AN INTROSPECTIVE STUDY OF LANGUAGE LEARNING ANXIETY

A Thesis

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by
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Chapter 1
THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The role of affective variables in second and foreign language learning has been examined by researchers in the field for more than twenty years (from Tarampi, Lambert, and Tucker, 1968 to Horwitz and Young, 1991). The evidence gathered in these studies supports the effect of affect on language learning, yet there remains much data which are conflicting. For this reason, the exact nature of the role of affective variables has been difficult to describe. The affective domain itself is difficult to describe with any precision, but we do know that it is the emotional side of human behavior and that it may have an impact on the cognitive side (Brown, 1987). Affective variables include anxiety, motivation, and attitude. Their description has become important as language teaching and research professionals have recognized the possibility of changing the learning environment in order to modify students’ emotional reactions to learning languages. Anxiety in particular has been explored with increasing interest particularly in the 1980s as research has continued to focus on the concerns of the learner. Although anxiety has been shown to have a relationship with second and foreign language learning (Scovel, 1978; Horwitz, 1990; and others), its exact nature is the subject of controversy due to conflicting findings. This controversy may be the result of many factors: the difficulties in defining the construct, of measuring it, and of controlling or accounting for intervening variables in the research setting. The research on anxiety in language learning is characterized by attempts to overcome these difficulties and to reconcile conflicting evidence.

Anxiety has been studied in a variety of ways. Physiological reactions to anxiety such as blood pressure, heart rate, and perspiration have been measured. Observational studies have documented the behavior of subjects experiencing anxiety. Paper and pencil tests have yielded self-reports of subjects’ reactions to anxiety as well as measures of other
learner variables expected to correlate or to interact with anxiety as a predictor of success in learning. Finally, subjects have reported their impressions of anxiety, their internal reactions to it, and a host of probable causes for its manifestation in interviews and introspective documents.

Considering the diversity of approaches to the study of language learning anxiety (LLA), it is not surprising that much of the evidence seems inconsistent. However, upon closer examination of the results, some distinctions among different types of anxiety have emerged. First of all, Alpert and Haber (1960) distinguish between facilitative and debilitative anxiety. Facilitative anxiety is viewed as desirable. Learners experiencing it are inspired to study harder and perform better in order to live up to their own expectations as well as those of their peers and teachers. Debilitative anxiety, on the other hand, has negative effects on learners. The pressure to meet expectations is too great resulting in avoidance of specific linguistic behaviors, classroom participation in general, and/or the language learning situation itself. Another distinction between types of anxiety is that of trait versus state anxiety. Brown (1987) describes trait anxiety as a stable predisposition to be anxious, as an aspect of personality; whereas state anxiety is a situation-specific phenomenon. Distinguishing these four types of anxiety may help to reconcile some of the conflicting findings in anxiety research.

It is important to recognize that the four types of anxiety mentioned above may not operate independently of one another; it is probable that within individuals all four combine to shape the manifestation of anxious feelings, reactions to them, and their impact on language learning. Other variables have been shown to relate to anxiety: self-confidence (Clément, 1977), motivation (Gardner, Smythe, Clément, and Gilksman, 1976), attitudes (Clément, Major, Gardner, and Smythe, 1977), and beliefs about language learning (Horwitz, 1983) to name a few. Anxiety is therefore a highly individualized experience. It is also important to explore how the interplay between the types of anxiety and other variables changes through the course of language learning. Assumptions about how anxiety operates may need to vary not only between individuals, but also within individuals.
over time. It is the responsibility of language professionals to accept and attempt to understand the complexity of anxiety as a personal variable that may have a significant impact, both negative and positive, on students as they learn languages.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine through a language learning diary my own beginning language learning experience over the course of nine months with a focus on anxiety. I have documented my own reactions to three college courses in French. It is hoped that this documentation in the form of a journal provides information about how other factors relate to anxiety, how anxiety affects the learning situation, how I deal with anxiety, and how my feelings of anxiety change over time. Although a study of this sort yields highly personal and idiosyncratic data and cannot be generalized in the traditional sense of the word, the information gathered may add to both existing knowledge about how individuals experience language learning anxiety and ways in which language learning anxiety can be studied.

Research Questions

This study examines the role of anxiety in language learning from my perspective as a beginning language learner in order to explore the following questions:

1) Did I experience language learning anxiety;
2) If so, which factors, intrinsic or extrinsic, seem to bear upon my feelings of anxiety;
3) How do I deal with anxiety;
4) Do these these attempts to deal with anxiety help or hinder my progress;
5) Does the manifestation of anxiety change in the course of the study;
6) If there are changes, can they be linked to other intrinsic or extrinsic factors?
Definition of Terms

The terms in this section are referred to throughout this study. Unless otherwise indicated, the definitions below are assumed. Other important terms are defined within the context of the paper.

**affective variables**: those aspects of learning a second language which can be referred to as emotional reactions and are related to the learner's personality (Horwitz, 1990). Affective variables include attitudes, motivation, and self-confidence.

**anxiety**: "a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object", characterized by a "... cluster of affective states influenced by factors which are intrinsic and extrinsic to the foreign language learner" (Scovel 1978, p. 134).

**aptitude**: a cognitive variable or "capability; innate or acquired capacity for something; an indication of the degree of success a learner is likely to have in a given educational setting" (Savignon, 1983, p. 301).

**attitude**: as related to second language learning, an affective variable that encompasses both the conscious and subconscious feelings and emotions the learner has regarding the second language and its culture (Savignon, 1983), or the language learning situation itself (Gardner, 1975).

**cognitive variables**: those aspects of learning a second language that can be termed as processes, styles, or strategies. Processes are common to all human learning. Styles vary across individuals. Strategies are employed by learners to deal with specific learning problems in specific contexts (Brown, 1987). Cognitive capacity or aptitude is also a cognitive variable.

**debilitative anxiety**: a type of anxiety that may cause avoidance behavior and thereby inhibit learning (Alpert & Haber, 1960).

**ethnic identity**: the sense of belonging to a culture characterized by adherence to a system of language, beliefs, and customs.

**extrinsic factors**: those factors which have an impact on the learner which originate outside the learner.
facilitative anxiety: a type of anxiety that may increase motivation to learn by creating within the learner an optimal state of alertness and tension (Alpert & Haber, 1960).

integrative motivation: (also known as integrativeness) a type of motivation influenced by the desire on the part of the learner to identify with the native speakers of the target language (Gardner & Lambert, 1972).

intrinsic factors: those factors that have an impact on the learner that originate within the learner. (It should be noted that it is not always possible to categorize a factor as completely intrinsic or completely extrinsic to the learner, the categorization may be a matter of degree.)

learner variables: any variable which can be said to affect the language learner, the source or sources of these variables can be either intrinsic or extrinsic to the learner.

motivation: the incentive, inner drive, or need that moves an individual to a particular action. This drive can be "global, situational, or task-oriented" (Brown, 1987, p. 115).

personality variables: those aspects of learning a second language which can be referred to as stable predispositions for reacting to situations (Horwitz, 1990). Introversion, extraversion, and self-esteem are examples of personality variables.

risk-taking: a personality factor characterized by the willingness to guess unknown answers. Degree of risk-taking can be situation-specific. Some learners may be more likely to take risks in some situations than they would in others.

self-confidence: the affective component to the personality variable, self-esteem, which is characterized by the belief in one's own abilities.

self-esteem: a personality trait that includes one's personal judgement of worthiness (Coopersmith, 1967). Self-esteem may be conceptualized in three levels: global (stable), situational (varying with context), or task (varying with task) (Brown, 1987).

state anxiety: a type of anxiety that is experienced in particular situations thought to be anxiety-producing by an individual (Brown, 1987).
target language: the second language being learned or taught (Savignon, 1983).

trait anxiety: a stable predisposition to anxious feelings, which is not situation-specific (Brown, 1987).
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review begins with the definition of anxiety in the context of language learning. Following the definition is a discussion of anxiety’s place in a hierarchy of learner variables. It includes an exploration of anxiety’s relationship to other learner variables. The third section of the review examines the aspects of language learning which seem to be related to anxiety. The fourth section discusses learner reactions to anxiety. The conclusion presents rationale for the present study. Sources include research reports and theoretical works in both primary and secondary sources. The purpose of this review is to illustrate what is currently known about language learning anxiety, how it has been studied, and how to approach new research in this area.

Definition of Anxiety

Webster’s New World Dictionary (1980) defines anxiety as “a state of being uneasy, apprehensive, or worried about what may happen; concern about a possible future event” (p. 62). A definition presented by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) adds a physical element to anxiety—“the arousal of the autonomic nervous system” (p. 125). Language learning anxiety (LLA) is a specific manifestation of anxiety experienced by learners of second or foreign languages. Scovel (1978) defines it as “...a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object” characterized by a “...cluster of affective states influenced by factors which are intrinsic and extrinsic to the foreign language learner” (p. 134). He proposes that anxiety should not be viewed as an independent construct, rather that it should be examined from a multi-dimensional perspective.
The Place of Anxiety in a Hierarchy of Learner Variables

Part of the problem with the study of LLA is that there is not a consensus among scholars as to its theoretical relationships to other learner variables. Gardner (1975) places anxiety in the category of course-related characteristics, which is a subcategory of motivational characteristics. This placement reflects Gardner's particular approach to the study of LLA, which has largely been as a variable related to attitude and motivation. In this view, anxiety springs from the combination of four attitudinal forces, a) attitudes toward learning the second language, b) attitudes toward the language course, c) attitudes toward the language teacher, and d) outside incentives to learn the language. However, Gardner himself admits that he has "... had problems integrating [anxiety] into a model of the language learning process" (1991, p. vii). In Brown's (1987) view, anxiety is a personality factor linked to self-esteem, inhibition, and risk-taking. Yorio (1976) places anxiety in the affective domain under the subheading, egocentric factors. Anxiety, in his model, is separate from attitude and motivation, yet contained in the same domain. Although it is not entirely clear, it appears that Yorio's model does not account for personality factors unless they are included under biological factors or, along with anxiety, under egocentric factors.

Attempts to cleanly and neatly place anxiety (or any learner variable, for that matter) into a theoretical hierarchy of learner variables have not yielded consistent results. Perhaps this is because it cannot be done. Perhaps it is more useful to consider anxiety in all its complexity by describing a model that more closely resembles its nature. Such a model should reflect a) other constructs related to LLA, b) aspects of language learning which are affected by or affect anxiety, and c) learner reactions to LLA. The remainder of this literature review describes the research on anxiety with regard to these three areas.

Other Constructs Related to Language Learning Anxiety

Many psychological and sociological constructs have been linked to LLA. Psychological constructs include self-confidence, risk-taking, aptitude, and motivation.
Attitudes and ethnic identity are among the sociological factors which have been named. Many times the psychological and sociological factors are connected to one another and related to aspects of the language learning process or environment. Although it appears that these factors have been separated into sections below, it should be recognized that the separation is artificial and is designed to facilitate discussion.

**Self-confidence and Motivation.** Daly (1991) suggests that the lack of self-confidence contributes to the fear of communicating, a fear which has been considered to be an aspect of LLA. Motivation, in conjunction with self-confidence, has also been shown to influence LLA. A series of studies conducted by researchers in Canada explores these relationships.

Clément, Gardner, and Smythe (1977) infer from negative responses to items on a self-report anxiety scale that self-confidence is a dimension of motivation related to proficiency. In other words, they suggest that self-confidence is a subset of motivation corresponding to a low-anxiety state within a learner. In turn, self-confidence is related positively with proficiency in the second language. Therefore, learners who believe in their own abilities may experience lower anxiety levels, be more motivated, and achieve higher levels of proficiency. Similar findings are reported by Clément and Kruidenier (1985) who posit that measures of language anxiety and self-evaluations of proficiency combine to describe the level of self-confidence within individuals.

In 1980, Clément, Gardner, and Smythe add a sociological component to the relationship between self-confidence and anxiety. They found that contact with native speakers of the target language corresponds to higher levels of self-confidence, while higher levels of anxiety correspond to a perceived threat to ethnic identity, otherwise known as a negative orientation toward integrative motivation. Thus, learners who have contact with native speakers tend to have more self-confidence. On the other hand, learners who perceive this contact as being a threat to their attachment to their own language and culture tend to exhibit higher anxiety levels. (Labrie and Clément (1986) report comparable findings.)
In a further exploration of the self-confidence-LLA connection, Lalonde and Gardner (1984) distinguish between anxiety as an aspect of personality, or trait anxiety, and anxiety as a reaction to a situation, or situational anxiety (this construct has also been referred to as state anxiety). While trait anxiety did not correlate with the other variables measured in the study, situational or state anxiety was found to interact with the other variables. The authors maintain that individuals who are motivated feel less anxious about the language learning situation and exhibit higher levels of self-confidence in their capabilities. Furthermore, this self-confidence positively influences achievement.

Risk-taking and self-esteem. Brown (1987) suggests that risk-taking is a personality variable that is closely linked to anxiety and self-esteem. Beebe (1983) asserts that a moderate amount of risk-taking is an important aspect of language learning. Persons who are willing to make good guesses are generally more successful language learners with high global self-esteem, but students who blurt out nonsense answers just to hear themselves talk are usually not so successful, yet these same students also exhibit high global self-esteem. On the other hand, learners who remain silent in the language class usually harbor a host of fears and anxieties including low self-esteem. Both Price (1991) and Young (1989) report that students name the fear of making mistakes as a significant cause of classroom anxiety. Ely (1986) adds that students should be made to feel less anxious in the learning environment before they are encouraged to take risks. Highly anxious persons who take risks before they are ready may aggravate their anxiety, especially if their guesses turn out to be wrong. Ironically, both Brown (1987) and Daly (1991) point out that students who take risks are more highly valued by their teachers. Brown goes on to suggest that teachers must encourage those students who are afraid to take risks and to recognize and nurture their efforts.

In summary, learners who have high global self-esteem take more risks and feel less anxious in the classroom. In contrast, learners with low global self-esteem take fewer risks and experience higher levels of anxiety. However, it should be noted that students with high global self-esteem are not always high-achieving students. It appears that
moderate risk-taking is an asset to the foreign language learner in terms of achievement, while excessive risk-taking is not. (It is not clear from the literature how moderate risk-taking relates to anxiety.) Students who take fewer risks and are more anxious in the classroom may still do quite well in terms of achievement if they are graded on writing instead of speaking in the classroom.

**Aptitude.** Studies which link aptitude and anxiety do so in an attempt to establish bases for the prediction of success in language learning. Gardner, Smythe, Clément, and Gilksman (1976) report that anxiety, in combination with aptitude and motivation, can be an accurate predictor of success. Trylong (1987), on the other hand, contends that prediction of success in language learning is more accurate when anxiety is combined with aptitude and attitude. The prediction is less accurate if anxiety is not considered. A conclusion which may be drawn from the results of these studies is that the consideration of anxiety, in conjunction with aptitude and other learner variables, is an important aspect of the characterization of language learning achievement. High levels of anxiety may be off-set by high aptitude and motivation levels or good attitudes in students to produce high levels of success. In turn, low levels of anxiety may be off-set by low aptitude and motivation or poor attitudes resulting in lower achievement levels. When these implications are considered the simple correlations of low or high anxiety with high or low achievement, respectively, do not remain valid. It becomes clear that many variables work together within individuals to influence learning outcomes. These findings seem to confirm the complexity of the role of anxiety as discussed in conjunction with the findings in self-esteem and risk-taking above.

The relationship between anxiety and sociological variables is characterized by feelings of fear and apprehension resulting from negative attitudes toward the target language culture and a perceived threat to ethnic identity. On the other hand, this relationship may be of a more personal nature reflecting attitudes toward the learning situation. Thus, the discussion of sociological variables may be divided into cultural and personal components. The cultural component includes attitudes toward the target language
culture and sense of ethnic identity; whereas the personal component includes attitudes toward the learning situation and the classroom culture.

Attitudes, Ethnic Identity, and Anxiety. It may be useful to begin this discussion with some background information on the concept of social distance. Schumann (1976) proposes that good and bad language learning situations may be defined in terms of the dissimilarity between two cultures, otherwise known as social distance. For example, considerable social distance can provide the basis for negative attitudes toward the target language culture on the part of the learner and thereby inhibit learning. Social distance relates to anxiety when learners feel that their native ethnic identity may be threatened by learning the language of a dissimilar culture. Conversely, positive attitudes enhance language learning in situations in which learners are motivated to identify with members of the target culture. This type of motivation has been identified as integrative motivation (Gardner & Lambert, 1972).

As discussed above in the section concerning self-confidence and motivation, Clément, Gardner, and Smythe (1980) report a connection between integrative motivation and anxiety. Learners who valued contact with speakers of the target language were more self-confident and less anxious, while learners who were not integratively motivated felt threatened by the same contact and, consequently, more anxious. Clément and Kruidenier (1985) found that learners who were integratively motivated tended not to suffer from fear of assimilation, which may also be referred to as loss of ethnic identity. In a related vein, Pak, Dion, and Dion (1985) address the question of loss of ethnic identity. They found that self-confidence in using the target language was not indicative of the loss of ethnic identity for Chinese learners of English in Canada. Although their study provides evidence which suggests that learning a second language does not necessarily lead to ethnic identity loss, it is the perception of the learner in this regard which may exacerbate or quell feelings of anxiety during the learning process (see Acton, 1979 on perceived social distance). In addition, Desrochers and Gardner (1981) point out that contact with target language speakers resulted in improved attitudes toward them and in reduced anxiety when using the
target language.

In summary, it appears that socio-cultural attitudes influence the manifestation of anxiety in second language learning. This influence may be more strongly felt in situations in which learners have more opportunity or necessity for contact with speakers of the target language. In foreign language learning situations far removed from the culture of the target language speakers, these considerations may have far less impact. Of more importance to situations such as these, is the consideration of the social milieu of the classroom culture.

**Attitudes, the Classroom Culture, and Anxiety.** Attitudes toward aspects of the learning situation have been linked to the manifestation of LLA. As discussed above in the section on anxiety's place in a hierarchy of learner variables, Gardner (1975) suggests that anxiety is related to attitudes toward learning the language, toward the language course itself, and toward the language teacher. The later research of Lalonde and Gardner (1984) supports these connections. They found that state or situational anxiety correlated with other learner variables whereas trait anxiety did not, thereby implying that LLA is specifically a product of the language learning situation. A puzzling finding reported by Clément, Major, Gardner, and Smythe (1977) is that although attitudes, motivation, and anxiety were found to be related to achievement in the second language, the language learning context or situation did not affect attitudes, but did affect achievement. One explanation for this finding is that the attitudes being studied did not relate to the context, but instead related more to the cultural orientation of the learners. The term attitudes, it appears, cannot be taken at face value. At any rate, attitudes toward the learning situation seem to be related to LLA.

Beliefs about language learning is another aspect of attitudes toward the language learning situation which has been identified as a contributor to feelings of anxiety. Horwitz (1984) found that many students who were anxious in the classroom held beliefs which aggravated anxious feelings. One of the most commonly reported is the belief that “... nothing should be said in the foreign language until it can be said correctly and that it is not okay to guess an unknown foreign language word” (Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986, p.
Price (1991) identified another belief influential in her subjects' manifestations of anxiety—the belief that it takes a certain aptitude to learn a foreign language and that they did not possess such an aptitude. The belief cited by Horwitz (1984) is quite specific and could be related to risk-taking in the classroom (see discussion on risk-taking above). The belief cited by Price (1991), on the other hand, is more global. Subjects attempt to explain their general ineptitude in the language learning situation.

Aspects of Language Learning Related to Anxiety

A great deal of the research on anxiety has focussed on its effects on various aspects of the language learning process and on language learning outcomes. This discussion begins with the research linking anxiety to achievement or proficiency. The most prevalent views on this connection name test taking and oral production as the most commonly studied anxiety-producing aspects of language learning. Some studies, on the other hand, have focussed on more task-related aspects and on learner characteristics directly related to classroom language learning.

The relationship between anxiety and achievement or proficiency has been examined in the form of correlational studies, prediction of success regression equations, and general associations of anxiety with achievement or proficiency.

Correlating Achievement and Anxiety. Many studies have shown anxiety to be negatively correlated with achievement and proficiency in language learning (for example, Gardner, Smythe, and Lalonde, 1984; Trylong, 1987; and Chastain, 1975). However, other studies have found either positive correlations between anxiety and achievement (Chastain, 1975, for example) or insignificant correlations between the two variables (for example Young, 1986). It is interesting to note that Chastain (1975) found both positive and negative correlations between anxiety and test scores. The negative correlations were found in a study of French audiolingual method students and the positive correlations were found in German and Spanish traditional method students. It appears that the language learning context accounts for some of this difference. The distinction between facilitating
and debilitating anxiety may also be useful to consider. In another study in which conflicting findings are reported, it is not so easy to identify the source of incongruity. Backman (1976) reports that the two lowest-achieving Spanish-speaking learners of English in her study earned both the highest and the lowest scores on an anxiety measure. The discrepancy in this case may lie more with learner differences rather than with differences in the learning environment.

**Anxiety as a Predictor of Success.** Another approach to the study of anxiety is to place it in a framework with other variables in order to predict success in language learning. Gardner et al. (1976) found that anxiety, motivation, and aptitude considered together were the best predictors of success for eleventh grade subjects. Clément et al. (1977) found that attitudes, anxiety, and motivation were strongly related to achievement. Contradictory findings are reported by Chapelle and Jamieson (1986) in a study on prediction of success based on computer-assisted language learning. In the context of their study, anxiety was not a significant predictor of success. In addition, anxiety did not significantly correlate with time spent on computer-assisted tasks nor with attitudes toward using the computer-based system. These findings are not surprising if one considers that a major source of student-reported anxiety results from stressful classroom situations in which teachers and other students may be viewed as threatening to the student. Computer-based tasks do not introduce this sort of personal anxiety provocation.

**General Associations of Anxiety with Proficiency.** Other studies have focussed on more general relationships between anxiety and proficiency. Ely (1986) maintains that the chief influence of anxiety on proficiency is through its effect on class participation. He argues that class participation is strongly related to proficiency. Clément and Kruidenier (1985) found that self-reports of proficiency are related to language use anxiety and self-confidence.

The skill areas of language learning most frequently associated with anxiety are oral production and test taking.
Oral Production. Horwitz et al. (1986) and Daly (1991) both identify communication apprehension as a significant aspect of the conceptual basis of LLA. In support of this assertion, many studies can be cited. For example, Tarampi, Lambert, and Tucker (1968) found that level of anxiety relates to the willingness to recite in class. Gardner et al. (1976) report that anxiety is correlated best with measures of oral production and speech skills. However, Chapelle and Jamieson (1986) found the opposite in their study. Anxiety did not correlate with scores on a speaking test. Differences in the anxiety instrument may account for this contradiction. In Price’s (1991) study, the most popular source of anxiety identified by the subjects was speaking the target language in class. Similar findings are reported by Horwitz et al. (1986), Koch and Terrell (1991), and Bailey (1983).

Test Anxiety. Findings regarding the relationship between test anxiety and LLA are more scarce. In anecdotal reports of clinical experiences, Horwitz et al. (1986) propose that anxiety can have negative effects during foreign language exams. In an extensive examination of various types of testing formats and skill levels, Madsen, Brown, and Jones (1991) report numerous findings. They found that individuals react quite differently to varying test types depending on level of achievement ranging from high to low within stages of instruction ranging from beginning to advanced. Dictation and true-false culture tests were found to be the least anxiety-producing. Translation, on the other hand, was found to be the most anxiety-provoking and least favorite especially among beginning students. High achieving students placed less value on nonthreatening test formats than did low achieving students. Reactions to oral questions became more positive as students progressed into more advanced stages and increased oral proficiency. The implications of these findings are that a) different types of tests evoke varying anxiety reactions, b) anxiety can have a biasing effect for certain types of students, and c) certain groups of students are more affected than others by test anxiety.

