activities.

Social learning strategies were noted in twenty instances. They were present primarily in the themes: "Understanding English Speakers and their Culture," and "Extra Practice," and "Getting Help." These situations required that Alex plan and execute social contact with proficient native speakers in a variety of locales.

The use of affective language learning strategies were noted ten times in the interview data. Alex used affective strategies to note both positively and negatively the way she was feeling about her language learning in the themes: "Relevant or Less

Relevant Learning Activities," " Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience," "Am I Making Progress?," "Difficulties and Confusion," etc.

Alex's interview data yielded nine instances of her compensation strategies use, primarily in the themes: "Difficulties and Confusion," "Understanding/Learning New Words," "Being Understood," etc.

Memory strategies were overtly noted four times in the interview data and this occurred in the themes: "English Language as a System" and "Understanding/Learning New Words."

Reflective note findings.

There was no qualitative data from the reflective notes process because Alex did not keep the notes.

Table 6

Alex's LLS Use and Associated Learning Themes

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Memory		"Sometimes you remember ...something ...sometimes you forget ...maybe underline some sentence ...important ...I think same way you learn in Spanish." (SSI)				
Cognitive		"She's trying to learn Spanish and I'm trying to learn English ...and sometimes I ask her ...okay ...for me deceptionate is like ...it's like you expect a little bit more ...and you don't have that ...for her it's like 'disappointing' ...so if you take that word from dictionary ...similar in English ...not exactly the same." (SSI)		"I remember when husband [host father] and friend were talking about Forest Game ...Gump ...movie and they say ...he used 'otherwise' with this and this ...I went to my bedroom ...I start to make a note because he wasn't making a mistake." (SSI)	"I think grammar is very helpful ...it shows you have to speak ...maybe I'm answer the exercise ...try to understand the meaning in Spanish ...there's only one rule ...and I think you've got to practice." (SSI)	"I'm ...I'm answer the exercise ...use the grammar book ...find the meaning in Spanish." (SSI)
Compensation						

Themes	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies.						
Metacognitive	"If you want more and more challenge, you have to do it by yourself ...because if you are learning another language ...many things are new for you ...doesn't mean you don't know nothing ...but you have to learn the way they think." (SSI)			"You have to ...the challenge is for you ...is to try to do real situations ...you have to go there and try to do it." (SSI)	"I think meanings good ...because it show you okay ...how to write ...sometimes you say okay 'did you every have this' ...is like an auxiliary ...you start to understand grammar." (SSI)	"I am the person who always pay attention in class ...when somebody talking ...I always have eye contact ...focus ...all ears ...grammar shows you how you have to speak." (SSI)
Affective			"Sometimes you feel frustrated ...it's horrible ...because you try to explain yourself ...and nobody understand you ...maybe that was because I was very anxious ...to learn many, many things ...now I know the only way I can try to learn to ...improve my English is to study." (SSI)			

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Social	"Try to be with people that speak the new language ...try to hang around them." (SSI)			"When host mother pick the telephone .. I hear the answer .. it's helpful to me ..maybe next time I'm going to ask [answer] telephone like that ...So ...okay, try to practice with everybody."		

Table 7

Themes:	Learning Pronunciation	Most Important Activity in Learning English	Being Understood	Understanding/Learning New Words	Getting Main Idea and Details	My Most Difficult Learning Task
Strategies:						
Memory				"Sometimes I turn on TV only to listen ...sometimes I don't know the meaning and sometimes I'm watching TV I used to say ..ah ...that was a word we saw at a class ...a word." (SSI)		
Cognitive				"For me helpful to watch TV ...they are talking in the show ...you can take notes ...sometimes you can watch the same show ...you can't catch the word in your first time ...that show ...but you catch the second time around." (SSI)	"I do the exercise ...and then I start to ask 'what does that mean?' ...my teacher says I'm inquisitive ...or something ...but I'm like that ...because like 'exclusive ...exclusive' ...I need to know ...I'm persistent ...I repeat ...write exclusive ...exclusive ...exclusive." (SSI)	

Themes:	Learning Pronunciation	Most Important Activity in Learning English	Being Understood	Understanding/Learning New Words	Getting Main Idea and Details	My Most Difficult Learning Task
Strategies:						
Compensation	"They say one ...you say it again ...sometimes ask them to repeat ...and up [louder] in order to hear and write for each one [word] ...and repeat ...and then write ...in Spanish." (SSI)		In the situation of being incomprehensible to a native speaker Alex said, "I will try ...myself ...speak slowly ...let him [doctor know] I am a Mexican ...they pay a little more attention." (SSI)	"If you hear a new word ...ask for pronunciation ...say again ...practice ...maybe you are missing something ...try to draw a little diagram ...make words a little darker ...you can write conversation ...put it in context." (SSI)		
Metacognitive		"Say ...listen ...the most important thing for me to do ...listen ...take it in ...or sometimes ...choose some sentence ...look at the book ...write down the correct way ...I copy them ...that's the way it has to be." (SSI)		"Look at the picture ...the person ...direct eyes ...I always ...when someone is talking with me ...keep the eye contact in my class ...and I always sit in the front." (SSI)	"But I think ...mm ...everybody ...study English ...they are able to read ...but the *problem, the* problem is to speak." (SSI)	
Affective						
Social				"Okay ...try to practice with everybody ...when I have an opportunity ...even if it's Japanese or Taiwanese and maybe they don't understand each other ...you have to speak ...with your hands ...they don't speak your language and you have to try and do it." (SSI)		

Table 8

Themes:	Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience	Getting Help	Am I Making Progress?	Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities	Preparing for a Challenging Task
Strategies:					
Memory					
Cognitive	"Maybe you have to repeat the story over and over ...I think it's the same way you remember in Spanish ...you remember ...you forget ...sometimes I underline the sentence ...cause for me important ...what is this meaning ...of the story ...make a summary ...you learn ...I guess it's the same way I study in Mexico." (SSI)				
Compensation					
Metacognitive					

Themes:	Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience	Getting Help	Am I Making Progress?	Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities	Preparing for a Challenging Task
Strategies:					
Affective	"In the beginning when I was watching TV ...I would ...oh ...one word ...that word ...and I'm pay attention in every single word ...and three months later ...when show is over ...I start to realize ...I was able to understand ...every single detail and I was really happy ...it was like a jump ...I was very, very happy." (SSI)			"Okay it has to be something I was really interested in ...I was really interested in her life [Nellie McClung] ...so I read and read." "I like to watch many videos in class and discuss videos with teacher, not just the students ..sometimes [talking other students] is wasting time ...because you are only making mistake ...I don't like that." (SSI)	
Social		"I am talking with my conversation partner ...we help a lot one another ...sometimes I ask her okay ...for me 'deceptionate' is like ...um ...or amputatage ...sometimes they mean totally different." (SSI)	"I think now is better for me because ..I ...I'm ...I understand more things ...at the beginning was very hard ...because everything is new ...for you ...very hard to understand ..sometimes ...[laugh] I give up ..when I wake up ...say 'I'm going to do it' ..I'm that kind of a person ...keep going and going ...and never give up." (SSI)		

Quantitative Findings

SILL findings.

On the findings of Alex's SILL inventory there were two learning strategy categories (social and compensation) which measured in the highest range of use (always or usually used). The scores for the other four macrostrategy categories of LLS use fell in the medium range of use (sometimes used).

Table 9

SILL Inventory Scores for Alex

SILL Evidence Rank Order Strategy Use	Score
1. Metacognitive	4.6
2. Social	4.4
3. Cognitive	3.4
4. Memory	3.2
5. Affective	2.8
6. Compensation	2.7

SILL Profile of Results (Version 7.0)

Key to Understanding Averages:

High	Almost or always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
Low	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

This figure is based on Oxford's (1990, p. 300) SILL Profile of Results. Copyright exemption was obtained from Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Reflective Synthesis

As the SILL inventory suggested, Alex was a sophisticated and seemingly experienced user of language learning strategies. Findings from Alex's interview data revealed a high personal and familial valuation of the English language. Positive beliefs and values toward the target language and its speakers seem to be predicative of a heightened level of both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Brown, 1994), and enhanced potential for success in language learning (Mantle-Bromley, 1995).

Alex spoke of her extensive reading experience in Spanish. It has been reported that learners with the advantage of a high level of literacy skills in their native language show an enhanced ability to deal with literacy and developmental language skills in the target language being studied (Weinstein-Shyr, 1993).

The findings from the interview data and the SILL inventory suggest that Alex used extensive metacognitive, cognitive, and social LLS. Her high level of persistence (Tremblay & Gardiner, 1995) would suggest that she had the intrinsic motivation necessary to support diverse and ongoing strategic learning activities in the face of confusion and frustration associated with learning English and being in an unfamiliar culture. Alex evidenced the realistic framework of beliefs and values about the nature and duration of language learning that has been reported to be conducive to success in language learning (Mantle-Bromley, 1995).

This area of beliefs and attitudes may be more important than has been previously recognized, not only in facilitating the tolerance of ambiguity (Ely, 1989), but also in the actual cognitive activities of paying attention and noticing (Tomlin &

Villa, 1994) that is critical in language learning. Learners who use language learning strategies evidence more ability to control and monitor their own learning, thereby contributing both globally and locally to their language learning process (Felder & Henriques, 1995).

The interview findings showed that Alex's accurate and congruent referential framework and her high level of commitment were associated with extensive use of language learning strategies. This seemed to facilitate the energy and the skill necessary to foster learner autonomy for Alex. As she said, "If you want more and more challenge ...I think you have to do it for yourself." That is, although Alex used her ability and her language learning strategies to focus on discrete and distinct aspects of language, she had a much larger personalized vision of the language learning process. Although she often reported using translation as a cognitive learning strategy, she sought to understand meaning as well as linguistic form, and used her conceptual Spanish knowledge in interpreting and better understanding her English language learning experiences.

Alex demonstrated her ability to tolerate ambiguity and to take risks, both attributes that have been associated with proficiency in SLA (Naiman, et al., 1978). She exhibited a high degree of self-esteem, and both reflected on and questioned the relevance and validity of aspects of her learning experience. By doing this she took a proactive and self-directed approach to the process, strategically evaluating her learning process and acquiring from it the aspects of knowledge that were most helpful for her as a learner. This powerful combination of a positive attitude associated with

extensive, pervasive language learning efforts, including the use of language learning strategies, seemed to be both supportive and facilitative of Alex's language learning efforts.

Table 10

Synthesis of Findings: Alex

Qualitative Evidence -Sum of Two Methods- Rank Order of Strategy	Score	SILL Evidence Quantitative Findings Rank Order of Strategy	Score
1. Cognitive	36	1. Metacognitive	4.6
2. Metacognitive	26	2. Social	4.4
3. Social	20	3. Cognitive	3.4
4. Affective	10	4. Memory	3.2
5. Compensation	9	5. Affective	2.8
6. Memory	4	6. Compensation	2.7

SILL Profile of Results (Version 7.0)

Key to Understanding Averages:

High	Almost or always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
Low	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

This figure is based on Oxford's (1990, p. 300) SILL Profile of Results. Copyright exemption was obtained from Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Learning Experience of Participant 'Don'

Description of Don

Don is a twenty-nine year old Taiwanese woman who trained and worked as a professional pharmacist in Taiwan. She had learned some English in junior high school and high school, studying English in Taiwan for a total of about six years before going to Japan. Prior to coming to Victoria she had worked in Japan for nine years as a software programmer.

In the context of her family, Don spoke of one older sister who majored in English in university, but uses it little as she lives in Taiwan. When Don came to participate in activities associated with this study she was always cooperative and often smiling, but seemed somewhat tense.

Speaking of her personal goals in learning English she said, "I don't know the future ...but maybe if I can speak English well, maybe the job is good for me ...or I thinking for Taiwan business ...the future may be like Hong Kong so English is ...maybe the future ...if you want good job." (arranging and planning learning/metacognitive). She concluded saying, "So it, now I just thinking ...if I just, just speak Japanese ...but I can't speak English maybe it's my minus." (self-monitoring/metacognitive).

Reflecting on her English language experience she said, "In junior [high] school ...I very like English ...and uh ...high school." (making positive statements/affective; focused attention/metacognitive). "But one time I don't like English ...the teacher about pronunciation and English ...I don't know ...my junior high school is DJ

pronunciation ...but go to high school...so when I tested I write ...DJ pronunciation and ...ah ...I got it wrong ...but new word and pronunciation ...I can't get my point ...so usually ...effort, effort ...my English and Chinese translation or choice ...or something ...results not so good." (taking emotional temperature/affective; analyzing expressions/cognitive; self-evaluation/metacognitive).

When I asked her how long she thought it would take to learn another language Don said, "If you are living there ...learning English ...every day ...maybe just to spend your two or three years ...conversation not deep ...just shur ...surface ...the simple sentence ...but if you want deeper ...make something ...do something ...or something like slang ...I don't know ...every day you repeat ...reading and writing ...just a short time to remember." (analyzing contrastively/cognitive; self-evaluating/metacognitive; practising/cognitive).

Don reported many areas of challenge in her SLA process which seemed overwhelmingly difficult. Much of her energy was focused on memorization as a mode of learning English, and she failed to demonstrate interest in the meaning or function of English.

