

Chapter 3

Results

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Results

Analysis

Strategy use was analyzed, by comparing notes taken by coders. The notes were taken based on the tapescripts which resulted from the interviews performed with the students one at a time, using the structured think-aloud or interview procedure. The tapescripts involved about three hours of cassette time, so they were not transcribed.

The results were an analysis of the strategies analyzed by the coders, according to the procedure described in the Methodology chapter. The types of strategies which were identified are outlined in the Review of Literature, and the answers were fit into the categories outlined by the interview questions. The types of strategies relevant to this study were metacognitive, cognitive, and compensatory. Two background (demographic) information features were compared with the results, namely: gender and age. The background information yielded little percentage difference for age, but a slightly greater percentage difference for gender. Statistical comparison of results (T-test) are outlined at the end of this chapter.

The results on the coding sheets were very consistent, with the exception of the results of one of the coders, who had been ill the week of the coding. This coder claimed after the coding process and tabulation of results to have been somewhat distracted due to the illness. If this affected the results, it was only slightly. It should be noted however, that the difference between the results of the coder who had been ill, and those of all the others, did not affect any trends, and though they may have affected

the incidence amounts slightly, they would not affect the averages or the results. This later proven by the result of no statistical difference.

The total number of possible responses the coders had to code was 748, or 68 students multiplied by 11 response categories. Eight of the interviews were spoiled for various reasons, including: unintelligible tapescripts, students who are participating in the Learning Strategies Training Project and therefore had to be disqualified, students who completed the forms, but did not return for the interview, and one (interviewee 35) which was completely skipped in the sequencing of interviews (never existed).

After eliminating the eight interviewees, we were left with 60 successfully coded interviews, where the answers were intelligible and codable. Therefore, 60 interviews, multiplied by 11 interview question categories yielded 660 responses, deciphered by the coders, which could be used in the final analysis of the data. Of the 660 total responses, only 18 of the answers recorded by the coders differed, or 2.7 percent. Of the 18 coded responses which differed, only two responses differed by more than one coder's answer. This means that all responses received a total score of 6 (all "yes" answers) or 0 (all "no" answers), except in 18 cases where there was a total response calculated of 5 or 1, and two of the responses were coded as 3 (see Appendix N). The coding of the practice interviews (those in which the coders coded their own interviews during the training) will not be discussed except to say that in the total of 55 possible response categories, all answers were coded the same, or 100 percent of the interview responses were coded the same by the coders. This has two implications: (1) that the coders did not have a chance to practice settling discrepancies during the coding of the practice interviews, as

there were none, and (2) that there was 100 % consensus during the training, while coding the practice interviews.

Tabulation of results

The coders' response sheets were each recorded on the computer using Microsoft Excel program. Initially there were six separate files in the Microsoft Excel program, one for each coder, ordered A through F. Based on those responses, three other files were created which linked the 6 files into three general files (Appendix N, O, and P). The reason six files were created was to recreate the coder response sheets on the computer, then to establish links between the files, linking them to the general files (Appendix N, O, and P) in order to process the data to make comparisons about strategy use, age, and gender of participants.

The first file which linked the 6 original coder response files was the file containing comparisons of strategy use and pre-test scores (Appendix N, filename T3.XLS). The second file (Appendix O, filename TC.XLS) contains the age comparisons. The third file (Appendix P, filename TA.XLS) contains the gender comparison.

The scores of the coders' responses in Appendix N, which show a comparison of strategy use, have two aspects. First the file shows a total possible number of affirmative responses to the strategy use as 6, or six coders per response. The file was ordered or separated according to A and B groups (A at-risk, B non at-risk). There were a total of 25 students in the A category and 35 students in the B category. Therefore for strategy use, the scores of the 25 A category students were added, divided

by 6 (6 coders) and multiplied by 10 in order to arrive at a score out of 10 for each group and each language learning strategy category. The same was done for the B group dividing the total first by 35, then by 6 and multiplying it by 10. The reason for basing the linked file results out of 10 was to be able to later use the answers as percentages, rather than to speak of them out of 6, an awkward number. The average score of strategy use by the A group was 5.4, and for the B group, 5.4. From this point on, for ease of discussion purposes, all scores will be discussed in terms of percentages, so 5.4 becomes 54 percent.

The listening exercise (Appendix E) which students were given to complete before the interviews yielded a total possible number of responses of 11, then the scores were calculated out of 10. The average score out of 100 for the A group students was 47 percent, and for the B group students 64 percent. This indicates that the B group students had greater success in completing the listening exercise performed by them before the interviews. The results of this were not statistically analyzed because the listening task and worksheet were chosen to help guide the students in thinking about strategies for the interviews and not to analyze their English ability based on one exercise and because I felt the results had little to do with confirming or rejecting the hypotheses.