In the late 1970’s, several approaches to language instruction were developed which attempted to alleviate affective stresses on language students. These approaches were also
designed to improve learner attitudes toward the language learning situation. The Natural Approach was developed by Terrell (1977). The Total Physical Response method was developed by Asher (1977). The Community Language Learning approach was developed by Curran (1976). Suggestopedia was developed by Lozanov (1979). Analysis of the features and effectiveness of these approaches is beyond the scope of this paper. However, at this point, it is sufficient to note that the abatement of LLA was one of the driving forces in the development of these approaches. It appears that LLA, in the minds of these educators, is a serious concern and, furthermore, that modified instructional practices can reduce its impact.

**Role of the Teacher.** Supporting these implications, discussions by Price (1991) and Young (1989) reveal that students perceive the role of the teacher as an important influence on their feelings of anxiety. The subjects in Young's study responded to open-ended questions concerning the instructor's practices and characteristics which helped to alleviate anxiety in the classroom. Practices related to error correction (58%) and to activity type or task (43%) dominated the subjects' responses. With regard to error correction, subjects valued the teachers' practices of reducing the importance of mistakes and of helping students to realize that mistakes are a natural part of language learning. The most popular responses dealing with classroom activities revealed that students prefer to volunteer than to be called upon in class and that they view small-group activities as anxiety-reducing. Teacher characteristics cited by the subjects as anxiety-reducing were friendliness, sense of humor, patience, and relaxed demeanor. Price reports that her subjects found many of these same teaching practices to be anxiety-reducing. However, some of her subjects reported anxiety-producing teacher behavior. Teachers who conducted class time as performance time rather than learning time alienated many students who were prone to anxiousness in such an environment. Based on these findings, it is apparent that instructional practices do make a difference to students.

**Competitiveness.** Related to teaching practices in the classroom context is competitiveness. In a diary study by Bailey (1983), competition in the classroom was a
significant source of LLA. The classroom environment fostered competitiveness, leading the learner/researcher to excessively compare herself to others in the classroom. She had a great desire to outperform others in the class, was overly concerned with tests and grades, and eventually experienced extreme anxiety which led to the avoidance of the language learning situation. However, at other times, this same competitiveness motivated her to study harder. In a more personal vein, Francine Schumann (1980) reports that competition with her husband John caused her guilt for not studying when he studied and worry if she did not study in the same way that he did. She became frustrated in her efforts to try to learn as he did resulting in a partial withdrawl from her own language learning efforts. Price (1991) reports similar findings from a qualitative interview study. Students in her study often compared themselves to others in the class believing that their skills were weaker and that they were looked down upon by their peers.

**Fear of Negative Social Evaluation.** Fear of negative social evaluation, which is closely related to competitiveness, is another aspect of the classroom environment that has an impact on LLA. Horwitz et al. (1986) suggest that this fear is an integral part of the conceptual foundation of LLA. The very nature of the foreign language classroom is such that students may feel that they are continually being evaluated by both the teacher and their peers. Curran (1976) and Stevick (1980) discuss this phenomenon in detail. Price (1991) also notes that one of the major contributors to anxiety for her subjects was the feeling that others in the classroom looked down on them. John Schumann (1977) reports that, despite his desire to maintain his own learning agenda, he often compromised his wishes in order to avoid looking like a failure in the eyes of his classmates. In addition, Daly (1991) notes that conspicuousness is a characteristic of anxiety-provoking situations. Conspicuousness seems to be closely related to the fear of negative social evaluation.

**Classroom Tasks.** The nature of classroom tasks is another factor that influences LLA. Young (1989) conducted a study to assess student reactions to speaking-oriented activities. She found that students preferred activities in which they were not singled out from the group. They preferred to discuss interesting topics and to work with other
students. In a comprehensive study of classroom tasks and anxiety levels, Koch and Terrell (1991) students found oral presentations and skits or role playing to be the most anxiety-producing. These activities continued to be the most anxiety-producing over time, however, the anxiety decreased over the one-year period. Activities reported to produce comfort were also included in the study. For the most part these activities were related to students on a personal level. Student reactions to the activities differed over time, some producing less anxiety, some producing more. This finding seems to correspond with that of Madsen et al. (1991) who report similar results concerning testing formats.

Certain learner characteristics (apart from psychological and sociological factors) have been linked to anxiety in the classroom. Bassano (1983) reports that among students unhappy with their language learning situations the most significant contributor to feelings of anxiety was the inconsistency between learner expectations and objectives and instructor expectations and objectives. (This inconsistency is similar to that reported by John Schumann (1977) above in his desire to maintain his own learning agenda.) Price (1991) found that students’ perceptions of the difficulty of learning a language had a significant effect on their anxious feelings. Preparedness, or lack thereof, has also been identified as a factor related to classroom anxiety (Young, 1989 and Madsen et al., 1991). Students unprepared for class seem to exhibit higher anxiety levels than those who are prepared. Another learner characteristic which may influence the manifestation of anxiety is familiarity with the learning situation or with the learning tasks. Clément et al. (1977) report that prior experience with language learning leads to higher levels of self-confidence (lower anxiety levels as well may be inferred). Gardner et al. (1977) report that beginning students are generally more anxious whereas advanced students are less anxious. In summary, learner expectations, objectives, preparedness, and familiarity with language learning situations seem to be related to LLA.
Learner Reactions to Anxiety

The symptoms of LLA are many and varied, but interrelated and sometimes cyclical (e.g. the illness causing the symptom, the symptom aggravating the illness). Apprehension, worry, dread, difficulty concentrating, forgetfulness, sweat, palpitations, avoidance behavior, and overstudying have all been identified as symptoms of anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986). Frustration and anger may also be attributed to anxious feelings. Most of these symptoms are not easily observable with the exception of the physiological reactions, which can be measured but not easily interpreted.

What happens when learners experience anxiety? The distinction between facilitating and debilitating anxiety suggests that there is more than one perspective from which to approach such a question. Such a distinction may account for seemingly contradictory findings such as those reported by Chastain (1975) and Backman (1976) above. Although Brown (1987) suggests that facilitating and debilitating anxiety are points along a continuum, Alpert and Haber (1960), who devised an instrument to differentiate the two types, insist that they are discrete, qualitative entities. Scovel (1978) posits that the two types of anxiety work in tandem in the normal learner—serving to motivate, on the one hand, and to warn, on the other. Bailey’s (1983) experiences may be an illustration of the coexistence of facilitating and debilitating anxiety within an individual. As mentioned above, competitiveness in the learning situation both inhibited and enhanced the subject’s learning process. Facilitating anxiety, thus, is viewed as a positive force, whereas debilitating anxiety is considered to be a negative force leading to avoidance of the learning situation and other negative reactions.

Kleinmann (1977) conducted a study on the avoidance of particular linguistic aspects of English by Arabic- and Spanish-speaking learners. He found that subjects who scored high on facilitating anxiety measures tended to produce constructions which were normally avoided by the speakers due to particular difficulty based on contrastive analysis of the structures. Kleinmann concluded that certain affective measures, in this case facilitating anxiety, influence learner behavior such that learners may go against predictions
of behavior depending on their affective state.

In contrast, avoidance behaviors linked to high debilitating anxiety are reported by Mejías, Applbaum, Applbaum, and Trotter (1991). In this case, the behaviors are linked to language learning contexts and situations. Students with high levels of anxiety related to specific contexts were reported to avoid those contexts. Avoidance behaviors are also reported by Bailey (1983) and Schumann (1980). In both diary studies, the students avoided and even withdrew from the learning situation due to anxious feelings.

Another interesting reaction to anxiety is reported by Steinberg and Horwitz (1986). In their experimental study of subjects exposed to situations varying in level of anxiety, it was found that subjects in the high anxiety group used more definition and less interpretation in speaking tasks than did their counterparts in the low anxiety group. It is possible that definition is regarded by the students as less threatening than interpretation which requires a more personal response.

**Summary of Findings**

This literature review has covered the research on language learning anxiety (LLA) that has taken place in the last twenty years. The research in LLA has examined a) other constructs related to anxiety, b) aspects of language learning related to anxiety, and c) learner reactions to anxiety. It is these three realms that must be considered in order to begin to understand how anxiety operates in foreign and second language learning.

**Measurement of Anxiety**

Anxiety has been measured in three different ways; physiological tests, behavioral observation, and self-report (Scovel, 1978; Madsen, Brown, & Jones, 1991). Physiological testing appears to be the most objective way to measure anxiety, but, as Scovel (1978) points out, this objectivity is an illusion. There is no way to discern, by physiological response alone, the internal state of the learner. It is possible to say that the learner is in some kind of state of arousal, but it is not possible to determine the source of
this arousal without confirming it with self-report. To complicate matters further, Schnore (1959) found that individuals varied considerably in their physiological responses to the same tasks. Despite these drawbacks, Scovel (1978) admits that physiological tests may have some use as measures of anxiety during speech production, which he considers to be an essentially physical task. He bases this assertion on anxiety studies conducted with athletes which link physical manifestations of anxiety and athletic performance (see Nideffer & Yock, 1976). Behavioral observation, on the other hand, involves observing the actions of individuals in anxiety-provoking situations. With this approach there is the same difficulty of interpretation as mentioned above with physiological tests. It is not possible to determine the internal state of the learner by observing external behavior alone. Idiosyncratic differences confound the evidence as well. Paper and pencil self-reports appear to be the most practical and reliable method of the three for measuring anxiety, but they are not without problems. Intervening variables make it difficult to isolate the construct being measured. The complexity of anxiety is evidenced by the many factors which seem related to its manifestation. These factors may be intrinsic or extrinsic to the learner. They may be inherent or situation-specific. Therefore, with paper and pencil measures of LLA, it is not always possible to know exactly what is being measured.

Anxiety and Qualitative Research

Recent attempts have been made to account for the complexity of anxiety by focussing on naturalistic research methods by which researchers study anxiety in naturally occurring contexts through in-depth interviews (Price, 1991) and diary studies (Bailey, 1983; Matsumoto, 1989). Instead of controlling intervening variables, these types of studies explore them so that anxiety can be more precisely, theoretically, and conceptually defined. Naturalistic or qualitative research methods are not without limitation. The most prevalent problems cited are those pertaining to generalizability and reliability. Despite these problems, naturalistic inquiry and diary studies in particular may “... offer insights into the largely unobservable processes of language learning and teaching” (Bailey &
Oschner, 1980). They may reveal relationships among learner variables and language teaching and learning practices that could be missed by controlled experimental studies. Due to the highly personal and complex nature of anxiety in language learning, the diary study seems particularly suited to its description. By analyzing how learners perceive their own anxious feelings perhaps we can get closer to an understanding of how language learning anxiety operates in general. While qualitative studies are not generally used to determine cause and effect relationships, they can be used for "illumination, understanding, and extrapolation" of complex, naturally occurring phenomena (Patton, 1990, p. 424).

Additionally, Yin (1989) points out that the case study method is especially useful when there is a "...desire to understand complex social phenomena" (p. 14). Research questions suitable for case study approaches are those that seek to understand what happens in a given context, how it happens, and why it happens. The case study is the preferred method when contemporary events are studied and when the events being studied cannot be manipulated. Furthermore, it is especially appropriate when "the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 23). As demonstrated by the literature review, the study of anxiety in all its complexity seems particularly suited to the case study method.

In conclusion, a combination of qualitative methods and the case study format is useful for the examination of language learning anxiety as experienced by individual learners. As we seek to understand how and why learners react as they do to the learning environment, we must also seek new ways to study the affective domain. Controlled laboratory situations may not be useful for examining phenomena whose occurrence depends heavily on the context in which it occurs. The control we lose when we deviate from experimental research methods is made up for in the richness of qualitative data, the attention to details of the context and the interplay of complex variables. Our learners are individuals; their experiences and reactions are important to us as we teach them. Qualitative research and case studies can help us to begin to understand the enormity of our task as we attempt to address our learners' individual needs.
Conclusion

Based on this review of the literature concerning language learning anxiety, it is apparent that learner reactions to anxiety are diverse: the reactions vary with respect to many variables both intrinsic and extrinsic to the learner. Anxiety has consistently been shown to have an effect on language learning, both positive and negative in terms of learning outcomes. The complexity of anxiety as a construct has been demonstrated. Its relationship to other factors is definite, but its place in a hierarchy of learner variables is not clear. Also, it is not evident from many of the studies how individual students deal with anxiety, positively or negatively. However, qualitative studies such as those conducted by Price (1991), Bailey (1983), and Schumann and Schumann (1977) yield data oriented to a personal perspective, data rich in the complexity of learner experience. These studies have moved away from the constraints of questionnaire studies of anxiety in which it is often difficult to determine exactly what is being measured and which do not reveal information that has not been elicited about factors as yet unknown.
Chapter III
DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The Research Design

The design chosen for this study is a combination of the case study method as outlined by Yin (1989) and language learning diary methodology based on guidelines put forth by Bailey and Oschner (1980, p. 190). These guidelines, modified for the purpose of this study, are as follows:

1. As the diarist, I have provided an account of my personal language learning and teaching history.
2. I systematically recorded events, details, and feelings about my current language learning experience in a second language diary.
3. I have revised the journal entries for the public version of the diary.
4. I have studied the journal entries, looking for patterns and significant events that provide information pertaining to the research questions posed at the beginning of the study.
5. The factors identified as important to language learning anxiety are interpreted and discussed in the remainder of this paper.
6. In order to maintain the "insider" character of the diary study, I have used the first person to report the findings.

This design was chosen because of its particular value for the study of a construct as complex as anxiety, whose manifestation relies heavily on the context in which it occurs. An in-depth view of one learner from that learner's perspective within the language learning context has great potential for revealing phenomena that may not otherwise be observed.
The results of this study are not meant to be generalizable beyond the scope of this particular situation. The value of this study lies in its attempt to portray how anxiety operates in the experience of one learner to provide working hypotheses that can be examined and re-examined in future research, so that we as language teaching professionals may begin to understand the complex nature of anxiety, which most likely functions differently within each individual. From the research on anxiety up to now, it has been demonstrated that many factors are related to anxiety, that reactions to anxiety vary, and that anxiety can influence the learning process both negatively and positively. By studying this labyrinthine interplay within individuals in naturally occurring settings, we may be able to find out more about both the idiosyncrasies and the universalities of anxiety in language learning.

The Subject: Profile and Language Learning History

It is important to recognize that subject and researcher in this study are the same person. In order to avoid confusion on this matter, this profile and the subsequent report are written in the first person. My language learning history is recounted here to the best of my memory supplemented with grade reports from high school, undergraduate, and graduate study.

I am a caucasian female graduate student in my late 20’s. I am studying foreign language education with an emphasis on teaching English to speakers of other languages in my second year of Master’s level course work at a large midwestern university. I have prior experience learning foreign languages. As a high school student in rural southern Ohio, I took two years of elementary Spanish during my sophomore and junior years (school years 1978 and 1979). I received A’s in both courses. The courses were taught by a teacher who traveled to the neighboring districts’ rural high schools where he taught Spanish I, II, and III. I recall few details of my high school language learning experience. I remember conjugating verbs and studying vocabulary lists, but the most vivid memories of my Spanish classes in high school are those of the fun I had in the classes and how little
I thought I was learning. Spanish class was a time for goofing off and catching up on homework from other classes. I do not remember any feelings of anxiety. I liked the teacher, but I did not have much respect for him. From what I remember, he taught using a combination of the audio-lingual and the grammar-translation methods.

Although I had received excellent marks in high school Spanish, I placed into Spanish 101 (the beginning class) at the college level. In Spanish 101 the second quarter of my sophomore year (1981), I received an A- and went on to study 102-104 in an accelerated series which combined the three courses into two. I received a B in the first of these two courses and an A in the second. My 101 teacher was a native speaker of Spanish, a man in his late 40's to early 50's. I remembered being a little intimidated by him because of his inaccessible and formal demeanor. He taught using a combination of grammar-translation and audio-lingual methodology. Speaking in his classes consisted of the recitation of memorized dialogues. I remember very little, if any, free conversation.

My accelerated series teacher was a woman in her early 30's, an American graduate student studying Spanish. In her classes we did very little in the way of formal grammar exercise. She focussed on classroom discussion of readings in Spanish and current events along with writing assignments. I developed some facility with the language and do not remember experiencing anxiety. The classroom atmosphere was very free: making mistakes was encouraged as long we tried to communicate. We often got off-track in our discussions, but this was encouraged as long as we spoke Spanish.

If I had been motivated to continue studying Spanish at this point I could have probably done very well, but I had no desire to continue my studies. I saw it as a waste of time if I were to complete my undergraduate degree before my scholarship money ran out. I had taken the courses in order to fulfill the language requirement of an Arts and Sciences degree in English Literature. I had no real interest in communicating in Spanish. I did as little as possible to get by in the courses with good marks. At this point in time (1991), I retain a rudimentary reading knowledge of Spanish, a bit of grammar knowledge, a few basic vocabulary words, and elementary constructions such as greetings.
At the beginning of this study, I had no prior experience learning French. However, I had had some contact with native French speakers. I tutored a French woman from Brazil in English composition in 1985 and dated a French man from Paris in 1988. In both cases, I spoke only English to them and they spoke only English to me. I chose to study French because my husband (married December 1989) had studied the language and had retained some competence in it. We both plan to travel, work, and study abroad and decided that a common second language would be an advantage. My objectives with regard to the study of French are to a) become a proficient speaker of the language, b) be able to communicate with native speakers of the language, c) be able to teach the language eventually should the need or occasion arise, and d) to gain a first-hand understanding of what it is like to become bilingual. With regard to the last objective, I have felt quite hypocritical teaching English as a second language when I have no real concept of what it is like to be able to express myself in another language. I plan to continue my study of French even after this project is completed.

I decided to do this study because of the unique opportunity to document insider knowledge of the language learning situation. (Yin (1989) calls this rationale the “relevatory” case.) I had become interested in language learning anxiety especially after experiencing severe anxiety in a modern dance class. Although I do not consider myself to be a generally anxious student, I found myself so anxious in this dance class that I finally withdrew from it. I felt humiliated by my instructor and embarrassed in front of others in the class. Because a foreign language classroom is in some ways similar to a performance art classroom due to the emphasis on individual performance, I was inspired to document my experience of learning French in a university classroom so that I could gain a better understanding not only of my own anxious feelings but also of language learning anxiety which affects my students of English as a second language.

I should also mention that keeping a diary is not a new experience for me. I have kept a personal journal since May 1981. It has been a great vehicle for self-development for me and a window into my mind at various periods of my life. I strongly believe that
journals or diaries can reveal one’s perceptions of oneself and of one’s feelings. Rereading entries has shed new perspective on circumstances that seemed very complex and confusing at the time of the writing. For this reason, the emergence of diary methodology in foreign language educational research is exciting for me.

Throughout the course of this study I was enrolled in regular university French classes. In Autumn 1990, I took French 101. The class met Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings from 8:00 to 9:18. Most of the students in the class were first-quarter freshman taking the class to fulfill their foreign language requirement. Many of them had taken high school French, but had still placed into the beginning course. There were about 30 people in the class at the beginning of the quarter, but that number decreased steadily until the end of the quarter when approximately 20 students remained. The teacher was a French woman in her early 20’s. She had never taught before. She conducted class in French 85% of the time. Classroom activities were designed to be communicative, but the tests covered written vocabulary, grammar, and composition skills. Speaking was graded only as class participation and an oral exam which together comprised fifteen percent of the final grade in the class. My grades in the class are documented in Table 1 below. Although I received a grade on my report card, the mark did not average into my GPA nor did the credits count toward graduation because of graduate school guidelines prohibiting graduate students from taking undergraduate courses for graduate credit. (This holds for French 102 and 103 as well.)

I took French 102 the following quarter (Winter 1991). The class met on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoons from 2:00 to 3:18. There were approximately 30 students in the class, the majority of whom were second-quarter freshman. Only one of them had been in my 101 class the previous quarter. I knew three of the other students from my work as a graduate assistant in a division of Student Affairs. The teacher was an American woman in her mid-twenties, a second year Master’s student. She conducted class in French 60% of the time. Classroom activities and the grading scheme were essentially the same as those for 101. My grades in the course are documented in Table 2.
Table 1. Percentage scores on graded work for French 101, Autumn 1990.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Check</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Quiz</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>91.5</td>
<td>96.5</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workbook</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Exams</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Exam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>89</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>?</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final course grade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The last column headed % represents the breakdown of the percentage of the final grade. **The grade for the final exam was not available. ***The grade of A falls in the 93-100% range.

I took French 103 the following quarter, Spring 1991. The class met Monday and Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 9:15. I had enrolled in the night class thinking that there would be a greater number of older and more serious students. There were approximately 25 students in the class, about half of whom would be considered "non-traditional" students: over 22 years old, with daytime jobs, who were working toward a degree on a part-time basis. There were two students, besides myself, taking the class because they had a desire to learn the language—they were not fulfilling university requirements. The remaining half of the class consisted of traditional full-time college students who were fulfilling their foreign language requirements. The teacher was an Indian woman in her early to mid-30's. French was her third language. She spoke Hindi and English as well.
She conducted class in French about 90% of the time. For the first 5 weeks of the course, classroom activities were much the same as in 101 and 102. During the last 5 weeks, we read a play and discussed it in class. The tests on the play consisted of vocabulary and essay questions. We did not have chapter quizzes. My grades for the course are reported in Table 3 below.

Table 2. Percentage scores on graded work for French 102, Winter 1991.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>%*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Check</td>
<td>97.5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>---**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Quiz</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>98.5</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>97.5</td>
<td>99.25</td>
<td>99.5</td>
<td>98.75</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workbook</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Exams</td>
<td>99.25</td>
<td>94.75</td>
<td>98.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam***</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final course: grade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A****</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The last column headed % represents the breakdown of the percentage of the final grade. **I did not take a Vocabulary Check for Chapter 14. Our lowest grade on a Vocabulary Check was dropped. ***The grade for the final exam was not available. ****The grade of A falls in the 93-100% range.

In addition to the French courses I took during the present study, I took graduate level courses toward my Master's degree and worked twenty hours per week as a graduate assistant in a division of student affairs as an educational specialist (the number of graduate
credit hours I took per quarter are listed below in Table 4). I also tutored a Japanese woman and a Chinese man, both graduate students, in English composition. I considered myself to be a regular student in the French classes although my motivation level in and perceptions of the classes may have differed from most of my classmates. I was very serious about learning French and very critical of the teaching practices of my instructors. I felt that most of my classmates were not serious about learning French, nor were they particularly concerned with how the classes were conducted. I learned these things through informal conversations with them and observations of their behavior before, during, and after class. Despite my desire to blend into the social milieu of my classrooms, I often felt like a misfit or an outcast due to my intense motivation to learn.

Table 3. Percentage scores on graded work for French 103, Spring 1991.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>Play</th>
<th>%*</th>
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<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Check</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workbook</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>N/A**</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Exams</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Exam</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam***</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A****</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final course grade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The last column headed % represents the breakdown of the percentage of the final grade. **There were no workbook exercises for the material covered in the play. ***The grade for the final exam was not available. ****The grade of A falls in the 93-100% range.
The Language Learning Diary

I attempted to systematically record events, details, and feelings about my language experience in a confidential and candid diary according to the guidelines put forth by Bailey and Oschner (1983). Entries were to be made each class day as soon as possible after class time and additionally as the need arose. Diary entries were made in writing or on audio tape, whichever was more convenient to me at a given time. The entries were later transcribed and typed. After that, the diary was revised in order to edit material of a sensitive nature to create a public version of the diary. This version is included in Appendix A of this report to make it available to other researchers and scholars interested in this type or area of study.