Qualitative Findings

Interview findings.

Findings from the interview data for Don proved to be perplexing and unexpected. Although her life experience suggested that she was a somewhat experienced language learner, the data from her SSI and RN did not display the presence of supportive language learning strategies. She did not reveal

'preunderstanding' (Gadimer, as cited in Svanes, 1987) or particular interest in target language culture or speakers. Don spoke in terms of her goals from an instrumental perspective (Dörnyei, 1995) (i.e., she seemed to be primarily motivated by extrinsic factors related to future employment and had somewhat unrealistic ideas about the duration of study that language proficiency would require).

Don evidenced the use of metacognitive strategies twenty-nine times in the interview data. These strategic behaviours were in the themes: "Difficulties and Confusion," "Extra Practice," "Understanding Grammar," "Most Important Activity in Learning English," "Am I Making Progress?," etc. Many of the instances focused on self-evaluation and self-monitoring and resulted in Don's reaching such conclusions as, "Sometimes just reading dialogue ...I see ...I see." (seems to indicate that she understands at this point). "But when you want to use it ...gone. It makes you feel not good, now very scared or frightened."

Fifteen instances of cognitive learning strategies were noted in Don's interview data. These involved strategies such as translating and using resources (dictionaries) in order to strategically facilitate her language learning endeavours. They were primarily evident in the themes: "Understanding/Learning New Words," "Understanding Grammar," "Getting Help," "Difficulties and Confusion," etc.

Memory strategy use was noted ten times in the interview data. Microstrategy areas used included visual imagery, placing new words in context, and practising and were used in the themes: "Difficulties and Confusion," "Understanding/Learning New Words," "Learning Pronunciation," etc.

The overt use of affective strategies was noted seven times in the interview data. They were used mainly in the themes: "Getting Main Ideas and Details," "Most Difficult Learning Task," "Extra Practice," "Am I Making Progress?," and "Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities." In terms of affective strategy use, these behaviours seemed to reflect Don's rather confused and despondent efforts to express her SLA difficulties, rather than serving to strategically strengthen her language learning abilities.

Social learning strategies were specifically mentioned in six instances in the interview data and were found in the themes: "Extra Practice" and "Understanding Grammar." Compensation strategies were noted four times, primarily in the themes: "Getting Main Idea and Details," "Extra Practice," and "Learning Pronunciation."

Reflective note findings.

Don made twelve entries in her reflective notes (four more than made by any other participant in the study). Of these, eight were anecdotal (i.e., "all day in house to do housework, washing clothes;" "nothing/nothing special") and did not relate specifically to LLS.

Two of the entries which proved more revealing in terms of strategy use follow:

"Today I need to prepare for Monday's presentation (five minutes) ...the topic is free. I am very bothered with topic. I don't know what topic is good. Think ...answer is lifes."

"I'm very nervous for today's presentation, that when I finished it classmate

asked me some questions about 'life', very deeply. I can't answer very well. I thought too bad anyway, it's finished."

There were five metacognitive learning strategies and one affective learning strategy noted in the reflective note data.

Table 11

Don's LLS Use and Associated Learning Themes

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Memory			"So sometimes I can't memorize too much in so a little bit ...I have to make sentence ...so my results aren't good." (SSI)	"If I use ...memorize a good ...many ...many ...vocabulary ...maybe ...maybe I will talk with you in English ...uh ...just ...that my mind is very strange." (SSI)		
Cognitive			"But I got to Japan ...almost forgot ...forgot my English ...my pronunciation very near Japanese English ...sometimes I can't speak English ...my mind is thinking ...which one is correct." (SSI)	"Sometimes in the bus we talk ...or listen ...usually listen radio ...sometimes watch TV..." (SSI)		"Maybe first I will use Chinese dictionary ...remember Chinese word...and if I use Japanese dictionary... remember...Jap... Japanese word...and English meaning...I use them both...uh...English meaning...but I cannot use well...I can't use my self ...time...so I had not enough time...learning English." (SSI)
Compensation						

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Metacognitive	"I think learning English not ...in your room ...you need to go out ...so you need to do or to think ...study in the room and then use it." (SSI)		"When I read some article I couldn't understand one word ...the purpose is to read the sentence ...but when I find a difficult word ...I'm afraid of ...I can't understand it ...article." (SSI)	(Regarding a field trip to Goldstream Don said), "More ...more ...they help ...help you learn English but not 100% ...it's pass but not perfect" (SSI)	"After time ...after time ...I would try to understand something about grammar ...sometimes I use a little time to ask the teacher is this correct ...just a little." (SSI)	
Affective			"Today I need to prepare for Monday's presentation ...the topic is free ...I am very bothered with topic ...I don't know what topic is good ...think ...answer is lifes" (RN)			

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Social				(Regarding conversation partner) "Just meet him three times ...my conv ...English conversation ...maybe he say something ...I don't know the meaning ...he feel sorry ...or how to express ...maybe I need two or three months to cover [recover] ...it makes you feel not good." (SSI) "Every Saturday I go downtown shopping ...or something ...and talk to sales girl ...vocabulary too small ...can't express very well." (SSI)	"If I hear the ...I will try...If I can't understand I will ask my friend ...or example ...think example write ...not good results." (SSI)	

Table 12

Themes:	Learning Pronunciation	Most Important Activity in Learning English	Being Understood	Understanding/Learning New Words	Getting Main Idea and Details	My Most Difficult Learning Task
Strategies:						
Memory	"Maybe the first ...I memorize the pronounces ...the spelling ...[demonstrated segmenting the word phonetically]." (SSI)					
Cognitive	"I know because every word is new ...I think ...I thought TV is better than radio ...you will see the action ...of this time seeing the world in context ...you can memorize quickly ...you should use the word ...or look up meaning ...make sure you can the pronunciation ...you can repeat." (SSI)			"If I have a dictionary I maybe try to find a word in it ...but if nothing [no dictionary] ...I maybe I just thinking about it before ...after the point ...listening maybe you can get not 100% ...just got 50% you know the words ...so you can try your mind ...the con ...context?" (SSI)		
Compensation			"Use my body language ...just my body language ...or try to do anything ...to understand my mean ...writing?" (SSI)		"Ya ...if I can't speak very well ...maybe draw a diagram and if I have time ...I listen ...make a memo ...or some point of word ...five children ...or ...after and I can answer." (SSI)	

Themes:	Learning Pronunciation	Most Important Activity in Learning English	Being Understood	Understanding/Learning New Words	Getting Main Idea and Details	My Most Difficult Learning Task
Strategies:						
Metacognitive		"Ah the most important thing ...sentence ...grammar ...ah conversation ...so you can continue ...any time ...anywhere." (SSI)				"Sometimes I can't memorize ..so a little bit ...I have to make sentence ...so sometimes ...my results aren't good." (SSI)
Affective					"First I say the main idea of that story ...ask more ...there maybe nothing [laughed]." (SSI)	"Difficult ..I just think ...how ..how to say ..sometimes ..I ah [laugh] um ..not interesting ...so sometimes very boring ..so sometimes wants us to imagination ..but I was thinking ...not necessary to question ...to answer ..because you can see the true ..the thing [seemed to indicate that the exercise in describing the details of a picture were not very motivating or stimulating] (SSI)
Social						

Table 13

Themes:	Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience	Getting Help	Am I Making Progress?	Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities	Preparing for a Challenging Task
Strategies:					
Memory					
Cognitive		"But I find how to say ...watching TV with my mother ...talking about ...usually find a chance ...to speaking at out that ...then try to memorize ...after I found out with dictionary .. usually I don't have enough time ...so must enter my room ...homework." (SSI)			
Compensation					
Metacognitive			"Ah ...interesting in life ...around life. You can use English to speak ...because now I can't speak good sentences for conversation ...so sometimes I say ...'Oh maybe I can't hear ...can't hear too much ...and now very scared or frightened ...maybe I'm not sure I can speak good." (SSI)		

Themes:	Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience	Getting Help	Am I Making Progress?	Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities	Preparing for a Challenging Task
Strategies:					
Affective			"Very afraid in class ...almost every student .. maybe good grammar ...so i can't follow them .. so now very scared ..I can't believe I'm in 4 ...410 class .. maybe I want to go to 3 class for basic English .. sometimes simple sentence ..I want to repeat." (SSI)		
Social					

Quantitative Findings

SILL findings.

On the SILL inventory Don's scores for social, compensation, and cognitive LLS strategies were in the medium (sometimes used, 2.5 - 3.4) range. Metacognitive, memory, and affective strategy scores were in the low (generally not used, 1.5 - 2.4) range. These scores suggest that Don is not an experienced user of LLS at the present time.

Table 14

SILL Inventory Scores for Don

SILL Evidence Rank Order Strategy Use	Score
1. Social	3.2
2. Compensation	3.0
3. Cognitive	2.5
4. Metacognitive	2.4
5. Memory	2.3
6. Affective	2.2

SILL Profile of Results (Version 7.0)

Key to Understanding Averages:

High	Almost or always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
Low	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

This figure is based on Oxford's (1990, p. 300) SILL Profile of Results. Copyright exemption was obtained from Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Reflective Synthesis

The findings from Don's qualitative data evolved in an interesting and somewhat unexpected way. Of all the women in the study, she was the only person who had experientially lived and worked in two language environments before commencing her studies in ESL. The scores on the SILL tool show that Don's use of language learning strategies occurred at a consistently medium to low level of use.

This was a revealing and perplexing case study in the use of language learning strategies. Vann and Abraham (1990) speak of unsuccessful language learners who pursue strategy use in a random, desperate manner with limited focus on the task at hand. Oxford (1990a) cautions that the use of metacognition in the form of self-monitoring is important, but that the learner who becomes "obsessed" (p. 161) with correcting every speech difficulty will not enhance their communicative ability.

Noting the frequencies of Don's preferred language learning macrostrategy categories in the qualitative findings, it initially appeared that her use of strategies, both in terms of quantity and complexity, might have resulted in her being a strategically successful language learner. However, on closer examination, much of Don's reflection and hypothesis generation focused on somewhat fragmented, random, and inflexible LLS use. Coupled with inappropriate beliefs about the nature and duration of a successful language learning experience, Don seemed, at the time, ill prepared to cope with her SLA experience.

Many of her strategies involved dealing affectively with situations in which she had, or was, experiencing difficulties in learning English. This seemed very

discouraging for her, and appeared to result in a high level of anxiety and distress (i.e., "makes you feel not good," "feeling very scared," etc.). Thus, her use of metacognition was more of the nature of "...perverted metacognition in which the learner is self-critical, overly anxious, and focused on reaching perfection." (Oxford, 1990b, p. 443).

Although she spoke of the necessity to experience "life in order to better learn English," she seemed to lack the knowledge or skill to coordinate her language learning goals with supportive, successful strategic language learning activities. That is, much of her learning effort was focused on acquiring language form. Learners who believe they can acquire language through acquisition of sufficient vocabulary items fail to provide sufficient attention to function and meaning, and are not well prepared for communication tasks (Vann & Abraham, 1990). Some of the language learning strategies which Don used (i.e., translation, memorization) may have added to the level of confusion that she experienced, as she seemed to lack definite or specific plans for their appropriate application. Although translation can be useful in enabling learners to quickly grasp complex concepts in early learning, its use as a frequent LLS is too time consuming and is often ineffectual when used in a communicative language setting (Oxford, 1990a).

I wondered if Don had scored artificially high on the SLEP placement test, thereby being assigned to an inappropriate level of classroom proficiency. Also, experientially, in dealing with two language systems which used idiographic orthographies, and working in a professional field which used algorithms

(pharmacy/computer programming), Don may have come to this English language learning experience cognitively prepared to deal with memorization tasks (algorithms, formulas, etc.), but not well prepared to deal with an interactive, communicative language classroom.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that Don may have been suffering from cultural shock, depression, general distress, and/or cognitive overload. There was limited evidence of her ability to use LLS to positively support her SLA activities. However, she may have been in the early stages of LLS use and assessment in another year may show quite a different profile in her use of language learning strategies.

Learners such as Don alert researchers and teachers to the idiosyncratic and unusual ways learners may shape the use of LLS. Such learners alert us to the significance of not simply counting frequencies as an indication of LLS use, and highlight the usefulness of qualitative research in better understanding in-depth, essential aspects of LLS use.

Table 15

Synthesis of Findings: Don

Qualitative Evidence -Sum of Two Methods- Rank Order of Strategy	Score	SILL Evidence Quantitative Findings Rank Order of Strategy	Score
1. Metacognitive	33	1. Social	3.2
2. Cognitive	15	2. Compensation	3.0
3. Memory	10	3. Cognitive	2.5
4. Affective	8	4. Metacognitive	2.4
5. Social	6	5. Memory	2.3
6. Compensation	4	6. Affective	2.2

SILL Profile of Results (Version 7.0)

Key to Understanding Averages:

High	Almost or always used	4.5 to 5.0
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Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
Low	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

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Learning Experience of Participant 'Tomomi'

Description of Tomomi

Tomomi is a twenty-three year old Japanese woman who has been studying English for eleven years. A graduate from Junior Woman's College, she began her English language studies in junior high school. Tomomi said of her parents, "Can speak English ...just a little bit." She said of herself, "I'm the first one ...overseas studies."