Strategy Use Comparison

The results showed a total of 8 strategies identified (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 11) (Appendix N) which were compared between Group A (at-risk) and Group B (non at-risk). Interview questions 1, 2 and 9 are not specifically related to which type of strategy

the students used, therefore were not included in the results and discussion. The results are as follows, showing that subjects:

3. -tried to compare the unknown word with a word in Spanish, used cognates

Group A	53 %	Group B	37 %
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4. -tried to listen to the words in the sentence surrounding the unknown word in order to get the meaning of the unknown word through context

Group A	77 %	Group B	86 %
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5. -tried to listen to the words in the sentences surrounding the unknown word in order to get the meaning of the unknown word through context

Group A	80 %	Group B	89 %
---------	------	---------	------
6. -made inferences of the word meaning or text meaning by looking at the title of the text

Group A	77 %	Group B	75 %
---------	------	---------	------
7. -used the accompanying illustration to aid in listening comprehension

Group A	80 %	Group B	89 %
---------	------	---------	------
8. -tried to identify the grammatical category of the unknown word

Group A	42 %	Group B	40 %
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10. -paid special attention to parts which were particularly difficult

Group A	06 %	Group B	06 %
---------	------	---------	------
11. -repeated the cassette a number of times to gain meaning of the text

Group A	13 %	Group B	07 %
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total of responses (average) for overall strategy use in both groups

Group A 54 % Group B 54 %

Age Comparison

Next was the age comparison of the subjects (Appendix O). The file was coded and categorized in the same way as the strategy use file. The results in this case were separated into age. The average age of the subjects was 19.7. Dividing .7 by the eight 19 year olds, I put the first five, according to list number, into the category with the younger students, and the last three, according to list number, into the category with the older students. The results, according to the division by age, were as follows for category one, age 17 to 19 (32 students total), and category two, age 19 to 43 (28 students total):

3. -tried to compare the unknown word with a word in Spanish, used cognates

younger	53 %	older	34 %
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4. -tried to listen to the words in the sentence surrounding the unknown word in order to get the meaning of the unknown word through context

younger	79 %	older	88 %
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5. -tried to listen to the words in the sentences surrounding the unknown word in order to get the meaning of the unknown word through context

younger	9.4 %	older	77 %
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6. -made inferences of the word meaning or text meaning by looking at the title of the text

younger	74 %	older	81 %
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7. -used the accompanying illustration to aid in listening comprehension

- | | | | | |
|--|---------|------|-------|------|
| | younger | 86 % | older | 88 % |
|--|---------|------|-------|------|
8. -tried to identify the grammatical category of the unknown word
- | | | | | |
|--|---------|------|-------|------|
| | younger | 53 % | older | 27 % |
|--|---------|------|-------|------|
10. -paid special attention to parts which were particularly difficult
- | | | | | |
|--|---------|------|-------|------|
| | younger | 06 % | older | 07 % |
|--|---------|------|-------|------|
11. -repeated the cassette a number of times to gain meaning of the text
- | | | | | |
|--|---------|------|-------|------|
| | younger | 06 % | older | 14 % |
|--|---------|------|-------|------|

total of responses (average) for overall strategy use in both groups

	younger	56 %	older	53 %
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The total number of Group A students (At-risk) in the age group of 17 to 19 year olds was 13, and Group B students (Non at-risk) was 21. In the age group of 19 to 43 year olds, the total number of Group A students was 11, and Group B was 15.

Gender Comparison

For the gender comparison, groups were divided into male and female, resulting in a division of 26 female students and 34 male students. The comparison of strategy use for female versus male students (Appendix P) are as follows:

3. -tried to compare the unknown word with a word in Spanish, used cognates
- | | | | | |
|--|--------|------|------|------|
| | female | 56 % | male | 32 % |
|--|--------|------|------|------|
4. -tried to listen to the words in the sentence surrounding the unknown word in order to get the meaning of the unknown word through context
- | | | | | |
|--|--------|------|------|------|
| | female | 84 % | male | 82 % |
|--|--------|------|------|------|

5. -tried to listen to the words in the sentences surrounding the unknown word in order to get the meaning of the unknown word through context
female 99 % male 71 %
6. -made inferences of the word meaning or text meaning by looking at the title of the text
female 76 % male 79 %
7. -used the accompanying illustration to aid in listening comprehension
female 84 % male 89 %
8. -tried to identify the grammatical category of the unknown word
female 59 % male 21 %
10. -paid special attention to parts which were particularly difficult
female 03 % male 10 %
11. -repeated the cassette a number of times to gain meaning of the text
female 14 % male 05 %
- total of responses (average) for overall strategy use in both groups
female 59 % male 49 %

Of the female group, 12 were Group A (At-risk) and 20 were Group B (Non at-risk). Of the male group, 12 were Group A and 16 were Group B.

Discussion of the results of the comparisons of the strategy use, listening exercise score, age comparison, and gender comparison, are included in chapter 4, Discussion.

Listening Task Worksheet Scores

Listening Task Worksheet Scores were compared for all three comparisons, strategy use, gender, and age. The results (an average of the scores) are as follows:

Comparison of strategy use, at-risk versus non at-risk groups, Listening Task Worksheet scores:

at-risk	43%	non at-risk	58%
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Age comparison, Listening Task Worksheet scores:

younger	50%	older	56%
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Gender comparison, Listening Task Worksheet scores:

female	50%	male	52%
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T-tests were performed on Microsoft Excel, with an alpha of .05 (see Appendix Q), yielding the following *p* values:

Comparison of strategy use, at-risk/non at-risk:	0.50 (not statistically significant)
Age comparison:	0.80 (not statistically significant)
Gender comparison:	0.55 (not statistically significant)

As a result of the T-test, the null hypotheses are confirmed, that of no difference, and the alternative hypotheses are rejected.