Despite my attempts to make entries in my diary each day after class, I did not always have time to do so because I was quite busy with other classes and my job. It should be recognized that my failure to record everyday after class is one limitation of the study. However, I made a total of 54 entries over the course of the nine month study. Additionally, I reasoned that my failure to keep up with the diary at all times was a significant factor in the study that deserves note and interpretation. Table 4 below summarizes the distribution and frequency of my entries.

It is apparent that the number of diary entries per quarter is inversely related to the number of credit hours I took per quarter. During Winter quarter I was able to devote much more time to the study, whereas during Autumn and Spring quarters I was considerably more occupied with other course responsibilities.

Data Analysis

Diary entries were analyzed using domain analysis techniques as outlined by Spradley (1980). Domain analysis is a systematic search for patterns in qualitative data. Semantic relationships were selected according to the research questions and the body of data was scanned for possible cover terms and examples which fit the semantic relationship. These procedures were repeated using different semantic relationships until a
A complete list of domains was made. Table 5 below illustrates the semantic relationships used to address each research question.

Table 4. Distribution and frequency of diary entries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>French 101 (9/19-11/28)</th>
<th>French 102 (1/6-3/19)</th>
<th>French 103 (4/1-6/13)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals:</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit hours*:</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These credit hours do not include hours in French or hours taken as research credits toward the completion of this study.
Table 5. Semantic relationships used in domain analysis of diary entries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Did I experience language learning anxiety?</td>
<td>X indicates an occurrence of anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. If so, which factors, intrinsic or extrinsic, seem to bear upon my feelings of anxiety?</td>
<td>X influences the occurrence of anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How do I deal with anxiety?</td>
<td>X is an attempt to deal with anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do these attempts to deal with anxiety help or hinder my progress?</td>
<td>attempt to deal with anxiety X influences Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Does the manifestation of anxiety change in the course of the study?</td>
<td>X represents a change in anxious feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. If there are changes, can they be linked to other intrinsic or extrinsic factors?</td>
<td>X influences change Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to recognize that during the analysis the variables in the statements above were replaced with words, phrases, and passages from my diary based on my own perspective, with my own biases and limited objectivity. In the next chapter on results and discussion, I have attempted to illustrate how I decided to approach the analysis of each of the domains.

**Trustworthiness**

In order to increase the trustworthiness of this study I kept a reflexive journal (see Lincoln and Guba, 1985) compiled from notes I took as I made methodological decisions. This journal reveals my thinking on the various problems I encountered and how I solved them. Relevant excerpts of the journal are reported along with the results of the study.
Extrapolation

Extrapolations are “modest speculations on the likely applicability of findings to other situations under similar, but not identical, conditions” (Patton, 1990, p. 489). One goal of this research, then, is to be able to speculate on what may happen in similar situations given the findings of the present study. Such extrapolation is not to be thought of as generalizability in the traditional sense of the word as used in quantitative research based on statistical procedures. Instead, such statements should be thought of as working hypotheses, not as all-encompassing solutions.
Chapter IV
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the research questions are addressed. I have attempted to show how the diary entries were analyzed with respect to each question. The findings are presented and discussed in terms of previous research.

Question 1. Did I experience language learning anxiety?

In order to answer this question, I began by searching my diary for words and phrases which indicated to me that I had experienced anxiety. I based my decision on which words and phrases to look for on the learner reactions to anxiety I had found in the literature. In Matsumoto's (1989) analysis of a Japanese ESL learner's diary, she chose to count only those instances of anxiety marked specifically by the word "anxiety" or a form of it. Instead, I have chosen to include words that may signal a reaction to anxious feelings. Another reason I chose to include words signaling reactions to anxiety is that diary writing, for me, has always been a forum for my reactions to situations and feelings. I have kept a personal journal since 1981. The words I found are listed in Table 6 below. I have also included the dates of the entries in which each word was found.

There were 24 out of 54 entries that contained reference to anxious feelings, either directly or indirectly through the mention of possible reactions to anxiety. It is apparent that I did experience anxiety and that it was a common occurrence during my language study. Question 2 addresses the contexts in which anxiety occurred.
Table 6. Words that indicated anxious feelings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/19/90</td>
<td>overwhelmed</td>
<td>11/13/90</td>
<td>hard time keeping focussed and concentrating,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/21/90</td>
<td>disturbed, embarrassed</td>
<td></td>
<td>frustrated, nervous, feel terrible, so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/24/90</td>
<td>feel pretty stupid</td>
<td></td>
<td>upset, panicked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/30/90</td>
<td>perturbed</td>
<td></td>
<td>couldn’t remember any French at all, feel silly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/1/90</td>
<td>embarrassing, humiliating, devastated, angry</td>
<td>11/27/90</td>
<td>nervous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/16/90</td>
<td>annoying, dehumanizing</td>
<td>1/6/91</td>
<td>nervous, heart racing, face hot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/22/90</td>
<td>irate</td>
<td>1/9/91</td>
<td>don’t feel as confident, too much to study, feel so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/24/90</td>
<td>uptight, couldn’t concentrate, overwhelmed, confusing, frustrating</td>
<td>1/14/91</td>
<td>stupid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/30/90</td>
<td>confusing</td>
<td></td>
<td>nervous laughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/16/91</td>
<td>freak out, trouble thinking, mind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>just seemed to empty, frustrating</td>
<td>2/27/91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/13/91</td>
<td>nervous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/25/91</td>
<td>unwilling to take a chance of being wrong, fear of making mistakes, nervous</td>
<td>3/15/91</td>
<td>face getting hot, heart beating fast nervous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/6/91</td>
<td>overwhelming</td>
<td>4/18/91</td>
<td>worry too much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/11/91</td>
<td>worry</td>
<td>5/15/91</td>
<td>worried about grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/26/91</td>
<td>difficult to study, freak out, freeze</td>
<td>6/13/91</td>
<td>anxiety, nervous, worried</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 2: Which factors, intrinsic or extrinsic, seem to bear upon my feelings of anxiety?

As I made note of each instance of anxiety marked by the words and phrases above, I also attempted to determine which variables in the learning situation contributed to those feelings. Initially, I looked only at those instances I had identified in Table 9 above; however, as I read through the diary I realized that not only was I missing more subtly marked anxious feelings, but I was also missing those situations and variables that eased anxious feelings. Nevertheless, the first and second domain analyses revealed several factors that contributed to my language learning anxiety providing a basis for further examination of the data. The factors that were identified can be grouped under three general categories: course related factors, personal factors, and social factors. It should be recognized that many of these factors are related to one another, even across categories. Table 7 shows these headings and the factors grouped beneath them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>course-related factors</th>
<th>personal factors</th>
<th>social factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>preparedness</td>
<td>personal agenda</td>
<td>new situations: classmates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>difficulty of material and task</td>
<td>motivation</td>
<td>competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>test anxiety</td>
<td>learning strategies</td>
<td>conspicuousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaching practices</td>
<td>self-confidence</td>
<td>creating anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>perfectionism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>learning styles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next step was to take a closer look at the diary entries with respect to these factors in order to get a better idea of how they functioned. Did some factors function in a
positive way to reduce anxiety? Did some function in both negative and positive ways? In order to answer these questions I read through the diary several times and color-coded the entries according to the instances of each factor. I used a different color for each of the factors shown above in Table 7. After I had coded the diary I cut out the coded sections and filed them according to the factor each section represented. In some cases a section represented more than one factor, for those I made extra copies of the passages and filed them with each factor to which they applied.

Figure 1 is a time line that shows the distribution of the factors that influence anxiety. Both anxiety-provoking instances and anxiety-reducing instances are noted.

Some of the factors are mentioned more frequently than others in the diary. Matsumoto (1989) notes that the frequency with which factors are mentioned in a language learning diary is related positively to the significance of those factors in the learner's experience. Table 8 shows a rank order of the factors found to influence my anxiety.

Some influencing factors had both anxiety-reducing and anxiety-provoking effects. In order to show how these factors functioned, the following sections discuss each of the factors and how the character of each operates throughout the course of the study. In doing so, the remaining research questions are addressed: I discuss how I deal with anxiety, whether those reactions help or hinder my progress, if the manifestation of anxiety changes over time, and how those changes relate to each factor. The date of each entry is noted in parentheses following the quote or reference to it.
Figure 1. Time line showing the distribution of factors that influenced anxiety.

- indicates an anxiety-provoking influence
* indicates an anxiety-reducing influence
Table 8. Factors that influenced anxiety: rank order of occurrence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Total Instances</th>
<th>Anxiety-reducing</th>
<th>Anxiety-provoking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Teaching Practices</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Personal Agenda</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Classmates</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Preparedness</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Difficulty</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Test Anxiety</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Self-confidence</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Perfectionism</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Learning Strategies</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Conspicuousness</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Creating Anxiety</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Motivation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Competition</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. New Situations</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Learning Styles</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course-Related Factors

Course-related factors are those that pertain primarily to the course materials, subject matter, testing, and teaching. These factors accounted for 56 out of 137 instances of anxiety-provoking or reducing.

Teaching Practices. The role of the teacher has been identified by Price (1991) and Young (1989) as an important influence on a learner's feelings of anxiety. In Young's
study, error correction and activity type were the most often cited aspects of teaching practice that either induce or reduce feelings of anxiety. The teacher's personality is also reported to influence the manifestation of anxiety. In the present study, the role of the teacher is very important. The most prevalent of the factors cited, teaching practice with regard to anxiety was mentioned 24 times: 9 of these were anxiety-provoking, 15 of these were anxiety-reducing. Teaching practices had a great influence to provoke anxiety, but played a greater role in reducing anxiety.

During French 101, each of the 6 references to teaching practice with regard to anxiety was negative or anxiety-provoking. I was very critical of the teacher, Marie. I thought she was young and inexperienced. She was in her early 20's, a native speaker of French, and a first-quarter Master's student in Biology. Many of my criticisms of her probably stemmed from my own education and experience. If I had not been a Master's student in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), I may not have been so critical. The following excerpts reveal this bias:

a) ... I wish that Marie had more experience teaching French or at least some background in education. I know how she feels when we ask her why some things are as they are in French but she should learn to look things up and give explanations later instead of giving half-baked answers or [saying] “I don’t know, it’s just that way”. (9/30/90)

b) I also get very angry at the way Marie builds anxiety in the classroom by saying things like--“You should move very quickly on this--you must go very fast”. ... it is glaringly obvious that she is not an experienced teacher and that she doesn't consider affective concerns. (10/1/90)

c) Marie is even more annoying. The Nazi drilling of class time!! She doesn’t seem to realize how she makes people feel. She picks on students who don’t respond well. When they can’t answer she has someone else (usually someone whom she knows can answer) answer the question. Didn’t I just read somewhere that that was a particularly dehumanizing practice? (10/16/90)

In addition to feeling disdain for the way Marie ran class in general, I had two particularly anxious incidents in her classroom. They are recounted in the following passages:

a) I volunteered to go to the board. Marie instructed me to write what she read. One of the words, “sportif”, I did not know, although I did get it right. She then made a big thing out of the necessity to use the
feminine form, “sporâve” in the sentence. I did not realize it at all. She was trying to use an inductive approach to teach adjective-subject gender agreement, a subject that was to be prepared by the [time of the] next class [meeting]. I was very embarrassed. She just kept saying “Write what you hear!” but I was so confused I didn’t know what I was hearing. I resented being used in that way. I do not have enough experience with French to know what exact sounds I am hearing! I am inclined to be totally against inductive approaches to teaching grammar. Instead of humiliating someone at the board, it would be better to introduce the concept, then have someone write it. (10/1/90)

b) I had to write on the board the French word for “European” and we hadn’t had it. I didn’t know how to spell or say it so I just wrote “European” in English.

Marie said, “Why did you write this in English?”

I said “Well, I don’t know how it is in French; it wasn’t in our book. So I assumed maybe it was the same as English and I guess it wasn’t.”

She noticed that I was irritated about it and said “That’s ok, that’s ok.”

I said “Well, I didn’t know it.” I wish I had taped the incident so that I could figure out what it was about the way she spoke to me that made me angry.

An incident of this sort occurred with another student:

c) One of the guys asked a question about the masculine definite articles “œ” and “œ”. He asked why the second one has a ‘t’ at the end and how do we know when to use it. Marie had explained it previously, but she had gone over it quickly and in French. She told him that he should listen in class because she had just said it. She said “Weren’t you listening?” I don’t know. It just seems to me that it shouldn’t be that way; she should just tell him. Up to a point, you should expect to repeat things in a classroom. This is a class, this is not a test every second of the day. . . I feel that people should be able to ask questions in a classroom and they shouldn’t be intimidated or ridiculed when they do. They should get some sort of answer. (10/24/90)

I definitely felt as though Marie ran class time as if it were performance time. Many times I was afraid to take a chance on an answer because I was afraid of the consequences of being wrong.

Another aspect of teaching practices that caused anxiety was that class time seemed to have little or nothing to do with testing. It often seemed as if there were no point at all to our classroom activities:
a) Many students are confused by what goes on in class. There doesn’t seem to be much of a consistent plan... (9/30/90)

b) Class time seems pointless. We do things related to our preparation but not in an illustrative manner. It seems to be a hodgepodge of activities. (10/1/90)

c) I’m learning the language by doing my homework and daily preparation. I don’t learn by doing tasks in the classroom. (10/22/90)

Despite all of the anxiety I experienced in Marie’s classroom. I did well. I received nearly perfect marks in class participation. I missed only one day of class. Unfortunately, many of my classmates did not fare so well. There were many absences by the third or fourth week and approximately one-third to one-half of the class dropped the course (judging from attendance on exam days). The only reasons I can give for my success in the class are my high motivation level, my hard work and persistence, my high marks on written tests, and my eventual realization that Marie was not really such a terrible person. She meant well and was perhaps merely a product of her culture. The following excerpt illustrates this realization:

It’s interesting to think of how things have changed for me over the course of this quarter in French. In the beginning I was very eager to learn and I was very disappointed that Marie was the way she is--impatient, demanding, and not accepting any mistakes. I just feel that the classroom is a place to learn and not a place to be drilled and graded and reprimanded constantly. I’ve come to realize that the way she teaches is partly due to her culture and that it’s very French to teach that way and that I should get used to it if I’m going on in French. I’ve talked to a few people--a French teacher in one of my classes for one--who have confirmed that. I’m interested in talking to Marie about this because she seems interested in making herself a better teacher and finding out how people perceive her. I’m much more accepting of how she is now because I now realize that it is a cultural thing and I no longer take it personally. I think that other students still do. (11/13/90)

This realization came late in the quarter, but once it did I no longer felt so threatened by Marie. I actually grew to like her and to respect her for her energy and her determination to speak French so much in the classroom, even though her exclusive use of French in the first few weeks of class were a source of anxiety for me (10/1/91).
In direct contrast, I established immediate rapport with my French 102 teacher, Anne. She was an American woman about my age, a Master’s student in French. I identified with her personally and was impressed by her informal approach to teaching:

a) There were quite a few bizarre things she said that made me think twice, pretty tangential; a kind of wit that I can identify with. Another interesting thing is that she uses slang and silly accents spontaneously. She doesn’t treat us as students or at least not as subordinates. Rather like we are a bunch of friends getting together. She knows French. We don’t. We’re there to learn it. She’s there to teach it. I also remember her saying that we should feel free to talk, make noise, and be obnoxious, whatever. As long as we use the language. A productive noisy classroom type of teacher. (1/7/91)

b) I waited to talk with Anne after class. She complimented my pronunciation. It made me feel good. I was surprised and encouraged. She suggested that I rent some French films for listening practice and to get more exposure to the verbal language. She is interested in promoting communicative skills and is trying to urge us to communicate in class. She recognizes and encourages creativity and risk-taking in the class. (1/11/91)

Her methods of error correction were effective and anxiety-reducing for me. I was not only encouraged to take risks and make mistakes, but I was also inspired to be a leader in the class by participating freely:

I made some mistakes with past tense and called Melanie [a classmate] “il” instead of “elle” in a sentence. She handled my gender mistake by saying “Who did you say?” and I realized my mistake and said “elle”. She didn’t address the past tense problems. I realized after I had finished that I hadn’t used it properly but said nothing. Not very many people were eager to volunteer. First day, oh well. I do wish more people would let their hair down and take some risks and be fools. I feel like that’s the only way I’m going to learn. In an environment where it’s ok to make mistakes and try new things and everyone’s doing it at the same time. Maybe I can help to promote that sort of atmosphere in the class. (1/7/91)

On one occasion, however, I was a bit upset by the way she had handled what she perceived as an error:

Class was boring. I didn’t feel like participating. I couldn’t think of anything to say. When I did say something I used a figurative term that was in our book, but Anne didn’t understand me until I told her what I meant. I had used the phrase “tenir le coup” meaning “to hold up under stress”. She said that these days people just use the word “stress”. I hate it when I try to be creative and I’m not understood. It seems like that happens a lot. It probably keeps me from being creative more often. (2/14/91)
After I wrote this in my diary I realized I probably would have handled this incident the same way if I were teaching the class. She was not very familiar with the phrase I had used, so she questioned me about it. I had probably over-reacted. Nevertheless, the incident did cause me to avoid talking during the rest of the class and perhaps kept me from experimenting as much with new words and phrases I learned from the book.

Another aspect of Anne’s teaching that impressed me was that she gave us learning strategy instruction:

a) Today Anne gave her lecture on using learning and test taking strategies. It was great. Although I already do many of the things she mentioned, I am sure that it really helped the other students in the class... another thing I found interesting is that she addressed the issue in terms of grades. She obviously realizes that the majority of the students in the class are there for their language requirement and don’t care too much about learning French. She gave very concrete tips on how to improve our grades. I hope I can remember everything.
   1. make flashcards for everything--every verb, every tense, nouns with their articles, frequently used phrases, etc.
   2. write out all of the exercises in the text book.
   3. on tests, if asked to write sentences go for the easiest, simplest ones. Don’t try to impress her on tests, do it in class. Get participation points, don’t risk it on the tests, especially if grades matter to you. (1/23/91)

b) Anne is really good about giving hints for studying. Marie didn’t do that at all. I think she assumed that we all knew how to study and assumed that many people just weren’t studying. (3/15/91)

Although the strategy instruction did not benefit me directly by reducing my anxiety caused by the overwhelming volume of material we were expected to learn, I felt that others in the class would profit from it. In general, I believe that strategy instruction is an anxiety-reducing practice. It shows that a teacher realizes what it is like to be a student.

Despite my respect for Anne and her teaching practices, I became disenchanted around the middle of the quarter. I wanted her to speak more French in class (2/20/91). I began to get bored by our classroom activities. I felt as if she did not even prepare for class each day. It seemed to me as if she just showed up and had us do exercises out of the book because they were already there. Then we had a substitute teacher who brought a fresh
perspective to the class:

We had a substitute teacher both Friday and today, Lisa. She had also substituted for Marie last quarter. She seems to put a lot of time into preparation. She plans exercises that are very relevant to the kinds of tests we have to take. She also prepares worksheets for quizzes and probably midterms. She gave us a worksheet today, which she told us that her class had to take as a quiz to be graded. It was very helpful in that it pointed out some picky things about grammar. (2/11/91)

I felt that this teacher put more effort into her instruction. She seemed to take it much more seriously. Her exercises challenged me and she spoke more French in class. Because I was no longer challenged by Anne’s class, I began to get lazy. I was not content being lazy though; I began to feel as if I were wasting my time coming to class. The lack of challenge and the fact that Anne did not speak French enough in the classroom conflicted with my own personal learning agenda. The feeling that I was not learning enough created a sort of anxiety that could perhaps be better described as discontent and frustration.

There are very few entries in my diary that address the teaching practices of my 103 teacher, Riva; however, all were positive. There is not one instance I can recall in which Riva’s teaching practices caused anxiety for me. She spoke French most of the time in the classroom and she was easy to understand. Her error correction practices were effective:

I made a few mistakes, but Riva handled them well and I did not feel embarrassed. She merely pointed out the mistake tactfully and either modeled it correctly or prompted me so that I could find my own mistakes. The latter of these correction strategies is the most favorable to me. Although if I had no idea as to an answer, I am sure that the former would be more effective. (4/3/91)

I was also impressed by Riva’s class preparation:

Riva is very organized. She has the lesson thoroughly planned out and activities ready to go. She seems to put a lot of work into her lesson plans. I appreciate that. That way a good third of class time isn’t spent trying to figure out what to do. (4/3/91)

I think I was reacting to the frustration I felt the previous quarter with a teacher who did not seem to spend much time at all in preparation for class.

I also felt that Riva handled my grammar questions very well. Anne had often told me not to worry about the tricky grammar problems I presented to her, and Marie had often
given me unsatisfactory answers or dismissed my questions as unimportant. Riva, on the other hand, "answered them quite well and told me that they were good questions." (4/8/91).

I do not know for certain, but Riva seemed to be a very experienced teacher. She was mild-mannered, confident, well-organized, and encouraging. Although I did not establish a particularly good personal relationship with her, I always felt that if I had problems in the class she would be willing to help. I know that others in the class went to her office regularly to discuss difficulties they were having.

In summary, teaching practices influenced my anxiety levels significantly, both positively and negatively. The most prevalent issues were error correction, speaking French in class, relevance of classroom activities, classroom environment, and the teacher's personality and preparedness for class.

**Test Anxiety.** Test anxiety has been found to have negative effects on performance on foreign language exams (Horwitz et al., 1986). Madsen, Brown, and Jones (1991) found that test anxiety varied with skill level and test type. In the present study test anxiety played a moderate role in my language learning. There were both general concerns about tests and specific concerns about particular test items or formats.

After my first chapter quiz in French 101, I was very upset that I had not done as well as I thought I had:

I got my homework and test back. I was devastated with a 3 out of 5 on my homework, I'm not sure why I lost the points. I got 87.5 on my quiz. I had studied very hard and worked very hard. I'm not accustomed to spending so much time on things and getting mediocre grades! Tonight I will go over both of them and try to find out what my problem is. Then I'll go see Marie. I know I can still do well in the class and that the first tests should let me know how to study and what I'm missing out on, but it's so frustrating! (10/1/90)

I think that the reason I was so surprised at my performance was because I had not known what to expect on the test and I had expected the teacher to give partial credit. The low score was also a blow to my self-confidence. In the previous section on teaching practices, I discussed my frustration that Marie, my 101 teacher, did not design activities that were
relevant to the test we would take. Further, I was not prepared for an entire answer to be marked wrong because it was misspelled. I analyzed that first quiz and made note of the kinds of errors I had made and resolved to organize my study time such that I would be more prepared to perform well on these tests.

After a few weeks I began to feel more confident about the written tests except that I still felt I needed more time. I did not like turning in a test that I did not have time to check for careless errors:

I don’t really get too nervous on written tests anymore. . . [but] I wish we would have had more time to go back over things during the tests. That’s one thing I really regret. I never have time to go back over my tests to check for little mistakes such as gender and number agreement, accents, and other things. (11/27/90)

However, as I progressed in my study of French, I began to have more time to take tests. I am not sure whether this is because I was given more time by the teacher or because I was a more efficient test taker by that time:

a) For the first time I was finished with a quiz and had looked over it twice before time was up. I found some spelling errors when I went back the first time. The second time around I didn’t make any changes. It seems like things are getting easier. (2/14/90)

b) The final was a piece of cake. Pas problème! I could have checked back over it but at that point I was just too tired to worry about it. There’s no way I could have done badly on it. It’s possible that I could have made some small errors, but I’m not too worried. (3/19/91)

The only other mentions of test anxiety in my diary were related to specific tasks on tests and specific subject matter. A recurring problem I had was that on free-writing portions of tests I would be penalized for trying to be creative; I always wanted to say more that I was capable of saying and I resented being discouraged from trying. For example, Marie wrote on one of my exams “Why don’t you use only the vocabulary you know?” and Anne suggested in her test taking strategy lesson that we not take any chances on tests. I understood the value of this kind of advice in terms of grades, but it is stifling.