With reference to better understanding Canadian culture and the English language Tomomi said, "Sometimes my host family ask me about my culture ...so ...sometimes ...ah ...our culture is different ...so we talk about that ...if I know the culture ...the Canadian culture ...I can talk a lot ...I need to know about another country's culture ...because we can communicate more." (developing cultural understanding/social; setting goals and objectives/metacognitive). She continued, "I want to use English at universities ...in work ...to speak another language." (setting goals and objectives/metacognitive).

Speaking of how long it takes to learn another language Tomomi said, "I don't know about that ...English and Japanese is completely different ...so it is hard to say many things ...totally different ...totally different ...in ...in you know, character, character is different ...English ...just letters ...noun and adjective in exchange ...sometimes make me very tired." (analyzing contrastively/cognitive; listening to your body/affective).

In the situation of strategically managing the pronunciation task, Tomomi

initially related the process step by step as it would transpire in the class: "Presentation from news article ...new words from that article ...learn ...write ...word ...definition ...teacher pronounce ...several time ...then we repeat." (focusing attention/metacognitive; notes/cognitive; practising listening/cognitive; repeating/cognitive). This made me think of what O'Malley (1990) refers to as developmental cognitive stages in which the learner, on her way to the associative stage and later the autonomous stage, first passes through a descriptive understanding stage of task focus.

Tomomi's findings reminded me that language learning and the use of LLS was an incrementally complex process. Although many of Tomomi's strategies appeared to be in the processes of development and refinement, her interview and reflective note findings evidenced a positive orientation toward LLS use.

Qualitative Findings

Interview findings.

Findings evident in Tomomi's qualitative interview data showed that she priorized the use of cognitive and metacognitive language learning strategies in her SLA endeavours. Thirty-nine instances of cognitive strategies were noted. They were mobilized in a variety of activities involving note-taking and practising. The creation of structure and her experiential language practice using cognitive LLS enabled Tomomi to increase her knowledge about the English language through knowledge compilation (O'Malley, 1990), and to create a structure framework within which to retain this knowledge. Cognitive learning strategies were noted primarily in the

themes: "Extra Practice," "Understanding English as a Language System," "Understanding/Learning New Words," "Studying Grammar," "Difficulties and Confusion," "Learning Pronunciation," "Getting Main Idea and Details," and "Remembering Success."

Metacognitive LLS use was noted in twenty-two instances in the SSI. Microstrategies in this category included self-monitoring, arranging and planning learning, etc. These microstrategies facilitated Tomomi's awareness of learning activities and their potential level of efficacy in supporting her language learning. The insights which she generated through her use of self-monitoring provided her with corrective feedback, useful to the modification of her hypothesis, about the form and function of the English language. Her ability to plan her learning activities ensured a high level of ongoing practice in learning situations both formal and informal. Metacognitive strategy use was noted mainly in the themes: "Most Difficult Learning Task," "Extra Practice," "Difficulties and Confusion," and "Most Important Activity in Learning Activity in Learning English."

In the SSI findings, social learning strategies were Tomomi's third most preferred macrostrategy category. These social learning strategies were noted thirteen times, and enabled Tomomi to cooperate and interact with native speakers for an enhanced level of interactive language learning experiences. Social learning strategies were noted in the themes: "Extra Practice," "Understanding Grammar," "Difficulties and Confusion," "Learning Pronunciation," "Most Important Learning Task," "Extra Help," etc.

Tomomi noted the use of affective strategies in ten instances in the interview data. Affective strategies were used primarily to help her remain in touch with the physical response of her body to her language learning experience. Affective learning strategy statements occurred in the themes: "Understanding English as a Language System," "Most Difficult Learning Task," "Am I Making Progress?," and "Difficulties and Confusion."

The use of memory strategies was noted ten times. Memory strategies aided Tomomi's language learning through the creation of visual memory to encode meaning, and were noted primarily in the themes: "Learning Grammar," "Getting Main Idea and Details," "Difficulties and Confusion," and "Understanding/Learning New Words."

Compensation strategies were noted seven times in the interview data. They included strategic responses such as circumlocution, adjusting the message, and abandoning the topic in situations in which Tomomi's developing English language proficiency was not adequate to meet the situational/linguistic requirement. The use of compensation strategies was noted mainly in the themes: "Difficulties and Confusion," "Getting Main Idea and Details," "Extra Practice," and "Understanding/Learning New Words."

Reflective note findings.

Tomomi made six one to two sentence entries in her RN data. In her two most complex entries, she used metacognition to set the descriptive frame of her learning experience. She then proceeded to note a cognitive process necessary to complete the

learning task or challenge. Finally, she concluded the explanation of her strategic endeavour by expressing the way in which the learning activity impacted her affectively (i.e., makes me very confused ...tired).

There were seven instances of metacognitive strategy use. They were present in the themes: "Difficulties and Confusion," "Getting Main Idea and Details," "Extra Practice," "Relevant or Less Relevant Activities," etc.

There were two instances of cognitive LLS in the RN data. They were present in the themes: "Difficulties and Confusion" and Understanding/Learning New Words." In the RN data, two instances of affective strategy use were noted. One was evident in the theme "Understanding/Learning New Words" and the other in "Difficulties and Confusion." No compensation, social, or memory strategies were noted in the RN data.

Table 16

Tomomi's LLS Use and Associated Learning Themes

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Memory						"I remember the form ...I have already learned in high school ...I just remember the form." (SSI)
Cognitive		"English and Japanese is completely different ...so it is hard to say many things ...totally different ...in you know ...character is different. English ...just letters ...noun and adjective in exchange ...sometimes makes me very tired." (SSI)				"Ah ...I just practice ...from the text book ...I always keep ...the paper ...in writing that sentence ...and if I have time to see that paper I check it." (SSI)
Compensation						"After I finish my homework I want to watch TV ...sometimes I can't understand all so ...I try to [indicates gesturally as if connecting the known with the unknown]." (SSI)

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Metacognitive	(Speaking of her host family) "We talk in the evening ...how ...was your school or something ..sometimes ask me about my culture ...because we can communicate more." (SSI)		"Today I had real success in presentation from news article. It took a long time to decide order of presentation and explain about presentation. I felt confuse." (RN)	"I try to speak a lot in the classroom or if I have a chance to speak with native speakers ...to speak a lot." (SSI)		
Affective			"Sometimes makes me confused [presentation] ..sometimes makes me very tired." (SSI)			
Social					"First read the whole question ..if I don't understand that from first ..we pass that ..and after ...do all of them we take ...I think question again. If I don't understand what that question said ..I ask the teacher ..what does that mean?" (SSI)	

Table 17

Themes:	Learning Pronunciation	Most Important Activity in Learning English	Being Understood	Understanding/Learning New Words	Getting Main Idea and Details	My Most Difficult Learning Task
Strategies:						
Memory						
Cognitive	"I ...I repeat ...copy it down ...repeat ...but next day or learning the word ..write it down several times ...sometimes I pronounce that." (SSI)			"First I read through all the story without the dictionary ..then read again ...then I check the word I don't know ...then I check the dictionary." (SSI) "Sometimes this kind of word makes me confused ...sometimes I forgot ..very easy ..sometimes I completely forgot that word." (SSI)		"Speak ...speech ..talking with other people ...conversation partner ..meet with regular students ..meet with my club ...weekend ..lunchtime." (SSI)
Compensation			(To increase native speakers' comprehension) "I try to repeat ...repeat ..repeat back many times ...I change my way of saying ...maybe write it down." (SSI)	"First I say the main idea of that story ..then look at person, ask more ..then ...I think ..then maybe nothing." (SSI)		
Metacognitive						"Challenge challenge is to make a presentation ..we can't read ..just explain ..remember some part and speak ..sometimes it makes me confused." (SSI)

Themes:	Learning Pronunciation	Most Important Activity in Learning English	Being Understood	Understanding/Learning New Words	Getting Main Idea and Details	My Most Difficult Learning Task
Strategies:						
Affective						
Social	"My host family correct my pronunciation. Sometimes my pronunciation ...not correct ...so they can't understand ...so then I repeat many times ...if pronunciation wrong they correct me." (SSI)					

Table 18

Themes:	Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience	Getting Help	Am I Making Progress?	Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities	Preparing for a Challenging Task
Strategies:					
Memory	"I think sometimes ...if I feel that is important ...I always write it down ...so then go back home ...or if I have time ...I try to look that again ...to review that again." (SSI)				
Cognitive					
Compensation					
Metacognitive					
Affective			"Ah ...is so ...mm ...so now ...I am getting used to it ...before ...I listen just ...ah what he says ...one sentence ...I think ...I can never think next word ...so I can answer." (SSI)		
Social		"I say to my host family ...my English have many mistakes ...so please correct my English ...don't want to practice mistakes." (SSI)			

Quantitative Findings

SILL findings.

On the SILL inventory, using Oxford's mode of scoring, Tomomi's highest score was in the cognitive macrostrategy category, although metacognitive and affective strategies were also evidenced in the high range of use.

Memory, social, and compensation strategies fell in the medium level of use range on the SILL inventory. The score for the use of compensation strategies was lowest in frequency, nearly approaching the low level range of use.

Table 19

SILL Inventory Scores for Tomomi

SILL Evidence Rank Order Strategy Use	Score
1. Cognitive	3.8
2. Metacognitive	3.5
3. Affective	3.5
4. Memory	3.4
5. Social	3.3
6. Compensation	2.6

SILL Profile of Results (Version 7.0)

Key to Understanding Averages:

High	Almost or always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
Low	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

This figure is based on Oxford's (1990, p. 300) SILL Profile of Results. Copyright exemption was obtained from Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Reflective Synthesis

Tomomi began her reflection on language learning by acknowledging that understanding culture and the Canadian people played a prime role in facilitating her language learning. The relevance of positive attitudes toward target language culture has been reported to be predictive of success in language learning (Phillips, 1992). She spoke of the difference in the structure between Japanese and English, and the difficulties that presented for her as a learner. Tomomi spoke and wrote about cognitive strategies she used to practice in many, varied life situations. She also spoke of taking notes which she could use to encode and support her developing linguistic knowledge. In this way she was able to continually revise and refine her hypothesis regarding the nature of the English language and to facilitate associated knowledge compilation (O'Malley, 1990), in addition to mobilizing use of language in naturalistic practice. Learners who combine naturalistic practice with bedrock strategies (memory, cognitive, and compensation) have been reported to be successful in their language learning endeavours (Green & Oxford, 1995).

Her metacognitive strategic ability enabled her to reflect on the efficacies of her cognitive behaviours and to plan and redirect her learning efforts when appropriate. This ability to delineate specific learning requirements appropriate to a given task or endeavour, and to combine, mobilize, or tailor the allied language learning strategies (Green & Oxford, 1995), seem to be a distinguishing factor between successful learners and those who are less successful (Vann & Abraham, 1990).

Tomomi's use of affective strategies to acknowledge feelings and bodily

sensations may have served to buffer her against the psychological effects of ambiguity and fatigue which often accompany language learning efforts. In my contact with her, Tomomi's ability to express her feelings seemed to reassure her that she could legitimately take time-out to acknowledge her feelings, and thereby to perhaps protect her self-esteem. It has been suggested that learners who acknowledge their negative feelings or attitudes are better able to develop techniques and strategies to control and modify them (Oxford, 1990). It has also been suggested that learners who are able to manage their affective frustrations may well reduce their level of language anxiety, thereby increasing the amount of energy available for cognitive endeavours (MacIntyre & Gardiner, 1991).

The findings from her SILL inventory suggest that Tomomi would be a moderately experienced user of LLS. Further, the ways in which she realized her ability to mobilize a heightened and complex level of cognitive strategy use were evident in the descriptive data of the interviews and notes. Here it is possible to see the situational locale, and the interactive use of Tomomi's cognitive and metacognitive strategies. It was also possible to see the particularized flexibility of organization and mediation of affective and compensation strategies.

In conclusion, Tomomi's coordinated and orchestrated use of a variety of LLS served to support cognitive and metacognitive strategy use, conserving Tomomi's cognitive energy level and protecting her self-esteem. This proved to be a powerful combination of LLS in Tomomi's language learning endeavours.

Table 20

Synthesis of Findings: Tomomi

Qualitative Evidence -Sum of Two Methods- Rank Order of Strategy	Score	SILL Evidence Quantitative Findings Rank Order of Strategy	Score
1. Cognitive	41	1. Cognitive	3.8
2. Metacognitive	29	2. Metacognitive	3.5
3. Social	13	3. Affective	3.5
4. Affective	12	4. Memory	3.4
5. Memory	10	5. Social	3.3
6. Compensation	7	6. Compensation	2.6

SILL Profile of Results (Version 7.0)

Key to Understanding Averages:

High	Almost or always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
Low	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

This figure is based on Oxford's (1990, p. 300) SILL Profile of Results. Copyright exemption was obtained from Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Learning Experience of Participant 'Sony'

Description of Sony

Sony is a twenty-eight year old Taiwanese woman. A graduate from a commercial college in Taiwan, she worked with computers before coming to Victoria. Speaking of her family she said, "They're all native speakers ...I'm the first one ...to went abroad to study English." Her interest in learning English related to her future goals of which she said, "I can try to be an English teacher ...to teach children." (setting goals and objectives/metacognitive).