Two other mentions of test anxiety dealing with specific tasks involved listening comprehension problems and trouble with inversion questions:
[The exam] was pretty easy, but I did have some trouble with the last part of the listening comprehension--numbers. I don’t know why they were difficult. (11/28/90)

I did not write this in my diary, but I remember that during this part of the exam I couldn’t understand what Marie was saying. I felt as if I knew the material and if I could have understood what she was saying I could have done well. I felt as if she was not speaking clearly. I remember my face getting hot and a feeling of panic coming over me. However, I was able to calm myself and to continue with the rest of the test with a minimum of anxiety.

[We had] to write questions again. I’m just not really clear on questions. Just like many of my Japanese ESL students, questions are my hardest thing. I felt myself get a little nervous as I tried to decide whether to put two of the questions into inversion form. (1/25/91)

During this test I remember the same kind of feeling come over me as in the first example above. I was very confused because the questions I wanted to translate into French were idiomatic in English and some of that meaning would be lost. I wasn’t sure how to properly complete the task. I probably could have chosen to translate easier questions, but I stubbornly struggled with what I wanted to say.

The most acute and devastating anxiety I experienced was during my oral exam in French 101. Before the exam I was nervous about it:

I’m nervous about the oral exam tomorrow. I’m afraid that I’ll freeze. I hope that I won’t. I hope that I can choose by chance topics that I’m familiar with. (11/13/90)

By the power of suggestion perhaps my worst possible imaginings were realized. During the exam:

I froze. I couldn’t remember any French at all. It probably lasted about 2 minutes. (11/27/90)

Those two minutes seemed like an eternity. I remember trying to remember anything, anything at all in French, but I couldn’t have even said “Bonjour” ! This experience was very new to me. I had had similar problems on tests before, but those were written tests and my terror was private. This kind of situation is particularly painful because of the
presence of the teacher grading you there at that moment. My subsequent oral exams were not as bad. I still got nervous, but I was able to keep talking—even if I couldn’t say exactly what I wanted to say, I could circumlocute. I also felt that I had better relationships with my teachers in 102 and 103 and felt that they were more tolerant of errors. The oral exam setting with them was much less threatening with them than it had been with my 101 teacher.

In summary, test anxiety was a factor in my language learning experience. It decreased as I became more experienced at taking the tests. Once I learned what was expected of me, my performance was better and I was less anxious. However, I occasionally experienced anxiety when I encountered test items for which I was not adequately prepared.

Difficulty. Difficulty refers to problems I encountered as I studied on my own and completed tasks in class. Price (1991) found that students who perceived their language studies as difficult experienced anxiety. In each case documented in my diary, difficulty was associated with specific material and tasks. I often found my anxiety escalating as I studied:

a) Last night I was studying, of course, and I was feeling very uptight about it. I couldn’t concentrate. I felt very overwhelmed by all of the vocabulary, by all of the rules I had to remember, the prepositions, and irregular verbs. I kept confusing forms of être, avoir, and aller. (10/24/90)

b) I’m having trouble figuring out which articles to use. Whether to use demonstratives, indefinite articles, or definite, or partitives. I think that I use the partitives after boire and prendre. After things like aimer and préférer I think I should use definite articles, but I’m having a hard time. I also have a really hard time with the listening comprehension tapes. They’re really going fast. I need more time to listen and to repeat things. I guess I just need practice. But it’s going really fast. (10/28/90)

c) I’m pretty confused about inversion questions and the passé composé confuses the issue even more. Even though I did all of the preparation for class today, I still was a little lost. I need to go back over that stuff and try to get a handle on it. I don’t think that the book gave a good explanation nor good examples nor enough exercises. (1/11/91)

Most of the time I responded to this kind of anxiety by devising learning strategies that
would make up for what I was missing in an attempt to make the material a little less ominous:

a) I kept confusing forms of être, avoir, and aller. I think I have it now, I hope so. I put them all on flash cards and it seems to help to have them all in one place. I did have them scattered throughout my notes, but it seems to be a lot easier to put them all together on one card so I can compare and contrast and see what’s similar and different about them. Although they are irregular, they do have a pattern. Once you realize that, after seeing them all together, it makes it a lot easier to remember them. (10/24/90)

b) I’ve decided to start using a new strategy for studying vocabulary. I’m going to start writing up vocabulary flash cards before I begin a chapter. Going through the pages and grouping words according to part of speech more clearly. My cards aren’t very organized because I do them as I progress through the chapter. (10/30/90)

As I got better at using learning strategies to cope with my difficulties, I became much less tense about studying French and my work became easier:

As I was doing homework in this chapter, I noticed things getting a little easier and not taking up so much time. (2/11/91)

Other difficulties I experienced were those related to specific classroom tasks such as reading comprehension, reading aloud, and the most prevalent being listening comprehension. This problem was most acute at the beginning of French 102. I was gaining some proficiency with the language; therefore, I expected more from myself. In 101 I had been satisfied with understanding bits and pieces of what the teacher said. In 102, I wanted to understand everything, but I often had trouble:

a) I find that if I let my mind wander at all in class I miss what is being said totally. (1/18/91)

b) Today I had a lot of trouble understanding Anne. Maybe I wasn’t paying attention or maybe I was just distracted by all the extra talking that was going on in the class. . . I was having trouble understanding basic sentences. . . (1/23/91)

c) I can’t understand everything Anne says in French but I can usually get the gist of it--if I’m totally listening and concentrating. If my mind wanders--forget it. It’s just a buzz. I get frustrated when I can’t understand. I strain to concentrate and wish that I had more practice. (2/1/91)
Understanding what the teacher was saying was often difficult for me. I tried so hard to understand that I may have defeated myself sometimes by getting distracted by anxious feelings. This problem did not persist. In 103, I was able to understand nearly everything Riva said (4/8/91).

In summary, difficulty of material and task influenced my feelings of anxiety. I dealt with these problems by devising strategies to overcome them and through gaining more experience and exposure to the language. These findings support Clément et al. (1977) in their assertion that learners become more confident and less anxious as they become familiar with the tasks of language learning.

Preparedness. Young (1989) and Madsen et al. (1991) report that preparedness is a factor related to classroom anxiety. The lack thereof was a contributor to my feelings of anxiety. For each day in class I was to prepare a designated amount of material in order to be able to participate in class effectively. The syllabus very clearly outlined the material to be covered each day and for the most part the instructors in my classes adhered strictly to that schedule. The pace was demanding, as illustrated by the following excerpt from my diary:

...there is so much to study and just to keep up I have to study for about 3-5 hours for every hour in class. (1/14/91)

In addition, I was concerned about doing well in my other courses, courses for which I received graduate credit:

a) Sometimes I feel like I'm putting too much time into learning French at the expense of my other classes. That's not good. I want to continue my studies, yet I don't want to hamper my other work. (1/30/91)

b) I worry about all the time I spend on French, I know that I should be working on other things. (2/11/91)

This concern led me to cut back on my preparation for French class:

I have been slacking off--only because I feel that I have been neglecting other subjects. (3/3/91)

As I continued to decrease my study time for French, I began to experience anxiety about not being prepared for class:
a) I'm nervous about not being prepared for class. This is the first time I have been behind. I don't like it but other assignments are more important to me now. (3/13/91)

b) I was not prepared for class today. I had so much work to do in such a short time [in my other classes] that something had to be sacrificed and sadly it was French. (4/3/91)

In order to cope with the anxiety that was produced by my lack of time and preparedness, I had to change the way I was studying. I no longer had time to study in the fashion to which I had become accustomed:

I've had to change my approach to studying French to try to make up for my tight schedule. Now, instead of proceeding through a chapter chronologically—doing all exercises, workbook, and tapes—I am skimming through the assigned topics and doing a few Preparation A exercises in each section. I plan to catch up on the weekends. I have done this because I think it's better to be at least somewhat prepared for class than to be behind, yet thoroughly finished with what I have managed to get done.

In the last chapter I felt pretty confident about everything except those topics which were covered last. I had finished studying those topics right before the test for the first time. I had not been able to get much out of class time practice, nor did I have time to let these things set in. (4/24/91)

This new approach seemed to work:

I have changed my approach to daily preparation because I was feeling pretty lost during class. This week and last I felt much better. I am going over each topic on time and doing the written part of the workbook. I have yet to do the oral part, but I will catch up eventually. (4/29/91)

I was then able to function in class and do well on tests, but at the same time I felt disappointed because I was doing as little as I could to get by. I felt as if I had compromised myself and my priorities in order to do well on tests (6/13/91).

To summarize, preparedness was a significant factor that influenced my feelings of anxiety. I was quite anxious when I was not prepared for class or a test, yet when I took steps to relieve the stress, I felt as if I were taking shortcuts and not really learning the material.
Social Factors

Social factors in the present study refer to those aspects of the language learning situation that involve other learners in the social setting of the classroom. These factors include competition, classmates, new situations, conspicuousness, and creating anxiety. They accounted for 31 out of the 137 instances of anxiety-provoking or reducing.

Competition. Competition has been shown to relate to language learning anxiety (Bailey, 1983 and Schumann, 1978). According to Bailey, it is characterized by comparing oneself to other students, responding emotionally to such comparisons, desiring to outdo other students, over-emphasizing tests and grades, desiring to gain teachers’ approval, comparing actual self with idealized self-image, and withdrawing from the language learning situation when the situation becomes too anxiety-ridden. I identified two instances of competition as related to anxiety in my diary.

On the first day of class I wrote:

I felt like I was probably at the bottom of the class, but I also felt that with study and practice I could quickly catch up and do well. (9/19/90)

The reason I felt this way was that many of the other students in the class had taken French in high school. Moreover, they were first-quarter freshman and fresh out of high school. They were able to use greetings and answer questions. I was stunned. I couldn’t do any of that. I was struggling just to say “What’s your name?”. However, I did catch on quickly and began to be able to participate in class. As I gained proficiency and facility with French I started to get frustrated because my fellow students did not take the class as seriously as I did. I compared myself with other students in the class, both overtly and covertly:

a) I worked with someone new today in a question and answer session. She had a hard time understanding and speaking and kept trying to look at the book for clarification. I felt way ahead of her. (1/11/91)

b) I’m getting discouraged with the people in my class. They’re duds. No one seems interested in speaking French at all. (1/14/91)

c) I worked with Chris today. We were to write a dialog of two friends who have met at the doctors office and are comparing illnesses. I did most of the work. I found that she was saying things in English and I
was translating them into the French. It didn’t seem like she wanted to put any effort in at all. (2/6/91)

d) The girl sitting next to me was my partner. My French was better than hers, but we did get through the exercise well enough. (4/1/91)

e) I worked with a woman named Chris and one named Betty today. Christy knew what she was doing most of the time, but didn’t seem interested in speaking French at all. We were just doing a verb exercise. However, Betty did speak French. It was great! Maybe I’ll try to sit next to her next time. She seems to be an older student too. (4/8/91)

Although these kinds of comparisons are pervasive throughout the diary, I cannot say that they caused me a great deal of anxiety except perhaps in a facilitating way. I was possibly motivated by my desire to be the top student in my classes; an anxious edge may have kept me on that track.

In a related vein, the findings reported in the previous section on preparedness also seem to relate to competitiveness when considered with respect to Bailey’s (1983) findings. My preoccupation with grades did create anxiety. I was anxious enough about my performance in class and on tests that I modified my own learning agenda in order to please my teacher and perhaps to outperform other students. Additionally, I seem to have been in competition with myself as shown in the section above on difficulty. I reported that I would often compare my actual performance to my idea of how I should be performing. These comparisons caused anxiety.

It seems that in my original analysis of the diary I overlooked the possibility that these more subtle influences on anxiety were due not only to factors such as preparedness, difficulty, and classmates; but also to competitiveness. This sort of interrelatedness of factors is one of challenges to the study of anxiety. When one attempts to separate factors that influence anxiety, it becomes apparent that such a separation is artificial. The complexity of anxiety is easily sacrificed in the name of scientific analysis.

The only other instance of anxiety created by competition noted in my diary is one that occurred in the context of a game during classtime:

We played a game to review. I don’t like competitive games too much, but I knew almost everything. I missed a few answers even though I knew them. I just said things wrong in the heat of competition. I felt
my face getting hot and my heart beating fast. I could tell that some people were not very good at doing games like that, but I thought that it was a good review. Everyone on my team thought I was the best and kept acting like they were counting on me when my turn came. It was a lot of pressure. I even said once, “I’m not very fast” and “I’m not good at games”. I’m not sure if that’s true, but I don’t like to be under that kind of pressure. (3/15/91)

In summary, competitiveness was a definite contributor to my feeling of anxiety. Many of my findings correspond to those of Bailey (1983), yet competition did not seem to cause me to withdraw in any way from the language learning environment. Instead, I was inspired to work harder in order to retain my status in the class.

Classmates. The classmates factor is closely related to competition. Other researchers have discussed it in terms of the fear of negative social evaluation (Horwitz et al., 1986) and conspicuousness (Daly, 1991). In the present study it is discussed with respect to competition as shown above and in terms of conspicuousness and creating anxiety in sections to follow. In addition to those discussions there is another aspect of classmates that I found to be significant in my diary. I was continuously hoping to work closely with my classmates in order to pursue my main interest in learning French: I wanted to learn how to speak the language. I was frustrated for two reasons: 1) I felt as if I did not fit in, and 2) my classmates did not seem interested in speaking French.

On the subject of fitting in I wrote:

a) I was thinking in the hallway before class that I feel like such an outcast in that class because everyone is so young. I just don’t fit in to the conversations. They don’t include me and I don’t try to join. I wonder what it would be like to be in a class with people my own age... maybe not even my own age, but just with people who were interested in learning French. (2/6/91)

b) I feel like such a geek in that class. I am not the oldest member of the class, but I still feel outcast in some way. I’m not sure what it is, but I’m having a hard time making friends. I want to speak French, but sometimes, the people I am working with want to use English. (4/3/91)

c) I feel like I isolate myself from classmates. Not just in French, but in other classes as well. I’m not sure why--am I shy?--sometimes I feel like a misfit. (4/8/91)
These kinds of feelings made me feel very lonely in class. I felt as if I were the only one who wanted to learn the language. I am sure that this was not true. It was just very difficult for me to talk to people, to try to make friends. In order to cope with these feelings, I retreated into my studies. I worked hard to do well on written tests, despite the fact that I really wanted to learn to speak French.

I was often frustrated because no one else would participate in class. On this subject I wrote:

I think classroom time would be more productive if more people would participate and actually speak French. I think that's a big problem. People just don't want to speak French. They revert to English then I revert to English. (11/27/91)

At the beginning of 102 I was hopeful that more people would participate in class:

Some of the other students who wrote on the board and volunteered answers had obviously gotten something out of 101. We all just have to get to know each other so that we can be comfortable together. I'm looking forward to class this quarter. (1/7/91)

Unfortunately for me, however, there seemed to be only a few people in my class who were serious about learning and trying to communicate in French. I was excited when I happened to work with those people:

a) It was so great to work with someone who knew what was going on and had a pretty good grasp of vocabulary and grammar and was creative to boot! We came up with a pretty interesting dialogue and volunteered to read first in front of the class. I wish I would have asked him his name; he seems like a good person to work with. (1/18/91)

b) I worked with someone whom I had never worked with before. He was pretty willing to talk and we actually had a conversation, but I was dismayed to find myself repeating everything I had just said in French in English. Why? I don't know. This is a new development. I'm sure he understood most of what I said. And I understood most of what he said. He even tries to use an accent. More experiences like that would make things a lot more interesting. (2/29/91)

In both of these passages interesting details arise. In the first, I was impressed with my partner yet I failed to find out his name and to follow up on working with him outside of class. In the second, I was so shocked to find myself having a conversation with someone in French that I repeated everything in English. It is apparent that my problems
with my classmates were most probably not their fault. I expected too much from them yet I did not pursue any relationships myself.

New Situations. This factor is marked twice on the time line in figure 1, each on the first day of a new quarter. My concerns related to the fear of learning in a new environment. I worried about what the teacher would be like. Would my classmates be better than I was? Would I be bored because no one would participate in class? I wrote:

As always, nervous about the first meeting--What will the teacher be like? Will everyone speak and comprehend better than I do? Will I be bored by a non-participating class? (4/1/91)

These fears are closely related to the teaching practices, competition, and classmates factors, which have already been discussed. Despite the feelings of discontent I may have had in a previous learning situation, that situation was familiar to me and thereby less threatening than the new one.

Conspicuousness. Conspicuousness is the feeling that you are on display, that you are on the spot, that everyone is watching you. Daly (1991) notes that conspicuousness is a characteristic of most anxiety-provoking situations. In my diary, conspicuousness functioned as a factor that influenced my feelings of anxiety. The majority of the entries that contained references to conspicuousness revolved around my uncomfortable feelings due to the fact that I was often the only student who would participate in class. I felt as if it would be easier to make mistakes if others would speak up in class. As the only person who would talk, I felt as if others considered me to be the teacher’s pet. I also found it more frightening to make mistakes because I was so exposed. In response to these feelings I wrote:

a) I don’t feel as confident speaking this quarter as I did last quarter. I think it may have something to do with the fact that no one else talks. I just feel too conspicuous. Last quarter, more people participated in class and it was easier to be willing to make mistakes. (1/14/91)

b) Today in class I volunteered more but I still held back a bit. I do not want to be the class brownie any more than I already am. (1/25/91)

c) I volunteered many times throughout the class. For the most part my answers were accurate but not always. I felt very conspicuous in the class and wish that more people would volunteer . . . (4/13/91)
d) I wasn’t volunteering much because I wanted others to participate and I didn’t want to be conspicuous. However, other students weren’t participating much and when all else failed I would volunteer. (4/18/91)

Another aspect of conspicuousness I experienced was documented only once in my diary, but I suspect that it was much more prevalent than that. This aspect is closely related to what Horwitz et al. (1986) term fear of negative social evaluation and perhaps has something to do with perfectionism. While attempting to relate a difficult point in French, I experienced the following conflict:

I probably have the grammatical ability and the vocabulary to say what I wanted to say but I felt as if it would have taken me a long time to get it out and I didn’t want to hold up the class and embarrass myself. I need to get over that problem. It’s the only way I’m going to be able to learn to use what I know. I just worry too much about what other people think of me. I don’t want them to think that I’m just trying to get attention or something. I hate that. I wish I could just forget all that stuff and concentrate on doing what I want to do in the class. (4/18/91)

Creating Anxiety. Both Bailey (1983) and Schumann (1977) mention in their diary studies that members of a class or learning situation can cause anxiety in others in the same situation. Bailey felt threatened and intimidated by a woman in her class whom she felt was ahead of her in language proficiency. Likewise, Francine Schumann experienced anxiety when she compared herself to her husband who was involved in the same learning situation that she was. However, I have not been able to find any diary accounts of learners who are aware that they create anxiety in other learners. I experienced this acutely. The following passages illustrate how I came to this realization and how I dealt with it:

a) We did some question and answer with the weather terms and the expressions with avoir. I knew nearly all of the answers. Anne told me to stop answering and a guy behind me said “Are you sure you should be in this class?” in a rather hostile tone almost under his breath. I guess I made him feel threatened and perhaps I was creating anxiety. It’s not because I’m any better than anyone in the class it’s just that I put in hours of study time and it works... I don’t know what to do about volunteering in class maybe I should keep my mouth shut more and give the other students a chance. I don’t want them to feel intimidated by me. (1/9/91)

b) I decided that I was not going to volunteer answers so much in class today because I felt like I was intimidating other students. So I didn’t
and I hated it. It's not like me to keep quiet when I know answers. I'm going to have to find a happy medium. (1/11/91)

c) Today in class I still did not volunteer so much because I just don't want to intimidate the other students in the class. This is cramping my style. I want to talk more and get more feedback, but I don't want to be a know-it-all either. (1/14/91)

d) Not many people participate in our class and I'm still holding back. I would like to tell Anne that any time she wants to call on someone when no one's answering, she can call on me; but I'm refraining from volunteering, because I don't want to intimidate the class. (1/18/91)

e) I'm still struggling with the participation thing. I want to do more, but I want to give others a chance. I gave my husband the lecture about not letting other students in a class hamper your learning style, and here I am doing the same thing. Maybe I should try volunteering more and setting an example for other students...somehow I don't think that works. (1/23/91)

f) Today I participated more fully and I'm going to do even more. I felt pretty good about it and I'm going to continue trying and taking more risks. I have decided that I don't care if I am in a class of duds and they are intimidated. (1/28/91)

In this final passage, I was shocked at how heartless I sounded. I did participate as much as I wanted after that, but I tried to be sensitive to others in the class. It was a strange feeling of power to know that I was a source of anxiety to my classmates. I cannot say that I enjoyed it, but there was some satisfaction in knowing that I was doing well in the class. This satisfaction is directly related to the competition factor.

**Personal Factors**

Personal variables influence language learning at the individual level. According to Schumann and Schumann (1977), personal variables interact with social, psychological, and cognitive variables "in patterns that are idiosyncratic for each individual" (p. 247). The personal variables or factors revealed in this study are the desire to maintain my own language learning agenda, motivation, learning styles and strategies, self-image or self-confidence, and perfectionism. These factors accounted for 50 out of the 137 instances of anxiety-provoking or reducing.
**Personal Agenda.** Failure to maintain one's personal agenda has been identified as an influence on language learning anxiety (Schumann and Schumann, 1977). This factor was a major concern in my own study, second only to teaching practices in frequency of entries in my diary. However, whereas teaching practices tended to be more anxiety-reducing in my diary, the personal agenda factor was more anxiety provoking.

Before I began studying French I outlined several objectives for myself. I wanted to a) become a proficient speaker of the language, b) be able to communicate with native speakers of the language, c) be able to teach the language eventually should the need or occasion arise, and d) gain a first-hand understanding of what it is like to become proficient in a second language. These objectives set the tone for my personal agenda. I was very interested in learning to speak the language effectively. My dissatisfaction with the course agenda surfaced early:

I'm doing well in the class as far as grades go but I am not learning to speak with any certainty or fluency. (10/16/90)

I was already compromising my agenda by concentrating on grades and thereby on written work and grammar at the expense of my speaking ability. I expressed my desire to get a tutor to work with me on speaking. I saw that as the only way that I was going to be able to practice speaking. I kept being concerned with getting a tutor, but I did nothing about it:

I'm doing very well in the class but I'm frustrated because I wish I could speak. I wish I had the chance to speak. I need to find a tutor. I need to find the time to be tutored. What would I do with a tutor? I'm not sure. Would I just do exercises? Would I try free conversation? Free conversation would be very hard at this point because my vocabulary is so small, my grammar is limited. I don't have any past tense. I guess I will have the simple past tense before the end of the quarter. I have present tense, there's not much material for conversation there. I guess that's just the way it is in one's first quarter. (11/13/90)

By the end of my first quarter of study I had still not found a tutor nor had I found the time to be tutored. I did plan, however, to work with a colleague who speaks French the following quarter.