Sony presented herself as a proactive, reflective user of language learning strategies in a variety of situations. For example, in relation to language skill development Sony wrote, "How can I improve my listening? Although, I'm not good at speaking and writing. But I think people can understand what I talk or write. But if I can't understand what they say, how I could answer them?" (planning learning/metacognitive; self-evaluation/metacognitive; self-monitoring/metacognitive).

In another instance, reflecting on a lesson related to functions, Sony wrote: "I don't feel like the ways she teaches ...price, landscape, sight the whole trip. But she didn't check whether all the adjective were suitable, and she didn't make assure whether we could understand all of them. She just asked us to copy in order to describe our tour package. I didn't think it was useful. We have to find the meanings of them by ourselves. We could learn from it but we spent more time to learn less." (taking emotional temperature/affective; self-monitoring/metacognitive; self-evaluation/metacognitive).

These entries availed an opportunity to see how Sony, as an adult language learner, alerts one to the necessity for a meaningful and useful learning situation, corrective feedback, and the need to use time efficiently. They also provide an appreciation of the needs, skills, attributes, and self-investment (Norton-Pierce, 1995) that an adult language learner may bring to various interactive life situations of the language learning process.

Qualitative Findings

Interview findings.

Findings for the qualitative data showed that Sony used primarily metacognitive and cognitive language learning strategies in her SLA experience. Twenty-nine instances of metacognitive strategies and twenty instances of cognitive strategy use were noted in the interview data. Metacognitive strategies were noted in the themes: "Understanding/Learning New Words," "Handling Grammar," "Extra Practice," etc. Cognitive language learning strategies were used by Sony in the themes: "Understanding/Learning New Words," "Getting Main Idea and Details," "Learning Pronunciation," "Extra Practice," etc.

Sony used affective strategies to support many of her cognitive, memory, and metacognitive behaviours. There were ten instances of overt use of affective strategies noted in the interview data. The use of affective language learning strategies was evidenced in the themes: "Difficulties and Confusion," "Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Experience," "Understanding English Speakers and their Culture," etc.

Sony's primary use of social strategies reflected her ability to empathize with others, attempting to understand their feelings and behaviours. Thirteen instances of social learning strategy use were noted in the interview data. However, this precludes the fact that her basic motivational and personality type facilitated behaviour not measured on either the SILL inventory or in the qualitative processes (i.e., helping organize other students, both formally and informally, for participation in this research project; helping me organize the research project; etc.). Social learning strategies were evident in the themes: "Understanding English Speakers and their Culture," "Studying Grammar," "Extra Practice," etc.

There were eleven instances of the use of compensation strategies noted in Sony's interview data. Almost all of these involved processes in which Sony was attempting to make herself comprehensible in situations where her linguistic proficiency was limited. Compensation strategies were evident in the themes: "Difficulties and Confusion," "Being Understood," etc.

Memory strategy use included creating mental linkage by association, forming images in memory, placing words in context, etc. Seven instances of memory strategies were noted in Sony's qualitative data. They were evident in the themes: "Understanding/Learning New Words," "Getting the Main Idea and Details," "Learning Pronunciation," etc.

Reflective note findings.

Sony was one of the learners who made eight entries in her reflective note data. The entries were extensive (averaging about eight sentences each) and focused on

specific linguistic, paralinguistic, and social instances, often revealing her thought process from a perceptual phase to an evaluative phase.

There were twenty instances of metacognitive strategy use in Sony's extensive RN findings. They were present in varied situations, often too complex and interactive to isolate. However, some of the themes in which metacognitive strategies were evident included: "Understanding English Speakers and their Culture," "Studying Grammar," "Am I Making Progress?," and "Understanding Grammar."

Eight instances of affective strategies were noted in such themes as: "Understanding English Speakers and their Culture," "Difficulties and Confusion," and "Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Learning Experience."

Cognitive learning strategy use, in the RN data, was noted seven times in themes which included: "Understanding and Learning New Words," and "Understanding Grammar."

Social learning strategies were noted three times in themes which included: "Getting Help," "Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities," etc.

Sony's use of a memory strategy was noted once in the theme: "Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities." There was also one instance of a compensation learning strategy noted in this RN data. It occurred in the theme: "Difficulties and Confusion."

As can be noted, Sony reported extensive, interactive LLS in her SLA activities. The level of her commitment of energy to these activities would suggest a high level of personal investment (Breen, 1985), in addition to a high level of both

intrinsic and extrinsic innovation (Brown, 1994).

Table 21

Sony's LLS Use and Associated Learning Themes

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Memory						"Sometimes ...I will review in my mind ...only in my mind ...not use the book ...do same exercises ...write essay ...or use the grammar." (SSI)
Cognitive				"If you can interview people ...you can listen ...differences being ...how they will pronounce ...different opinions." (SSI)	"Sometimes I have to study ...but I always use two grammar books ...just choose the part I need ...and I study and do exercise ...if I didn't really understand ...I will ask my teacher or ask anyone." (SSI)	
Compensation						

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Metacognitive	"If you want to learn another language ...you have to turn you ...your thoughts to think about a language ...and how they think ...what's the difference between their lives and yours." (SSI)			"I think to listen ...listen to others talking ...driving in the bus ...can listen to others talking ...maybe you can walk in the shop and ask for something ...about the price ...how to use the article." (SSI)	"Today ...not only today ...I felt very confused about preposition ...I think it is very important ...sometimes I can get it ...I have to think about the situation and decide what preposition to use ...but it doesn't really work." (RN)	"It's really helpful for me to study on 'most, almost, get, make, etc.' Now I know the difference between them ...but in Taiwan our teacher didn't explain that for us ...maybe I forgot." (RN)
Affective	"Sometimes I just like kidding ...want to practice phrasal verb ...so I asked impolite question ...have you ever gone around ...but I didn't think about that was impolite ...Gerry was very impolite ...was that the culture of Taiwan ...I felt very disappointed ...I felt sorry for Gerry and all my country people ...Gerry told me ...'I just kidding.'" (RN)		(Regarding homestay) "Also ...I ...I write in my journal ...to my teachers about my feelings ...what is difficult ...or I feel confusion about ...what is the question?" (SSI)			

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Social	(Regarding homestay) "I think that depends ...some homestays are very good like mine ...they can help me ...speak English ...improve my English ...help me to complete my homework." (SSI)		"Sometimes I feel scared to talk with strangers ...but I think if you interview others ...speak the normal speed ...you have to listen carefully ...but I think ...is only way to learn." (SSI)	(With reference to interviewing) "Maybe they will refuse you ...maybe they would like to help you ...I can try to speak and make him understand what I have to say." (SSI)		"I will try to explain grammar to other people ...maybe from Taiwan [hearing] ...maybe I will use Mandarin to explain." (SSI)

Table 22

Themes:	Learning Pronunciation	Most Important Activity in Learning English	Being Understood -	Understanding/Learning New Words	Getting Main Idea and Details	My Most Difficult Learning Task
Strategies:						
Memory	"I just catch the pronunciation ..try to get the letter ...not really the meaning." (SSI)			"I think I will always choose to look in my dictionary ...and try to use the word ...and I listen other's word." (SSI)	"Sometimes I can catch the word ...I will change the words into my thought ...just in my mind ...choose to bigger ...wrote the words." (SSI)	
Cognitive	"I will write down the pronunciation ...copy ...oh stress ...stress here ...I will just copy or write down the vowel." "I know the pronunciation keys ...the rules ...I just catch the pronunciation ...try to get the letter ...I will write the pronunciation ...oh ...the stress is here ...or write down he vowel." (SSI)			"I think the children ...like their vocabulary is not so hard to understand ...they will use easy words for you." (SSI)	"Sometimes I will think Chinese ...but if I write in Chinese ...I will forget English word ...I think not good ...maybe I will get the sentence ...write a pun word ...some words on my paper." (SSI)	

Themes:	Learning Pronunciation	Most Important Activity in Learning English	Being Understood	Understanding/Learning New Words	Getting Main Idea and Details	My Most Difficult Learning Task
Strategies:						
Compensation			(Regarding being misunderstood) "Maybe I will try again and ...if you couldn't understand my words ...I will show you my question in words [writing] (SSI)			
Metacognitive				"Is it very important for my English learner to remember lots of vocabulary? Today we went to Goldstream. I had learned a few vocabulary about that ...so I could understand and explanation about salmon ...but if I hadn't, I didn't think I could understand." (RN)		
Affective						
Social				"On Saturday ...I went to ABC Sound [beside my friend] ...ask about TV ...and very interesting about discussion ...so she [clerk] didn't get it what I say ...so we had to talk and discuss it over ...so we got each other ...a little bit in words." (SSI)		"I think the most difficult would be vocabulary ...lots of vocabulary I don't know ...I have to ask for the word ...ask for explanation." (SSI)

Table 23

Themes:	Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience	Getting Help	Am I Making Progress?	Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities	Preparing for a Challenging Task
Strategies:					
Memory					
Cognitive					
Compensation					
Metacognitive	"I think I would .. after class in my room ...I would sit down ..maybe sit in my bed ...and try to remember that ...the procedure from the first thing to the last thing .. and write down in my journals." (SSI)		"The environment is very important for a language learner. They can find a teacher good at grammar in their own country. They need more practices. When I look up I know I have more courage to speak than before." (RN)	(What is important) "Uh ...I think .. depends ..different people ..maybe he [friend] likes to talk with host family ...but maybe I had to ...I should interview all the people ..I like that way to learn." (SSI)	"Sometimes my presentation really bother me ...I write about presentation .. in my journal .. read the grammar books ..ask teacher .. what kind of presentation ...feel afraid of standing up to get everyone's attention." (SSI)

Themes:	Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience	Getting Help	Am I Making Progress?	Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities	Preparing for a Challenging Task
Strategies:					
Affective	"In my class there was a visitor. He was an astrophysicist. I really liked his speech. I think it was interesting and helpful for me because what he said we had studied in our junior high school. So he could talk all my attention ....Also, today our seats were the same as in class. Everyone could see the speakers not the back of heads." (RN)				
Social		"I think I was interested in the morning class ...the teacher gave us twenty-five descriptions and five verbs ...we had to make a sentence ...and to make others agree with you ...If you were not really understand you would always at the start ...also others could help you to understand what you need." (RN)		"In my opinion, it wasn't a good idea to be taught by my classmates about newspaper vocabulary ...because classmates didn't really understand ... my teacher explain ...I have understood ...just be like a words in Chinese. Don't ask only one person when you get lost."	

Quantitative Findings

SILL findings.

Sony's scores for the SILL inventory are reported in Table 24. Of the values reported, the use of the affective strategy category scored in the high range of use. The other scores for Sony's language learning strategy use all fell within the medium range of use.

Table 24

SILL Inventory Scores for Sony

SILL Evidence Rank Order Strategy Use	Score
1. Affective	4.0
2. Cognitive	3.3
3. Social	3.3
4. Metacognitive	3.1
5. Memory	2.7
6. Compensation	2.5

SILL Profile of Results (Version 7.0)

Key to Understanding Averages:

High	Almost or always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
Low	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

This figure is based on Oxford's (1990, p. 300) SILL Profile of Results. Copyright exemption was obtained from Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Reflective Synthesis

Both qualitative and quantitative findings provide revealing perspectives on Sony's use of language learning strategies. Each of the macrostrategies measured on the SILL evidenced use at a medium level, except for affective learning strategies. It has been reported that learners who use primarily complex language learning strategies (affective, cognitive, metacognitive, etc.) may, in their quest for meaning-focused learning, use fewer memory strategies (Nyikos, as cited in Oxford, 1993a). Thus the findings on Sony's SILL inventory suggested that she might be an experienced user of language learning strategies.

Sony's reported high use of affective learning strategies on the SILL inventory was interesting. Affect, as a construct, is difficult to define and measure (Phillips, 1992), and one wonders if the findings from the qualitative data which reflected a high level of metacognitive and cognitive strategy use are not in fact reflecting similar findings to the SILL affective category, although in a circuitous mode. That is, although Sony did not report the overt use of affective strategies extensively in the qualitative data, the use of metacognitive and cognitive strategies may have been external manifestations of essential, internal psychological processes (Breen, 1985).

It has been suggested that affect as an individual learner factor, and its ramifications for the language learning process, neurobiologically and otherwise, are not well understood and beg more research attention (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995; Schumann, 1994). Also, learners often do not report the use of affective and social language learning strategies because they are unaware of their importance (Oxford,

1990).

Sony's language learning strategy use in the qualitative data revealed extensive use of metacognitive strategies. These tended to be generalized, complex, and pervasive in nature. This was particularly evident in Sony's RN data. Sony noted reflectively the relevance of the physical and social learning environment and the significance of learning materials to the learner's response. She also noted the importance of using time efficiently, teaching style, and personal investment in offering her a relevant, well-organized learning experience.