At the beginning of 102, I was hopeful that there would be more opportunity to speak French in class:
Anne mentioned today that she wants to stress speaking in the class because when (not if) we go to France we won't be handing the waiter a piece of paper with our order on it; we will have to be able to speak. I was glad to hear this. (1/9/91)

My hopes were not realized partly perhaps because of the lack of cooperation of my classmates and because of the teacher. I was already looking forward to the next term:

Hopefully, next quarter there will be more speaking in class. I think that if Anne was more insistent that we speak French, that our class could do it, maybe. (2/26/91)

I had not taken my friend up on her offer to work with me either:

I'm still complaining about the need to practice speaking, but what am I doing about it, nothing, nada, rien!! I should at least get my Taiwanese friend to help me before my oral exam. Maybe this weekend. (Ha). (2/19/91)

My flippant "Ha" in parentheses reveals the fact that I had realized that I would not work with her. I rationalized and began thinking of alternatives to a conversation partner:

I really do not have the time to seek outside oral practice. I will have quite a mastery over the written word, but little or no proficiency with the spoken word. I am determined to at some point develop my speaking proficiency, if only when I go to France. It would probably be a good idea to start getting some French movies and seeking out French TV. (3/11/91)

I am not sure what kept me from meeting with my friend. The time factor is certainly one consideration, but had I been serious I would have found the time. It is more likely that my tendency to work and learn alone and my reluctance to make friends in my classes was more to blame. In addition to realizing that I would not get a conversation partner, I began to see that part of the reason I was not learning to speak French was that my classes focussed on written language:

If grades were more orally-based, it would inspire more time spent on oral preparation and practice. (3/15/91)

This excerpt also reveals my preoccupation with grades, which has already been discussed.

As I began 103, I took a minor initiative to find another conversation partner: I waited after class to tell her that I was interested in meeting some of the students from Nantes who are studying here. Another woman in the class said that she knew several of these students and would pass my telephone number along to any of them who may be interested
in talking to me. Finally, I’m taking a step to learn to speak better! (4/1/91)

I did not receive any phone calls nor did I follow up on the opportunity. I was too busy struggling with the French on which I would be tested and on my other studies:

I was just looking over the syllabus and thinking about how much time the study of a language takes, how much time I need to spend on my other classes, and how real these concerns are for students who must take languages as graded, credited courses. The pressure is great. I’m very sorry to say that, in my case, French must take a back seat. Yet I feel that I must still get good grades. So I have become very grade oriented—I can only hope that as I continue to take language courses I will become less grade oriented and will be more concerned with speaking and understanding. (4/8/91)

This admission marks the point at which I stopped being concerned that I was not following my own agenda. I had modified my objectives to meet those of the French curriculum, yet I found it strange that one of the stated objectives of the French department is to promote oral proficiency in the language when 85% of one’s grade in their classes depended upon skills in the written language.

Near the end of 103 I had successfully adjusted my learning strategies in order to meet the course objectives. I had also become nearly satisfied with my decision to do so:

I have finally come to the realization that I have probably learned just what I should learn in these 3 quarters of French. I have the basics of French grammar and a working vocabulary. If I had not worried about grades and had concentrated more on speaking would this base be as solid as it is now? I’m not sure. Am I brainwashed? (5/15/91)

I had begun to feel that I had done the right thing, yet still I questioned myself. I was not and still am not sure whether I truly felt this way or if I had come to feel this way because it was more comfortable, less stressful, less anxiety-provoking to do so.

Motivation. Motivation has been linked to anxiety by a number of researchers (for example, Lalonde and Gardner, 1984). In general, high levels of motivation have been found to correlate with low levels of anxiety. This finding is curious in light of the findings in the present study. Although I consider myself to be a highly motivated learner, I still experienced high levels of anxiety throughout the course of my language learning experience. The crucial consideration here may be the distinction between facilitating and
debilitating anxiety. While I did experience high levels of anxiety at times, I did not avoid the learning situation. I changed my strategies and my agenda in order to make myself more comfortable. My motivation to remain in the French classes was driven by my desire to complete this study as well as my other objectives, which were stated earlier. These findings are consistent with those of Trylong (1977) who asserts that high motivation can counteract high anxiety.

It is possible that other learners with less intense incentives would not have weathered as well. In fact this possibility is quite likely considering the dropout rate I witnessed in my 101 class. Motivation may have been a strong influence on my anxiety levels, but it was hardly mentioned in my diary and never addressed directly aside from the connections with factors such as preparedness and competition, which have already been discussed.

Another reason I believe that motivation played a large role in my language learning experience as a counter force to anxiety is that I have once before experienced a great deal of anxiety in a learning situation, one from which I completely withdrew. I am referring to the incident recounted in my subject profile when I became so anxious in a dance class because of teaching practices and conspicuousness that I dropped the class. My only motivation to take the dance class was that I was interested in exploring the mode of artistic expression. The price I had to pay in anxious feelings was too great to justify staying in the course.

In light of this contrast, it appears that high anxiety may have the potential to be either facilitating or debilitating. Factors within the learner determine the direction in which this potential is realized.

**Learning Styles.** Learning styles refer to the media through which a learner prefers to receive information about the material to be learned. Some people prefer to learn from visual representations, while others prefer audial representation. It is possible that instruction that conflicts with one’s learning styles may cause anxiety. My first few days in the language class revealed to me that I preferred one learning style over another:
a) I thought that if I could see the words written down that I could do better and if I knew pronunciation and spelling rules I could do even better. (9/19/90)

b) I definitely learn better when I see things written down. The way I studied last night was to write everything down. (9/21/90)

This realization served me well. It provided the basis for all of my learning strategies.

**Learning Strategies.** Learning strategies are tactics a learner uses in order to make material learnable. They may be used to counter anxious feelings. My diary provides a wealth of information about the strategies I used during the nine months of the study. In fact, another analysis of this diary with a focus on learning strategies could fuel another paper. I have already discussed the strategies I used to alleviate my anxiety in connection with the test anxiety, difficulty, and preparedness factors. From these discussions it is evident that I used learning strategies to deal with my feelings of anxiety.

**Self-confidence.** Many researchers have examined self-confidence and its connection to language learning anxiety. Clément, Gardner, and Smythe (1977) found that self-confidence related to anxiety in that learners who were more self-confident tended to be less anxious.

In my diary, self-confidence seemed to be an influence on my anxiety levels. This influence fluctuated between a negative and a positive one. When I experienced success, my confidence was bolstered; my anxiety was low:

'‘Today I really felt like speaking French. I kept wanting to say everything I knew how to say in French. I liked that feeling, it is one of confidence and of recognition that I am indeed learning this stuff.’ (1/16/91)

When my self-confidence was low, I was prone to anxious feelings:

'I don’t think that my accent is very good at all, but I want to try. I feel really silly. (11/27/90)

An early blow to my self-confidence occurred after I received a low grade on my first quiz score in 101:

'I got my homework and test back. I was devastated with a 3 out of 5 on my homework, I’m not sure why I lost the points. I got 87.5 on
my quiz. I had studied very hard and worked very hard. I'm not accustomed to spending so much time on things and getting mediocre grades! (10/1/90)

In general, I believe that my confidence levels remained relatively high because I did experience a good deal of success. However, I still experienced my fair share of anxiety. Again, as in connection with motivation, the anxiety I experienced may have caused me to work harder to succeed.

Perfectionism. Perfectionism refers to the desire to perform without errors. In language learning, errors are an inevitable part of the process; therefore, learners who are perfectionists may experience a great deal of anxiety in the language learning situation. An aspect of perfectionism that has been studied by language learning researchers is risk-taking. A moderate amount of risk-taking is thought to be beneficial to the language learning process (Beebe, 1983). Furthermore, individuals with low global self-esteem generally are low risk-takers. They experience high levels of anxiety and have difficulty speaking in class because they are unwilling to make mistakes. Making mistakes is seen as a threat to their idealized self-image. Both Price (1991) and Young (1989) report that students name the fear of making mistakes as a significant cause of classroom anxiety. In my diary I report having a fear of making mistakes. I also reported in previous sections a deep concern with being prepared for class, with being able to understand difficult material, and performing well on tests. These feelings are all part of perfectionism.

In the section above on teaching practices, I recounted several episodes that occurred in my French 101 class in which I became afraid to make mistakes due to teaching practices. This fear persisted, even through French 102, a class in which I believed that the teacher encouraged us to make mistakes and in which the classroom setting was non-threatening. At this time perfectionism had become a personal battle instead of a reaction to a threatening classroom environment:

I find myself wanting to answer in French and ask questions in French whenever possible, but I also feel unwilling to take a chance of being wrong. I think out everything very carefully when I think I should be developing my instincts about speaking the language more spontaneously. (1/25/91)
I was becoming increasingly aware of the need to take risks and to realize that it was natural to make mistakes. I gradually gained more confidence:

a) Today I participated more fully and I’m going to do even more. I felt pretty good about it and I’m going to continue trying and taking more risks. (1/28/91)

b) Today I found myself answering questions without thinking the whole sentence out first. I would get halfway through and then stumble a little for words then find the words and go on. It was ok. (2/6/91)

c) In class Monday, I was able to complete a spontaneous utterance. I only faltered a few times, but I got my point across. I felt really good about it. The only way I’m going to learn to speak is to speak. (2/26/91)

d) My oral production is so full of errors but at least I’m trying. I don’t worry too much about what I say in class, but I know that it’s often full of errors. (4/29/91)

Despite these advances, I still found myself wanting to be perfect while still realizing that I had to be willing to make mistakes in order to progress:

A few times in speaking exercises in class, I had a lot to say, but could not figure out how to say it and I was reluctant to try. For example, I was wanted to explain that although the canoes in the passage we read were called winter canoes, they were not only used in the winter. They were the same canoes that natives and early immigrants to Québec used for transportation. I probably have the grammatical ability and the vocabulary to say what I wanted to say but I felt as if it would have taken me a long time to get it out and I didn’t want to hold up the class and embarrass myself. I need to get over that problem. It’s the only way I’m going to be able to learn to use what I know. (4/18/91)

My struggle with perfectionism as shown by my fear of taking risks seemed to be an ongoing one. However, I notice that it became less of an issue in my diary as I became more and more familiar with the tasks of language learning.

In this section I have discussed each of the factors that influenced my feelings of anxiety. In these discussions, I have attempted to provide a very detailed picture of how each functioned in my language learning experience. In doing so, the remaining research questions were addressed as well in considerable detail. For this reason, I have chosen to use the remaining sections to summarize the findings with respect to each of the remaining
questions.

**Question 3: How do I deal with anxiety?**

The analysis of each of the factors that influence anxiety discussed above reveals that I dealt with anxiety in different ways depending on the perceived cause of the anxious feelings.

I attempted to reduce my anxious feeling in many cases. In situations in which learning styles, test anxiety, difficulty, and preparedness influenced my anxiety I developed learning strategies for coping with the feelings. These strategies had an anxiety-reducing effect. When my personal agenda did not match the course agenda, I resolved my anxious feelings by adjusting my personal agenda so that it more closely resembled the course agenda. When I found that I was creating anxiety in my fellow students, I tried to withdraw from the learning situation. However, I found that by doing so I compromised not only my own, but also the course agenda to an extent that was not acceptable to me. After a period of self-conflict, I resolved to continue to participate in class despite the fact that it may have been anxiety-provoking to others. In situations in which teaching practices were anxiety-provoking, I tried to understand more about the situation: the teacher, the students in the class, and the dynamics of our interaction.

I did not overtly deal with anxious feelings influenced by conspicuousness and perfectionism. These factors represent an ongoing struggle that is being overcome through increased proficiency and familiarity with both the language and the learning process.

There are some anxiety-provoking factors that I did not deal with at all: competition, classmates, new situations, and self-confidence.

**Question 4: Do these attempts to deal with anxiety help or hinder my progress?**

Most of my reactions to anxiety were beneficial to my learning process. The strategies I implemented to deal with anxiety helped me to learn the material more efficiently. My increased familiarity with the learning process and proficiency in the
language were definitely positive developments. My attempts to empathize with my teachers allowed me to work around my feelings of anxiety, thereby facilitating my progress.

Withdrawal from classroom participation in order to ease the anxiety of my classmates, on the other hand, was not an acceptable solution. Had I continued to do so, my learning process would have been stifled.

It is difficult to say whether my failure to address certain factors was helpful or harmful to my learning. However, as shown by the discussion on competition, classmates, self-confidence, and new situations the bases for these factors run very deep with me perhaps revealing personality traits, which are not easily altered by situational attempts to alleviate the stresses associated with them.

Adjusting my personal agenda to more closely resemble the course agenda can perhaps be seen as both a help and a hindrance to my learning process. In one sense this adjustment allowed me to ease my anxiety and to accomplished the objectives of the course. One can easily argue that such an outcome is beneficial. However, the same adjustment could be considered as a hindrance to the pursuit of my own objectives and reasons for studying French. It is possible that I found a short-term solution that ignores the long-term problem. Perhaps a better solution would be to find a learning environment in which I could pursue my own agenda. Time will tell.

**Question 5: Does the manifestation of anxiety change in the course of the study?**

The manifestation of anxiety did change in the course of the present study. There were changes attributable to the factors influencing anxiety, changes due to my own actions, and changes due to aspects of the learning environment.

As described in previous sections, anxiety levels were affected by measures taken to lower them and by experience in the classroom setting. Anxiety associated with certain factors, however, was not dealt with. It is difficult to say whether those particular aspects of anxiety changed, but it is doubtful. Perhaps it is useful to consider the distinction
between state and trait anxiety noted by Brown (1987). Researchers have suggested that trait anxiety is a permanent predisposition to be anxious, whereas state anxiety is more momentary, or situational. It is possible that those aspects of anxiety that I was able to deal with and to change are manifestations of state anxiety and those that I did not deal with are manifestations of trait anxiety.

**Question 6: If there are changes, can they be linked to other intrinsic or extrinsic factors?**

As demonstrated by the discussion of the factors that influenced my anxiety, the changes in the manifestation of anxiety were inextricably linked to intrinsic and extrinsic factors. As demonstrated in the diary entries presented in the analysis of Question 2, some aspects changed because I took action to change them, some changed with experience in the language learning setting; and some changed as the learning environment changed. The factors most significantly linked to the changes in my anxiety were teaching practices, personal agenda, learning strategies, and motivation. Motivation probably played a larger role in determining my reactions to anxious feeling than is revealed in the diary.
Chapter V
CONCLUSIONS

An Overview of the Study

Anxiety in foreign language learning is a complex variable. It is influenced by many factors both intrinsic and extrinsic to the language learner. How learners perceive and deal with anxiety has not been adequately described. The present study, therefore, has focussed on one language learner, me, and how I experienced, perceived, and dealt with anxiety in an attempt to find out more about what an individual goes through when beginning foreign language study.

In order to investigate my feelings of anxiety, I kept a language learning diary in which I recorded a detailed account of my learning experience. Through the diary I was able to provide an “emic” or insider’s view of what it is like to begin studying a language. I was able to record information that probably could not have been gathered any other way. I attempted to show how I experienced anxiety without trying to control for intervening variables. Instead, I strove to account for and to show the connections between them.

Analysis of the diary revealed the following information with respect to the initial research questions:
1. Anxiety influenced my language learning process.
2. Fifteen factors that most influenced my anxiety were reflected in the diary entries:
   - teaching practices
   - preparedness
   - new situations
   - test anxiety
   - competition
   - conspicuousness
   - difficulty
   - classmates
   - creating anxiety
personal agenda  motivation  learning strategies
learning styles  self-confidence  perfectionism

The most frequently included factors were teaching practices, personal agenda, classmates, preparedness, and difficulty.

3. I dealt with anxiety in different ways depending on the factors that influenced its manifestation.
   a) I used learning strategies;
   b) I adjusted my learning agenda;
   c) I withdrew temporarily from the learning situation; and
   d) I tried to understand the dynamics of anxiety-provoking situations.

Some aspects of anxiety changed because I gained more experience with the material, tasks, and learning process. Some aspects of anxiety were not dealt with at all.

4. Most of the ways in which I dealt with anxiety were beneficial to the learning process as outlined by the course objectives. However, it is difficult to say whether the ways in which I dealt with anxiety were beneficial to my personal learning agenda. My temporary withdrawal from the learning situation probably would have hindered my learning process had I continued to refrain from participating in class.

5. The manifestation of anxiety changed throughout the course of the study. It changed with respect to the influencing factors and the severity of the anxious feelings.

6. The changes in the manifestation of anxiety were inextricably linked to the factors that influenced it. Some factors were both anxiety-provoking and anxiety-reducing depending on the situation.

Closer examination of the factors that influenced my anxiety revealed information about the distinctions between trait and state anxiety and facilitating and debilitating anxiety.

My failure to deal with anxiety influenced by competition, classmates, new situations, and self-confidence seems to suggest that the anxiety that was either eased or
aggravated by these factors reflects my inherent tendencies to compete, to want to work
with others yet find it difficult to initiate and sustain relationships, to be apprehensive about
new situations, and to fluctuate between high and low self-confidence based on reactions to
successes and failures. These types of anxiety could be examples of trait anxiety. The
actions I took to alleviate my anxiety related to learning styles, test anxiety, difficulty,
preparedness, personal agenda, creating anxiety, and teaching practices reveal that I
perceived the problems associated with these factors as solvable ones. They seemed to be a
part of the learning environment that I could do something about. Perhaps the anxiety I
experienced in connection with those factors was state anxiety.

Motivation seemed to play an important role with respect to facilitating and
debilitating anxiety. Any of the anxious experiences I encountered could have caused me to
withdraw from the learning situation; indeed, learners have withdrawn from courses due to
similar circumstances. I did not, however. Instead I tried to find ways to alleviate my
anxiety, ways that facilitated my learning process according the course objectives. On the
other hand, it is important to recognize that in the process of succeeding according to the
course objectives, I had to adjust my own learning objectives. This adjustment was the
most often cited anxiety-provoking influence in my diary. I dealt with that anxiety by
abandoning my own objectives because I was very motivated to get good grades in the
classes and in order to be able to be comfortable in the classes as I worked to complete this
study and to begin to develop proficiency in French. Did these adjustments truly facilitate
my language learning? According to whom?

The major conclusion based on the results of this study is that anxiety is an
extremely complex variable. It relates to many other factors, factors that are also related to
one another. Whether anxiety facilitates or impedes the learning process is a highly
individualized problem. The interplay of variables in the process is difficult to describe and
even more difficult to study. As Scovel (1991) asserts,

...the deeper we delve into the phenomenon of language learning,
the more complex the identification of particular variables becomes
... We must become more cognizant of the intricate hierarchy of
learner variables that intervene: the intrinsic/extrinsic factors, the
affective/cognitive factors, and then the various measures of anxiety
and their relationship to these other factors. But the overwhelming intricacy of these intertwining systems should not deter us from the task of trying to discover natural patterns and continuities, for, at the very least, we will realize even more profoundly and with even deeper respect than before, the marvelous act that our students so subtly perform in front of us day by day, the act of inheriting someone else’s language and culture (p. 23).

Implications

The fact that I was able to deal with my anxiety by devising and implementing effective learning strategies suggests that perhaps other learners could benefit from strategy instruction. Recent emphasis in this area of research and pedagogy by O’Malley and Chamot (1990) and Oxford (1990) among others reveals that the emphasis in second language acquisition is shifting from the teacher to the learner. However, while strategy training may be able to help students learn to cope with anxiety that is related to some factors, there are other factors that can and should be manipulated by the teacher in order to create a classroom environment in which learning can take place and in which learning is not confused with performing. In such an environment learners feel free to make mistakes and to work together cooperatively. In an ideal learning environment, teachers could adjust their expectations of students with regard to the students’ own learning agendas. Unfortunately, this scenario is not often possible in the formal classroom setting—classrooms are overcrowded, departments set standards, and teachers must do the best they can to satisfy both their students and the administrators.

Limitations of the Study

Many of the limitations of this study have been discussed earlier. The most significant limitation is the fact that the researcher and the learner in the study are the same person. Two problems arise from this fact: 1) a sample size of one is too small to make generalizations to a population of learners and 2) researcher bias is inevitable when the researcher analyzes data gathered by and concerning herself. In response to the first
problem, it is important to recognize that the goal of qualitative research of this type is not to provide the basis for generalization. A more important consideration is to generate working hypotheses (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) about a given phenomenon in a given context. Attention to the phenomenon and the context in great detail necessitates the small sample size. As for the second problem, perhaps researcher bias in a study such as the present one could also be called “researcher insight”. For example, researchers as subjects in qualitative studies can recognize times when the data gathered does not truly reflect a given situation and adjust the data gathering and/or analysis phase of the study. Nevertheless, researchers as subjects may also fail to recognize aspects of the study because of too close personal involvement. For this reason, I have attempted to make my decision-making processes clear in the methods and results sections of the study. Readers should be able to follow what I have done and why I decided to do it as I did. In addition, I have included the diary in the appendix so that it may be examined along with the report itself.

Related to the problem of researcher as subject is the problem of the imperfection of memory. There are aspects of my language learning history that I have most likely not remembered accurately, if at all, making it difficult to establish a base line assessment of my tendencies to be anxious in language learning situations. Additionally, although diary entries were made as soon as possible after each class meeting, it is possible that my memory of class meetings was not entirely accurate and perhaps even selective. This limitation is one that cannot be avoided in this type of study, yet it must be recognized.

Another limitation is that I was unable to record entries in my diary every day after class as originally planned. My failure to do so is directly related to other demands on my time such as graduate course work and a job. Despite this problem, I was able to record 54 entries over the course of 9 months. The distribution of the entries is also a significant factor to consider. I made more entries during my 102 class than I did during the other two quarters combined because of other time commitments during the quarters in which I took 101 and 103. This skewed distribution probably affects the results of the study because the
circumstances of 101 and 103 are not adequately represented while those of 102 are over-
represented.

Despite these problems, I hope that this study can improve our understanding of the
complexity of anxiety and how it operates within an individual with respect to other
intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Furthermore, I hope that it has provided a basis for further
research on anxiety.

Recommendations for Further Research

We have just begun to look at variables like anxiety in naturally occurring contexts.
The interconnectedness of learner variables is mind-boggling, yet it is important to
understand if we are to adequately describe and take action from which our students will
benefit. More research is needed that accepts this interconnectedness and seeks to make
sense of it. Multiple case studies would be especially beneficial to this endeavor.
Examining findings across a number of cases could reveal patterns that might otherwise
appear to be idiosyncrasies in single case studies. Naturalistic research methodology must
also be developed to the point at which such inquiry is less cumbersome and more reliable.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods could help us to examine the
factors that determine whether learners are defeated or inspired by anxious feelings. Are
these factors within or outside of the learner’s control? Are they within or outside the
teacher’s control? How can these factors be manipulated by teachers and learners?
Answers to questions such as these may be able to improve the learning experience for
foreign and second language learners.
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Appendix

The Language Learning Diary
Appendix: The Language Learning Diary

French 101

19 septembre

I got to class about 10 minutes before the bell and got a seat in the far left row (facing front) in the first seat. Two people were already talking to the instructor about adding the class. The teacher seemed confused about the procedures. I got up and went to her desk after they sat down and told her that I also wanted to add the class. She is obviously young—mid twenties I’d guess and a native speaker of French. Most of the people in the class seemed like first quarter freshmen—except one woman who looked like she was about my age. (She was also trying to add the class.)

The room was quite crowded and several people sat on the floor (maybe 5 or 6).

Marie (the teacher) identified herself and wrote her office number on the board. I asked her which building it was in. “Cunz Hall” was her reply.

She began class and I was quite lost. Many people had already taken French in the class. Most of them answered questions and responded to dialogue quite well.

I did all right when called on, but I had trouble with pronunciation. I thought that if I could see the words written down that I could do better and if I knew pronunciation and spelling rules I could do even better. She asked us to do pair work asking and answering:

Q: Comment vous appelez-vous?
A: Je m'appelle Kate Lenzo. Et toi?
Q: Comment vas-tu?
A: Je vais très bien.

I couldn’t hear my partner. She had had French before, but had terrible pronunciation. I felt quite overwhelmed and unable to participate.

Marie came over to us and I asked how to say “What’s your name?”. She stopped the class and explained again then set us back to work. I still did not have it and wished she would write it on the board.

I kept trying to use Spanish pronunciation—rather than trying not to let it keep creeping in.

It was confusing when she went over the syllabus and assignments. However, the syllabus and handouts themselves were quite clear.
Appendix: The Language Learning Diary

I felt like I was probably at the bottom of the class, but I also felt that with study and practice I could quickly catch up and do well. I especially want to have a passable accent.

21 septembre

At the listening lab

I went to the lab in Cunz hall at about 8:15. Only one or two other people were there. I asked for the tape, left my id and went to the carrel in the front of the room to the far right side. I had no idea what the tape would cover or how. It began with the *Mise en Scène*, p. 13 of the textbook. Then it went to a workbook exercise on *Activités et préférences*. I was able to understand most of them. On one I couldn’t make out the activity--on the other one I could not make out qualifying comments.

I then went on mistakenly to exercises beyond my assignment because it was confusing. Finally after consulting text, tape, and workbook, I figured out what to do. I think the tape practice will be useful to me.

I got annoyed at 2 Japanese men who were talking very loudly in the lab. I was having trouble shutting them out.

Meeting with Marie--same day

I went to Marie’s office to find out if I could get in the class and to inform her that the answer keys were not available.

She said that I had to wait until Monday to find out about getting in, then I had to go to the French office in 248 Cunz to interview with the coordinator to find out if I could get in. She said that she was not authorized to sign the permission slips because she was only a TA.

She didn’t know anything about the answer keys, but one TA in the office took charge and found out that the copy service had printed the wrong materials and hopefully got things straightened out.
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Personal notes

I’m getting ready to study, I plan to write things down and memorize vocabulary, but if it will be difficult without being able to hear pronunciations. I’d love to have the entire textbook on tape.

I am disturbed that I do not know basic pronunciation and spelling rules. I can remember what vocabulary words look like but I don’t know what they sound like.

21 septembre

The class meets MWF at 8:00-9:18 am. Class started great with a vocab. quiz. I could tell that some students did not expect it. I thought that I got everything correct except perhaps for some accent marks. I need to come up with some device for remembering which goes where and the difference between accent aigu and accent grave. In fact, I wrongly pointed out that a student at the board should have used accent aigu when it should have been accent grave for “très bien”. I looked it up just now to be sure to get it right.

At any rate, the studying and listening paid off, but I still feel embarrassed about my accent.

I asked Marie to write "Comment t'appelle-tu?" on the board so that I would know how it looked. I definitely learn better when I see things written down. The way I studied last night was to write everything down. It’s very hard to spell and write fluidly in a language you don’t know.

Many students were called on to interact with the teacher and other students. The activities designed to inspire student interaction were interesting.

1. She had two students go up to the board. One was to write the other’s name as he spelled it with the French alphabet. When one said /ge/ instead of /zi/ for “j” he looked at Marie and said “That’s wrong”. She said “You said it, I didn’t”, first in French then in English. The student thought for a minute then got it right.

2. She collected common items from people in the class and called a woman and a man up to the board. She demonstrated, "Le cahier pour le garçon" and "Le cahier pour la fille". An inductive approach to the gender of definite articles. After the exercise she asked “What grammar point did we just demonstrate?” I wasn’t sure whether she meant articles or prepositional phrases--I should have known that articles would
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come well before prepositional phrases.

3. She passed out drawings on paper and divided the class into five groups. The person with the paper had to do a survey and ask if each of us liked or disliked the discipline portrayed on the paper by the picture. This was to be completed in 4 minutes. Another person from the group was to report the findings at the front of the class. Our group did well at asking and answering the questions in French, but when it came to telling the surveyor our names we fell back into English.

One girl in the class seems particularly good, her name is Susan. She’s had French before, but it’s been a long time. I was trying to look at her notes but I could only tell that she probably used a learning strategy similar to mine--writing things down.

NOTE: I think I may be able to learn faster if things are written on the board and pronunciation is clear.

24 septembre

Got 1st test back “100% Bravo! Continue!” was written in red at the top. I missed one accent aigu in “géologie”. No, it was “géographie”.

We did 2 paired activities, I worked with Sharon. We had to ask each other if we liked certain school subjects. We did ok.

The other activity was on definite articles–we had to fill in the articles on the dialogue from the Mise en Situation. I disagreed with Susan (the smart one) on one answer. I was right.

I feel that classtime helps my listening comprehension and that I get good practice speaking.

I was called on to speak once–My forms/words were fine but my pronunciation was terrible.

I could not follow once when Marie read a dialogue–we were supposed to answer questions in English based on the passage. I was lost.

The strategies I am using include the daily preparation outlined for the class. In addition I take reading notes on forms and vocabulary. I listen to the tape more than once–many time. I still feel pretty stupid in the class, I know that if I just keep studying I’ll do ok.
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30 septembre

I haven’t written in my journal since last Monday. Very busy. I feel a little better about French class, although I wish that Marie had more experience teaching French or at least some background in education. I know how she feels when we ask her why some things are as they are in French but she should look things up and give explanations later instead of giving half-baked answers or “I don’t know, it’s just that way”.

Many students in the class are confused by what goes on in class. There doesn’t seem to be much of a consistent plan—although there is a pattern. First thing we have review Q & A. Marie asks questions and we answer. She chooses people to answer. She avoids people whom she knows are working and concentrates on those who are having trouble.

People are also confused about what is expected of them as far as homework and tests.

I was rather perturbed that we had a vocabulary word on the test that wasn’t in the chapter—vacation—vacances. And also that she had never addressed the difference between chercher and rechercher.

I did not say anything in class, but I intend to Monday after vocab check.

My listening skills seem to be getting a little better. I want to get a tutor or a conversation partner to practice French. I will talk to Veronique, my longtime friend from France, and maybe try the Office for International Students.

1 octobre

French class is much less attractive to me. Class time seems pointless. We do things related to our preparation but not in an illustrative manner. It seems to be a hodge podge of activities. Also she gives instructions in French—this is the 2nd week of class! For crying out loud! I usually can decipher most of what she says but I doubt that anyone in the class fully understands what we are to do.

I was terribly embarrassed in a typical French classroom anxiety way. I volunteered to go to the board. Marie instructed me to write what she read. One of the words—“sportif”—I did not know—although I did get it right. She then make a big thing out of the necessity to use the feminine form—“sportive” in the sentence. I did not realize it at all. She was trying to use an inductive approach to teach adjective—
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subject gender agreement, which was to be prepared by the next class. I was very embarrassed. She just kept saying "Write what you hear!" but I was so confused I didn't know what I was hearing. I resented being used in that way. I do not have enough experience with French to know what exact sounds I am hearing! I am inclined to be totally against inductive approaches to teaching grammar. Instead of humiliating someone at the board, it would be better to introduce the concept, then have someone write it.

I got my homework and test back. I was devastated with a 3 out of 5 on my homework, I'm not sure why I lost the points. I got 87.5 on my quiz. I studied very hard and worked very hard. I'm not accustomed to spending so much time on things and getting mediocre grades! Tonight I will go over the both of them and try to find out what my problem is. Then I'll go see Marie. I know I can still do well in the class and that the first tests should let me know how to study and what I'm missing out on, but it's so frustrating!

I also get very angry at the way Marie builds anxiety in the classroom by saying things like--"You should move very quickly on this--you must go very fast". I wonder if this is the way she learned English. Somehow, I doubt it. Maybe this pressure is just the French way, but it is glaringly obvious that she is not an experienced teacher and that she doesn't consider affective concerns other than saying cursory sorts of things like--"I know it's hard, but just try" or "I know you've never had this, but..." and "I know you haven't learned this yet, but just try." I resent being asked to do things I haven't yet learned, especially in front of everyone else. I don't know how to approach her about this or whether I should. I could potentially get emotional, angry, and self-righteous because I have studied foreign language education and she doesn't seem to know what she's doing. She makes no effort to make the classroom a non-threatening place. Quite the contrary, in fact.

2 octobre

After I looked over my test I realized what I had done and most of my mistakes were careless errors. The word "vacances" was in the text--I had forgotten. It was in a section before I started taking extensive notes on the chapter. I looked at the grade distribution and realized that the quizzes and the workbook were so small in contribution to final grade that I'm not so upset. I still can't understand why I
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got 3 out of 5 on my workbook though. Well over 2/3 of my work is correct. I don’t know whether I should talk with her about it or not. I have a dilemma about how I want to talk to her about things or if I should at all.

There is a graduate student doing dissertation research in our class. I volunteered to be interviewed. The interview was interesting. She addressed my status as a grad student in FLE and got my reactions based on my experiences as a teacher.

I tried to reach Veronique about tutoring—no answer—left a message. Will try office for International Students and Scholars (ISS).

16 octobre

Marie is even more annoying. The Nazi drilling of classtime!! She doesn’t seem to realize how she makes people feel. She picks on students who don’t respond well. When they can’t answer she has someone else (usually someone whom she knows can answer) answer the question. Didn’t I just read somewhere that that was a particularly dehumanizing practice. I certainly know that it feels like one.

I’m doing well in the class as far as grades go but I am not learning to speak with any certainty or fluency. Marie praises me. I find myself torn between wanting to like her and wanting to hate her. She treats people who are having trouble like idiots and assumes that their problems are the result of not studying. Maybe they are, but I don’t think that it’s fair to assume so and to insinuate it in front of the whole class. Class time should be a time for questions and clarification—not inquisition.

I would like to get a conversation tutor but I’m too busy. I need to call the office of ISS to find a French speaker who wants to practice English.

22 octobre

I just got out of French class and I got sort of irate today. I had to write on the board the French word for “European” and we hadn’t had it. I didn’t know how to spell or say it so I just wrote “European” in English.
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Marie said, "Why did you write this in English?"

I said "Well, I don’t know how it is in French; it wasn’t in our book. So I assumed maybe it was the same as English and I guess it wasn’t".

She noticed that I was irritated about it and said "That’s ok, that’s ok."

I said "Well, I didn’t know it." I wish I had taped the incident so that I could figure out what it was about the way she spoke to me that made me angry.

I’ve been focussing a lot on what’s happening in the classroom and the feeling that I get in the classroom. There are many people who have dropped the class. It’s down at least half. I would not doubt that those who have dropped have done so because of Marie because she just doesn’t know what she’s doing and she’s . . . . well I’ve already described what she does.

I’m learning the language by doing my homework and daily preparation. I don’t learn by doing tasks in the classroom. I think that I actually learn when I study on my own, but I’m really sort of surprised that no one looks at this.

24 octobre

Last night I was studying, of course, and I was feeling very uptight about it. I couldn’t concentrate. I felt very overwhelmed by all of the vocabulary, by all of the rules I had to remember, the prepositions, and irregular verbs. I kept confusing forms of être, avoir, and aller. I think I have it now, I hope so. I put them all on flash cards and it seems to help to have them all in one place. I did have them scattered throughout my notes, but it seems to be a lot easier to put them all together on one card so I can compare and contrast and see what’s similar and different about them. Although they are irregular, they do have a pattern. Once you realize that, after seeing them all together, it makes it a lot easier to remember them.

I had a test today. Actually, I like these tests; they are meaningful. They are cloze type exercises, but we are given the English form of the word with which to fill in the blanks. We just have to translate it into French. It’s a meaningful context, we can relate to it, it’s not bad. The second part of each quiz (they all have the same format) we’re asked to create. Often I find myself wanting to use vocabulary and forms
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we haven’t yet had. That can get frustrating, but I guess that if we just do the best we can with what we know, that’s all that can be expected. I’m always interested to see how those are scored because they are going to be highly variable among the students. I know I got one thing wrong, I forgot that “hôtel” was masculine.

I still don’t like Marie very much. I was very surprised to hear her say that the class was going to be videotaped on Friday. I’m very curious to see how she is going to act. Is she going to act the same way she normally does in her accusative way? I don’t know. That’s very interesting to me. She did it today; it was really bad. One of the guys asked a question about the masculine definite articles “a l’” and “a un’. He asked why the second one has a ‘t’ at the end and how do we know when to use it. Marie had explained it previously, but she had gone over it quickly and in French. She told him that he should listen in class because she had just said it. She said “Were you listening?” I don’t know. It just seems to me that it shouldn’t be that way; she should just tell him. Up to a point, you should expect to repeat things in a classroom. This is a class, this is not a test every second of the day. I don’t know what her reasons are for being like this. Maybe this is how she was taught and this is how she imagines education to be. Maybe the American system is just very tolerant and maybe I’m spoiled. Still I feel like people should be able to ask questions in a classroom and they shouldn’t be intimidated or ridiculed when they do. They should get some sort of answer.

28 octobre

I just finished my homework. I’m having trouble figuring out which articles to use. Whether to use demonstratives, indefinite articles, or definite, or partitives. I think that I use the partitives after boire and prendre. After things like aimer and preferer I think I should use definite articles, but I’m having a hard time. I also have a really hard time with the listening comprehension tapes. They’re really going fast. I need more time to listen and to repeat things. I guess I just need practice. But it’s going really fast.
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30 octobre

I'm studying; I have a quiz tomorrow. I've decided to start using a new strategy for studying vocabulary. I'm going to start writing up vocabulary cards before I begin a chapter. Going through the pages and grouping words according to part of speech more clearly. My cards aren't very organized because I do them as I progress through the chapter. They are confusing. I'm confused about articles. No surprise to anyone. Same old stuff with partitives, definite, indefinite, and demonstratives.

13 novembre

I'm studying for tomorrow's oral exam. I'm having a hard time keeping focussed and concentrating on it. I just want to stop because this grade doesn't count for me. I don't get a grade. It doesn't matter. I'm just sick of studying this quarter.

It's interesting to think of how things have changed for me over the course of this quarter in French. In the beginning I was very eager to learn and I was very disappointed that Marie was the way she is--impatient, demanding, and not accepting any mistakes. I just feel that the classroom is a place to learn and not a place to be drilled and graded and reprimanded constantly. I've come to realize that the way she teaches is partly due to her culture and that it's very French to teach that way and that I should get used to it if I'm going on in French. I've talked to a few people--a French teacher in one of my classes for one--who have confirmed that. I'm interested in talking to Marie about this stuff because she seems interested in making herself a better teacher and finding out how people perceive her. I'm much more accepting of how she is now but I now realize that it is a cultural thing and I no longer take it personally, but I think that other students still do. They don't realize that that's the way it is in France. She's used to that.

I'm doing very well in the class but I'm frustrated because I wish I could speak. I wish I had the chance to speak. I need to find a tutor. I need to find the time to be tutored. What would I do with a tutor? I'm not sure. Would I just do exercises? Would I try free conversation? Free conversation would be very hard at this point because my vocabulary is so small, my grammar is limited. I don't have any past tense. I guess I will have the simple past tense before the end of the quarter. I have present tense, there's not much material for conversation there. I guess that's just the way it is in one's first quarter.
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I'm nervous about the oral exam tomorrow. I'm afraid that I'll freeze. I hope that I won't. I hope that I can choose by chance topics that I'm familiar with. I think that it's wise that they have us choose topics by chance, then pick from those we have drawn randomly.

I go back over my tests to find out what I make mistakes on. I try to pay more attention to those things. Sometimes I make a list of things to watch for—spelling, agreement, verb tenses, etc.

I could have a tutor check my homework. I know I make mistakes in it. I must, because I feel like I learn while doing my homework and maybe if I do not have someone check for mistakes, I will learn things incorrectly. That shows up when I do my workbook and make mistakes on tests. Although I do get in the 90's on every test now, so I shouldn't complain. I guess that's pretty good. I look around the class and see a lot of 70's. I feel like I have to be perfect though, I don't want to miss anything. I feel terrible when I do. I remember when I got my first quiz back and it was an 87; I about died. I panicked. I felt that it was unfair. I don't remember if I recorded that day, but I was so upset. I've come to realize that the grading was fair. They just want you to be perfect.

27 novembre

Tomorrow is the last midterm in class. I haven't made any entries in my journal. I should have. I especially should have mentioned my problems with the oral exam. I wish I had recorded it. I froze. I couldn't remember any French at all. It probably lasted about 2 minutes.

Overall, I feel like I've made some progress. My speaking leaves a lot to be desired. I'm going to have a conversation partner next quarter, a Taiwanese woman who is in my program is going to make some time to sit down with me to talk. She will be in my language planning course next quarter. That should be good. It should really help. She's in the 600 levels of French now.

I don't really get too nervous on written tests anymore. I'm doing very well. In order to get an A in the class, I need to get 93 or above on everything. The odds are that it's pretty likely, because I've scored over 90 on the majority of the tests I've had.

I wish we would have had more time to go back over things during the tests. That's one thing I really regret. I never have time to go back over my tests to check for little mistakes such as gender and
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number agreement, accents, and other things.

I think classroom time would be more productive if more people would participate and actually speak French. I think that's a big problem. People just don't want to speak French. They revert to English then I revert to English. That's what happens.

I don't think that my accent is very good at all, but I want to try. I feel really silly. I try to use a good accent.

I'd like to go to France at some point to study for a quarter. Or for a year. Well, 10 weeks might be really good if I can do it. I'd like to try.

28 novembre

Took the last midterm today. It was pretty easy, but I did have some trouble with the last part of the listening comprehension--numbers. I don't know why they were difficult. I even had time to look over my test. Maybe I moved through it more quickly. I felt more comfortable about the test. I don't remember whether or not I changed anything when I went back over it though.

French 102

6 janvier

Winter quarter starts tomorrow. I start French 102. I'm pretty nervous. I think I should review because I don't remember much. I didn't look at it at all over the break. It's about 4 weeks of no French. I did some practicing in my head though. Made some sentences in my mind, went over verb forms. I'm unclear about past tense. I need to brush up on it. I'm nervous about having to talk in class the first day, but maybe it will come right back to me. Hopefully I will have a class this quarter in which more people will participate and be willing to speak French.

7 janvier (1)

I'm reviewing my French before class. I need to refresh my memory of verb forms, especially past tense and irregular forms. My reading comprehension is pretty good except for lapses in vocabulary. I have
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forgotten some qualifying words, but I can usually infer them from context. I really want to work on pronunciation and fluency this quarter.

I went over words I couldn’t remember from the *Mise en Scène* for the first 102 chapter. I got most of them right. I quizzed myself on verb conjugations.

*En classe*

Anne warned us that she would slip in some slang and cuss words. And commented on her knowledge of cuss words in some languages but her lack of knowledge in other languages. She informed us that we already knew how to say “large breasts” — “les grands tittons” --- the name of an American mountain range.

She explained the difference between “le jour” and “la journée”. The latter is different in that it indicates the passage of time. The former just means the *day* as a noun, a thing. I asked her if that was the same as the difference between “can” and “can’t”. She said it was and pointed out a few others.

Some of the other students who wrote on the board and volunteered answers had obviously gotten something out of 101. We all just have to get to know each other so that we can be comfortable together. I’m looking forward to class this quarter.

Oh some things I forgot. She called my name and said “You’re a grad student?” and asked what I was doing in there. I said writing my thesis I’m in foreign language ed. and she said “Oh, you’re one of those”. Now that I think of it that sounds like a snide comment, but it didn’t sound like it at the time, and my gut feeling says that there was no scorn intended.

She also was a little incredulous at my age. How flattering, she’s younger than I am. I think maybe 26 or 27. She established rapport with me.

7 janvier (2)

French class was good. I sat in the window of CC second floor before class next to an interesting looking woman dressed in a black mini skirt and a dull gold colored sweater. She turned out to be my French teacher. She was immediately personable in front of the class. She started writing her name and office number on the board and everyone got quiet. She turned around and said “You don’t have to stop
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talking, I'm just writing on the board." Some girls to the left of me started asking her about her wedding. I guess they had her in 101. I immediately liked her, and noted that she tended to be maybe a little too open, just as I did with the students whom I have worked with. I identified with her.

She gave us a warning that she occasionally used what some may call dirty words but that she would try to curb the tendency. She said that as a linguist she had to agree with George Carlin that there are no Bad Words, just Bad Intentions. And apologized in advance just in case she offended someone. She mentioned that she had been brought up in a house like that so what could she do.

There are quite a few bizarre things she said that made me think twice, pretty tangential, a kind of wit that I can, that word again, identify with. Obviously she is very excited about being married. No. Can you believe it. Same as me. Is this my French teaching twin up there? She seems pretty self-assured. Another interesting thing is that she uses slang and silly accents spontaneously. She doesn't treat us as students or at least not as subordinates. Rather like we are a bunch of friends getting together. She knows French. We don't. We're there to learn it. She's there to teach it.

Although I'm going on and on about how absolutely hip this woman, Anne Findlay, is; she was all-business as she went over the syllabus and made it clear that we were expected to work very hard in her class. She made it clear that for those students who had not taken 101 at OSU may find 102 a bit different from what they have done in French classes before, about the tapes and the quizzes and checking the workbook. She indicated that these students should ask someone else who has taken 101 here to fill them in. I was a bit bored by all of this, but I realize that is important for her to make clear what the course expectations are, since it is a demanding undertaking.

The first exercise was Get To Know Your Neighbor. She gave us handouts and we were supposed to ask each other some basic name, age, address, etc. questions. She warned us that we would not be able to talk to the same person all quarter. We should move around. I also remember her saying that we should feel free to talk, make noise, and be obnoxious, whatever. As long as we use the language. A productive noisy classroom type of teacher.

I worked with a girl next to me named Melanie. I interviewed her first. I helped her with some vocabulary and grammar. There are some things I didn't know how to say. Like, "How do you spell it?"
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(his name). We got through me and she just started to interview me when Anne called time and asked for volunteers to present whom we had just met. Enrico, who was in my 101 class, volunteered first. He sat behind me and we had talked briefly before class.

I volunteered second and gave my presentation. I made some mistakes with past tense and called Melanie "il" instead of "elle" in a sentence. She handled my gender mistake by saying "Who did you say?" and I realized my mistake and said "elle". She didn't address the past tense problems. I realized after I had finished that I hadn't used it properly but said nothing. Not very many people were eager to volunteer. First day, oh well. I do wish more people would let their hair down and take some risks and be fools. I feel like that's the only way I'm going to learn. In an environment where it's ok to make mistakes and try new things and everyone's doing it at the same time. Maybe I can help to promote that sort of atmosphere in the class.

The next thing we did was irregular verb conjugation at the board. I volunteered to do "être". I got it all quite easily, but could not quite remember the "vous" form. I wrote all of the other forms and thought that if I could go through and read them that the form would come to me. It worked. I remembered the sound of "vous êtes". Spelling is tricky but I do recognize some patterns in the irregularities. How's that for contradiction? Anne stressed the importance of reviewing these verb forms because they were très important and we would be using them right away.

She tried to speak a lot in French but I could tell that she didn't want to freak everyone out on the first day of class. She repeated things in English and checked with us to see if we understood.

Next she had us open our books and told us to read over the Mise en Scène for next meeting. She pointed out that the terms in Les mots et la vie would be the ones tested in the vocab check. She went over some of the weather terms and expressions with "ôohr" and warned us of some things not to say. Like, "Je suis chaud" and "J'ai chaud". The former meaning "I'm hot!" with a sexual connotation and the latter being the correct way to say it. She told us about an experience she had in France with a host family. At the dinner table, she commented that she was full and said, "Je suis plien" (or something like that, I'll look later) which is slang for "I'm pregnant". She should have said, "J'ai plien".
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8 janvier

I saw Anne today in the Rathskellar.

I said, "Hi, Anne."

She looked at me, then recognized me and said, "Oh, hi" and smiled.

I said, "I'm the old woman in your 102 class."

She indicated that she recognized me. The guy she was with is also a French TA. She said to him, "That's the grad student in Ed. Studies. I'm intimidated by her."

I said, "Don't be" and meant it. My study focuses on my reactions and progress not on her teaching. Although my reactions to teaching are focused on in many of my journal entries, I'm not trying to judge teaching, merely trying to see how I react to it--learner reactions to classroom environment.