Writing tasks are thought to be helpful as a format for disclosure of personalized language learning strategies (Faersch & Kasper, 1987; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Sony's writing in her RN data reported LLS potentially appropriate for problem solution, and in several instances developed her strategic learning approach from perception of the problem, assessment of available options through monitoring of responses, and finally to suggestions for possible solution and evaluation of efforts. As such, the diary type entries revealed the transparency of Sony's complex use of LLS in a way that was not possible in the quantitative findings, and were not as well developed in the interview data.

In developing the text for the RN data, Sony appreciably improved her grammatical proficiency level. Judging by the volume and complexity of the RN entries, they appeared to provide an opportunity for her to document personally relevant material. Learners who have an opportunity to write about their LLS use may experience the benefit of an intrinsically motivating learning task (Brown, 1994), an

opportunity to increase the schematic complexity of their existing LLS knowledge (Bacon, 1995; Schumacher & Nash, 1991), and support for developing learner autonomy (Cotterall, 1995).

Reflective or dialogue journal writing can support and validate LLS use for learners like Sony. It may also provide modelling for other learners, thereby heightening their consciousness relative to LLS use and its potential for them as individual learners.

Sony's writing provided her with a mode for continually refining and expanding her hypothesis about the English language and her participant socio-cognitive role as a language learner. This has been reported to be useful to language learners in developing proficiency (Corbeil, 1990; Faersch & Kasper, 1987).

The findings from the qualitative data also revealed Sony's specific modes of social and cognitive language learning strategy use. Thus, it was possible to view her use of complex and interactive strategies supporting the proactive behaviour necessary to optimize and bring her language learning opportunities to fruition. It has been suggested by Vann and Abraham (1990) that less successful language learners may use several LLS of varying complexity. The critical factor, however, seems to be the less successful learner's inability to cohese the strategies in a flexible, orchestrated, and focused manner to deal with the requirements of the presenting task or learning opportunity.

Sony talks of her realistic beliefs and attitudes relative to the language learning process. Learners who have realistic beliefs and positive attitudes toward the target

culture (Mantle-Bromley, 1995), and function proactively, using LLS to resolve both discrete and globalized learning tasks, tend to be successful in their endeavours (Oxford, 1990b).

Sony's extensive and complex RN data revealed her high level of social investment (Norton-Pierce, 1995) in the life situations of her SLA experience, and thus facilitated a more complete understanding of her use of LLS. In conclusion, it may be said that Sony's extensive use of LLS enabled her to seek out multiple and diverse learning situations and to monitor her language learning with a focus on understanding (versus memorization), creating solutions to her individualized learning challenges.

Table 25

Synthesis of Findings: Sony

Qualitative Evidence -Sum of Two Methods- Rank Order of Strategy	Score	SILL Evidence Quantitative Findings Rank Order of Strategy	Score
1. Metacognitive	49	1. Affective	4.0
2. Cognitive	27	2. Cognitive	3.3
3. Affective	18	3. Social	3.3
4. Social	16	4. Metacognitive	3.1
5. Compensation	12	5. Memory	2.7
6. Memory	8	6. Compensation	2.5

SILL Profile of Results (Version 7.0)

Key to Understanding Averages:

High	Almost or always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
Low	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

This figure is based on Oxford's (1990, p. 300) SILL Profile of Results. Copyright exemption was obtained from Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Learning Experience of Participant 'Hiromi'

Description of Hiromi

A graduate of Junior Woman's College in Japan, Hiromi began her English language studies eight years ago in junior high school. She had studied Dutch for one year in Japan, and was studying both English and Mandarin when interviewed.

Speaking of her future plans to use English, Hiromi said: "English is a very helpful for me because I were a teacher ...Japanese language teacher ...I want to teach Japanese to foreign students ...if they don't understand ...or have some trouble in Japan ...I want to help them ...in English." (planning for a language task/metacognitive; empathy, cultural understanding/social; setting goals and objectives/metacognitive).

Speaking about how long it would take to learn another language Hiromi said, "I'm not sure ...but I think ...I guess ...five or ten years ...after Junior Woman's College I studied Dutch ...Dutch is very difficult ...now I study Mandarin ...very difficult ...and in spite of Kanji ...but Dutch is more difficult." (analyzing contrastively/cognitive).

Speaking of getting extra practice Hiromi said, "A few days ago ...I went to ...um supermarket ...I asked somebody ...mm ...this potato is so ...so cheaper ...or not? The man ...woman said to me 'I have no idea'. But I said, to myself, I have no idea is a correct answer or not? Usually I hear the 'I'm sorry ...I don't know about that' ...but I didn't know that ...I have no idea is okay." (analyzing linguistic expressions/cognitive; practising naturalistically/cognitive; self-monitoring/metacognitive; self-evaluation/metacognitive).

Qualitative Findings

Interview findings.

Hiromi spoke of studying words by reading, saying: "Reading ...almost ah ...words ...I look the ...sentence ...sometimes write it ...usually I look the word ...my eyes remember ..sentence or vocabulary ...I remember the page of the dictionary ...what kind of word ...where is the word ...top or down ...bottom of page ...the colour ...check the colour ...[to find it again] sometimes my eyes." (focused attention/metacognitive; making notes/cognitive; using imagery/memory; placing new word in context/memory). Thus, Hiromi's combination of both intricate and bedrock LLS (Green & Oxford, 1995) suggested that SLA and complex problem-solving learning processes are achieved in a variety of ways by individual learners.

Hiromi used the interviews to express her LLS abilities thoughtfully and completely. She seemed to have purpose in what she wanted to express, and was not deterred if she had to hesitate to bring her thoughts and expression to closure.

Metacognitive language learning strategies were noted in thirty-three instances. These primarily involved setting goals and objectives, arranging and planning learning, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. She used metacognitive strategies in the themes: "Difficulties and Confusion," "Handling Grammar," "Extra Practice," "Am I Making Progress?," and "Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities."

In her use of cognitive language learning strategies Hiromi focused on practising, repeating, analyzing expressions, and on using resources (TV, language learning laboratory, dictionary, etc.). She used cognitive strategies twenty-nine times

in the themes: "Understanding/Learning New Words," "Extra Practice," "Getting the Main Idea and Details," "Learning Pronunciation," etc.

Hiromi's use of memory strategies in the interview data was noted ten times. Her memory strategies primarily involved the use of auditory memory, but there is also evidence of kinesthetic and visual memory strategies. They were evidenced in the themes: "Learning/Understanding New Words," "Studying Grammar," and "Learning Pronunciation." Affective strategies were evidenced in the data eight times. Hiromi used affective strategies to acknowledge and assess the ways she was feeling related to her learning process. Affective strategy use was primarily evident in the theme: "Difficulties and Confusion."

Social strategies were noted seven times in the interview data and involved Hiromi's empathetic and interactive relationships with more proficient English speakers. Social strategies helped Hiromi in the themes: "Understanding English Speakers and their Culture," "Extra Practice," and "Understanding/Learning New Words."

Hiromi's use of compensation strategies was noted six times in the interview data primarily in the themes: "Difficulties and Confusion," "Understanding Grammar," and "Getting the Main Idea and Details." She was confident when she spoke of the way she could move from one compensation strategy to another (repeat, ask questions, gesture, writing) in order to gain the comprehension of her English language listener.

Reflective note findings.

Hiromi made five short entries in her reflective note data. In terms of language

learning there were three instances of metacognitive strategies, three instances of cognitive strategies, one instance of memory strategy, and one instance of social strategy. They were all found in the themes: "Extra Practice" or "Difficulties and Confusion."

Table 26

Hiromi's LLS Use and Associated Learning Themes

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Memory				"Sometimes watching TV ...especially commercials ...I can listen again ...again and I croon and remember them unconsciously." (SSI) "When you talk to different people ...oh I remember the word ...and I studied ...English studies." (SSI)	"I must transfer ...I think about the verb ...just the verb ...so I remember 'eat, ate, eaten' ...maybe I don't remember ...mouth or sound come but ...mouth remember." (SSI) "Good way to study grammar ah ...compare the sentence ...which is ...which part of the sentence is different ...why that sentence is so different ...maybe ...yes use grammar book." (SSI)
Cognitive		"At first I didn't understand why the verb ...came after the name ...so I can't understand the verb ...but now I'm very happy when I understand ...verb and adjective ...then I interested." (SSI)	"After junior woman's college I studied Dutch ...Dutch is very difficult ...now I study Mandarin ...very difficult ...in spite of Kanji ...but Dutch is more difficult." (SSI)	"Television ...or ah ...sometimes I go to ...language lab ...there I can hear tape recorder ...again ...again ...so it's very good." (SSI)		

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Compensation			When not being understood Hiromi suggested the following strategies: "I could um .. ask the speaker .. again? [repeat] ...or say .. sorry I can't understand you .. please say more slowly ...or I will do gesture ...ah ..writing." (SSI)			
Metacognitive				"So this lunchtime I went to K-Mart ...I had to take a ticket for the movie ...I think ...what can I say ...'Could you .. give me .. five ticket ...for the movie?' ...so I make correct sentence ...I need time ..to say" (SSI) "Watch TV ... or ah .. sometimes I go up to the language lab .. I can .. I can hear the tape recorder .. again and again and again ..so it's very good" (SSI)	"Sometimes I remember the correct ..just the correct sentence ..I don't change it .. the sentence .. sometimes say different sentence ..'oh ...oh this is not good ...I ...I have never heard this sentence before ...ah differences .. so I think .. wrong" (SSI)	

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Affective			"I thought I didn't speak English but my listening ability is very good ...but native English like to use slang ...I couldn't understand that word ...so I'm afraid to speak and hearing." (SSI)			
Social	"Speaking of a plan to meet a conversation partner who did not appear Hiromi said, "I called her ...we manage [arrange] to meet at fountain ...she didn't appear ...maybe she can't skip part-time job." (SSI)			(Regarding new conversation partner) " one day I look for information ...on the notice board ...so now I am touching with him ...so we telephone or once a week we speak." (SSI) "Now I share a house with my other friend- ...Taiwanese ... she can't speak Japanese ...so now we are discussed every day ...she can't speak [English] so well ...like native speakers ...but we can practice." (SSI)		

Table 27

Themes:	Learning Pronunciation	Most Important Activity in Learning English	Being Understood	Understanding/Learning New Words	Getting Main Idea and Details	My Most Difficult Learning Task
Strategies:						
Memory						
Cognitive		"...talk ...talk to many people ...when you talk to different people [you think] ...'oh I remember that word' ...I studied ...when I talk to somebody." (SSI)		"I pick up the meaning ...dictionary [indicated would circle it] ...I think ...sometimes I use the word ...make sentences ...article ...or talk to somebody." (SSI)	"I remember the meaning ...main idea ...situation ...the order ...order ...what you say and important word." (SSI)	"Most difficult ...hearing ...I think hearing is the most difficult ...I can understand and the ...vocabulary ...some vocabulary ...for example, I get up ...moving ...go to school ...I can hear that ...but I forgot ...so next sentence go through my head ...first sentence I transfer in my head ...Japanese ...da da something ...oh ...what ...is next sentence ...can't hear ...but next, next sentence I can hear." (SSI)
Compensation				"Um ...I'm sorry ...could you give me a little more information ...repeat." (SSI)	"I looking at you and your body language ...or your stress word ...hear ...and remember that and more sentence I can't understand." (SSI)	

Themes.	Learning Pronunciation	Most Important Activity in Learning English	Being Understood	Understanding/Learning - New Words	Getting Main Idea and Details	My Most Difficult Learning Task
Strategies:						
Metacognitive				"Right now I'm keeping my diary ...so I write new word in my diary " (SSI)		
Affective				"When I can't understand a word? ..sometimes I am ashamed ...to ask somebody ..I can ask ...but stranger ..I can't ask stranger." (SSI)		
Social				"Because when I find new words in conversation I can ask them soon before I forget these words " (SSI)		

Table 28

Themes:	Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience	Getting Help	Am I Making Progress?	Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities	Preparing for a Challenging Task
Strategies:					
Memory		"Teacher write vocabulary on the board ...check the stress ...so she say apple ...the point ...I look for [her] mouth ...I move my mouth as she say 'pp' [shows pursing lips]." (SSI)			
Cognitive					
Compensation					
Metacognitive			"Um ...I think ...it's not easy ...because I can't hear English speaker ...now I'm studying ...especially listening [elective] ...but I can't hear ...everyday watch the news ...movie ...or something ...so now I am confusing ...what should I do?" (SSI)	"Ah ...usually make a sentence ...it ...ah ...relation to me or something ...I must remember 'beautiful' ...ah ...I like a movie star ...Julie Roberts ...I can say 'Julie Roberts very beautiful' ...but I don't make a sentence its not concentrate me." (SSI)	
Affective					

Themes:	Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience	Getting Help	Am I Making Progress?	Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities	Preparing for a Challenging Task
Strategies:					
Social				"Before October ...I stayed with host family ...they have two children ...go to bed early ...get up early ...I couldn't have time ...a chance to talk to them ...so I don't think it is better ...to stay home ...homestay." (SSI)	

Quantitative Findings

SILL findings.

The findings on the SILL inventory suggested that Hiromi was a sophisticated and experienced strategic language learner. Five of the SILL macrostrategy category values fell in the range of "usually used" and one fell in the range of "always or almost always used." Her highest score was in the range of affective strategy use and it was predictive of the positive and organized manner in which she strategically approached her many and varied SLA endeavours.