9 janvier

People are still trying to get in the class. There are apparently 5 spaces left and 5 people who want in so it will probably work out OK. Anne mentioned today that she wants to stress speaking in the class because when (not if) we go to France we won't be handing the waiter a piece of paper with our order on it; we will have to be able to speak. I was glad to hear this. She seems to take more initiative in the department to design the class in ways she sees fit. She also indicated that she gives lots of partial credit. That was great to hear as well, because last quarter I felt that Marie did not give enough partial credit. I agree that when you show you know something about what's going on you should get some credit.

The vocab check was a different format from what we had last quarter. Anne had made up an overhead with a sort of cloze passage, except that phrases went in the blanks. I know I missed at least one. A stupid mistake. I put:

Le temps est de... instead of "Le température est de..." Oh well. I'm pretty sure everything else was OK, although during class it seems like I may have made one other mistake but I can't remember what it might have been now.

We did some question and answer with the weather terms and the expressions with avoir. I know nearly all of the answers. Anne told me to stop answering and a guy behind me said "Are you sure you
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should be in this class?” in a rather hostile tone almost under his breath. I guess I made him feel threatened and perhaps I was creating anxiety. It’s not because I’m any better than anyone in the class it’s just that I put in hours of study time and it works.

Next we read our weather bulletins. Enrico volunteered first. I volunteered next to read my avant garde Twin Peaks weather report. I think Anne got a kick out of it. She watches it. She asked who else in the class watches it and I think only 1 other person raised their hand. She was shocked and said how good the show was. As I read my bulletin evidently I got very nervous my heart was racing and my face got very hot. I felt confident that my grammar was pretty much correct although some of my constructions may have been unorthodox. Maybe it was just the act of reading something I had written in French in front of the class.

Next we got into groups of three. Anne moved people around to avoid letting the same people work together. I worked with Doug (who is blind) and Terry. I was the scribe, Doug was the speaker, and Terry was the interrogator. His pronunciation was atrocious and caused Doug some problems. He can’t see the spellings so he relies on the spoken words and is more accustomed to a somewhat accurate accent from his tutor (I would imagine). We got three out of the assigned four questions done and I made up the fourth since I was the scribe. I had to read the answers out loud. I don’t remember being particularly nervous. I was sitting on the floor.

Our assignment for Friday is to write 3 questions to ask other people in the class. Anne went over question formation by inversion and the new verb conjugations for venir and partir and verbs like them.

I forgot to mention that at the beginning of class we reviewed the passé composé. I was a little rusty on this stuff.

I don’t know what to do about volunteering in class maybe I should keep my mouth shut more and give the other students a chance and I don’t want them to feel intimidated by me. After all the grade doesn’t count for me. I think I should talk to Anne about that and about the kind of research I am doing in her class. She indicated that she was intimidated by me and I don’t want that, besides she has no reason to feel that way. I’m thinking about calling her tonight.
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I wish they assigned us to larger classrooms to facilitate moving around and communication. The room seems over-crowded and stuffy. It would be much more conducive to moving around if the room were larger.

11 janvier

I decided that I was not going to volunteer answers so much in class today because I felt like I was intimidating other students. So I didn't and I hated it. It's not like me to keep quiet when I know answers. I'm going to have to find a happy medium.

I'm pretty confused about inversion questions and the passé composé confuses the issue even more. Even though I did all of the preparation for class today, I still was a little lost. I need to go back over that stuff and try to get a handle on it. I don't think that the book gave a good explanation nor good examples nor enough exercises.

I find myself taking more notes in this French class. Anne explains more than Marie did about grammar points. She also teaches us slang and common expressions which I find fascinating and hope that someday I have the opportunity to speak. I'm not learning to speak. I know I need a tutor for speaking but I can't justify the expense nor the time.

I waited to talk with Anne after class. She complimented my pronunciation. It made me feel good. I was surprised and encouraged. She suggested that I rent some French films for listening practice and to get more exposure to the verbal language. She was surprised to hear that I didn't have a VCR. She said that it would be ok for me to ask for volunteers from our class for my study. She was interested in the subject of anxiety. We could have talked for hours and started to talk about our personal lives. She could be a good friend. She is interested in promoting communicative skills and is trying to urge us to communicate in class. She recognizes and encourages creativity and risk-taking in the class.

I worked with someone new today in a question and answer session. She had a hard time understanding and speaking and kept trying to look at the book for clarification. I felt way ahead of her.

We got our vocab checks back. I got a 97.5. Anne only marked wrong the “neige” / “neiger” error. I should ask her why she didn't mark the “Température” mistake. She said that most of the class did
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poorly and that she would probably drop that grade and indicated that she hoped that the scores would be better next time.

Enrico is volunteering a lot and he seems to be putting more effort into the class this quarter. Maybe he just likes Anne better than he did Marie. He’s an interesting guy. I think Portuguese is his native language. Not very many other people volunteer.

I’m glad I talked to Anne, but I forgot to talk to her about my class participation. I will have to do that later. I want to participate, but I don’t want to intimidate other class members. There has to be a middle ground.

14 janvier

Today in class I still did not volunteer so much because I just don’t want to intimidate the other students in the class. This is cramping my style. I want to talk more and get more feedback, but I don’t want to be a know-it-all either.

During one of the exercises, I went up to Anne and asked if I could make an announcement about a study group I would like to start. She said ok and good luck. She had tried to start something like it last quarter and no one was interested. I think she was probably right in assuming that no one would be interested. I’m getting discouraged with the people in my class. They’re duds. No one seems interested in speaking French at all. I think they’re all in there for their foreign language requirement. Maybe except for Enrico who already speaks a few languages.

I don’t feel as confident speaking this quarter as I did last quarter. I think it may have something to do with the fact that no one else talks. I just feel too conspicuous. Last quarter, more people participated in class and it was easier to be willing to make mistakes. Another reason I feel like I’m not doing so well is because there is so much to study and just to keep up I have to study for about 3-5 hours for every hour in class and 3/4 of that time is spent reading and writing the language with the rest spent on listening. No speaking! I want to talk. Reading and writing are both important if I want to be able to teach eventually, but I want to communicate. I feel so stupid when I tell people I’m taking French and they start speaking French to me and I don’t understand. I should take my Taiwanese friend up on her offer to help me, but I
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don't have the money for a tutor and don't want to take advantage of her good will. I will resolve this.

16 janvier

Today was our premier petit examen. I felt pretty confident about it. The fill-ins were easy, but the inversion questions were a little more difficult. I had some trouble and began to freak out a little because English questions do not transfer literally and I was having trouble remembering the French equivalents. I had just gotten out of aeroèics, the shower, and sauna. I think I had trouble thinking. My mind just seemed empty. That was frustrating. I took a lot of time to go back over my test. I didn't change anything though.

I decided that I would participate as much as I wanted in class today, but I still felt myself holding back. Anne called on me out of the blue a few times and I answered well. Today I really felt like speaking French. I kept wanting to say everything I knew how to say in French. I liked that feeling, it is one of confidence and of recognition that I am indeed learning this stuff. I often practice things in my head and mutter under my breath as I am walking. People will probably think I am crazy and talking to myself.

I asked questions in class today in French. That was great! I think maybe I even asked them appropriately. I really want to practice more.

C'est tout pour aujourd'hui!

18 janvier

Someone was there to observe Anne today, she asked them if they could do it some other time, because it was a day from hell... she went on to tell us that she was very upset because her husband could be called at any time to go to war and that he would be called for sure in March. She apologized to us for not having our quizzes graded and explained that things have been difficult for her. She asked if anyone in the class had anyone close to them in the Middle East and indicated that she would be very understanding toward them if they were having problems getting their school work done. I'm not sure how I felt about this and I'm sorry to say that I immediately thought about people who would use the war as an excuse for not doing work and the complications that would make in grading and keeping track of everyone's work. Now that I think about it, I believe that part of my problem and numbness is a result of this war. It may be part of the
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reason why I can’t seem to get anything done.

I find that if I let my mind wander at all in class I miss what is being said totally.

Today no one wanted to volunteer to read. Finally, Anne looked at me and I said, “Sure, I’ll read.”

I had a hard time getting started; my tongue and mouth wouldn’t work so I started over. I did not feel particularly nervous, but I was worried about my intonation and realized that if I just read the words on the
text. I didn’t pay attention to what was being said that I could not pronounce words.

We did a partner exercise in which one student played a boss and the other an employee. The boss
was propositioning the employee to go on a “business” trip with him or her and the employee didn’t want
to go. I worked with the guy behind me. It was so great to work with someone who knew what was going
on and had a pretty good grasp of vocabulary and grammar and was creative to boot! We came up with a
pretty interesting dialogue and volunteered to read first in front of the class. I wish I would have asked him
his name; he seems like a good person to work with.

Not many people participate in our class and I’m still holding back. I would like to tell Anne that
any time she wants to call on someone when no one’s answering, she can call on me; but I’m refraining
from volunteering, because I don’t want to intimidate the class. I should probably call her and see how
things are going with her husband and talk about that mess as well as my behavior in class.

Overall, I feel French getting easier to speak and I translate sentences into French all the time.
The pronunciation is also getting easier. I think I’m getting more fluent, well, maybe a little.

I am behind in my preparation work, but have no problems following along in class. I don’t
know why I’m behind; I just haven’t been able to concentrate and keep going for long periods of time. La
guerre, etc. . . . Je ne sais pas.

23 janvier

This going to class right after aerobics may be part of my problem. I can’t seem to think fast
enough to answer questions or make comments in French spontaneously. But maybe that is an unrealistic
expectation. Last quarter it was the I-just-got-up-so-I-can’t-think excuse, this quarter it’s aerobics. Just face
it, I can’t do it. I just have to tell myself that I need more time and practice.
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Today Anne gave her lecture on using learning and test taking strategies. It was great. Although I already do many of the things she mentioned, I am sure that it really helped the other students in the class. If they even care... another thing I found interesting is that she addressed the issue in terms of grades. She obviously realizes that the majority of the students in the class are there for their language requirement and don’t care too much about learning French. She gave very concrete tips on how to improve your grades. I hope I can remember everything.

1. make flashcards for everything--every verb, every tense, nouns with their articles, frequently used phrases, etc.

2. write out all of the exercises in the text book.

3. on tests if asked to write sentences go for the easiest, simplest ones. Don’t try to impress her on tests, do it in class. Get participation points, don’t risk it on the tests, especially if grades matter to you.

The reason she went into all of this is because she felt that our quiz scores were a little too low--by the way, I got 5/5 on my wkbk, 100 on my last vocab check, 99 on my quiz. I feel like I’m getting a good start gradewise but the grade doesn’t count. I want to learn to speak.

I’m still struggling with the participation thing. I want to do more, but I want to give others a chance. I gave my husband the lecture about not letting other students in a class hamper your learning style, and here I am doing the same thing. Maybe I should try volunteering more and setting an example for other students...somehow I don’t think that works.

Many of the students don’t even try to pronounce. They just read as if it were in the English sound system, just funky spellings. It would be interesting to find out why they don’t attempt the French sounds. I wonder if Anne is addressing this in her study. Here I go again thinking of ways to make my life difficult. It would be an interesting study.

Today I had a lot of trouble understanding Anne. Maybe I wasn’t paying attention or maybe I was just distracted by all the extra talking that was going on in the class. Anne handled it pretty well but I’m not sure she really had control of the class. She seemed to get a little irate after it went on for awhile.

Anyway, I was having trouble understanding basic sentences and forming basic sentences. I felt as if something in my mind was stopping up the flow, like there was a block or something. There probably is.
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Some days are just better than others.

I swear that I am going to try to participate more in class. I am going to talk and practice. I need to start looking on class time as practice time. Use French as much as possible. If I know how to say it in French, I am going to do so.

I really think that the idea of outside the class conversation groups would be a good thing. I should try to get other students from other sections who really want to learn French to get involved.

25 janvier

Today in class I volunteered more but I still held back a bit. I do not want to be the class brownie any more than I already am. I should however make it a point to answer any speaking questions like, “Qu’est-ce que vous avez fait le week-end dernier?” or “Qu'est-ce que tu vas faire pendant le week-end?” I didn’t answer these and these are the sorts of questions that I should be answering and asking freely.

I read my homework job application letter aloud today. I felt like my pronunciation was terrible. I think I try to go too fast when I should just go slowly and concentrate on being accurate.

I find myself wanting to answer in French and ask questions in French whenever possible, but I also feel unwilling to take a chance of being wrong. I think out everything very carefully when I think I should be developing my instincts about speaking the language more spontaneously. I wonder if practicing that sort of thing would help. Probably. It’s pretty much a given. I just need to get over the fear of making mistakes.

The quiz today was OK. I was very careful to check for past tenses. The writing part asked us to write questions again. I’m just not really clear on questions. Just like many of my Japanese ESL students, questions are my hardest thing. I felt myself get a little nervous as I tried to decide whether to put two of the questions into inversion form. I finally did and I’m still not sure if it was right. Overall, I’m sure I’ll do fine but I’m not as confident as I was on the last quiz on which I got 99/100. We’ll see.
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26 janvier

I made a list of things to watch for on my next midterm. Here's what it looked like:

Things to remember:
--Be sure tenses are correct.
--When using direct object pronouns in passé composé, be sure to reflect number and gender in the verbs with avoir.
--Be sure all adjectives agree in person and in number.
--Verbs of motion use être in the passé composé.

28 janvier

Today we had our first midterm, it wasn’t bad. There was one part of the dictation that I didn’t understand, but I just circled it and went back later to try to make sense of it. It sounded like “vitesse” or “vos tour” but neither seemed right so I wrote “vas-tu” since it was a question in inversion. It made sense in the sentence and it sounded right. Hope it was right! There was a tough reading comprehension section that stretched me, but I’m finding that reading is very easy for me. At this point I can catch the main idea even if I don’t know all of the vocabulary. I don’t let what I don’t know bog me down. I just go with what I know. There was the word “donc” in one of the sentences of the writing exercise, I hope it wasn’t critical. One of the cultural questions was misleading or maybe I just forgot how to express the fem.pl. of “jeune”. Oh well. I probably got a score in the upper 90’s. No problem.

Today I participated more fully and I’m going to do even more. I felt pretty good about it and I’m going to continue trying and taking more risks. I have decided that I don’t care if I am in a class of duds and they are intimidated. I ran into Anne (who is on crutches right now) after my LP class. She was on her way from her class with one of her colleagues. She introduced me to him as her “only real student” in her class. I asked her if she thought our class was a bunch of duds and she agreed. She said that the other TA’s had had these students before and that they were basically rejects. She said that the grades in our class are below mediocre. She said that she is not very motivated to teach this quarter. I felt like an insider. I am after all ahead of her as far as program progress goes.
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Rose, one of the girls in class, approached me about the study group. I told her that I would be happy to work with her. She says that she studies a lot, but still isn't doing very well. She wants to get at least a B in the course so that she can keep her GPA up so that she can get into grad school. We couldn't set up a time to meet, but we'll decide on Wednesday.

30 janvier

Today Anne was observed. She took great pains to conduct the entire class in French and even asked the observer for help on questions about vocabulary and usage. I asked some questions about things which one guy in the class said “Don’t worry about it.” I think he thinks that I should just shut up but I won’t, Nyah! Anne also told me not to worry about it. I participated almost every chance I got, but then again, everyone in the class was participating probably because of the observer. The class was loud and a little obnoxious. It was the most relaxed and enthusiastic class so far this year.

I got my quiz, test, and workbook back today. I got a 98 on my quiz, a 99.25 on my midterm, and a 5/5 on my workbook. We took a vocab check today. I’m sure I got them all right. I put a lot of time into that course and it shows in my grades. I just wish I were learning to talk more.

I’m going to start working with Rose this Saturday. She is very concerned about her grade in the course. She wants to get at least a B in the class. Now she is probably borderline B/C. I hope I can get her to talk. She says that she already does all of the exercises in the book, but wants to have someone to discuss them with. I’m going to work with her on analyzing her mistakes and other metacognitive strategies.

Sometimes I feel like I am putting too much time into learning French at the expense of my other classes. That’s not good. I want to continue my studies, yet I don’t want to hamper my other work. It’s difficult to reconcile the two of them. I’m not sure whether or not I’m going to take any French next quarter or summer quarter. Completing my thesis is very important at this time. Yet I don’t want to lose my momentum. Oh well. I’ll think it over some more. C’est tout!
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1 février

Today I worked with someone new, Don. He is very good at the written language. He seems shy, but I’d like to work with him more. I’m still getting together with Rose on Saturday. I hope it works out. I want to spend some time talking in French, not just answering her grammar questions.

I got my vocab check back, 100%. My grades this quarter are even better than last. I’m not making as many stupid errors and Anne gives more partial credit.

Our class was a lot more lively and creative today. People are participating more and the topics are more interesting. I’m not sure why, but it seems as if since the day Anne was observed the class has been more responsive and lively.

I can’t understand everything Anne says in French but I can usually get the gist of it—if I’m totally listening and concentrating. If my mind wanders—for get it. It’s just a buzz. I get frustrated when I can’t understand. I strain to concentrate and wish that I had more practice.

6 février

I just realized that I forgot to do my journal entry Monday. Oh well. Monday we had a quiz and I didn’t do as well as usual. I got a 94.5 my lowest grade yet of the quarter. Some of my mistakes were due to overload, I’m sure. It’s so hard to remember everything. Some of my mistakes were due to my stretching beyond my limits and trying things I’m not sure of. I’d rather do that than say “The city is nice”. The grade doesn’t count for me so I should just get over it.

I’ve been thinking about whether or not to take French next quarter. I don’t want to lose the progress I have made, but it’s such a time commitment and other things require my attention. I may just take 3 credits independent study and audit so that I don’t get so hung up on grades. I want to learn the language. Speaking is the most important to me but so is reading and writing. I need to quit whining about how little practice I get speaking and make myself find a conversation partner. Anne would probably do it and I know that my Taiwanese friend would do it. So call!!

Today Anne told us that her husband got called up to go back to the Marines. He has to leave the 18th of this month. She won’t be in class this Friday or Monday because she’s going with him to visit his
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parents before he leaves. He has to drop all of his classes. I don’t know what I would do nor how I would react if I were in her place. It must be very hard to continue with school, teaching, and a normal life.

At the beginning of class Anne started going off in French and I don’t think anyone knew what she was saying. She rephrased it and I think I knew so I answered. Today I found myself answering questions without thinking the whole sentence out first. I would get halfway through and then stumble a little for words then find the words and go on. It was ok. Sometimes though, I just don’t understand what she says.

I worked with Chris today. We were to write a dialog of two friends who have met at the doctors office and are comparing illnesses. I did most of the work. I found that she was saying things in English and I was translating them into the French. It’s just that it didn’t seem like she wanted to put any effort in at all. I was slow to volunteer our group to read what we had written out loud. I feel like such a brownie. I always volunteer to read and answer.

I was thinking in the hallway before class that I feel like such an outcast in that class because everyone is so young. I just don’t fit in to the conversations. They don’t include me and I don’t try to join. I wonder what it would be like to be in a class with people my own age... maybe not even my own age, but just with people who were interested in learning French. Maybe independent study will be the way to go. I’m interested to see how that learning environment is different. I know that I will have some group sessions and it would be really nice if the people in it were interested in the language.

It’s pretty overwhelming to try to remember every little thing, what goes where, when, and why. I try not to worry about some little details like when to use “de” before an infinitive, hoping that they will come. I just try to trust my instincts. Sometimes that works and sometimes it doesn’t. Even though I supposedly learned Spanish all those years ago, this feels like my first attempt at learning a foreign language. I can’t remember any strategies I used, if I was nervous in class, or if I did well on tests. I’m going to look up My tests and look through my old school stuff and see if I can get any information.

Spanish 101A-
Spanish 162B
Spanish 163A
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11 février

Well, I forgot to do my journal again last Friday. I went to rehearsal right after class and then it slipped my mind. We had a substitute teacher both Friday and today, Lisa. She had also substituted for Marie last quarter. She seems to put a lot of time into preparation. She plans exercises which are very relevant to the kinds of tests we have to take. She also prepares worksheets for quizzes and probably midterms. She gave us a worksheet today which she said that her class had to take as a quiz to be graded. It was very helpful in that it pointed out some picky things about grammar. I can’t remember...oh yes...it was about the agreement of reflexive verbs in the past tense. If a reflexive verb has a direct object other than the subject, the verb stem does not agree with the subject.

I kept quiet a little today to let some other people have chances to answer questions. I knew just about all of the answers and I understood Lisa quite well. As I was doing homework in this chapter, I noticed things getting a little easier and not taking up so much time. I worry about all the time I spend on French, I know that I should be working on other things. Oh well. I think that I have decided to take 2 or 3 credits of independent study French next quarter anyway.

When class was over Lisa asked me if I had had French before. I was flattered and said that it was just that I studied a lot. She said that it showed. We walked out together and talked about foreign language ed. Her undergrad is in FLE and she’s getting her master’s in French. She seems like an interesting person.

12 février

Last night I dreamed that I was in France or some other French speaking country speaking French with some people in a cafeteria. I was trying to order food. I remember using the tu form with the person who worked there and realizing that I shouldn’t. I also remember using too many avoir’s in a sentence. Generally, however, I was understood and could understand her. My husband was with me and we were talking to some men in the cafeteria. I think we were speaking French.

When I think about that dream now I wonder if I could really speak and understand French in a French-speaking country. My attempts at speaking French with my Taiwanese friend were interesting. I found that I could communicate, but that it was a slow and limited process. My Taiwanese friend speaks
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English and French. She says that she believes that she speaks better French than she does English.

14 février

Forgot to do journal entry yesterday after class. Quiz was the easiest we have had. For the first time I was finished with a quiz and had looked over it twice before time was up. I found some spelling errors when I went back the first time. The second time around I didn’t make any changes. It seems like things are getting easier. I probably have spoken too soon however.

I decided to definitely take some independent study French next quarter. I just have to decide whether to take 2 or 3 credits. I need to make plans to try to go to France next summer. If I can’t go to France, maybe I can go to Québec.

Class was boring. I didn’t feel like participating. I couldn’t think of anything to say. When I did say something I used a figurative term that was in our book, but Anne didn’t understand me until I told her what I meant. I used the phrase “tenir le coup” meaning “to hold up under stress”. She said that these days people just use the word “stress”. I hate it when I try to be creative and I’m not understood. It seems like that happens a lot. It probably keeps me from being creative more.

We have a midterm tomorrow and I’m probably not going to study too much for it. I’m going to spend time with my husband tonight for his birthday—Valentines Day celebration. I feel so distracted right now since I just found out that I got accepted into the PhD program. I can’t seem to work on anything which really requires thinking. Studying French though is so step by step that it’s easy to keep up on. It’s almost as if it just sinks in even though I just go through the motions of my homework. On the other hand the papers I have to write require so much thought and effort, not to mention that I feel like papers are a window into my mind, and I don’t feel particularly smart right now. I guess I just need to get into it and do it. Don’t let myself think about it. I just have no self discipline and I’m finding it hard to set my own agenda.
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19 février

I've been very neglectful of my journal probably because I've been neglecting my French studies as well. Not just my French studies, but studies in general. Winter quarter is not the time for me to do serious work. Now I know.

I didn't study much at all for my last midterm and got a 94.5. It seems like I've put a lot of effort into the beginning phase and now I can coast. I realize that's an illusion and I'd better get serious about it again or I'll miss learning some important things now.

I feel pretty good in class. I don't always answer correctly, but mostly I try to answer anyway. I'm still complaining about the need to practice speaking, but what am I doing about it, nothing, nada, rien!! I should at least get my Taiwanese friend to help me before my oral exam. Maybe this weekend. (Ha).