Table 29

SILL Inventory Scores for Hiromi

SILL Evidence Rank Order Strategy Use	Score
1. Affective	4.5
2. Metacognitive	4.2
3. Compensation	4.0
4. Social	3.7
5. Cognitive	3.6
6. Memory	3.4

SILL Profile of Results (Version 7.0)

Key to Understanding Averages:

High	Almost or always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
Low	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

This figure is based on Oxford's (1990, p. 300) SILL Profile of Results. Copyright exemption was obtained from Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Reflective Synthesis

Hiromi's findings from the SILL inventory suggest that she is an experienced and sophisticated user of LLS, particularly in the areas of affective and metacognitive strategies. While the number of instances of overt uses of affective strategies reported in the data did not fully support the SILL, the general nature of Hiromi's language learning behaviour did.

For example, findings from Hiromi's interview data near the onset revealed an observation on the difference in language structure between Japanese and English. She noted difficulties and confusion, subsequent insights, and realistic beliefs related to the process of learning a language in many ways different from her native language. Learners who use affective learning strategies to tolerate the ambiguities of an unfamiliar language and culture have an enhanced opportunity for success in SLA (Ely, 1989).

Some learners have the ability to use language learning strategies to flexibly generate usual and unusual solutions to their learning challenges, and these learners tend to be successful (Vann & Abraham, 1990). Hiromi used a variety of metacognitive strategies to plan, monitor, and evaluate her learning endeavours.

For example, when Hiromi's original conversation partner proved unsuccessful, she found herself another one. When she desired extra practice, she used her social and cognitive learning strategies to mobilize her developing language interactively with native speakers in the larger social community of the society. Although not completely confident, her level of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Brown, 1994) was

sufficiently high to enable her to reflect on incomprehensible feedback, and seek out clarification to resolve her difficulties (Holec, 1987).

It is thought that this construction of information from one's environment, which involves cognitive strategies (Corbeil, 1990), leads to the quality of learning characteristic of successful language learners.

Within the interview structure itself, Hiromi used the social strategies of asking questions for clarification and verification. That is, she would restate, or ask for further information, to summarize or clarify what she thought she had heard. This is reported to be a powerful cognitive learning strategy, particularly useful in naturalistic/authentic learning contexts (Bacon, 1992). Hiromi demonstrated her use of memory strategy involving auditory, visual, and kinesthetic memory. She specifically noted her use of physical responses or sensations (Oxford, 1990a) as a mode of contextualizing new language information in order to facilitate its association into her developing language knowledge structure.

In conclusion, Hiromi reminded me of the folly of making generalized assumptions about characteristics/styles and strategies of individual language learners relative to their cultural origin. In her study of style preferences, Joy Ried (1987) stated that the kinesthetic mode of language learning was, of all Asian language learners in her study, least preferred by Japanese learners. Related to this, Hiromi as an individual Japanese language learner showed an unexpected preference for kinesthetic and auditory sensory input and the use of sensory and kinesthetic related LLS in developing SLA proficiency. Such findings remind us that each learner has

his/her own preferred mode of SLA, which may or may not reflect larger cultural, academic, or psychosocial learner preferences for language learning strategies.

Table 30

Synthesis of Findings: Hiromi

Qualitative Evidence -Sum of Two Methods- Rank Order of Strategy	Score	SILL Evidence Quantitative Findings Rank Order of Strategy	Score
1. Metacognitive	36	1. Affective	4.5
2. Cognitive	32	2. Metacognitive	4.2
3. Memory	11	3. Compensation	4.0
4. Affective	8	4. Social	3.7
5. Social	8	5. Cognitive	3.6
6. Compensation	6	6. Memory	3.4

SILL Profile of Results (Version 7.0)

Key to Understanding Averages:

High	Almost or always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
Low	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

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Learning Experience of Participant 'Jessie'

Description of Jessie

Jessie is a twenty-two year old woman from Taiwan. Before coming to Canada, she studied hotel management for ten months in Switzerland. She had studied English for seven years, beginning when she was a high school student in Taiwan.

Speaking about her family and their valuation of English language learning Jessie said, "I have one older brother and two younger sisters and everybody study English because ...we have to study in high school ...everybody has to study ...English is very important in Taiwan ...I think the most important language is Chinese ...English ...Japanese ...and ...my family like ...travel." Speaking of her plans for the future she said, "I'm not sure, maybe I will try office." (self-evaluation/metacognitive; arranging and practising learning/metacognitive).

When we spoke of how long it would take to learn another language Jessie said, "A long time." She qualified this by saying, "If I try to speak with English speakers ...it's more you can prove [improve] it ...very quickly." (arranging and planning learning/metacognitive; self-evaluation/metacognitive).

Assessing the difference between naturalistic practice and planned practice Jessie said, "If I just watch TV ...maybe I can understand ...'what did they say?' and I can review ...I can review ...review ...review ...but if I speak with a English speaker ...if I don't know ...we can just stop and ask him or her." (arranging and planning learning/metacognitive; repeating/cognitive; self-monitoring/metacognitive).

When I asked Jessie how she could manage to figure out an unfamiliar word in

a book Jessie said, "I will read the whole sentence ...if I can't understand ...whole sentence ...check dictionary ...ah maybe I just know ...I just [can't] understand this word ...then I can understand the whole sentence ...so this word is not important ...if I couldn't understand the whole sentence ...I check dictionary ...if I see this word ...maybe it's a key word." (organizing/metacognitive; using resources/cognitive; using clues/compensation). "...If I understand the whole sentence I can guess ...ah this word I don't know ...but I can guess it meaning." (taking risk wisely/affective).

Reflecting on learning experiences she did not find helpful, Jessie said, "Some people, they know you are international student, so speak very slowly ...I think ...it's not very good for me ...now ...my teacher speak too slow ...we talk with [her] always ...but now ...didn't change." (self-monitoring/metacognitive; self-evaluation/metacognitive; discussing feelings with someone else/affective). Jessie spoke openly and confidently about her LLS and her SLA learning endeavours. When she noted problems, she reflected on them and pragmatically tried to generate creative solutions. Much of her energy in SLA activities was oriented toward this proactive resolution of challenges. Though cognizant of problem areas she was experiencing, Jessie gave no indication that she was immobilized or peripheralized within the locale of the classroom or the larger learning community. In fact, she impressed me as a language learner who was using her available resources wisely to support endeavours, including LLS needed to assure success in achieving SLA proficiency.

Qualitative Findings

Interviews findings.

Jessie revealed an expanded and diversified strategic approach to her SLA experience in the findings from her interview data.

For her time was valuable, as evidenced by such quotes as: "Last time I went to museum ...level 200 ...can't understand very well ...I think nonsense ...waste of time; ...speak with English speakers ...improve very quickly."

Cognitive LLS were evidenced thirty-six times in the interview data. Jessie used cognitive learning strategies to analyze expressions, encode information, and provide structure for her developing language knowledge. She used naturalistic practice to continuously utilize her language knowledge, thereby availing opportunities for revision and refinement of her developing language skill and knowledge level. Cognitive learning strategies emerged mainly in the themes: "Extra Practice," "Difficulties and Confusion," "Understanding/Learning New Words," "Learning Pronunciation," "Most Important Activity in Learning English," and "Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities."

Language learning activities reported in the interview data revealed twenty-five instances of metacognitive strategy use. Metacognitive strategies were used primarily to arrange and plan her learning activities, consciously focus attention, and to monitor and evaluate her learning activities. Metacognitive strategies were noted in the themes: "Extra Practice," "Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience," "Understanding/Learning New Words," "Understanding Grammar,"

"Difficulties and Confusion," "Getting Main Idea and Details," etc. For Jessie it was also important to plan her energy efficiently. She wanted to secure a broad range of naturalistic language practice and expressed her frustration when this was not forthcoming. She seemed attuned to the realization that her psycho-cognitive development in SLA was dependent on the nature and quality of her social learning context (MacIntyre & Gardiner, 1994). She sought to optimize both her own use of language learning strategies and the situations in which she could use them.

Social learning strategies were evident in eighteen instances and were Jessie's third most preferred LLS strategy category. Social strategies enabled Jessie, through various modes of cooperation with proficient English speakers, to better empathically understand both target language culture and to avail herself of meaningful practice opportunities. Social LLS were noted in the themes: "Understanding English Speakers and their Culture," "Getting Extra Practice," "Difficulties and Confusion," "Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities," etc.

Memory strategies were noted eight times in the SSI data. These were primarily used to aid Jessie in visualization, association, elaboration, and grouping of language input and were evident in the theme: "Getting Main Idea and Details."

Compensation learning strategies were evident in five instances. Jessie used linguistic and contextual clues and asked proficient speakers for help in resolution of language ambiguities which her developing language could not resolve. Use of compensation LLS were noted in the theme: "Difficulties and Confusion."

Jessie used affective strategies in eight instances in the interview data.

Affective strategies were used to support Jessie in her use of positive self-talk, and in taking calculated risks to discern ambiguous situations. These strategies were evidenced in the themes: "Understanding/Learning New Words," Most Important Activity in Learning English," "Getting Main Idea and Details," "Understanding/Learning New Words," and "Extra Practice."

Reflective note findings.

Jessie made eight lengthy entries in her reflective note data. Her observations focused on various aspects of her learning activities and were insightful and transparent. That is, her writing revealed both her self-assessment processes related to her language learning dilemmas, and enabled me as a researcher to access her world of LLS.

There were fourteen instances of metacognitive strategy use noted in the RN data. They occurred chiefly in the themes: "Difficulties and Confusion," "Understanding Grammar," "Extra Practice," "Am I Making Progress?," and "Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities."

In the RN data there were six cognitive LLS noted. They occurred in the themes: "Difficulties and Confusion," "Extra Practice," "Studying Grammar," and "Am I Making Progress?."

Four social LLS were noted in the RN data. They were present in the themes: "Am I Making Progress?" and "Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities." Two affective strategies were noted in the RN data in the themes: "Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities" and "Am I Making Progress." No memory or

compensation LLS were noted.

Thus, in her own voice, Jessie reveals her active involvement in analyzing and understanding her learning behaviours and resolving learning dilemmas. Further, she assessed the efficacy of her learning efforts as they impact her particularized language learning challenges.

Jessie showed her ability to manage her learning at various stages. That is, in her RN writing she showed how she mobilized a range of reflections in trying to assess and better understand her learning processes. Jessie wrote of her personalized objectives for her language learning activities. She then talked about how she monitored her success in meeting her objectives, and reflected on some of the factors which could influence her success or failure in language learning endeavours.

Table 31

Jessie's LLS Use and Associated Learning Themes

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Memory						
Cognitive			"Today I felt confuse, this is second time I absent from evening writing class ...I didn't write essay ...maybe only one short essay ...I didn't have any improve ...I don't know why I can remember vocabulary word easily ...I still have difficult with grammar ...even I study it ...I can't use it." (RN).	"Now I have a conversation partner ...is very good ...she study Mandarin ...just beginning ...so mostly the time we are speaking English ...if I can't understand ...I will ask him ...'what does this world mean?' ...or I found television ...heard some word ...ask 'how do you spell that word?' ...yeah very helpful." (SSI)	"Um grammar ...even I can speak ...but speak is very fast ...I can't think about grammar because if I find a problem ...check grammar ...check dictionary ...check grammar." (SSI)	"Grammar is my weak point ...I know how to you but in real life ...I don't know how to use the grammar ...I don't hear grammar which I've learned ...from Canadians ...does Canadians use all their grammar?" (RN)
Compensation			"Not understanding native speakers) "Ah ...first I will guess ...if I really can't understand ...then I ask ...please say again ...or what do you mean ...sorry I can't understand." (SSI)			

Themes:	Understanding English Speakers and their Culture	English as a System of Language	Difficulties and Confusion	Extra Practice	Understanding Grammar	Studying Grammar
Strategies:						
Metacognitive			"I have a problem. 'Why I can't speak English with my Taiwanese friends?' ...sometimes we speak English but if something can't explain ...I'll change to Mandarin. I won't try to find English word ...if I speak to another language speaker I'll try to find vocabulary to explain." (RN)	"Today I went to teacher's potluck ...no school ...but I think I still use English in another place because I think talk with somebody ...good way to practice listening and speaking." (RN)	"Grammar is my weak point. When I am studying grammar I know how to use but in real life when I am speaking or writing I don't know how to use the grammar and I don't hear some grammar which I've learned from Canadian. Maybe it is my problem, but does Canadian use all the grammar in speaking and writing?" (RN)	"I felt confused ...evening writing class ...didn't write many essay ..didn't have an improve ..I still have difficult with grammar. I don't know why." (RN)
Affective						
Social	"If I live in homestay ...I can talk with host mother ...roommate talks with host daughter ...I can't ...maybe age." (SSI)		"If I can't understand I'll ask my teacher ...sometimes I will make a mistake ...have to come back and ask again." (SSI)	"It's good to practice ...maybe you can find someone ...they are very ...like talk ...and you just sit there and talk with them ...very good." (SSI)		

Table 32

Themes:	Learning Pronunciation	Most Important Activity in Learning English	Being Understood	Understanding/Learning New Words	Getting Main Idea and Details	My Most Difficult Learning Task
Strategies:						
Memory					"Ah ...first they get married ...second is they not married ...maybe divorce ..I think even I understand ...maybe too many things I can't remember." (SSI)	
Cognitive	"I will write down ...pronounce ...maybe write down many times ...and pronounce ...for me ...it's the best way." (SSI)	"Last session teacher prepare ...I think very good ..really Canadian ...how do you say sentence ...maybe say too fast ...I try to guess ...oh I don't know what that means ...maybe two words ...not just one word." (fast speech) (SSI)		I will read the whole sentence ..if I can't understand ...check dictionary ...maybe this is two words not one word." (SSI)		
Compensation						
Metacognitive					"If I just concentrate one question ...listen ...listen I can get it ...if I read the whole thing ...maybe forget something important ...so I ask one question ...concentrate to listen ..listen ...and I can find it." (SSI)	

Themes:	Learning Pronunciation	Most Important Activity in Learning English	Being Understood	Understanding/Learning New Words	Getting Main Idea and Details	My Most Difficult Learning Task
Strategies:						
Affective		"I like to do vocabulary games ...because even I couldn't remember ...how to spell, but I know how to pronounce ...and I know the meaning ...I can go home ...just try to spell ...I can get it." (SSI)				
Social						

Table 33

Themes:	Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience	Getting Help	Am I Making Progress?	Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities	Preparing for a Challenging Task
Strategies:					
Memory				"First term ...I talk with my friend's conversation partner ...but he can speak Mandarin not bad and learning Mandarin ...so always talking Mandarin ...didn't learn anything from him." (SSI)	
Cognitive					
Compensation					

Themes:	Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience	Getting Help	Am I Making Progress?	Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities	Preparing for a Challenging Task
Strategies:					
Metacognitive	"Today ...I had real success ...new words from old ...in that exercise I already know a word ...and put them together and get a new word." (RN)		"Now ...I can say ...'please repeat' ...but first ...I think I couldn't because ...I think it's impolite ...but now I think if I can't understand I have to ask them." (SSI) "Recently I am thinking do I improve in this section and I think I get the answer ...yesterday, when I was watching TV I felt my listening is getting worse ...English is getting worse ...I don't know why sometimes my listening is good ...but sometimes is bad for me. I think concentrate is the most important thing and it also depend on content is easy or not." (RN)	"Yesterday I had attended an informal discussion meeting We were talking about ESL program and I realize I haven't done any study yet. This term is like a vacation because my teachers ...teachers are very good people but their teaching can't make me interest to English. In the meeting I said, 'Teacher is very important for students' study' and everybody was agree with me. Someone said she doesn't care how long is class ...if teacher's teaching is interesting." (RN)	
Affective			"Last session teacher always gives us homework ...ask three Canadian English speakers these questions ...and first time ...I was very nervous ...I can't call ...but next time ...next time ...very good ...I just go to learn ...say, 'Could you help me with my homework?'" (SSI)		

Themes:	Remembering a Successful/Unsuccessful Language Learning Experience	Getting Help	Am I Making Progress?	Relevant or Less Relevant Learning Activities	Preparing for a Challenging Task
Strategies:					
Social				"...if I live by myself I think not good ...I have to cook ...waste of time ...living with Taiwanese ...never speak English ...very bad. If I live in homestay that's good ..I can talk with host family ...very good ..always at supper time ..like to talk with host mother ..if I have a problem ..I will talk to them." (SSI)	

Quantitative Findings

SILL findings.

On the SILL inventory, using Oxford's (1990) mode of scoring, Jessie's highest score was in the category of cognitive strategies. Metacognitive strategies were reported at a level approaching a high level of use (usually used). Affective, compensation, and social strategy use were reported at the same level, in the uppermost range of medium use. Memory learning strategies occurred at a lower level of medium strategy use.

Table 34

SILL Inventory Scores for Jessie

SILL Evidence Rank Order Strategy Use	Score
1. Cognitive	3.8
2. Metacognitive	3.4
3. Affective	3.3
4. Compensation	3.3
5. Memory	3.3
6. Affective	2.8

SILL Profile of Results (Version 7.0)

Key to Understanding Averages:

High	Almost or always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
Low	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

This figure is based on Oxford's (1990, p. 300) SILL Profile of Results. Copyright exemption was obtained from Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Reflective Synthesis

Both the qualitative (RN and SSI) and quantitative (SILL) data suggest that Jessie used cognitive and metacognitive LLS extensively in her language learning activities. Memory strategies were used to strengthen Jessie's existing knowledge frameworks and to add to their complexity. She acknowledged at one point, "Very easy for me to memorize ...but sometimes not use ...so forget." In this sense she seemed to acknowledge that although memory strategies served her well in terms of conserving her time and acquiring information, they were most useful when combined with application and use.

Although at one time thought to be mundane, it is now felt that memory and other "bedrock strategies" (Green & Oxford, 1995) may be used frequently or moderately frequently by learners at all levels. However, it is important that they be used in combination with active naturalistic practice, combining function and form in meaningful language.

Jessie also used social, compensation, and affective strategies at a lower level. It is difficult to assess the full effect of learners' use of affective and social strategies and their interactive effect with/on the ability of the learner in supporting motivation, goal orientation, etc. (MacIntyre, 1994). Learners are often, both culturally and academically, not encouraged to pay attention to their affective language learning strategies (Oxford, 1990) and affect, as a construct, is somewhat difficult to fully understand (Phillips, 1990). Some cultures may focus most attention and effort on cognitive and memory learning strategies (Reid, 1987) and do not prepare the learner's

awareness/consciousness for attending to affective and social learning strategies (MacIntyre, 1994).

An interesting and important aspect of Jessie's use of LLS was her ability to organize her learning activities and to personally associate her psychological learning efforts with the social realities of a variety of learning situations. She evidenced a high level of self-investment (Norton-Pierce, 1995) in the many areas which she reported in her use of LLS. This high level of self-investment seemed to facilitate a high level of motivation. Jessie's motivation appeared to enable her to combine her use of LLS in such a way as to assess, monitor, and evaluate her active involvement in the learning process, and to focus her use of time, materials, and problem-solving activities to maximum advantage. That is, she used her LLS to develop the actual conceptual and behavioral skills necessary for successful language learning. She also worked actively to generate personalized problem solutions and maintain ongoing practice and negotiation of meaning in the English language.

A particularly important aspect of Jessie's ability was her use of LLS to assess her SLA progress. In order to do this, language learners have to be psychologically ready to become their own expert in deciding what is evolving in their learning experience (Holec, 1987). Jessie provided evidence in her LLS use that she, as a learner, was both willing and able to assess her personal learning efforts. She was aware of the significance to her, as a learner, of teaching methodologies, authentic language input, and relevant learning material. In the SLA learning world, teachers and external examination are often acknowledged as credible criteria for the

measurement of learners' efforts. Thus, the ability of a learner to take responsibility for personal learning assessment, in combination with the skill and ability to mobilize such assessment, is a powerful, emancipatory combination (Holec, 1987).

Table 35

Synthesis of Findings: Jessie

Qualitative Evidence -Sum of Two Methods- Rank Order of Strategy	Score	SILL Evidence Quantitative Findings Rank Order of Strategy	Score
1. Cognitive	42	1. Cognitive	3.8
2. Metacognitive	39	2. Metacognitive	3.4
3. Social	22	3. Affective	3.3
4. Affective	10	4. Social	3.3
5. Memory	8	5. Compensation	3.3
6. Compensation	5	6. Memory	2.8

SILL Profile of Results (Version 7.0)

Key to Understanding Averages:

High	Almost or always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
Low	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

This figure is based on Oxford's (1990, p. 300) SILL Profile of Results. Copyright exemption was obtained from Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Conclusion

One may think of SLA as a generative process (i.e., "development as growth"; Ellis, 1989, p. 76). From this perspective, it is assumed that the learner has different linguistic, social, and communicative tasks at different levels of SLA proficiency. Early in the language learning/acquisition process, the learner is faced with developing a basic understanding of the target language as a system, as well as accumulating linguistic structure and behaviours that facilitate early referential use of language. Memory, compensation, and cognitive (Direct Strategies) strategies assist the learner in these tasks.

As language learners move toward language proficiency, "...[they] develop their own understandings or models of second or foreign language and its surrounding culture." (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989, p. 291). The ability to use appropriate learning strategies in a variety of situations enables the learners to take responsibility for their learning, thereby enhancing learner autonomy, independence, and self-direction. These factors are important because language learners need to keep on learning and seeking opportunities for learning, even when they are no longer in the classroom (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989).

Adult language learners bring to the SLA process different attributes from younger learners. Of these, one of the most important is the ability to think metacognitively (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995; Flavell, 1979). The ability to think metacognitively may include the ability to reflect on and regulate one's own learning and learning needs (Oxford, 1985a). As such, the learner develops conscious

awareness of his or her own learning patterns and needs and outcomes. This ability empowers the adult to "...set long term goals and determine one's own optimal learning environment." (Oxford, 1985b, p. 4).

The participants in this study often priorized or actively organized those learning situations which availed a greater degree of control over personalized learning and an expanded level of authentic input, as well as a heightened level of reflective thought.

Such behaviours seem to be important for the adult learner for a variety of reasons. Firstly, they recognize the learners' developed, mature world view and are empowering and motivating in a learning process in which adult learners may feel otherwise disempowered. Secondly, they provide opportunities for participation in communicative situations thought to be critical in the development of language proficiency (Lightbrown & Spada, 1995). Thirdly, they avail an opportunity for the adult learner to choose language learning activities appropriate to his/her needs, interests, and language proficiency level. [Active engagement and initiation of activity in the language learning process, is listed as one of the strategy groups most characteristic of *good* language learners (Naiman, et al., 1978; Wenden, 1987b) and appears correlated with other measures of learning success (Oxford, 1990b)].

Finally, adult language learners' use of LLS provides ongoing opportunities for personal reflection and analysis in interaction with native speakers in a variety of naturalistic learning situations. In turn, these opportunities may increase learners' tolerance for ambiguity and risk taking (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995), facilitate personal

understanding of motivation (MacIntyre, 1994) and anxiety (Horowitz & Young, 1991) related to their learning, and provide opportunities to challenge their "habits of expectation" (Roth, 1990, p. 119).

In conclusion, findings from this study which locate various and diversified preferred learning situational themes reflect findings from other studies which link successful language learning efforts in a variety of intentionally chosen, personalized ways not always associated with institutionalized learning (i.e., Ehrman & Oxford, 1995; Gardiner & MacIntyre, 1993; Naiman, et al., 1978).

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

One purpose of human language is to reduce ambiguity of meaning, facilitate communication, and to serve "...as a mechanism for the creation of social interaction among two or more speakers." (Richards, 1988, p. 84). The closing decades of this century have witnessed tremendous growth and change throughout the world. English has emerged as an international language of science, medicine, and education (Johnstone, 1992). In conjunction with these communication requirements, others related to globally disruptive political and ecological activity have resulted in an ever increasing number of immigrants, migrants, and other world travellers. This has necessitated extensive language reeducation worldwide through the process of Second Language Acquisition (SLA).

Second Language Acquisition was once thought to be primarily a linguistic process. Over a period of time, understandings of the actual processes and of the multiple and varied aspects affecting the process have resulted in a redefinition of SLA. Thus, it is now considered a multifaceted, interactive process (Gass, 1988). Current research in the field of SLA suggests a role for other disciplines including psychology, sociology, neurocognitive science, anthropology, and adult education. As such, the preferred educational approach in adult language learning (SLA) has reflected a major theoretical shift (McLaughlin, Rossman, & McLeod, 1983; Swaffar, 1989) in which individual learner attributes, as well as learning theory and methodology, play

major roles. Theoretically and pedagogically this has necessitated the understanding and integration of ideas and findings from diverse, though interrelated domains of knowledge and research (Flynn, 1990; MacIntyre, 1995; Schumann, 1995).

Educational research can be seen as careful, systematic attempts at developing a better understanding of the educational process with the aim of improving its effectiveness (Entwistle, 1984). To this end the role of the adult learner in the SLA process has received increasing attention and interest in regard to self-determination, self-competence, and metacognitive behaviours characteristic of adult learners (Brown, 1990; McCoombs, 1990).

Nevertheless, a major dilemma facing learners and teachers in the field of SLA has been the lack of consistency in levels of success experienced by various language learners. In the past, research has often sought simple answers related to the complex question of how SLA occurs. Brown (1990) says that "...we have yearned to see the complexity of acquiring a second language reduced to some sweeping generalizations that hold across multiple contexts, some simple formulas for teachers, or maybe even an ultimate method." (p. 383). This type of solution is not appropriate to the task at hand (Brown, 1990; Flavell, 1979), and ultimately does little to delineate the complexities that an adequate theory of SLA needs to address (Long, 1990).

In terms of the complexity involved in human learning and in language learning in particular, it appears that SLA is a multifaceted, interactive process in which no one variable can be seen as entirely central. It seems to be LLS use is dependent upon a number of variables, some known and some unknown. SLA is a

highly personalized process and, unlike L1 acquisition, probably occurs in a number of different ways depending on the learner, nature of the learning experience, goals of learning, etc. These findings have been suggested in the literature (Cook, 1992; Kumaravadevalu, 1994). This avails a greatly enhanced theoretical base from which to glean insights into dynamics which impact the SLA process.