I have to carry this through and really learn this language. I need to get the ball rolling for a trip to France next summer. Maybe then I'll get motivated and stay that way.

Sam, who sits behind me, asked me to be his partner in an exercise. He said he didn't understand what was going on and thought that I could help him. Flattering. He's a pretty good student. Had French in high school, doesn't study too much says that other classes are more important. Many of my classmates say the same thing. So do I in fact. Except I still spend too much time at it, not lately though.

I did go to Anne's office and talk to her about going to France. She suggested that I find a school where I can teach English and study French at the same time. Hopefully by that time I will be relatively competent in French. We'll see. I also told her that I was bored in class and didn't feel like talking half the time. I hope that wasn't an insult, but I do feel like we could be doing more interesting things. When Lisa came to our class she did lots of neat things, Wah! What a whine; I am today!

20 février

Today in class Anne tried to conduct more of the class in French. I almost wish she spoke more French in class. She went over exercises in the book orally and asked us to close our books. I answered first, I knew how to do it because I had prepared for class. A few others answered hesitantly. Then she
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asked the class "What's the problem, What don't you understand?" No one would answer. Then when she said OK open your books it was easy and everyone could get it.

It must be really frustrating. It is for me I just wish that class were more interesting and that we actually spoke a lot of French. Oh well maybe next quarter.

I worked with someone whom I had never worked with before. He was pretty willing to talk and we actually had a conversation, but I was dismayed to find myself repeating everything I had just said in French in English. Why? I don't know. This is a new development. I'm sure he understood most of what I said. And I understood most of what he said. He even tries to use an accent. More experiences like that would make things a lot more interesting.

Last night I found myself talking to my husband in French. He took French in HS so he understands some of what I say. I should do that more often. Maybe he will start to pick it up too. It would be great practice if we could both speak the language. I wish I could talk him into taking French for his language requirement.

I'm rethinking my decision to only take 2 credits next quarter. I may really benefit from the classroom environment. Especially if I take it at night. We'll see.

26 février

I'm finding it very difficult to study for my oral exam. I feel like if I can't do it without writing everything out, I really can't do it. And why should I pretend that being prepared for the oral is the same as being able to communicate orally? But, on the other hand, if I don't prepare I will probably freak out and freeze like I did last quarter. I want to tape this one. I meant to tape last quarter's but I forgot. I had the recorder with me and everything, but when I got in the room, I was so flustered, that I forgot all about it.

Things are definitely getting easier. Sometimes I can understand everything on the listening comprehension exercises in the lab manual. Sometimes I am only able to get the gist of it. And other times I think I have an idea only to find that I've missed some little detail which changes the meaning of the sentence,
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In class Monday, I was able to complete a spontaneous utterance. I only faltered a few times, but I got my point across. I felt really good about it. The only way I’m going to learn to speak is to speak. (I’m really sick of telling myself that!) I would really love to have the time to concentrate on my language studies, but I don’t. It’s going to be this one-class-a-quarter-with-all-my-other-classes-too thing. After a few years, I may be able to take French for graduate credit, but those days are far in the distance. However, I feel that it is important for me to gain proficiency in order to know what I’m talking about as a teacher and a language learner.

Hopefully, next quarter there will be more speaking in class. I think that if Anne was more insistent that we speak French, that our class could do it, maybe. I worked with the guy behind me again yesterday. We communicated in French. It was pretty good except that he has terrible bad breath.

I am studying much less now. I only do part of the exercises in writing. I usually do the Preparations and not the other sections. I just hope this doesn’t hurt my long term retention. I can do extremely well on the quizzes, but on the midterms and finals, I may have problems. I’ve had to prioritize and I’m afraid that French must take the backseat for now.

27 février

Today is my oral exam. I haven’t prepared much and I’m just going in and hoping for the best. I’m going to record. I hope that won’t make me too nervous, I can’t forget everything like I did last year.

L’examen orale

Went very well. Some hesitation, some nervous laughter, but all in all not bad. I think that’s because of my good relationship with Anne. We were very much peers. She is a grad student at about the same level as me. She respects me. I respect her. I was a little nervous, but nothing paralyzing.

3 mars

Oral exam went well. I remembered to tape it. I was nervous but not nearly as much as I had been last quarter. I make a few mistakes but usually I caught them before they were out of my mouth. !
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feel as if I have learned a lot since last quarter and that now I have a broad base on which to build further skill. I only hope that I can sustain my pace. I have been slacking off—only because I feel that I have been neglecting other subjects.

I had a dream last night that I was in a small town in rural Ohio. This town had a French-speaking enclave. I needed to buy some food for my horse. I looked in the phone book and found a place to buy it. It was owned and run by French-speaking people. I rehearsed in my mind what I would say to them. First, I would admit that I didn’t speak French well and ask for their pardon. “Excusez-moi, je ne parle pas bien français. J’ai besoin d’acheter de nourriture pour mon cheval.” However, I never got to actually call them. I couldn’t find the number again. (The phone number was not arranged as an American phone number. It was arranged in two digit groups.) I had to leave because I was riding home with someone else who was in a hurry to leave. I traded phone numbers with the woman who had helped me and promised to visit. I was anxious to mingle with the French-speaking people of the area.

4 mars

I am sick of everything. Not motivated to do school work. Class was there today. I worked with Doug and Steve on an interactive thing. They really are learning this stuff. I can’t get myself to study how am I going to continue? No confidence.

However, my pronunciation seemed better than usual when I read aloud today. I’m interested in getting the intonation. I wonder how appropriate it is to use English intonation. I need to hear more French spoken. Movies. Etc. But will I do it? That’s another question.

I got my oral exam results back. She gave me a 100%. I was surprised. I made at least one mistake that I didn’t catch although I did know how to correct it once she pointed it out to me.

I’m so burnt out I don’t know how I’m going to get everything done these next few weeks. I found myself wondering how little I could study my French and still manage to get an A. My grades are much better this quarter than last. I feel ashamed admitting having such thoughts.

I think these dreams about French are interesting.
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11 mars

I blew off class today. I had to get my LP paper done. I'm getting an easy A in French and my entire LP grade depends on this paper. The choice was easy. I called Anne to let her know what was up. She said not to worry about it that she had figured out everyone's grades and I had almost a 99% overall. Only need a 93% to get an A. She said I didn't need to make up the vocab check, because we got to drop one anyway.

I haven't been studying French much at all. I'm really hoping that next quarter will be better for conversation during class time. I really do not have the time to seek outside oral practice. I will have quite a mastery over the written word, but little or no proficiency with the spoken word. I am determined to at some point develop my speaking proficiency, if only when I go to France. It would probably be a good idea to start getting some French movies and seeking out French TV.

Later.

13 mars

I'm nervous about not being prepared for class. This is the first time I have been behind. I don't like it but other assignments are more important to me now.

15 mars

Wednesday when I was unprepared did not go so badly. One thing I really noticed was that I could not rattle off answers quite so quickly. I had to figure out the exercise on the spot. It's much easier to have already done the work. Anne showed me my grade so far in the class, I'm at the top with a 98.75 average. I would have to score pretty low on the last quiz and final to get below an A for the course. I am not going to be able to study much for them so we'll see what happens. I hope that I'm not overloading myself by taking 103 next quarter. But I feel like if I stop now it will be hard to get going again. I want to keep up the momentum.

Anne is really good about giving hints for studying. Marie didn't do that at all. I think she assumed that we all knew how to study and assumed that many people just weren't studying. Many people
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do not have a clue as to how to study for language classes.

Same day later after class

The test wasn't too bad. I didn't get around to studying the vocabulary, but I sincerely doubt that I got below a 90%. I remembered all the grammar stuff.

We played a game to review. I don't like competitive games too much, but I knew almost everything. I missed a few answers even though I knew them. I just said things wrong in the heat of competition. I felt my face getting hot and my heart beating fast. I could tell that some people were not very good at doing games like that, but I thought that it was a good review. Everyone on my team thought I was the best and kept acting like they were counting on me when my turn came. It was a lot of pressure. I even said once, "I'm not very fast" and "I'm not good at games". I'm not sure if that's true, but I don't like to be under that kind of pressure.

There was a guy in class whom I've never seen before. I couldn't believe it. I was late and had to sit near the door on the left side of the room. It was an entirely different perspective. All quarter I had been front and center where I could hear everything spoken and was in the middle of everything. I wouldn't have liked to sit on that left side all quarter. I couldn't hear well, see well, nor think back there.

Well, the quarter's over and I think I've learned a lot. I've definitely gotten a good start. I was thinking back to when French was so hard for me. Now it's pretty easy, but it still takes time. I cut back on the amount of preparation I was doing. I was discouraged from doing so much due to the mere fact that I could still get A's on the tests. If grades were more orally-based, it would inspire more time spent on oral preparation and practice. Maybe next quarter.

19 mars

The final was a piece of cake. Pas problème! I could have checked back over it but at that point I was just too tired to worry about it. There's no way I could have done badly on it. It's possible that I could have made some small errors, but I'm not too worried.
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French 103

1 avril

I'm going to get ahead in class work by starting on Chapter 15. As always, nervous about the first meeting--What will the teacher be like? Will everyone speak and comprehend better than I do? Will I be bored by a non-participating class?

This classroom is not as crowded as my 101 and 102 rooms were. There are fewer desks and more space in the front of the room. On the left side of the classroom (facing the guard) there are full length windows which make up more than half the wall. I'm sitting in the first seat in the row next to the window. It's 6:40 and there are only women in the room. One woman has a child (girl) who is about 11 or 12 years old with her. Her daughter, I presume.

A man just walked in. Some of the students on the right side of the room seem to know each other--probably from previous quarters of French. A woman sitting behind me and to my left asked me if I had taken French last quarter and how far we had gone in the textbook. She had taken 101 and 102 at Columbus State. 101 using Invitation and 102 using a different book. She was wondering how far behind she would be. I commented that our text was pretty good in that it introduced and reintroduced most material rotating or perhaps spiraling vocabulary and grammatical forms. More people in the back are talking as if they know each other from previous quarters.

This group seems older. Night class.

First day of class. We have only 2 men in our class from what I saw today. The class is full. We should spread out the seats a little so that people have more room. I like the teacher very much. She seems like a native speaker of French, but I'm not sure. Her name seems Indian. Perhaps she is just a very good FSL speaker.

When she went over the syllabus, she asked if anyone had used the computer lab programs. I said that I had and that I didn't like them very much. She wasn't very pleased with my answer and quickly told the class that the programs were very good. She spoke mostly French in the class as I was able to understand a great deal, in fact, almost all of what she was saying. The girl next to me was having trouble and it was getting to her. She kept shaking her head. People in the class sat there like they didn't
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understand. A few people would nod or laugh at the appropriate moments, but were reluctant to answer questions.

Riva started off by asking students their names, where they were from, and why they were taking French. Then we worked in pairs to ask each other the same questions. Then she asked for volunteers to share what they had learned with the rest of the class. The girl sitting next to me was my partner. My French was better than hers, but we did get through the exercise well enough. I volunteered to share my information. I couldn't remember how to say...she is taking French because...I stumbled a little, then was able to finish. I wanted it to come out perfectly the first time.

We did a verb review. I did pretty well and volunteered to put answers on the board. I only missed about 6 out of 40. I had forgotten some of the irregulars. I need to review.

We read over the Mise en scène. I volunteered to read a paragraph. As I was reading, I felt meaning slip away. I was just reading an unintelligible code. It's so hard to read aloud and use stresses properly and keep the flow and understand what I'm reading.

Riva gave us the choice of taking a break or getting out early. We chose to get out early. I waited after class to tell her that I was interested in meeting some of the students from Nantes who are studying here. Another woman in the class said that she knew several of these students and would pass my telephone number along to any of them who may be interested in talking to me. Finally, I'm taking a step to learn to speak better!

I feel that this class will be very good. I think that the instructor will speak more French and that I'll get good input and have the confidence to try to use the language more.

I'm confused about the syllabus. There don't appear to be any chapter quizzes. I'll have to ask about that on Wed.

3 avril

I was not prepared for class today. I had so much work to do in such a short time that something had to be sacrificed and sadly it was French. The vocab check went ok. I might have missed the gender on one of them. Oh well. Now that the quarter is rolling along I should have enough time to get everything
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done.

Riva started with a review of *les mots et la vie*. She asked questions and we were to answer. She does not wait long for volunteers. She calls on people randomly. I liked this because I didn’t feel compelled to answer. The pressure was off me. I usually feel obligated to give something a try when no one will volunteer. I made a few mistakes, but Riva handled them well and I did not feel embarrassed. She merely pointed out the mistake tactfully and either modeled it correctly or prompted me so that I could find my own mistakes. The latter of these correction strategies is the most favorable to me. Although if I had no idea as to an answer, I am sure that the former would be more effective.

Riva is very organized. She has the lesson thoroughly planned out and activities ready to go. She seems to put a lot of work into her lesson plans. I appreciate that. That way a good third of class time isn’t spent trying to figure out what to do.

I feel like such a geek in that class. I am not the oldest member of the class, but I still feel outcast in some way. I’m not sure what it is, but I’m having a hard time making friends. I want to speak French, but sometimes, the people I am working with want to use English.

We got out of class almost an hour early. That’s great for me. These days get awfully long.

8 avril

I was just looking over the syllabus and thinking about how much time the study of a language takes, how much time I need to spend on my other classes, and how real these concerns are for students who must take languages as graded, credited courses. The pressure is great. I’m very sorry to say that, in my case, French must take a back seat. Yet I feel that I must still get good grades. So I have become very grade oriented—I can only hope that as I continue to take language courses I will become less grade oriented and will be more concerned with speaking and understanding.

The 6:48 bell just rang and only 7 students out of the nearly 30 are here. I wonder if a lot people have dropped or maybe they are rained out. Here’s one more. I wonder if people are scared away because Riva is a native speaker (or is she?) [She’s not--She’s Indian]
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The talk between students before class is in English and concerning assignments and small talk. (a few more have straggled in). I feel like I isolate myself from classmates. Not just in French, but also in other classes as well. I'm not sure why--am I shy--sometimes I feel like a misfit. "Herbie doesn't want to make toys!"

More people wandering in. The front chairs fill up last. People are probably afraid that they will be called on more in the front, but Riva calls on people randomly using the roll sheet.

Good class today. I understand almost everything the teacher says. Even if I don't get everything, I usually understand the gist of things. I am trying to ask questions in French whenever possible. I can't always do it because I don't have the vocab or the grammar. I don't feel particularly tense when I do these things. I realize that I will not get penalized. It can only help me to try to speak as much as possible.

I asked a few picky grammar questions and Riva answered them quite well and told me that they were good questions. I volunteered a lot today. Speech is coming a little more naturally.

I worked with a woman named Chris and one named Betty today. Christy knew what she was doing most of the time, but didn't seem interested in speaking French at all. We were just doing a verb exercise. However, Betty did speak French. It was great! Maybe I'll try to sit next to her next time. She seems to be an older student too.

Most everyone in the class seems to have a basic mastery of what we learned in 101 and 102. People are more willing to talk and volunteer than they were in either of the previous classes. Although I thought at the beginning of class tonight that many people would be absent, most everyone was there, but several people came in late. Riva did not really seem to mind.

We had a very difficult reading exercise which boggled my mind, but I'm used to such passages from previous quarters. This is the first one, however, which I could not understand for the most part. If I have time I'll go back over it later.

13 avril

On 10 avril we had a substitute teacher. Her accent was interesting. She came up to me before class started and asked me if I had an extra sheet of paper (in French). I understood and said, "Oui". I sure
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out a sheet and gave it to her. She thanked me, “Merci beaucoup.” “Désolé,” I said.

Her name was Mary. She lapsed into English a lot when she felt like we didn’t understand. I liked the exercises she had us do. We did T&F (or V&F) quizzes on the Mise en Scène and Les Notes Culturelles. I was surprised at how much I knew and had retained. I feel like my reading in French is very good. Reading skill from L1 probably transfers to L2 to some degree.

The questions Mary asked us seemed to be designed not only to elicit the forms which we are working on now but also to encourage us to talk about ourselves—once we answered the question she pursued the line of questioning as far as we could with it within reason. I liked this very much—I found myself responding very easily in French even if not entirely accurately.

At one point I gave up on trying to produce a complex sentence—I was trying to say that some people who hiked in France did not do it only because it was inexpensive—they had the money to do other things and that there were many other reasons for choosing to hike. I talked myself into a corner and couldn’t get out. I felt like I was wasting everyone’s time so I gave up rather than pursue it. Mary was very supportive and encouraging. But I still did not continue.

I volunteered many times throughout the class for the most part my answers were accurate but not always. I felt very conspicuous in the class and wish that more people would volunteer, although more people in this class volunteer than did those in 102 or 101.

16 avril

Yesterday I got to class early. Several of the older students were already there too. We started talking about language learning. One woman teaches HS Spanish. She and I are both pretty motivated to learn French not just for the credits. The other two are taking it for the requirement. We discussed problems in pronunciation, anxiety, and the amount of time necessary. This is the best rapport I have had with any fellow French students. I think it’s because they are older.

Riva was back. She really is delightful—great sense of humor and very quick on her feet. I had not prepared for class but I tried to volunteer as much as possible. More people are volunteering so I don’t feel like I’m the only one talking all the time, but I do my fair share.
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There were a lot of things I did not know, but I tried anyway. I don't really worry about knowing every little thing any more especially if I haven’t prepared. It sort of puts me on the same level as the other students—I guess that makes me feel more comfortable. I don't feel so much like a showoff. I wonder if I will be able to do as well on exams.

This may be the class to try a study/practice group. I think I’ll mention it next meeting. Maybe if a group of us were always prepared, then we could participate more equally and I wouldn’t feel so conspicuous and I would be more prepared.

18 avril

I had a terrible headache in class last night and the thought crossed my mind that I should just skip class. But I didn’t. We have a midterm Monday and I wanted to be in class for the review.

Riva started the class as usual with questions designed to elicit the grammar and vocabulary we have been learning. No one would give her negative answers when she wanted them. Finally, I did. I wasn’t volunteering much because I wanted others to participate and I didn’t want to be conspicuous. However, other students weren’t participating much and when all else failed I would volunteer.

I made a lot of stupid mistakes of the sort I don’t usually make. This was in a translation exercise. I do not have a firm grasp on the relative pronouns, but I haven’t yet covered that section in my book. A few things became clearer. At first I thought that the way you decided whether to put que or qui was to look at how the entire clause functioned in the sentence, but that is not the case. You look at how the word will function within its clause only. No problem. At least not now, until I do some exercises.

I feel ok about the upcoming midterm. Got homework and vocab checks back. A's. Even though I haven’t been able to totally stay on top of things, I am not too far behind to cover everything before the test.

A few times in speaking exercises in class, I had a lot to say, but could not figure out how to say it and I was reluctant to try. For example, I was wanted to explain that although the canoes in the passage we read were called winter canoes, they were not only used in the winter. They were the same canoes that natives and early immigrants to Québec used for transportation. I probably have the grammatical ability
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and the vocabulary to say what I wanted to say but I felt as if it would have taken me a long time to get it out and I didn’t want to hold up the class and embarrass myself. I need to get over that problem. It’s the only way I’m going to be able to learn to use what I know. I just worry too much about what other people think of me. I don’t want them to think that I’m just trying to get attention or something. I hate that. I wish I could just forget all that stuff and concentrate on doing what I want to do in the class.

I pointed out an error in a student utterance of which Riva had approved. It was a negative statement using “ni, ni.”. The student had not used “ne’ before the verb. I did it more to clarify for myself than to point out someone else’s error. It bothers me when teachers accept utterances which are not correct without at least modeling the correct way to say it. I mean that only during exercises. There should be some margin of error for free speech in the classroom.

24 avril

I’ve had to change my approach to studying French to try to make up for my tight schedule. Now, instead of proceeding through a chapter chronologically—doing all exercises, workbook, and tapes—I am skimming through the assigned topics and doing a few Preparation A exercises in each section. I plan to catch up on the weekends. I have done this because I think it’s better to be at least somewhat prepared for class than to be behind, yet thoroughly finished with what I have managed to get done.

In the last chapter I felt pretty confident about everything except those topics which were covered last. I had finished studying those topics right before the test for the first time. I had not been able to get much out of class time practice, nor did I have time to let those things set in. I am tempted to ask Riva if I can get copies of chapter quizzes to use as review sheets.

Now that there are no chapter quizzes there is no built-in mechanism for reviewing by the chapter. I tried to review all of my vocabulary for two chapters at once. Disastrous.

29 avril

I can’t believe it! I got my midterm back today and got a 99. I got my vocab check back with a 100%. I did not feel confident at all and yet I still did very well. This stuff must be sinking in somehow.
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I have changed my approach to daily preparation because I was feeling pretty lost during class. This week and last I felt much better. I am going over each topic on time and doing the written part of the work book. I have still yet to do the oral part, but I will catch up eventually.

Riva gave us copies of the chapter quizzes for us to do on our own. She will even look them over for us and give us feedback. I think this will help not only me but also many other students in the class.

My oral production is so full of errors but at least I’m trying. I don’t worry too much about what I say in class, but I know that it’s often full of errors.

2 mai

I blew off class yesterday evening. I was exhausted, I didn’t have my homework done, and I just didn’t feel like coping with it. I called Riva and told her how I was feeling. I went ahead and scheduled my oral exam for mercredi, 8 mai. I told her that I never study for my orals and she said Oh you should. I probably shouldn’t have told her that. I told her about my study and about the fact that the class doesn’t count for anything for me.

9 mai

I took my oral exam yesterday. I even prepared for it a little. I did ok I think. I found myself starting utterances I couldn’t finish because I don’t know enough vocabulary. I wasn’t too nervous, but I did forget to record. I couldn’t remember the things I had prepared to say. Oh well.

15 mai

I have finally come to the realization that I have probably learned just what I should learn in these 3 quarters of French. I have the basics of French grammar and a working vocabulary. If I had not worried about grades and had concentrated more on speaking would this base be as solid as it is now? I’m not sure. Am I brainwashed?

This summer, since I won’t have the opportunity to speak French much, I am going to read some French plays or novels. Maybe Camus—L’Étranger.
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I am exited about reading and discussion but I am not too confident about my “discussing” ability. I am going to work through the discussion questions and write things down. I also need to keep track of words and expressions that give me trouble. Try to use them.

Enough talk. Now to work!

13 juin

This is a wrap up for 103. I didn’t get below a 95% on any of my tests or other graded things. The final wasn’t too bad. I did not study nearly as much this quarter. I remember when I was in Spanish that I just figured out how to get A’s then coasted. Is that the same thing I did here? I’m not sure. I want to learn this language, but I just don’t have the time to devote to study it. I don’t experience any anxiety in class anymore, but when I talk to other friends who speak French I get a little nervous although I shouldn’t because my French is often better than theirs.

I want to get some books to read over the summer. I saw a student’s copy of Camus’ L’étranger which is used for a 104 section. I should pick it up.

My relationship with Riva was strange this quarter. I don’t feel like we ever really understood each other. I participated in class raising my hand often. Many time she wouldn’t call on me to give others a chance. I had to keep quiet sometimes for the same reason. I just hope that 104 has more people in it who are interested in speaking French. I wish I could make a friend in a French class, that would make it easier to study and practice speaking. That will be my goal for 104. To find someone to practice with.

I hate it that I ended up doing so little to get by, but I had to because of my other course work. In fact I’m worried about continuing to take French because I can’t get credit for it, it counts for nothing, yet it takes so much time. Still I feel that it is important for me to be proficient in a second language. I will continue.

One important realization I had this quarter was that learning a language is a long process, sure I knew that, but I guess without the actual experience saying that it takes a lot of time is only a bunch of words. I’m sure that I would be better if only I had more time, but there is only so much time and I have to be satisfied with what I can do with it.