Concluding Observations

1. Despite theoretical debate in the literature about language learning strategies, the participants in this study appeared to use 'strategies' as defined by Oxford and measured by SILL. For me, this use of strategies was real. That is, I began with the question of understanding what strategies the participants used and then identified naturalistic situations in which they described their LLS use.

Although the use of three different methods of data collection may have obscured the research question, the use of Oxford's approach and tool provided some focus, security, continuity, and value in the data collection process and interpretation. That is, it was useful in explaining what strategies were used by the participants, as well as the ways in which they were used.

2. A question remains about the utility of using a combination of two qualitative methods of data collection with Oxford's quantitative approach. That is, it was difficult and challenging to triangulate the resultant findings in an attempt to gain insights about specific language learning strategies. Did this attempt to triangulate help or hinder a clear understanding of strategy use?

Summative tools like SILL, are designed to produce standardized information

about individuals as members of large groups. Considering this usual use of such discrete item tools and the fact that my sample was small, SILL may not have been a suitable choice in understanding LLS.

However, there has been a call for new and creative ways of combining qualitative and quantitative research methods to provide a multi-perspective approach in investigating complex social phenomena (Mathison, 1988). SLA and the use of learning strategies constitute such phenomena (Flavell, 1979). As such, combined, interactive, and innovative use of methodology may be useful in gaining a more complete understanding of the nature of such phenomena in establishing structural corroboration by gathering and cohesing differential perspectives or images on existing research questions. Triangulation might then be viewed as availing different views on the nature of the research endeavour.

It has been said that,

> What is important for researchers is not the choice a priori paradigms, or methodologies, but rather to be clear about what the purpose of the study is and to match that purpose with the attributes most likely to accomplish it. Put another way, the methodological design should be determined by the research question (Larsen-Freemon & Long, 1991, p. 14).

The purpose of this research was to contribute to an expanded understanding of the way in which successful female adult language learners use LLS. Thus I ask, would it have been more appropriate to see all three data collection processes as

having utility at different levels of insight into the nature of LLS use?

I am left with the feeling that the special usefulness of SILL in a research group of this size and nature may be to provide an empirical structure for understanding more global, perhaps qualitative findings. I also think that SILL has excellent potential for raising 'consciousness' about the nature of LLS use, thereby causing learners to reflect on the subject both generally and personally.

3. My participants were adult learners. They appeared to use strategies in ways not always accommodated by the theory and research underlying SLA.

For example, Yuriko, Sony, and Hiromi used affective strategies in ways which seemed to support and facilitate their learning. Only recently has affect, both neurobiologically (Schumann, 1994) and socially (MacIntyre, 1995), become a more prominent focus of research in SLA. Affect, as a construct, is still not well understood, and as such is often difficult to identify or describe. From the findings of this study, it seems that this is an important area for further investigation.

4. How do language learners perceive and conceptualize their language learning tasks? In my findings, there were some areas in which learners showed similar patterns in their reflections about the learning and use of LLS.

As adults, the participants brought with them values, beliefs, and attitudes toward SLA which often seemed to facilitate their use of LLS. These findings were evident in the interview and reflective note data as it was not possible for SILL to identify such specific, idiosyncratic behaviours.

For example, Hiromi, Yuriko, and Tomomi expressed assumptions that the

English language was completely unlike their native language, Japanese. Tomomi said, "English and Japanese is completely different ...it's hard to say many things ...totally different ...character ...is different ...English just letters ...noun and adjective in exchange ...language is completely different."

However, rather than being disempowering or discouraging, these insights seemed to enable perceptions that learning English might involve new and quite different approaches to the learning and use of language. In a sense, it may have reflected a level of readiness to learn in some of these women. One wonders how much of the use of innovative or novel methods of language learning is shaped by learners' readiness to accept change and ambiguity as an integral part of the learning experience.

Similarly, when asked how long it might take to learn another language, Alex replied, "Oh, I think it would take forever ...many years." In both of these areas the women were able to use their beliefs and knowledge about language learning to realistically define their task and better understand their learning challenges. Such findings suggest that realistic beliefs and values may aid the second language learner in tolerating ambiguity, maintaining motivation, and mobilizing task knowledge in the generation of appropriate and focused LLS use. Thus it may be important to help learners assess and examine their beliefs, values, and attitudes related to language learning in order to realize appropriate goals and LLS in their learning experience.

5. In attempting to understand the life situations in which the strategies were evident, it seemed that LLS are realized by the learner at both an internal and external

level. For example, the theme "Am I Making Progress?" suggests an internal introspective domain. However, "Being Understood" implies behaviours and interactions in contact with the concrete social world external to the learner.

6. This was a small survey of seven learners, all women. How much of these two factors influenced the results? Although gender was not a primary focus, it is possible that some of the seventeen themes, which emerged, were influenced by gender. Language is contextual, and context for women in modern society has been reportedly defined as unique. While being sensitive to gender effects in this study, the small number of subjects and the complexity of understanding LLS and their use was the fundamental research question. However, the findings of such researchers as Tannen (1990) and Toohey and Scholefield (1994) would suggest that a gender focus might be an appropriate inclusion in further research in the area of women's LLS use.

7. It is difficult to explain findings resulting from variant data collection methods which do not consistently support existing conceptual ideas about language learners' use of LLS. That is, language learners in this study used individually significant LLS to create innovative, unique, and sometimes particular, solutions to language learning tasks.

For example, in the thematic category "Getting Help," Yuriko used mainly social learning strategies, Jessie used a combination of metacognitive and cognitive learning strategies, and Hiromi used affective and memory learning strategies. Still others, such as Alex and Sony, used a combination of several learning strategy categories to accomplish the task requirements. LLS use seemed to depend on the

situation in which the task occurred, learners' perception of the task, and her particular learning resources.

Pervasively, the conceptual nature of the situation in which the task occurred seemed to be important in helping the learners define and mobilize appropriate LLS. It has been said that there are many ways to successfully learn a second language and that each language learner has a unique and individual language learning career (Brown, 1994). One wonders if some of the incongruencies that emerged in this study are as much a product of the individual learning processes as the divergent research methodologies.

8. It is not easy to accommodate such idiosyncratic use of LLS with the precision of existing theories or the instruments currently utilized in studying LLS. Perhaps the dilemma of better understanding the uniqueness and complexity of diverse processes characterizing the language learning process could be the basis for further research.

Such research might focus on longitudinal studies in order to ascertain if, and how, learners change the use of LLS throughout their language learning careers. Cross-cultural studies would help us examine the effect of early experiential learning and socialization, as well as the role they play in the choice and use of LLS.

9. From my perspective, the use of both qualitative and quantitative methodology has provided initially perplexing conclusions. However, as we come to a more inclusive understanding of the nature of LLS and their characteristics, it may be possible not only to describe LLS but to better appreciate how they are operative and

useful in the lives of second language learners.

10. Anita Wenden (n.d.b) has suggested that we may need a new paradigm in researching LLS. She posits that, to date, the major focus in LLS has used a discrete approach to collecting and analyzing data. That is, the research objective has been to identify and classify strategies and provide taxonomies. These strategy systems are then sometimes mobilized for further research and learner strategy training that are, at times, quite separate from the task that originally elicited them.

Because the relationship between the strategies used and the task knowledge necessary in the actual task performance are so critical to optimal LLS use, this may be a fruitful area in which to focus further research (i.e., What aspect of strategy use is shaped by task requirements? Are learners aware of this crucial connection between strategy and task?).

11. The thematic categories which framed these women's use of LLS were generated from their lived experiences related to their use of LLS. Expressed in their own voice, these experiential, behavioral aspects of their learning journey allowed me to examine anecdotal and subjective aspects of LLS relevant to them as adult learners. It should also be remembered that the researcher brought to the study several levels of subjectivity and tacit knowledge regarding the use of LLS in SLA. As such, both areas of subjective knowledge (the learners' and the researchers'), as well as the interactive subjectivity, undoubtedly influenced the findings of this study.

Although these findings may not be generalizeable in the traditional research sense, I am left with the perception that they could provide foci for further research.

That is, it seems important to attend to those LLS variables which learners priorize, operationalize, and discuss as having relevance to their language learning experience.

Recommendations

Practice enhancement.

1. ESL teaching methodologies should address the SLA learning event in consideration of learners' needs including stage of learning in terms of psycholinguistic research, individual learner factors, and available teaching/learning resources. Learners need help in using the variety of strategies which they naturally possess and in becoming conscious of the many others available. This may be accomplished through consciousness raising using strategy use inventories such as SILL (Brown, 1994), dialogue journals (Bacon, 1995), multi-skill portfolios (MacNamara & Deane, 1995), and other self-assessment techniques.

2. SLA teacher/guides need to examine their assumptions about the nature of adults' SLA processes and learners' individualized strengths and needs. Critical reflection rather than consistent use of specific guidelines and methodological techniques will aid educators in participating in more flexible, informed, and learner centred SLA learning experiences.

3. SLA contexts which facilitate metacognitive LLS should be available and planned. Specifically, learners should have opportunities to think reflectively by journalling, goal setting activities, self-evaluation, and feedback exercises. Learning contexts which facilitate learning in the area of social and affective strategy use should be included in an effort to support metacognitive behaviour. Successful learners could

be encouraged to model their behaviour, particularly in formalized learning activities.

4. Intermediate adult female SLA learners who seek out authentic learning situations and otherwise evidence self-directed learning efforts should be recognized and valued. Their mode of negotiating meaning and processing the target language through the use of LLS could thus be acknowledged as critical to an optimum SLA experience, and thus might serve as a model for other learners.

5. Teacher/facilitators have opportunities to create and shape learning activities which support inclusive, relevant, communicative language learning. One way of establishing credibility of such efforts is to involve learners in the planning, organization, and evaluation of their learning activities, including LLS assessment and development.

Theory enhancement.

1. SLA theory could be enhanced by a more specific recognition of adult SLA learners as adult beings. Though not often mentioned in literature, theoretical perspectives on adults' modes of approaching and sustaining their SLA efforts could be enhanced by the inclusion of androgogical theory. Adult language learners bring to the SLA process well-developed personal attributes, beliefs, and values. Educators' appreciation and knowledge of these could serve to enhance the language learning process.

2. ESL teacher/guides need to develop and refine a generative, inclusive attitude toward SLA research. Use of different data collection methods could be used to address variant learning contexts and purposes for research, as well as the

multifaceted nature of both the SLA learning process and SLA learners.

3. SLA learners who seek out authentic learning situations and otherwise engage in self-directed learning should be recognized and valued so that their mode of negotiating meaning and processing language is acknowledged as critical to optimal language learning. Such modes of language learning behaviours are useful in incrementally developing theoretical understanding of LLS in SLA.

Further research.

1. There are many relationships associated with social and affective behaviours of learners and the way they impact cognitive and metacognitive behaviour. Further research could focus on the contexts that learners choose for their learning and what these mean to them personally and socially. That is, how do learners view their meaning as members of a new social world? How does this affect motivation and subsequently the ability to enter into cognitive and metacognitive endeavours?

2. There are many ways in which learners become actualized in their personal life and in their educational life. It would be helpful to know from learners' perspectives the kinds of learning variables which serve to facilitate the self-actualization process. It would be useful to examine these findings cross-culturally and longitudinally to better understand the process of becoming and being an adult SLA learner.

3. Further research could include a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodology in order to facilitate a more refined and inclusive understanding of the learners' use of LLS in SLA.

4. Methodologies for enhancing learner self-assessment and collaborative learner/teacher assessment should be investigated. The potential use of dialogue journals, portfolios, and self-evaluation inventories may serve to foster learner autonomy and facilitate cooperative learning contexts. The change in philosophical perspectives that accompany such activities may serve as an impetus to optimizing attitudes and energies in language learning and teaching.

The above conclusions and recommendations suggest varied and interesting trends in the use of language learning strategies by a group of successful adult female language learners and some implications for further research. They also serve to conclude the documentation associated with this research study.

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Appendix A: SILL Inventory

Please Note

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Appendix C: Frame for Reflective Notes

November, 1994

Reflective Notes

Research Project: Strategies of Successful Female Language Learners

Each day when you are doing you learning log would you please write a short description of a situation or experience:

1) That you found useful or helpful in your English language learning (i.e., it can be something from classroom activities, from a field trip, from a social activity, from a "homestay" conversation). Can you think why it was especially good?

2) That you found did not work well, that you did not find helpful. (Again, it can be from any area of your life and learning, try to think why it was not helpful.)

For example:

November 15, 1994 1) Today I had a real success....

2) Today I felt confused.....

Appendix D: Outline of Strategy System

Language Learning Strategies

Diagram of the Strategy System: Overview

Learning Strategies

- Direct Strategies
  - I. Memory Strategies
  - II. Cognitive Strategies
  - III. Compensation Strategies
- Indirect Strategies
  - I. Metacognitive Strategies
  - II. Affective Strategies
  - III. Social Strategies

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